

**FREDERICK JACKSON TURNER:
A CASE STUDY OF AN AMERICAN HISTORIAN'S RELEVANCE IN THE FIELD OF
ADULT EDUCATION**

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Keywords: Adult Education, Adult Learning, Andragogy, Facilitation of Adults, Frederick
Jackson Turner, Frontier Thesis, Postsecondary Teaching Techniques

Frederick Jackson Turner: A Case Study of an American Historian's Relevance in the Field of Adult Education

Kathleen B. Munive

ABSTRACT

Frederick Jackson Turner was a prominent American Historian who lived during America's Progressive Movement of the early twentieth century. Turner's most seminal piece, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*, commonly referred to as *The Frontier Thesis*, challenged the accepted assumption that American culture stemmed from European ancestors. Turner resisted conventional wisdom that did not take into account the struggles and advances of the pioneers of the West. Turner believed the experiences of the pioneers forced them to adapt and modify their European roots, thus developing a distinct and separate culture from Europe.

As a university professor, training a plethora of doctoral students in the field of history, Turner embraced the changes in educational thought of the time; including the importance of lifelong learning and the need to continually re-evaluate previously held beliefs. To Turner, a university professor's priority was to facilitate learning experiences that helped develop students into independent and competent critical thinkers. One way Turner differed from his contemporaries was the way he studied and wrote about history. Turner subscribed to the ideal that all aspects of historical events, incorporating information that set a complete context of the event itself was essential. The historiography Turner employed is considered a standard today.

The Progressive Era also brought a wave of reformation in political, social and educational thought. Adult education programs began to develop throughout the nation. Adults for the first time had low cost opportunities outside of collegial studies to expand their professional expertise, literacy skills, and appreciation for art and entertainment. Adult education thinkers also began to systematically research and study ways in which adults best learn.

The impetus of this study was to examine Turner's educational and career efforts juxtaposed with adult learning theory, principles and practices as an embedded university elite and active planner and participant of alternative adult education programs. As such, this study investigated Turner as an educator outside the field of adult education, who emulated the principles, practices and value structure of adult learning theory.

Keywords: Adult Education, Adult Learning, Andragogy, Facilitation of Adults, Frederick Jackson Turner, Frontier Thesis, Postsecondary Teaching Techniques

DEDICATION

My dissertation is dedicated to two people who made me the person I am today, my parents, James J. Brock and Shirley C. Brock. They grew up with adversity and in poverty. Their generosity and commitment to their families meant giving up their own educational aspirations and future dreams so that others in their family could receive post-secondary educations and prosper. They have taught me the meaning of perseverance, goal setting, commitment to family, and charity toward others. They are both brilliant in their own right and instilled in me the value of perpetual learning and moving forward regardless of experiences or circumstances. I am honored to be able to give them the distinction of having the first family member to achieve a doctoral degree.

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HOFSTADTER'S LAW:

It always takes longer than you expect, even when you take into account Hofstadter's Law.

— Douglas Hofstadter, *Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid*

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CHAPTER ONE: SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Background to the Research

In the field of history, Frederick Jackson Turner is a well-known and renowned American Historian who lived during America's Progressive Movement of the early twentieth century. Turner is most known for this seminal piece, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*, which is commonly known as *The Frontier Thesis*. In this work, Turner challenged the accepted assumption that American culture and ideals stemmed from European ancestors who immigrated or fled to the United States and fought wars against England to win independence as a new nation. Turner, who grew up in the Mid-Western part of the United States, had a different point of view about the American character. He believed that conventional wisdom did not take into account the struggles and advances made to the nation through the pioneers, and the experiences and environment that forced this group of people to adapt and modify their European roots, thus developing a national culture distinct and separate from Europe.

Turner lived in a time when scientific inquiry and discovery was beginning to be incorporated into the fabric of the American educational system. As a university professor who trained a plethora of doctoral students in the field of history, Turner embraced the changes in educational thought and subscribed to the importance of lifelong learning and the necessity of re-evaluating previously held knowledge and beliefs. He emulated his espoused beliefs that university professors' priority was to facilitate learning experiences that allowed students to become independent and competent critical thinkers. One way in which Turner differed from his contemporaries was how he studied and wrote about history. Turner was of the position that it was necessary to research all aspects of historical events, incorporating information that set a complete context of the event itself. In order to do so, Turner cautioned his students that they would be reckless if they did not thoroughly investigate and understand the economic, social, political and cultural facets of the people who were directly affected by the event, and how the conceptualization and writing about the event would lead to the common knowledge that would be used for the good of the nation. The historiography Turner employed is considered a standard today.

The Progressive Era also brought a wave of reform in political, social and educational thought. Adult education programs began to develop throughout the nation, both in formal and

informal settings. Adults began to experience low cost opportunities outside of collegial studies to expand their professional expertise, literacy skills, and appreciation for art and entertainment. It was during the Progressive Era that adult education thinkers began to systematically theorize research and study the ways in which adults best learn.

Turner was embedded within the university elite, but also was an active planner of and participant in alternative adult education programs. As such, the question as to Turner's intentional participation in the varied adult education programs piqued this researcher's interest into the inquiry as to whether or not investigation of Turner, an educator outside the field of adult education, emulated the principles, practices and value structure of adult learning theory. Thus, the impetus of this study was to examine Turner's educational and career efforts juxtaposed with adult learning theory, principles and practices.

Chapter 1 sets forth the organizational structure of the dissertation, providing the reader with background into the issue presented by the study. The purpose of the study is also defined. I delineated questions that guided the inquiry, explained rationale for the study and developed a narrative for the relevance of investigating Frederick Jackson Turner as a practitioner in the field of adult education.

Chapter 2 provides a literature review, which covers a multi-faceted discussion of the content examined in this study: First, a summary of the most important writers about Turner and the archives that contain primary sources about his life and works; second, the aim of andragogy in context of developing adults into independent and critical appraisers of self and society is outlined; next, a detailed discussion of five influential adult education practitioners, and the convictions and principles in which they operated. These five perspectives of adult learning are further used as the basis of analyzing Turner's relevance in the field of adult education.

Once a foundation of the philosophical principles of adult learning theory is presented and understanding that adult learners are as complex as they are individual, a list of three specific adult learning traits are mapped out for comparison purposes in the study. The three attributes featured are (a) Self-direction, Autonomy, and Homonomy, (b) Accumulated Life Experiences and Goal Setting, and (c) Transformative Change.

In order for this study to be successful, it is paramount to understand the motivations and actions of Turner within the context of the era in which he lived. Therefore, an extensive framework on the historical context of his era is recorded. This conversation includes the social

norms and reformations in political, economic, urbanization and rural homesteading, and educational thought of the American Progressive Movement, and establishes the mindset and perspective in which to view Turner as a life-long learner and educator. Finally, an overview of the types of adult education programs available and/or developed during the Progressive Era set the stage to appreciate the types of programs Turner may have involved himself. This information is necessary so that Turner and the work he accomplished are not examined from the 21st century viewpoint or expectations of behavior, but that of the late 1800s and early 1900s.

This study explored three specific questions in relation to Turner and adult education; therefore, Chapter 3 discusses these questions along with the research method used to find a potential connection between adult learning theory and Turner, the rationale for choosing a case study format as the research method, the process used for data collection and the analysis, and the potential pitfalls of the approach. Failsafe protocols for ensuring integrity of the study are also discussed.

Chapters 4 and 5 are biographical in nature. Chapter 4 presents a timeline of Turner's life from his early years, through his post-secondary education, his motivation to pursue a professorship and the accomplishments, pitfalls and persistence Turner demonstrated to achieve his goal. His career as an educator is also chronicled, as well as a glimpse into his marriage and family life. Finally, the work he conducted after his retirement, and his death and legacy are also explored. Chapter 5 is an in-depth look at Turner as an adult learner and educator. His thought process and reliance on the power of reflection to gain and make meaning are analyzed. A glimpse of how and why Turner chose to modify his teaching methods from that of the conventional way in which university students were taught isolates one factor that aligns Turner with adult learning principles. Turner as a researcher and his attempts to educate his students in new methodologies, as well as his vigor in educating the public about the cause and effects of historical events also illuminate his propensity to emulate Adult Educators. The chapter ends with a detailed account of the many ways in which Turner participated in adult learning venues and the respect such determination afforded him.

The study concludes with the findings and further research implications of the study. In Chapter 6, the three research questions are answered; with the caveat that much more is needed to be investigated about Turner and his alignment with adult learning principles. Comparisons to Turner and the five adult learning leaders are evaluated and discussed. The chapter closes with a

conversation of five proposed future research areas.

Andragogy

Andragogy is a term used to describe the essence of the complexity facilitating and learning of adults. Andragogy is not based on building block developmental stages but begins by determining the place, or stage, and the body of knowledge the learners currently possess. Andragogy is complicated and multifaceted. Objectives and curriculum are specifically and purposefully designed to align and support the developmental cognitive and psychosocial orientation of participants and their continuing development as self-directing learners. Although the objectives may be predetermined, teachers often spend numerous hours planning lessons and activities with the learning styles and interests of the students in mind.

Andragogy is an intertwined, spiraling process that does not have distinct hierarchical characteristics dependent upon one another. The theoretical framework of Andragogy is multi-disciplinary in scope guided by a perspective of adult development that includes cultural and societal components. Therefore, methods and techniques of learning experiences will vary dependent on the geographic location, behaviors, and beliefs regarded as important to the social, ethnic and age group of the student population. Andragogy does not exclude any approach, curricula, or structures. The facilitation and learning of adults encompasses a multi-modal epistemological orientation which includes holistic, cognitive, metacognitive, affective, transpersonal, and experiential to name a few aspects of human knowledge and accessing potential for growth in all areas of development. The complexities of the learning of adults lie in four distinct subsets that include (a) the learner and the learner's community, (b) the field of study and/or area of interest, (c) the design and facilitation of the learning, and (d) the when and where the learning takes place. Each of these subsets looks distinctively different depending on the life phase of the community of learners.¹

Andragogy is much more than the learning of individual adults. It is a spirit enabling learners to freely understand that knowledge itself is not significant, but the ability to apply knowledge in a comprehensible way will yield responsibility and wisdom. Practitioners of andragogy realize this type of learning allows for society to change and grow with the help of

¹ Marlene Schommer, "Comparisons of Beliefs about the Nature of Knowledge and Learning among Postsecondary Students," *Research in Higher Education* 34, no. 3 (1993): 355–70.

coordinated human efforts. The United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO) stated, “The final object [objective] must be to equip man to play his part harmoniously in the modern world.” This objective includes all aspects of lifelong learning in which men and women become aware of their human dignity, understand their place in society, determine what it means to be self-fulfilled, and take action to shape the world to be a place in which equity for all includes equal access to education and economic and cultural satisfaction.²

Adult education encompasses more than a specific set of characteristics, content, methodologies, or activities. Andragogy embodies the intrinsic motivation of human beings to continually learn, develop, mature, and evolve within oneself and society. As such, andragogical approaches are not one-dimensional. Knowledge and learning styles of individuals vary regardless of age, socioeconomic status, culture, and/or previous learning. A facilitator must be flexible when organizing learning constructs to help adults gain the knowledge needed to meet specified goals. Martinez de Morentin de Goni expressed that this means adult education experiences need to allow those involved to learn how to be, develop an understanding as to how they learn, and to empower learners to take action in becoming lifelong learners, comprehending that as one matures in these skills, learning will become a part of their being.³

Andragogical ideals assert that in order for a learning experience to be meaningful, adult learners need to be included when negotiating educational goals and determining stimulating teaching approaches that align with participants’ learning styles, background knowledge, and needs. An educator’s ability to facilitate learning by navigating collective educational goals while motivating students’ inquiry and learning potential is vital; otherwise, the experience may lead to dissatisfaction or be deemed not meaningful or useful by the participants.⁴

Malcolm Knowles, a leader in American adult education, suggested that facilitation of such experiences is more likely to be successful if empathy and understanding toward the participants in any adult learning event are fostered by relaying acceptance and trust with the

² United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO). “Annex I. Recommendations on the Development of Adult Education. Content of Adult Education.” In *Records of the General Conference*. Vol. 1, *Resolutions*, Resolution 19C/Annex I.III.10. Paris: United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture, 1976, 17.

³ Juan Ignacio Martinez de Morentin de Goni, *What Is Adult Education? UNESCO Answers* (Guatemala: San Sebastian UNESCO Centre, 2006).

⁴ Ralph G. Brockett and Roger Hiemstra, *Self-Direction in Adult Learning: Perspectives on Theory, Research, and Practice*, Routledge Series on Theory and Practice of Adult Education in North America (New York: Routledge, 1991).

learners. By establishing trust with learners, a facilitator can successfully encourage collaboration and active participation in any adult learning environment.⁵ John Henschke, another notable American adult education thinker, also commented on the importance of gaining trust when facilitating a learning experience. He stated that it is imperative for the participants of the learning environment to understand, or trust, that the facilitator's primary objectives are to rejoice in the participants' desire to gain knowledge, encourage self-directedness, and celebrate when individual goals have been met.⁶

Both Knowles and Henschke emphasized the importance of assisting learners in their personal ability to assess their self-concept. By guiding participants and asking them to reflect upon themselves as learners, adults not only become more adept at understanding what they know but also have the confidence to determine what they have yet to learn. Gaining an accurate self-understanding helps learners build the confidence to trust their ability to understand which types of activities best fit their learning styles and take responsibility for the learning itself.

Educational Thought during the American Progressive Movement

According to Boucouvalas and Lawrence, "the 1920s [and the educational thought leading up to the 1920s] is generally recognized as a watershed period [for adult education]."⁷ The Progressive Movement in American History (defined as the years between the late nineteenth century and the first part of the twentieth century) was a time of modernization and change. The strength of scientific inquiry, advancement of new technologies, and development of sound educational practices, for children and adults, were held in high regard as requirements for the United States to prosper. This era regarded human intellectualism, coupled with muscular brawn, not only as necessary to consciously improve the conditions of an individual's life but as an obligation and duty for the sake of society. At this particular point in time universities began

⁵ Malcolm S. Knowles, *Andragogy in Action: Applying Modern Principles of Adult Learning* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1984).

⁶ J. A. Henschke, "Identifying Appropriate Adult Educator Practices: Beliefs, Feelings and Behaviors." In *Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Midwest Research-to-Practice Conference in Adult, Continuing and Community Education*, pp. 89-95, St Louis, MO: University of Missouri, 1989.

⁷ Marcie Boucouvalas and Randee Lipson Lawrence, "Adult Learning," in *Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education*, 2010 ed., ed. Carol E. Kasworm, Amy D. Ross, and Jovita M. Ross-Gordon (Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 2010), 35.

to focus not only on liberal arts education but also research and development of specialized disciplines of study.⁸

Professors began to explore whether universities should be places where research could be integrated into traditional ways of developing courses. Pioneers of this paradigm shift included universities such as Harvard, Columbia, Johns Hopkins, the University of Chicago, and the University of Wisconsin.⁹ However, the ideal of educating the public through formal education at the university level was only one framework model of the Progressive movement.

In *Philosophical Foundations of Adult Education*, John Elias and Sharan Merriam stated that the Progressive Movement in American History had the largest impact on the adult education movement in the United States compared to any other school of thought,

In an attempt to deal with a society that was quickly becoming urbanized and industrialized, early Adult Education looked to the dynamic Progressive movement as an inspiration in establishing theoretical positions and practical programs.¹⁰

The progressive education movement in the United States arose from learning theory coming out of Europe. In the United States, traditional liberal arts programs were evolving by incorporating aspects of European adult programs and models. Such changes appeared in the writings of major adult learning thinkers and scholars such as Cyril Houle, Eduard Lindeman, Paulo Freire, and Malcolm Knowles.¹¹ One key of this changing attitude toward adult learning was the philosophy that adults should understand the benefits of adding specific learning to their knowledge base, realize they already possessed a wealth of information from their life experiences, and see the interconnectedness they have with their community and society as a whole.

Charles Darwin's deductive thinking process was increasingly incorporated into the way education, and even broader society, were perceived by American educators and politicians. Darwin's mindset was that principles of scientific reasoning needed to be included in all ways of

⁸ Richard D. Brown, "Modernization and the Modern Personality in Early America, 1600–1865: A Sketch of a Synthesis," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 2, no. 3 (1972): 201–28.

⁹ John D. Buenker, John Chynoweth Burnham, and Robert Morse Crunden, *Progressivism* (Cambridge, MA: Schenkman, 1976). Also see Maureen A. Flanagan, *America Reformed* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

¹⁰ John L. Elias and Sharan B. Merriam, *Philosophical Foundations of Adult Education* (Melbourne, FL: Krieger, 1995), 45.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

thought. He also believed that man was ever-evolving. One merely had to look to nature as a context to determine the habits and behaviors of living flora and creatures, and thereby simply apply deductive reasoning to obtain new “truths” about man.¹² Adult education programs began to embrace the concept of and the importance of adult learners gaining meaning from their learning experiences through the use and application of deductive reasoning.

The crux of progressive education theory that arose during the period under study was the belief that personal experiences of the learners provided a baseline of knowledge and skill sets. An adult educator was required to make an assessment of this pool of knowledge and guide the community of learners to work with one another to share information and develop group and individual goals. Equipped with such information, facilitators of learning would be able to guide learners into deeper and more meaningful learning that would motivate them to want to know more. For this type of teaching to be successful, the most important aspect was for the educator to provide experiences that engaged learners as well as built on previous experiences (background knowledge). For new learning to be achieved, learners’ curiosity had to be piqued to make them eager for future study and to actively participate in goal setting.¹³

Darwin was far from alone in this line of thinking. John Dewey, for example, also promoted this ideal, which he called the experiential continuum. He emphasized the importance of what he called “quality experiences.” These experiences had a memorization component but also needed to include the students’ participation for intellectual growth. To ensure intellectual development, a facilitator of learning needed to cultivate experiences that stimulated curiosity and motivated students to take an interest. This interest would allow learners to obtain new knowledge and determine whether the knowledge was good only for oneself or would also benefit society as a whole. As Dewey said, “Education, in its broadest sense, is the means of the social continuity of life.”¹⁴

Theorizing that newly gained knowledge was important for society to prosper, Dewey was of the position that a person should take action in the form of actively engaging in social reform. However, he left it to the learner to determine what course of action to take to integrate the new knowledge into one’s own reformation style. He also believed that learning should

¹² Charles Darwin, *The Autobiography of Charles Darwin, 1809–1882* (London, UK: Collins, 1958).

¹³ Arthur Zilversmit, *Changing Schools: Progressive Education Theory and Practice, 1930–1960* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

¹⁴ John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1916), 2.

continue throughout life and not be limited to formal schooling from kindergarten through the university level.¹⁵

Dewey was in alignment with another characteristic of Progressive educational theory, which valued all teaching venues, whether formal institutions such as universities or informal activities such as women's group gatherings should be based on the importance of the learners' personal needs, interests, experiences, and wants. Value was also placed on the significance of the social effect of the participants as a collective community. To promote a sense of community, the educator needed to be sensitive to the learning environment in which the teaching or "experience" took place. The classroom or forum needed to be set up in a manner that had implied respect for the learners and was nonthreatening to participants. The facilitator had the responsibility to provide an atmosphere in where each participant's knowledge or questions were considered a benefit to everyone in the discussion. Finally, another goal of the learning environment was to place the *learner* at the center of the educational process, not the *facilitator*.¹⁶

One example of this type of environment would be to have desks and/or chairs arranged in circles or to have the main speaker located in the center of the room. In this way learners would be able to participate in conversations that evoked curiosity and gave deference and honor to the thoughts of others. This format for teaching was quite opposite to the traditional teacher standing at the "head" of the classroom.

By setting the environment in this way, students would be less likely to become passive. Participants are unable to become invisible to the facilitator by hiding behind another's head or to drift off in thought, oblivious to the discussion around them. This setup would also provide the facilitator a better view of the student population to ensure that everyone would be involved in the discussion. Likewise, the facilitator would have a clear view of all the participants and vice versa. As a result, the facilitator would be on display and the students more readily able to read the teacher's body language as well as determine whether the dialogue being presented was authentic and useful.¹⁷

Malcolm Knowles, in *A History of the Adult Education Movement in the United States*, discussed the connectedness of progressive and adult education in the late 1800s and early part

¹⁵ John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1938).

¹⁶ John Heyl Vincent, *The Chautauqua Movement*, Vol. 3 (Boston, MA: Chautauqua Press, 1885).

¹⁷ Elias and Merriam, *Philosophical Foundations*.

of the 1900s. Knowles provided examples of American vocational education, university extension programs, and immigration education as progressive education formats. He emphasized that during this era a shift took place from teaching general academic subjects to an environment in which a person became knowledgeable by attending specific training programs in which information was learned for a targeted and desired outcome.¹⁸ In *The Modern Practice of Adult Education*, Knowles examined the importance of the changing role of the facilitator. He defined the role of an educator as “helper, guide, encourager, consultant and resource, not that of transmitter, disciplinarian, judge and authority.”¹⁹

Eduard Lindeman also spoke of the power of progressive education’s tenet that the needs and goals of the learner not only drive instruction but could also aid society. In *The Meaning of Adult Education*, Lindeman wrote,

In what areas do most people appear to find life’s meaning? We have only one pragmatic guide: meaning must reside in the things for which people strive, the goals which they set for themselves, their wants, needs, desires, and wishes.²⁰

Although the adult educator would have an outline of basic class goals, the community of learners would aid in the development of new learning and purpose. Lindeman’s work also focused on problem-solving methodologies that would allow students to question and inquire about ways to solve their own particular woes as well as those of society. In *The Democratic Man: Selected Writings*, Lindeman stated,

He [the teacher] is no longer the oracle who speaks from the platform of authority, but rather the guide, the pointer-out, who also participates in learning in proportion to the vitality and relevancy of his facts and experiences.²¹

Lindeman also advocated for adult experiential learning as a key to social reform,

¹⁸ Malcolm S. Knowles, *A History of the Adult Education Movement in the United States* (Huntington, NY: Krieger, 1977).

¹⁹ Malcolm S. Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: Andragogy Versus Pedagogy* (New York: Association Press, 1970), 34.

²⁰ Eduard C. Lindeman, *The Meaning of Adult Education* (New York: New Republic, 1926), 13–14.

²¹ Eduard C. Lindeman, *The Democratic Man: Selected Writings* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1956), 160.

Adult Education will become an agency of progress if its short-time goals of self-improvement can be made compatible with a long-time, experimental but resolute policy of changing the social order.²²

The format in which adult learners were educated also began to change. In “quality experiences,” memorization was only one component (if present at all) of a meaningful educational experience. The expectation for learning experiences to heighten participants’ ability to positively impact themselves, their families, and society took precedence. Venues offering both traditional and nontraditional programs began to be more accessible and offered both technical and leisure courses, which changed the dynamic of who engaged in learning activities. Finally, great consideration was given to the learning environment; the approach educators chose to deliver experiences was fixed on trust building and taking risks without fear of judgment, promoted curiosity, and celebration was emphasized.

Adult education in America changed dramatically during the Progressive Era. There was a shift in focus into the intellect of adults, and the era was a springboard from which adult learning theory and philosophy have continued to be researched, outlined, and advanced. Yet, adult learning was far from the only area of transition for Progressives. Scientific inquiry and deductive reasoning became the dominant practice and adults began to use logic and personal experience to inform their decisions in determining the types of learning endeavors they needed or wanted to explore.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose for this study arose from the combination of educational, social, and historical thought. The Progressive Movement had several driving factors, with a myriad of intentions and hopes of change. Ordinary citizens with varying belief and value systems contributed ideas and grassroots efforts to make way for a better America. Progressive education took center stage during this era, with educational philosophy that promoted the conviction that society benefitted from improvement of oneself, focusing on an individual’s relevance and interconnectedness to the community in which they lived. Some of these educators emerged from other disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, and sociology. One of these educators is

²² Lindeman, *Meaning of Adult Education*, 166.

well-known historian Frederick Jackson Turner. As a professor of history, he embraced the tenets and principles of facilitating adult learning experiences that were emerging during this time period.

As I read about Turner, the man, my interest in him as an adult educator began to form. In particular, a statement made by Wilbur R. Jacobs about Turner piqued my interest further,

Frederick Jackson Turner (1861–1932) has long been recognized as one of our most distinguished [American] historians, a scholar whose work . . . helped transform the teaching and writing of American History. At the University of Wisconsin and at Harvard he gained a reputation as a man of ideas, a brilliant teacher who probed the origin of the American character. He belonged to that rare class of scholar, the original thinker.²³

Jacobs was not the only American historian to praise Turner. Ray Allen Billington remarked that Frederick Jackson Turner was known for his professionalism and proficiency as a national adult educator of history. Turner's vitae included teaching at the University of Wisconsin, the University of Chicago, Harvard, and Columbia. He was a popular national and community speaker. Even after retirement, Turner spent much of his time working as a guest speaker and associate researcher at the Huntington Library in California until his death in 1932. Billington saw Turner as one of the key promoters of historical discipline that led the way in developing protocols that preserve historical documentation, data, and information concerning key figures of our time.²⁴

Turner became an important subject for me during research I was conducting in 2009. I came upon his name while exploring the history of the Immigration Act of 1917. For the first time in American immigration history, those wishing to gain entry to the United States were required to take an English proficiency test before entrance would be granted. In Joseph Kett's *The Pursuit of Knowledge Under Difficulties: For Self-Improvement to Adult Education in America 1750–1990*, I noticed Kett took the position that critical attention to, and inquiry of, the accomplishments of many, including Frederick Jackson Turner, had been given in the study and promotion of American History. However, Turner seemed invisible in the field of adult

²³ Wilbur R. Jacobs, *The Historical World of Frederick Jackson Turner: Selected Correspondence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968), preface.

²⁴ Ray Allen Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).

education.²⁵ Since Kett found it noteworthy to point out the absence of Turner from commentaries of the self-improvement era in the United States, I also became curious about his absence. Turner's career and professional relationships overlapped the American progressive adult education movement so why had he not been given consideration as a practitioner of historical importance to adult learning theory and principles?

Driven by my curiosity, I continued to read more about Turner. I was stuck by an article that noted how popular Turner's classes were, often prompting the university to offer more sections of his courses. At this point, a strong case for investigating Turner as an adult educator arose within me and became the seed of this study.

Born in Wisconsin in 1861, Turner graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in History from the University of Wisconsin in 1884. He continued his studies in history at Wisconsin, obtaining a Master's degree in 1888. He then moved to Johns Hopkins University, graduating with a Doctor of Philosophy in History in 1890. Shortly after graduation from Hopkins, Turner accepted a teaching position at his alma mater, the University of Wisconsin. There he concentrated his interests on the teaching of history and his investigation of the westward expansion of the United States.²⁶

Turner's social and professional circle was an elite group of educators and politicians. He lectured at more than thirty universities, including Princeton, the California Institute of Technology, and the New School for Social Research. Woodrow Wilson, before his election to the U.S. presidency, tried in 1905 to persuade Turner to teach at Princeton University, where Wilson was then president.²⁷

John Dewey, a noted educator of human development and cognition who co-founded the New School for Social Research, also wanted Turner to teach at his institution, the University of Chicago. Turner declined, opting instead to become more active in the Chautauqua Institute, library clubs, the Pasadena Lecture Series and University Extension programs. He was also an advocate and teacher of university extension programs.²⁸ Kett stated that the Chautauqua

²⁵ Joseph F. Kett, *The Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties: From Self-Improvement to Adult Education in America 1750–1990* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994).

²⁶ Martin Ridge, "Frederick Jackson Turner, Ray Allen Billington, and American Frontier History," *Western Historical Quarterly* 19, no. 1 (1988): 5–20.

²⁷ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

²⁸ Allan G. Bogue, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Strange Roads Going Down* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998).

Institute, library clubs, and university extension programs were considered credible adult education experiences available during Turner's lifetime,

University extensions demanded professors to be eager to become apostles of culture. The Chautauqua-Johns Hopkins axis provided many of these ambassadors, including Harper, Adams, Ely, Turner, and Bemis.²⁹

Kett's linkage to programs outside of formal university training as adult education experiences and the mention of Turner as an active participant in these types of programs warranted further investigation into the life of Turner as an adult educator.

Turner's accomplishments and activities included being a member, president, or guest lecturer of more than thirty-five associations, most of which were national organizations. These included the Agricultural History Society, the American Council of Learned Societies, the American Historical Association, the Audubon Society, the Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching, and the Society for the Scientific Study of Education.³⁰

Turner is also credited with conceiving and forming the Harvard Commission on Western Studies, the *Dictionary of American Biographies*, and the National Historical Center.³¹ He wrote for *Encyclopedia Britannica* and national teaching magazines and newsletters. According to Modern History educator Hazel W. Hertzberg, Turner was instrumental in defining and promoting the study of history in the public schools.³²

Turner was praised by his students as a dedicated teacher who genuinely took interest in his students and continually refined his craft. This claim is evident in the relationships and discussions he had with other educators of the time. Woodrow Wilson, John Dewey, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Charles Darwin all influenced Turner's thought processes, writings, and teaching.³³ Therefore, as an educator myself, I was intrigued by his accomplishments and wanted find out more about who Turner was as a learner and educator.

As I pondered what it might have been like to live during that era and actually have Turner as a teacher, I began to pose the following question to myself, "Along with love of

²⁹ Kett, *Pursuit of Knowledge*, 187.

³⁰ Ridge, "Frederick Jackson Turner, Ray Allen Billington," 5–20.

³¹ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

³² Hazel W. Hertzberg, "Foundations: Frederick Jackson Turner on 'the Significance of History' for Teachers," *Social Education* 51, no. 6 (1987): 392–94.

³³ James D. Bennett, *Frederick Jackson Turner* (Woodbridge, CT: Twain, 1976).

history and commitment to his discipline and his students, does the adult learning community also perceive Turner's importance in the history of American adult education?" Reflecting further, I began to wonder, "Given Turner's broad background with institutions linked to adult education, could he also have felt compelled, or at least thought it his duty, to contribute and/or model the tenets of progressive educational theory, namely, adult education practices?" Herein is the focus of this study.

Statement of the Problem and Significance of the Study

As a well-regarded professor at major universities, Frederick Jackson Turner had an opportunity to influence his students through his university work and to shape public thought via Chautauqua and other lecturing venues. Turner also had the opportunity to shape intellectual and social thought by using adult learning principles and methodologies. Therefore, this study was a qualitative case study utilizing a biographical exploration of Turner's ideas, thoughts, and practices to investigate the potential importance of his consideration as a valued member of the adult learning community. I analyzed Turner through examination of his teaching experiences, his colleagues, and his political and social actions to try to determine his mindset and motivation as an adult educator in the light of the embryonic and developing emergence of progressive thought and adult education theory.

Throughout my research I tried to determine not only Turner's role as an adult educator but also characteristics and behaviors he demonstrated that aligned with adult learning theory. I looked at events in Turner's life as a university professor, lecturer, and writer of history to understand what shaped his thought process in his role as an adult educator and the embodiment of what it means to be a lifelong learner. I wanted to shed light on the concept that studying educators and thinkers who focused their life's work outside of the discipline of adult education have legitimate insight and value in the history and exploration of the field of adult education.

Organization of the Study

The focus of this study was to investigate whether Frederick Jackson Turner actively and consciously emulated and/or influenced the growing popularity of progressive adult learning

theory. Chapter 2 is a literature review that establishes an outline for contextual purposes for topics that were researched. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used to conduct the study along with specific research questions. Chapters 4 and 5 chronicle Turner's personal life, career and retirement to include Turner's adult learning and teaching experiences. The research is then woven together in Chapter 6 in narrative form to make a determination of Turner's relevance to the field of adult learning, postulating whether or not he should be considered a bona fide adult educator of the late 1800s and early 1900s within the context of the definition of adult education as provided by this study. Questions for future study are also provided.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study were:

1. Did Frederick Jackson Turner knowingly or unknowingly reflect andragogical philosophy and practices in his teaching and learning experiences?
2. What previous instruction and/or formal training, if any, did Frederick Jackson Turner have in adult education as a field and as an area of practice?
3. Would Frederick Jackson Turner have described himself as an adult educator and would modern-day adult educators have considered him a colleague?

Definition of Terms

Adult	Not a chronological age, but a mindset of maturation with personal and/or familial responsibilities that has graduated from high school, been granted a GED, or taken a break from initial K–12 education.
Adult Education	“The entire body of all types of education processes whereby adults engage in systematic and sustained learning activities to gain new forms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, or values” (achieved via formal and informal settings including self-study). ³⁴ Adult education offers personal choice, responsibility, and self-direction as well as personal empowerment. It engages adults through their interests in a relaxed and welcoming environment whether the learning is for employment, academic, or for personal interest or improvement.
Adult education program	“Traditional and nontraditional learning to include, but not limited to collegiate, work related certificate programs, special interest topics, civic, political, trade union and co-operative programs developing independent and critical judgment and implementing or enhancing the abilities required by each individual to cope with changes affecting living and working conditions, by effective participation in the management of social affairs at every level of the decision-making process.” ³⁵
Adult educator	Individual who facilitates learning, aiding adults to achieve desired learning goals developed and negotiated in a synergetic relationship between the learner and educator. An adult educator is cognizant of

³⁴ Sharan B. Merriam and Ralph G. Brockett, *The Profession and Practice of Adult Education: An Introduction* (Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 7.

³⁵ United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO), “Annex I. Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education. Content of Adult Education”, 7.

the importance of establishing trust and creating an environment where freedom from judgment is implicit and praise for risk-taking is celebrated.

Adult learner

A responsible individual who seeks to add to his or her knowledge base to gain or enhance competency in a specific subject matter, skill, or trade through pragmatic, real-world problem-solving activities. Adult learners are distinct from child learners in that they have the ability to use experience to add to their knowledge base, to be self-directed in setting goals, able to find traditional or nontraditional avenues to achieve desired learning, and to apply new meaning to the real-world situations.

Andragogy

A term used in the field of adult education that embodies the essence of what it means to move adults forward in their learning goals through structured or unstructured learning experiences. Andragogy is oriented to achieve learner participation and critical thinking in academic, technical, civic, and social contexts and/or ability to take on responsibly in these types of endeavors. Often defined as the art and science of helping adults learn as in the writings of Malcolm Knowles.³⁶

Autonomy

The ability to proactively seek out learning opportunities in a self-directed manner, rather than simply relying on an instructor or facilitator to plan objectives and coursework. A frame of mind in which individuals live in the context of persistently trusting one's instincts, believe in one's ability to learn, and make decisions with the courage to act accordingly.³⁷

³⁶ Malcolm S. Knowles, *Andragogy in Action: Applying Modern Principles of Adult Learning*. Also see Malcolm S. Knowles, *The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species*. Building Blocks of Human Potential (Houston, TX: Gulf, 1980).

³⁷ D. Boud, *Developing Student Autonomy in Learning* (London, UK: Kogan Page, 1988). Also see Malcolm S. Knowles, *Self-Directed Learning* (New York: Association Press, 1975); R. F. Dearden, "Autonomy as an Educational Ideal." In Stuart C. Brown (ed.), *Philosophers Discuss Education* (London, UK: Macmillan Press, 1975), 3-18.

“Refers to the development of the individual, independent, unique separate self sense, often considered an essential quality of maturation in “western” philosophies and practices.”³⁸

Beliefs	The ideas that one accepts as truths. These truths are generally learned values and behaviors within a family or community. These ideas are the least flexible aspect of one’s personality and perspective.
Case study	Type of qualitative research that investigates a contextualized, contemporary phenomenon within a specified boundary, having a specific framework structure of identifying a problem and having a context of the problem, a possible resolution of the identified issue, and a lesson learned. ³⁹
Chautauqua	Founded by John Vincent and Lewis Miller, Chautauqua was (and in some cases still are) adult education and cultural centers popular during the Progressive Era that provided free or inexpensive learning opportunities in the form of speakers, teachers, musicians, entertainers, preachers, and specialists of working trade.
Coding	An analytical process used in qualitative research in which linguistic data is collected, distilled and categorized into reoccurring themes. Linguistic data is defined as written, verbal, survey questions and results and/or via observations.
Commonplace book	A journal or notebook that university students were required to keep during Turner’s time period.

³⁸ Marcie Boucouvalas, "Human Development and Adult Education: Personal, Interpersonal and Transpersonal" In *Adult Education and Training*, edited by James A. Athanasou, 19-34. Sydney, Australia: David Barlow Publishing, 2008, 20.

³⁹ Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*.

Community education	Formal and informal programs that encourage and promote learning and social development of particular interest to individuals and groups within a neighboring community.
Construct	“An abstract, theoretical entity invented or adapted that will be operationalize into one or more items for special scientific (or learning) purposes.” ⁴⁰
Decontextualize	The weeding out or discarding of data which is not aligned with the research questions of a qualitative study.
Deductive reasoning	A basic form of valid, coherent analysis using a logical process that begins with a general statement (hypothesis, premise) then examines possible conclusions in which things agree and do not conflict with each other; however, if the general premise is wrong, the conclusion may be logical, but it may also be untrue.
Evening schools	Adult education programs popular during the Progressive Era that were conducted after the workday for both men and women four days a week from September to April/May, which provided primarily English reading and writing and topics to advance one’s trade and/or skill. These programs were usually developed and paid for by the adults’ employer.
Experiential continuum	Based on the research of Dewey, activities and situations that promote metacognition in which students become able to organize fact-based comprehension by building on prior experiences, preconceptions, and their personal knowledge base.
External Validity	The confidence in which a qualitative study results are based on

⁴⁰ Samuel Messick, "Validity of Psychological Assessment: Validation of Inferences from Persons' Responses and Performances as Scientific Inquiry into Score Meaning," *American Psychologist* 50, no. 9 (1995): 741.

credible information and based on accurate and logical reasoning.

Facilitator	Someone who guides groups of adults to understand common objectives while jointly enabling the learners to devise a plan to achieve goals. A facilitator's purpose is "to <i>support everyone to do their best thinking and practice</i> through encouraging full participation, promoting mutual understanding and cultivating shared responsibility. By supporting everyone to do their best thinking, a facilitator enables group members to search for inclusive solutions and build sustainable agreements." ⁴¹
Generalizations	The conclusions made based on appropriateness of the data collected, valid coding of data into themes and patterns, in which logical and factually plausible statements can be made of the data. Merriam suggested that more than one peer consultation should be established in order to establish a "pooled agreement of judgments." ⁴²
Genetic viewpoint	A belief that all living things are interconnected in one way or another.
Germ Theory	The study of American History with the perspective that development of society is framed as an outgrowth of European cultures and customs. This term has no relationship to the more commonly used expression about biological germ theory.
Habit of the Mind	In reference to education, according to Jack Mezirow, one has been conditioned in one fashion or another to think in a particular way, or

⁴¹ S. Kaner, *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making*, With L. Lind, C. Toldi, S. Fisk, and D. Berger (Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 32.

⁴² Sharan B. Merriam, "The Case Study in Educational Research: A Review of Selected Literature," *Journal of Educational Thought* 19, no. 3 (1985): 204-17.

a bias, which in turn does not allow one to be neutral, however the bias should not be considered positive or negative.⁴³

Homonomy

“An individual’s focus on a sense of connections: the meaning derived in life by being and feeling parts of greater wholes.”⁴⁴ The realization and actions taken by a person or group based upon a sense of interconnectedness among individuals and societies. Homonomy is a developmental trajectory that complements autonomy.

Instructional perspectives

Guiding beliefs, feelings, and behaviors theorized and practiced by adult educators as measured on the Instructional Perspectives Inventory (IPI) to include five of the eight parameters set by John Henschke: (a) planning and delivery of instruction, (b) learner-centered learning process (experience learning), (c) empathy toward learners, (d) accommodating learner uniqueness, and (e) teacher trust of learners.⁴⁵

Invisibles

Women, economically challenged citizens, and minorities.

Learning

The acquisition of new information that may or may not change behavior or enhance skills.

Learning contract

A document to assist in planning a learning project, established through a negotiation between the facilitator and learner to diagnose learning needs, to outline specific objectives, strategies, and resources to be used, and to develop a timeline for completion of the accomplishment.

⁴³ Jack Mezirow, “Transformative Learning: Theory to Practice,” *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 74 (1997): 5-12.

⁴⁴ Marcie Boucouvalas, “Human Development and Adult Education: Personal, Interpersonal and Transpersonal”, 20.

⁴⁵ J. A. Henschke, “Identifying Appropriate Adult Educator Practices”.

Lecture circuit	During the Progressive Era, tapping into the nation's ideology and commitment to self-improvement, speakers with personal knowledge and/or experience meeting specific needs of geographic areas, class status, and community interest toured the nation, sharing their knowledge and philosophies; by 1870 commercial lectures began to define a credentialing process for speakers.
Lifelong learning	Voluntary and continual self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons to understand and participate in social progress, the demands of development, and the needs of self and society and/or community in an interdisciplinary manner.
Literacy campaigns	During the Progressive Era, these campaigns formed out of a need to have a literate public to ensure prosperity economically and technologically. The goal was to integrate individuals into academic (specifically, the speaking, reading, and writing of English), social, political, and/or religious and moral dogma and to have participants gain at least minimal rudimentary and functional literacy defined as the ability to read and write at a level proficient enough to conduct one's daily affairs.
Living lecture	Espoused by John Henscke, an improvement on the practice of lecturing by adding techniques to the discussion to engage the learners more actively in the learning process, supporting it with the theories of large group meetings and andragogy. ⁴⁶
Lyceum	An early form of organized localized community adult education popular during the Progressive Era that encouraged self-study and development of cognitive learning through discussions, debates, and lectures.

⁴⁶ J. A. Henscke, A Living Lecture for Lifelong Learning. *30th Annual Midwest Research-To-Practice Conference in Adult, Continuing and Community Education* (St. Charles, MO: Lindenwood, 2011), 153.

Mechanics' Institute	Stemming from the self-improvement mindset of the Progressive Era, an adult education enterprise that provided practical technical learning and libraries for individuals to gain proficiency tailored to the refinement of specific skills, particularly in work-related trades.
Modeling	Providing an example that allows students to observe a facilitator's thought process. Using this type of instructional format, adult educators engage students in a conversation about an example and/or information. ⁴⁷
Paradigm shift	A fundamental change in approach or underlying assumptions, "one conceptual world view is replaced by another." ⁴⁸
Progressive education	During the late 1800s and early 1900s a shift in the theory of education principles and practices focusing on scientific reasoning with an emphasis on the types of learning that would better oneself and/or others; this could be accomplished by integrating personal needs that ultimately would aid society to grow in nationalism as well as economically; this theory was steeped in the credence that adults not only were capable of deriving their own goals based from personal experiences, but also had the capability to seek out settings to accomplish such a goals.
Progressive Era	Events in the United States between the late 1890s and the early 1900s in which ideas and practices evolved from isolated efforts of like-minded individuals and/or groups via specific individuals, social societies, or community efforts to better society politically, economically, and socially. (Synonymous with Progressive Movement). ⁴⁹

⁴⁷A. Bandura, *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1986).

⁴⁸ Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1964), 10.

⁴⁹Lewis L. Gould, *America in the Progressive Era, 1890-1914* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2001).

Progressivism	An ideology steeped in altruism, optimism, environmentalism, and self-improvement for the purposes of social action, change, or reform for individual, economic, or societal benefit. ⁵⁰
Quality experiences	Intellectual development through student experience promoting learner participation; a facilitator is expected to cultivate experiences that stimulate curiosity and motivate learners to take an interest in obtaining new knowledge and determine whether this new information is good only for oneself or would also benefit society as a whole. ⁵¹
Recontextualize	In the process of conducting a qualitative study, aligning data with the proper context of time, place, social, political and economics with a new lens of reasoning based on the established research questions.
Self-directed learning	“A process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies and evaluating learning outcomes.” ⁵²
Self-improvement	An orientation to add to one’s present knowledge base in order to improve one’s economic status, character, or enjoyment of life through one’s own efforts by setting goals and searching for learning experiences that will achieve said goals. These environments may include preparing for civic and social responsibilities, individual needs and aspirations, developing one’s personality, as well as and embracing culture, artistic, creative, and

⁵⁰ Walter Nugent, *Progressivism: a Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁵¹ John Dewey, *Experience and Education*.

⁵² Knowles, *Self-Directed Learning*, 18.

sensible development to enact change.⁵³

Transformative change	Theory of adult educator Jack Mezirow; the ability to positively change behaviors, belief systems, and/or attitudes for the betterment of oneself and/or society through educational experiences. ⁵⁴
Turnerian	Historians who aligned with Turner's philosophy that the settlement of the American West was not an outreach of European tradition but derived through the circumstances and struggles of the pioneers. The actions of the settlers of the West played a significant role in developing American culture and democratic systems and functions.
University Extension	Developed during the Progressive Era, these popular adult learning programs were offered by universities as an attempt to solve the problem of how much universities could do to educate willing learners unable to attend formal university training. University Extension programs have since become entrenched in American culture. ⁵⁵

⁵³ Joseph F. Kett, *The Pursuit of Knowledge*.

⁵⁴ Jack Mezirow, "Transformative Learning: Theory to Practice."

⁵⁵ Catherine Casey, "Building for a Long Future: Worker's Education in the Progressive Era," In *Breaking New Ground: The Development of Adult and Workers' Education in North America; Proceedings from the Syracuse University Kellogg Project's First Visiting Scholar Conference in the History of Adult Education*, pp. 233-249. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Kellogg Project, 1989.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review literature that provides a foundation for this study, thus establishing a background for topics that were researched. A summary of Turner's biographers and key archives that contain primary sources about him is followed by a definition of andragogy and its basic tenets. The chapter provides a summary of contemporary adult learning leaders whose ideas and practices were used as a reference for determining a conceptualization of adult learning theory and variations of how tenets of adult learning were categorized for this study.

Four characteristics of adult learners are used and described. These characteristics were chosen because of their relevance and the similarities that best aligned across the five academics' models. Next, a framework defining an adult educator and aspects of sound adult education program designs are established. Finally, a brief historical review of the American Progressive Movement is provided to give context to the era in which Turner lived as well as what adult education looked like during that era.

Noted Biographers and Turner Archives

Below is a list of Turner biographers and their works which were used for this study. This is not an exhaustive list of individuals who have written on Turner's life, but merely an account of the most seminal authors and publications used for the purposes of this study. These brief descriptions have been derived from information in prefaces or introductions, as well as from statements from within the Turner biographies themselves.

The biographers are listed in alphabetical order and should not to be confused with an order of importance. The institutions and archives housing Turner's papers which were used for this study are listed after the biographer list.

(Note: In the past, not all post-secondary institutions required students with a Bachelor's degree matriculate to a Master's program prior to applying to a Doctorate level program. As such, many of the biographers will not have a Master's degree listed under Post-Secondary Education.)

Carl Becker

- *Born:* September 7, 1873
- *Died:* April 10, 1945
- *Post-Secondary Education:* BA (1896) University of Wisconsin–Madison; Ph.D. (1907) University of Wisconsin–Madison
- *Profession:* Professor and American Historian – Instructor of History at Dartmouth (1901 – 1902); Professor of History University of Kansas (1902 – 1916); Professor of History at Cornell University from 1917 – 1941)
- *Notable Written Work:* *The Beginnings of the American People* (1915); *The United States: An Experiment in Democracy* (1920); *The Declaration of Independence* (1922); *Frederick Jackson Turner* (1927); *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers* (1932); *Everyman His Own Historian* (1935); *Progress and Power* (1936)
- *Relationship to Turner:* Studied under Frederick Jackson Turner, who subsequently became Becker’s doctoral adviser

Lee Benson

- *Born:* January 19, 1922
- *Died:* February 10, 2012
- *Post-Secondary Education:* BA (1947) Brooklyn College; MA (1948) Columbia University; Ph.D. (1952) Cornell University
- *Profession:* Professor and American Historian – Professor of History University of Kansas–Lawrence (1902 – 1916); Cornell University (1917 – 1941)
- *Notable Written Work:* *Research Problems in American Political Historiography* (1957); *The Concept of Jacksonian Democracy* (1961); *Turner and Beard* (1965)
- *Relationship to Turner:* Researched Turner – although no personal relationship to Turner Benson aligned with Turner’s philosophy of Community Education. One example is Benson’s

development of the Netter Center for Community Partnerships at the University of Pennsylvania.

Rae Allen Billington

- *Born:* September 28, 1903
- *Died:* March 7, 1981
- *Post-Secondary Education:* BA (1926) University of Wisconsin; MA (1927) University of Michigan–Ann Arbor; Ph.D. (1926) University of Wisconsin; Ph.D. (1933) Harvard University
- *Profession:* Professor of History and Expert on the American West and Frederick Jackson Turner, Research Associate at Huntington Library – Professor of History at Clark University (1931 – 1936); Professor of History at Smith College (1936 – 1943); Professor of History at Northwestern University (1944 – 1952 and 1955 – 1959); Harmsworth Professor at Oxford University (1953 – 1954); Senior Research Associate of Huntington Library (1960 – 1963)
- *Notable Written Works:* *How The Frontier Shaped The American Character* (1958); *Words That Won the West* (1963); *America's Frontier Heritage* (1963); *Western Expansion: A History of the American Frontier* (1949 with Martin Ridge); *The Far Western Frontier* (1956); *Westward Movement in the United States* (1959); *The Frontier Thesis* (1966 and 1977); *The Genesis of the Frontier Thesis* (1971); *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Teacher, Scholar* (1973)
- *Relationship to Turner:* Studied Western History under Frederick Merk (considered to be Turner's protégé at Harvard); Senior Research Associate at Huntington Library immersing himself in study of the Turner Archives

Merle Curti

- *Born:* September 15, 1897
- *Died:* March 9, 1996
- *Post-Secondary Education:* BA (1920) Harvard; Ph.D. (1927) Harvard
- *Profession:* American Historian, Professor of History and pioneer of Peace Studies and Qualitative History – Professor at Smith College; Columbia University (1931 – 1941); Professor University of Wisconsin– Madison (1942 – 1968)
- *Notable Written Works:* *The Section and the Frontier in American History: The Methodological Concepts of Frederick Jackson Turner* (1931); *Peace or War: The American Struggle* (1936); *Frederick Jackson Turner* (1949); *The University of Wisconsin A History 1848-1925* (1949); *The Democratic Theme in American Historical Literature* (1952); *The Making of an American Community: A Case Study of Democracy in a Frontier County* (1959); *The Growth of American Thought* (1964); *The American Peace Crusade, 1815-1860* (1965); *Human Nature in American Thought: A History* (1980)
- *Relationship to Turner:* A “Turnerian” who studied under professors who were taught by Turner; Curti also adapted the Frontier Thesis into a form of study called Intellectual History⁵⁶

Max Farrand

- *Born:* March 29, 1869
- *Died:* June 17, 1945
- *Post-Secondary Education:* BA (1892) Princeton; Ph.D. (1896) Princeton
- *Profession:* American Professor of History and First Director of the Huntington Library –Professor at Wesleyan University, Stanford University, Cornell University, and Yale

⁵⁶ Robert Allen Rutland, ed., *Clio's Favorites: Leading Historians of the United States, 1945-2000*, (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2000). Also see Charles F. Howlett, "Merle Curti and the Significance of Peace Research in American History," *Peace & Change* 25, no. 4 (2000): 431-466.

University

- *Notable Written Works: Legislation of Congress for the Government of the Organized Territories of the United States, 1789-1895* (1896); *The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787* (1911); *The Framing of the Constitution of the United States* (1913); *The Founders of The Union* (1926); *Frederick Jackson Turner at the Huntington Library* (1933); *Frederick Jackson Turner: A Memoir* (1935)
- *Relationship to Turner:* Friend and colleague; worked with Turner at the Huntington Library; member, alongside Turner, in the American Historical Society

Wilbur R. Jacobs

- *Born:* June 30, 1918
- *Died:* June 15, 1998
- *Post-Secondary Education:* BA (1940) University of California–Los Angeles (UCLA); MA (1942) UCLA; Ph.D. (1947) UCLA
- *Profession:* Professor, Scholar and Historian of American Indians and U.S. Colonial History – Professor Stanford University (1947 – 1949); Indiana University (Summer Lecturer 1948); University of California, Santa Barbara (1965 – 1988)
- *Notable Written Works: Frederick Jackson Turner: Master Teacher* (1954); *Frederick Jackson Turner’s Legacy: Unpublished Writings in American History* (1965); *Turner’s Methodology: Multiple Working Hypotheses or Ruling Theory?* (1968); *The Historical World of Frederick Jackson Turner: Selected Correspondence* (1968); *On Turner’s Trail: 100 Years of Writing Western History* (1994); *The Fatal Confrontation: Historical Studies of American Indians, Environment, and Historians* (1996); *Frederick Jackson Turner, New Historian* (1999)
- *Relationship to Turner:* Researched the work and life of

Frederick Jackson Turner

Martin Ridge

- *Born:* May 7, 1923
- *Died:* September 22, 2003
- *Post-Secondary Education:* BA (1943) Chicago Teachers College (now Chicago State); Ph.D. (1951) Northwestern University
- *Profession:* Professor of History and Director of Research at the Huntington Library – Professor of History at Westminster College (1951 – 1954); Professor of History at San Diego State College (1955 – 1965); Professor of History at Indiana University (1966 – 1977); Director of Research at the Huntington Library (1977 – 1993)
- *Notable Written Work:* *Ignatius Donnelly: The Portrait of a Politician* (1962); edited the *Journal of American History* (1966 -1977); *America's Frontier Story: A Documentary History of Westward Expansion* (1969); *Frederick Jackson Turner: Wisconsin's Historian of the Frontier* (1986); *Turner the Historian: A Long Shadow* (1993)
- *Relationship to Turner:* Worked with and collaborated with Ray Allen Billington; Director of Research Huntington Library

Turner Archive #1

Henry E. Huntington
Library

Henry E. Huntington Library

151 Oxford Rd, San Marino, CA 91108

(626) 405-2100

Email: publicinformation@huntington.org

<http://www.huntington.org/>

Footnoted in this study as HEHT, HEHTH, HEHTH TU-H or HEH TU vol.#

Turner Archive #2

State Historical Society of

State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, WI

- Wisconsin 816 State St, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI 53703
(608) 264-6535
Email: asklibrary@wisconsinhistory.org
<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/>
- Turner Archive #3** Harvard University Archives
Harvard University
Pusey Library – Harvard Yard
(617) 495-3650 or (617) 682-9043
Harvard University Office Email: archives_reference@harvard.edu
Ask an Archivist (Reference): <http://askarc.hul.harvard.edu/>
Ask a Librarian: <http://asklib.hcl.harvard.edu/>
<http://library.harvard.edu/university-archives/contact>
- Turner Archive #4** University of Wisconsin Archives
University of Wisconsin – Madison
425 Steenbock Library, 550 Babcock Dr, Madison, WI 53706-1201
(608) 262-5629
Email: <http://archives.library.wisc.edu/contact.html>
[http:// archives.library.wisc.edu/](http://archives.library.wisc.edu/)

Andragogy

Andragogy, defined broadly, encapsulates the facilitation of adults' learning experiences. The word andragogy is derived from the Greek *άνήρ* (aner, or in modern Greek, andras), or "man," and *άγω* (ago), "to lead"; thus, together andras and ago means "to lead man." The word *lead* in this context means to "help take," thus taking man where he needs or wants to go. The connotation of "taking" or "wanting" means to guide and help people achieve goals they have set for themselves.⁵⁷

The aim of andragogy is to form mature, responsible beings throughout all stages of adult life. One premise of andragogy is that adults are mature, logical thinkers who may or may not have had formal schooling yet have previous knowledge that, coupled with other life experiences, brings intellect to new learning. Andragogy also assumes that adults enter into partnerships with learning facilitators to collaboratively create learning goals and identify techniques that aid in achieving these goals.⁵⁸ These relationships allow adults (both learner and facilitator) to develop independent and critical appraisals in reference to enhancing oneself to effectively participate in the management of personal and social connections in decision-making processes.⁵⁹

Andragogy affirms that each adult comes with a wealth of knowledge and learned experiences that can be used to problem solve real-world issues. It implies that students are partners with educators in respect to the learning that is about to commence. In andragogy, the assumption is that adults are self-motivated and want to contribute to developing their aptitude for acquiring organized study in educational venues—formal or informal, traditional or unconventional. Practitioners of andragogy embody the belief that adult learners can be trusted to define their own goals and determine the ways in which these goals can be mastered. Andragogy also assumes that adults not only want to learn for their own individual benefit but are compelled to make meaning of who they are and what their purpose is within the society they live.⁶⁰ In the Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education, UNESCO affirmed that,

⁵⁷ "Andragogy: Etymology and Generalization," Andragogy Academy, accessed November 12, 2013, <https://www.facebook.com/handragogy>.

⁵⁸ Angela V. Cyr, "Overview of Theories and Principles Relating to Characteristics of Adult Learners: 1970s–1999," ERIC: ED435817 (1999), 3.

⁵⁹ Martinez de Morentin de Goni, *What Is Adult Education*.

⁶⁰ Knowles, *Modern Practice of Adult Education*.

Adult Learning encompasses the mantra that adults wish to enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or progression qualifications or turn them in a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behavior in the twofold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent development.⁶¹

Andragogy is a concept of adult autonomy, homonomy, responsibility, and self-realization that leads to self-actualization and independence, with the understanding that independence cannot be achieved without interconnectedness within one's culture and society. Andragogy also encapsulates the significance of promoting stimulating and sustainable experiences that foster intellectual curiosity. Aspirations, both individual and collective, are of high importance. Andragogy is a concept of lifelong learning that encourages harmony, evolution, and increased awareness of one's surroundings, which brings about dialogue that aids in the development of respect for differing personalities, belief systems, and values of communities and individuals. Frank Milligan, author of "In Defense of Andragogy," summed up the ideals of andragogy:

Key elements of Andragogy might be summarized thus: facilitation of Adult Learning that can best be achieved through a student-centered approach that, in a developmental manner, enhances the student's self-concept, promotes autonomy, self-direction and critical thinking, reflects on experience and involves the learner in the diagnosis, planning, enactment and evaluation of their own learning needs.⁶²

Adult Education Practitioners

Adult learning research in the United States over the past five to ten decades has revolutionized the way in which adult programs are designed and taught. Knowledge about learning styles, preferences in learning formats, and alternative vehicles such as online programs for delivering instruction continue to be developed and augmented as new research emerges. There are several qualified and published adult learning leaders who have contributed the plethora of knowledge about the adult mind and the best practices of adult learning theory.

⁶¹ United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO), "Relations between Adult Education and Youth Education," in *Records of the General Conference*, Resolution 19C/Annex I.VII.46. (c), 11.

⁶² Frank Milligan, "In Defense of Andragogy," *Nurse Education Today* 15, no. 1 (1995): 22.

Although adult learning is a broad concept and cannot be precisely grouped into specific categories, my analysis indicated three general groupings.

In one sense, adult learning can be defined as formal, structured adult learning experiences in which some type of diploma or certification is awarded after completion. Such programs would include collegial fields of study for a Bachelor, Master or Doctoral diploma or formal training in certification programs like License Practical Nursing, Veterinary Technicians or HVAC.

Another area of adult learning includes non-structured, semi-structured programs or independent study. These types of programs include community classes in painting, drama or car maintenance; women's groups who gather to share expertise in child rearing, knitting or quilting; men's consortiums where skills such as techniques to improve farming productivity are discussed; or personal research and study.

The third area is the application used in business such as the work done on organizational behavior. Applications include design and development of human resources and organizational management. Leaders in this aspect of adult education include Peter Senge and Joel Suzuki's ideas on systems theory or systems thinking.⁶³ Another innovator in this area is Stephen Covey and his work on business leadership.⁶⁴ There is also Tom Peters and his work on personal responsibility in business management.⁶⁵

For the purposes of this study, references to business applications of adult learning are not appropriate because Turner's career did not intersect with this area. My research and discussion apply to the first two categories listed above—formal structured adult experiences and non-structured or semi-structured programs, categories where Turner was deeply involved.

Although there are many practitioners of Adult Learning that can be drawn upon for a study such as this, the discussion was narrowed down to the ideals of five prominent adult learning thinkers. The pioneers used to establish a perspective of adult learning as a template for comparison to Turner and adult education are Edward C. Lindeman, Malcolm S. Knowles, Allen Tough, Jack Mezirow, and John Henschke. This distillation does not diminish the contributions of the many other adult education theorists, but provides a representative sample of well-

⁶³ Peter M Senge and Joel Suzuki, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Currency Doubleday, 1994).

⁶⁴ Stephen R. Covey, *Principle Centered Leadership* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992).

⁶⁵ Tom Peters, *The Brand You 50 (Reinventing Work): Fifty Ways to Transform Yourself from an Employee into a Brand That Shouts Distinction, Commitment, and Passion!* (New York: Random House, 1999).

respected theorists whose ideas highlight various aspects of Turner's educational practice.

Lindeman was chosen because of his position in United States history of the field of adult education. Lindeman has been documented as one of the first advocates and practitioners of adult learning theory. He consciously set out to study adults and the types of learning experiences they deem valuable. Malcom Knowles was chosen for his championing of andragogy and emphasis on adults having the capacity to actively seek out and gain knowledge. A salient theme of Knowles was the importance of communal respect as well as the give and take of knowledge and discourse by facilitator and participants. Tough was chosen because of his work on adult motivation and to solidify the concept that adults are not only independent, but also are able to acquire knowledge and impart it to others. Mezirow was chosen for his concept that awareness of self-learning was a spring board toward the ability to transform one's life with the help of a facilitator who progressively decreases learner's dependency on the facilitator and eventually learns the framework needed for setting and achieving goals themselves. Finally, Henschke was chosen because of the training he acquired from Knowles and his work on facilitation of adults with the use of Living Lectures.

There is both a continuum of theoretical adult education thought and a breadth of interests among these five experts that provides a strong basis for evaluating Turner's role as an adult educator and his ongoing educational practices.

Eduard C. Lindeman: Social Responsibility and Freedom to Continuously Learn

Hiemstra and Sisco stated, "The ideas, concepts, and approaches to adult learning were introduced to adult educators in the United States by Malcolm Knowles."⁶⁶ Although Knowles is credited with bringing the term andragogy to the United States, Hiemstra and Sisco also noted that his predecessor Eduard C. Lindeman (1885–1953) also used a similar term.⁶⁷ Lindeman's view of education was grounded in the progressive liberalism of his early life.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Roger Hiemstra and Burton Sisco, *Individualizing Instruction: Making Learning Personal, Empowering, and Successful* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1990), 1.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Stephen Brookfield, "The Contribution of Eduard Lindeman to the Development of Theory and Philosophy in Adult Education," *Adult Education Quarterly* 34, no. 4 (1984): 190. Also see Sandra Janine Mills, *Eduard C. Lindeman: Beyond "The Meaning of Adult Education," Toward a View of Professionalization in Adult Education and Social Work* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University, 2002); Jan W. Thornton, *Eduard C. Lindeman and His*

The Progressive Movement in America was a time when scientific inquiry and research were developing into specific disciplines of study, the advancement of new technologies and industrialization was impacting society with both positive and negative consequences. Therefore the development of educational practices was regarded as a requirement for citizens of all socioeconomic status to flourish. During this time of social consciousness, its relevance to politics also came under debate.

As an educator, Lindeman took an interest in social justice and how the education of adults of all ages should be classified, incorporating his beliefs into his teaching practices.⁶⁹ David W. Stewart's book, *Adult Learning in America: Eduard Lindeman and His Agenda for Lifelong Education*, not only provided a history of the adult education movement in the United States, but is also a biographical text of Lindeman which conceptualized Lindeman as more than a man of academia. Although Lindeman was a professor, Stewart also characterizes him as committed to and engaged in major social issues, a social philosopher, a researcher of the social sciences (all hallmarks of the Progressive Era), and one of America's leading adult learning theorists. He also discussed Lindeman's continual investigation on the concepts of adult activism, lifelong learning, and adult education.⁷⁰

Through Lindeman's experience working with young and middle-aged adults as a professor of social philosophy at the New York School of Social Work, he began to develop key assumptions about adult learners. To conceptualize his thoughts on adult education, Lindeman determined that there were five "truths" about adults' educational needs. These were (a) adults are motivated to learn as they experience needs and interests, (b) adults' orientation to learning is life centered, (c) experience is the richest source for adults' learning, (d) adults have a deep need to be self-directed, and (e) individual differences among adults increase with age.⁷¹

Lindeman felt that a predetermined and set curriculum may not encapsulate what the adult learner needs. Instead, he reasoned that learning could be accomplished in everyday life via

Beliefs on Freedom: Historical and Contextual Influences (Milwaukee, WI: University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, 1999).

⁶⁹ Richard Hofstadter, *The Progressive Movement, 1900–1915* (New York: Knopf, 1963), 72. Also see Eduard C. Lindeman, *The Community: An Introduction to the Study of Community Leadership and Organization* (New York: Association Press, 1921).

⁷⁰ David W. Stewart, *Adult Learning in America: Eduard Lindeman and His Agenda for Lifelong Education* (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company, 1987).

⁷¹ Lindeman, *Meaning of Adult Education*, 105.

one's life experiences. Lindeman also did not believe learning was limited to a formal, traditional, or "conventional" classroom:

Orthodox education may be a preparation for life but Adult Education is an agitating instrumentality for changing life. Institutions, groups and organizations come within the scope of continuing, advancing learning insofar as these collective agencies furnish the medium for educational experience.⁷²

To Lindeman, life was education; therefore, one never ceased to learn. His philosophy was that learning was determined by an adult's needs, personal interests, and desired goals. Per *The Meaning of Adult Education*,

The real distinction between educated and uneducated persons is not to be found in such superficial criteria as academic degrees, formal study or accumulation of facts ... knowledge rather, emerges from experience. Intelligence is the light which reveals educational opportunities in experience. To be educated is not to be informed but to find illumination in informed living.⁷³

In Lindeman's view, education should be a continuation of adults' life experiences, which should be considered valuable resources to build upon. He professed that learning experience revolving around nonacademic and non-vocational interests are applicable to adults' lives and just as relevant as any other learning experiences.⁷⁴

As in his philosophy of what constituted an adult learner, Lindeman also had distinctive beliefs about what constituted an adult educator:

None but the humble become good teachers of adults. In an adult class the student's experience counts for as much as the teacher's knowledge ... sometimes it is difficult to discover who is learning most, the teacher or the students.⁷⁵

⁷² Ibid., 107.

⁷³ Ibid., 109–10.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 11.

Additionally, Lindeman stated,

Adult Education is a co-operative venture in non-authoritarian, informal learning the chief purpose of which is to discover the meaning of experience; a quest of the mind which digs down to the roots of the preconceptions which formulate our conduct; a technique of learning for adults which makes education coterminous with life, and hence elevates living itself to the level of an experiment.⁷⁶

Therefore, adult educators should not be arrogant, thinking without their direction students would not be able to learn or flourish, but instead should be genuinely cognizant of the intellect their students bring to the learning environment and excited to see how the partnership between teacher and students will benefit both.

It was Lindeman's belief that a powerful and productive way to set up adult learning experiences was to create an atmosphere where teacher and learner respected one another for their intellectual acuity; therefore, he stressed a learning format should provide a reciprocal give and take structure between facilitator and student,

Small groups of aspiring adults who desire to keep their minds fresh and vigorous; who begin to learn by confronting pertinent situations; who dig down into the reservoirs of their experience before resorting to texts and secondary facts; who are led in the discussion by teachers who are also seekers after wisdom and not oracles: this constitutes the setting for Adult Education, the modern quest for life's meaning.⁷⁷

Malcolm S. Knowles: Self-Direction and Homonomy

Malcolm Knowles (1913–1997) was influenced by the work of Lindeman. Knowles had met Lindeman while working at the National Youth Administration in Massachusetts. The two struck a connection with each other and Lindeman became one of Knowles most influential mentors. Knowles was deeply inspired by Lindeman's *Meaning of Adult Education*. Of the work

⁷⁶ Brookfield, "The Contribution of Eduard Lindeman".

⁷⁷ Eduard C. Lindeman, "To Discover the Meaning of Experience," *Survey* 55 (1926): 545–46.

Knowles commented, “I was so excited in reading it that I couldn’t put it down. It became my chief source of inspiration and ideas for a quarter of a century.”⁷⁸

Knowles was also captivated by Cyril Houle, his advisor at the University of Chicago where Knowles was studying and Houle worked for four decades. Knowles was intrigued not only with Houle’s dedication to scholarship, but Houle’s finding that there generally appeared to be three main orientations to learning among adults who continue to learn and that one orientation usually predominated:

- (a) goal-orientated – using education as a means of accomplishing fairly clear cut objectives.
- (b) activity-orientated – taking part in such activities because of an attraction in the circumstances of learning rather than in the content or announced purpose.
- (c) learning-orientated – seeking knowledge for its own sake⁷⁹

Knowles spent his life dedicated to adult learning and disproving the adage, “You can’t teach an old dog new tricks.” To Knowles this maxim was simply a myth. It was his disposition that adults of any age (barring mental defect) had the capacity to add to one’s knowledge base at any time. He asserted that learning is a continual process that, either consciously or unconsciously, never ends. In his book, *Self-Directed Learning*, Knowles stated that the learning process for adults takes place when,

... individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes.⁸⁰

It was Knowles who defined the term *andragogy* as the art and science of helping adults learn. Knowles is also credited with popularizing the term in the United States. According to Jarvis,

As a teacher, writer and leader in the field, Knowles has been an innovator, responding to the needs of the field as he perceived them and, as such, he has been a key figure in the growth and practice of adult education throughout the Western world this century.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Malcolm S. Knowles, *The Making of an Adult Educator: A Autobiographical Journey* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1989), 8.

⁷⁹ C. O. Houle, *The Inquiring Mind: A study of the Adult who Continues to Learn* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961).

⁸⁰ Knowles, *Self-Directed Learning*, 18.

⁸¹ Peter Jarvis, “Malcolm Knowles” in *Twentieth Century Thinkers in Adult and Continuing Education*, 1987 ed.,

Jarvis is not the only adult educator who acknowledges Knowles' importance in popularizing the term andragogy in the United States. Dusan Savicevic, a highly regarded European adult education theorist and practitioner, who had multiple discussions with Knowles stated,

In the USA, the concept of andragogy is tightly connected to the name of Professor M. S. Knowles.... The concept of andragogy explained by Knowles, initiated new discussions in the professional literature.... There is no doubt that Knowles contributed to it, not only by his texts, but with his spoken word and lectures.... His contribution to dissemination of andragogical ideas throughout the USA is huge. The history of andragogy will put him on a meritorious place in the development of this scientific discipline.⁸²

Knowles further clarified that andragogy was a continuation of childhood learning:

Andragogy is simply another model of assumptions about adult learners to be used alongside the pedagogical model of assumptions, thereby providing two alternative models for testing out the assumptions as to their "fit" with particular situations. Furthermore, the models are probably most useful when seen not as dichotomous but rather as two ends of a spectrum, with a realistic assumption [about learners] in a given situation falling in between the two ends.⁸³

To Knowles, it was important for educators of adults to conceptualize the salient distinction that adults should be recognized as having the internal ability, desire, and power to know the types of learning experiences they need. It should also be assumed that adults have the capacity to create academic goals for themselves. Knowles also emphasized that adults have the ability to actively find the types of learning experiences they need to gain an understanding of concepts they want to master.⁸⁴

Knowles based his theory of andragogy on four basic assumptions about adults and learning: (a) an adult's self-concept moves from dependency to independence or self-directedness, (b) adults accumulate a reservoir of experiences that can be used as a foundation to

ed. P. Jarvis, pp. 185. London, UK: 1987.

⁸² Dusan Savicevic, "Convergence or Divergence of Ideas on Andragogy in Different Countries," *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 27, no. 4 (2008):361-378.

⁸³ Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education*, 43.

⁸⁴ Knowles, *The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species*.

build learning, (c) adults are more readily accessible when a skill or task is associated with life and social roles, and (d) adults have a need to immediately apply information.⁸⁵

According to Sopher and Henschke, “Knowles wanted nothing more than for his theory of adult education to be not only understood in a theoretical and a practical sense, but also to be applied by practitioners well beyond academia.”⁸⁶ Knowles’s overarching philosophy was that adult learners should be shown respect and be considered active participants in their own learning. They are intelligent beings, capable of self-directedness, autonomy and homonomy.⁸⁷ He also professed that adult educators should not determine what students need to learn but act as a facilitator of learning, guiding students to places where they would be able to obtain the information they need to achieve their goals.

Knowles also stressed the importance of being cognizant of the learners’ capacity to learn when designing adult learning experiences. He emphasized that facilitators need to make sure they understand their students have a desire to know why they need to learn something. They also need to be given an opportunity to learn experientially because adults approach learning as opportunities to solve problems to understand new concepts. As such, adults learn best when the topic is of immediate value. Another seminal component to Knowles’ principles implies the importance of the adult-to-adult relationship and a facilitator’s obligation to create environments for relationship building. Facilitators must convey humility with their students. It is incumbent for facilitators to understand that they, too, are continually learning and can gain knowledge in tandem with the students throughout the process.⁸⁸

Knowles often used the terms self-directed and autonomous in his writings to describe adults and their motivations and behaviors toward learning. Knowles used these terms in the broadest sense (both explicitly and implicitly); not in the narrow view that many westerners refer to as autonomy or autonomous; thus implying that self-reliance and individual efforts are

⁸⁵ Knowles, *Modern Practice of Adult Education*, 44–45.

⁸⁶ Marti Sopher and John Henschke, “The Four Forces Behind Knowles’ Andragogy” (paper presented at Midwest Research-to-Practice Conference in Adult, Continuing and Extension Education (St. Charles, MO, 2011), 1. <http://www.lindenwood.edu/mwr2p/docs/SopherHenschke.pdf>.

⁸⁷ Although the concept and term “homonomy” was defined by Andreas Angyal in the 1940s as a principle of learning, thinking, and orientation of agency for change neither the concept nor term was widely understood or practiced at the time of Knowles’ life. It is difficult to definitively know whether or not Knowles was aware of the term “homonomy,” but Knowles’ writings strongly suggest that he would have embraced the concept and incorporated this element of human nature into his framework of thought, study, and practice.

⁸⁸ Malcolm S. Knowles, *Designs for Adult Learning* (Alexandria, VA: American Society for Training and Development, 1995). Also see Malcolm A. Knowles, “Introduction: The Art and Science of Helping Adults Learn.” In *Andragogy in Action: Applying Modern Principles of Adult Learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1986.

perceived as of greater merit than that of working side-by-side with others to achieve a goal. Marcie Boucouvalas, who worked and studied with Knowles, and herself a prominent contemporary leader in adult education, has written many pieces clarifying Knowles's philosophies on this subject. She stated that although Knowles used the terms "self-directed" and "autonomy" his definition for these themes have a much broader lens than the way in which it is associated in much of American culture.

Boucouvalas explained that Knowles' principles and practice are more aligned with the term "homonomy"; a term coined by Andras Angyl.⁸⁹ Boucouvalas stated,

Self-direction at that time, at least a la Knowles, was not just an educational process to be catalyzed; it was also for learners, a way of thinking about *being* with learning. ... It was less about independence per se and more about taking responsibility for one's learning, thinking about and selecting both material and human resources to aid ones' learning. It was about a commitment to knowing oneself as a learner.⁹⁰

Speaking of her experiences working and learning with Knowles, and her reflection that followed, she continued to explain why the term homonomy (the interconnectedness between individuals and society) more fully encapsulated Knowles teaching and practice:

... learning was not exclusively for individual benefit. It was also geared to improving the working of groups, organizations, and ultimately for any needed social change in society-at-large. Marinating one's center while also working for collective action, I learned was integral.⁹¹

Allen Tough: Learning Projects and Personal Change

Allen Tough (1936–2012) was known as an ambassador of adult learning as he helped raise awareness of the many adults with whom he interacted. Tough helped the adults he worked with comprehend they were indeed learners, regardless of where and how the learning was achieved. Tough believed as adults go about learning on an everyday basis (as a natural part of

⁸⁹ A. Angyal, *Foundation for a Science of Personality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press for the Commonwealth Fund, 1941).

⁹⁰ Marcie Boucouvalas, "Revising the Concept of Self in Self-Directed Learning: Toward a More Robust Construct for Research and Practice in a Global Context.: *International Journal of Self-Directed Learning* 6, no. 1 (2009):2.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

navigating life), their approach, although different than the planned learning of formal education, is as relevant in meaning as what is learned in traditional “schooling.” In Tough’s view, educators of adults could learn much from understanding this seminal process of “natural” learning. Tough was of the position that learners are independent, self-directing, and adult oriented in their thinking, learning, and ability to acquire and impart knowledge. In *The Adult’s Learning Projects: A Fresh Approach to Theory and Practice in Adult Learning* Tough explained that adult learners expect learning experiences to mirror their feelings of autonomy and self-worth and to acknowledge their life experience.⁹²

Tough described how most adult learning is taken place outside of formal traditional learning settings. He called such experiences “informal learning.” For example, Tough considered that most adults learn new concepts through the guidance of colleagues, friends, and other experts to help themselves be more productive in some seminal way that affected them personally. For example, Tough theorized when an adult learns how to use new technology, such as integrating PayPal as a vehicle to accept payments for their organization, via watching YouTube videos, or reading a book such as *PayPal for Dummies*, this type of learning should be considered a credible learning experience.

Tough also researched and theorized that formal teaching settings contributed to a fraction of the learning adults receive. Reasons for this are: (a) learners have a desire to control their learning environments, and therefore, no one needs to prod them into learning pursuits, (b) nontraditional learning allows for flexible time schedules and, (c) cost is always of concern; however, there are times when the experience can be achieved with little or no payment at all.⁹³

Tough stressed that adults have a large foundation of knowledge and skill to draw upon and this foundation of knowledge can be used as a baseline for new learning. He demonstrated that many adults are active, self-directed learners who want to learn and are not forced to do so. A caveat, however, was that adults are motivated by life situations and want to immediately apply new knowledge to their lives.

Most often, adults access new skill sets and knowledge without the use of typical, scripted coursework. Therefore, Tough’s recommendation to facilitators of adults is that educators should spend less time teaching specific content and more time finding out what the

⁹² Allen Tough, *The Adult’s Learning Projects: A Fresh Approach to Theory and Practice in Adult Learning* 2nd ed. (New York: Pfeiffer, 1979).

⁹³ Ibid.

adults in their class feel they need to learn, then give students pathways to explore how to gain new knowledge to achieve their “academic” goals.⁹⁴

Jack Mezirow: Perspective Transformative Learning

Jack Mezirow (1927– 2014) described distinct differences between the learning of children and the learning of adults. In childhood, learning comes from authoritarian figures in social settings telling students what should be learned from lessons, thus determining what should be understood. In adult learning, participants are capable of determining how their cultural and personal beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes may distort understanding once new knowledge is obtained. Mezirow stated that the hallmark of adult learning is,

...becoming critically aware of how and why our presuppositions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; of reformulating these assumptions to permit a more inclusive, discriminating, permeable, and integrative perspective, and of making decisions or otherwise acting upon these new understandings. More inclusive, discriminating, permeable, and integrative perspectives are superior perspectives that adults choose if they can because they are motivated to better understand the meaning of their existence.⁹⁵

Mezirow’s theory of transformative learning defined three distinct types of learning knowledge. The first is instrumental knowledge, which comes from the principles, rules, and technical information derived from scientific experiments or “stated truths” of any adult’s paradigm. The second, communicative knowledge, is socially constructed, which means adults develop feelings, values, morals, and meaning from those with whom they surrounds ourselves. The third is emancipatory learning, which leads to transformative learning. Emancipatory knowledge is determined by critically reflecting upon information while simultaneously being critically self-reflective to determine intentional and unintentional theories about the world. To change the frame of modus operandi if one chose, the adult must open oneself to transformation

⁹⁴ Allen Tough, “Potential Futures: Implications for Adult Educators,” *Lifelong Learning* 11, no. 1 (1987): 10–12.

⁹⁵ Jack Mezirow, “How Critical Reflection Triggers Transformative Learning,” in *Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood: A Guide to Transformative and Emancipatory Learning* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1990), 14.

by continually reflecting, asking questions, and pursuing new knowledge, thus keeping free from manipulation and being true to ourselves.⁹⁶

Mezirow established a template or format that would help with organized and sustained efforts to assist adults to learn in a way that highlights their capability to be self-directed learners. This framework includes, but is not limited to, (a) progressively decreasing the learner's dependency, (b) helping the learner understand how to use learning resources in reciprocal learning relationships, (c) assisting the learner in defining personal learning needs and increasing personal responsibility for defining learning objectives, (d) fostering a self-corrective reflexive approach to learning, and (e) reinforcing the self-concept of the learner, as a learner, by providing for progressive mastery in a supportive climate through encouraging feedback and supporting risk-taking.⁹⁷

Mezirow declared that adult educators should be aware of the “habits of the mind,” meaning there is no such thing as value-free education. Educators and their students are never neutral in their thinking. Mezirow stated that all human beings have bias. The definition of bias in this case is neither positive nor negative— it just is. Bias means we are influenced through a culmination of stimuli dependent on the belief and value system of our familial upbringing, schooling, and community attitudes and values. This bias affects one's perception and can lead to humankind fearing ramifications for voicing thoughts or challenging the status quo. For example, Mezirow stated, “An example of a habit of mind is ethnocentrism, the predisposition to regard others outside one's own group as inferior.”⁹⁸

Because Mezirow believed that “we transform our frames of reference through critical reflection on the assumptions upon which our interpretations, beliefs, and habits of mind or points of view are based,” adult educators should keep three factors in mind when developing learning experiences for adults.⁹⁹ These factors are (a) adults develop meaning in a constructivist manner of learning through a social process, (b) meaning is made through learning experiences that provide a safe environment to challenge assumptions and question social and personal belief systems, and (c) teachers should create an atmosphere where adults make meaning by

⁹⁶ Jack Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1991).

⁹⁷ Jack Mezirow, “A Critical Theory of Adult Learning and Education,” *Adult Education Quarterly* 32, no. 1 (1981): 21–22.

⁹⁸ Jack Mezirow, “Transformative Learning: Theory to Practice”, 6.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

examining, questioning, validating, and revising previous personal beliefs and prior understanding of knowledge.¹⁰⁰

John Henschke: Living Lecture and Beliefs/Feelings/Behaviors of Adult Educators

John Henschke (1932–) is a contemporary scholar of andragogy research who respected and worked with Malcolm Knowles. Henschke’s immersion into adult learning and the people he encountered at Boston University motivated him to write his doctoral dissertation on Malcolm Knowles and Knowles’ contributions to the field of adult education.¹⁰¹

Among Henschke’s contributions to the field is the promotion of what he called the “living lecture” as an integral component of adult learning experiences. Henschke does not presume to claim that he invented the concept of living lectures; he attributes this concept to Knowles. However, he has honed, refined, and shaped the use of living lectures through decades of implementing the method in his coursework and international adult learning partnerships. Henschke has adapted the format by adding numerous techniques to enhance the experience. In living lectures, participants actively engage in the learning process through collective dialogue with the facilitator. One can read about Henschke’s thought process in reference to the value of living lecture in “The Dynamic of a Living Lecture in Career and Technical Education,” in which he discusses the pros and cons of using lecture as a learning model and provides context as to how to maximize the use of living lecture and active learning techniques.¹⁰²

In the living lecture method, the facilitator prepares information on a predetermined topic. The participants are divided into teams, called listening teams. Next, the focus of each team is to be cognizant of the following while a short five- to seven-minute lecture is presented: (a) concepts that need clarification, (b) rebuttal impulses, (c) necessary elaboration for the content to be more comprehensible, and (d) how the information can be practically applied in real-world situations. After the lecture, the teams discuss one or more of the points noted from the lecture. The teams then decide which point they want to share or present to the other groups. Once this phase is completed, the presenter (facilitator) responds to the teams’ remarks and

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 8.

¹⁰¹ J. A. Henschke, “Malcolm S. Knowles: His Contributions to the Theory and Practice of Adult Education,” Boston University, ProQuest, UMI Dissertations Publishing, 1973.

¹⁰² J. A. Henschke, “The Dynamic of a Living Lecture in Career and Technical Education,” in *Handbook of Research on E-Learning Applications for Career and Technical Education* (Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference/IGI Global, 2009), 668–80.

questions.¹⁰³

Another of Henschke's research topics that has moved the field of adult education forward is the identification of seven characteristics he calls "perspectives" that are essential to effective practice in the field of adult education. Since two of the seven characteristics appear to be more aligned for the learning of children (by definition of my paradigm), for the purposes of this study, only five of the characteristics will be employed. These five characteristics are (a) planning and delivery of instruction, (b) a learner-centered learning process or experience-based learning techniques, (c) teacher empathy with learners, (d) accommodating learner uniqueness, and (e) teacher trust of learners.¹⁰⁴

Characteristics of Adult Learners

Recognizing that adult learning theory is a broad territory and that the characteristics of adult learners are as varied as the individuals participating in any learning experience, for the purpose of this study, an adult learner will be characterized as having three distinct attributes. These characteristics have been chosen because all three attributes encapsulate in one manner or another all five theorists depicted above. These specific characteristics of adult learners are defined as (a) having the ability to be self-directed and homonomous, (b) being goal oriented on the basis of personal accumulated life experiences, and (c) having the potential for transformative change. The rest of this section defines each of these characteristics.

Self-Direction

Adult learning theory supports the supposition that adults are self-directed and have the potential to become autonomous as well as homonomous learners. Knowles suggested that in its broad sense, self-directedness related to the ability to know what learning is needed in order to make meaning and bring completeness to one's life and those who interact within a learner's definition of one's community. He was of the position that each adult had the capacity to obtain knowledge necessary to execute and accomplish predetermined and changing goals that benefit

¹⁰³ Henschke, "A Living Lecture for Lifelong Learning," 153–59.

¹⁰⁴ Henschke, "Identifying Appropriate Adult Educator Practices", 89–95.

the individual as well as impact society as a whole.¹⁰⁵ Therefore, self-directed individuals understand the gaps in their knowledge base and rely upon facilitators to help them navigate and enable them to achieve learning goals and enhance their ability to not only improve their individual circumstances, but those around them as well.

Brockett and Hiemstra suggested that self-direction be discussed in terms of two distinct intertwined categories: (a) instructional processes and (b) personality characteristics. Instructional processes relate to the learner assuming responsibility for planning, finding and participating in learning activities, and evaluating progress. This is what they call “self-directed learning.” Personality characteristics refer to learning styles and preferences of individual learners, which they call “learner self-direction.”¹⁰⁶ Kirwin, Lounsbury and Gibson are in alignment with Brockett and Hiemstra when they define self-direction as “a disposition to engage in learning activities where the learner takes responsibility for developing and carrying out learning endeavors in an autonomous manner without necessarily being guided or prompted by other people.”¹⁰⁷

As individuals navigate through processes leading to successful completion of personal goals the continuum moves forward with individuals beginning to demonstrate the same practices and procedures facilitators modeled for them. As time continues, self-directed learners develop the ability to function independently when making decisions of every aspect of learning, doing, and being without the necessity of a facilitator. Once an individual reaches this stage of development, the next evolutionary progression commences.

The continuation of the continuum moves toward learners focusing not only on personal goals, but see themselves as a part of a larger entity, that of society, and construct goals that include a broader outcome than that of self-improvement. Although self-improvement continues to be an integral aspect of learning, it is no longer the fundamental reason for acquiring knowledge. Motivation shifts from personal benefit to focusing on one’s role interconnected within a society. Thus the focal point no longer is exclusively on oneself, but reflection on how one’s actions and learning can aid in improving humanity.

¹⁰⁵ Knowles, *Self-Directed Learning*. Also see Knowles, *Designs for Adult Learning*.

¹⁰⁶ Ralph G. Brockett and Roger Hiemstra, *Self-Direction in Adult Learning*.

¹⁰⁷ Jeral R. Kirwan, John W. Lounsbury, and Lucy W. Gibson, "An Examination of Learner Self-Direction in Relation to the Big Five and Narrow Personality Traits," *SAGE Open* 4, no. 2 (2014): 1-14.

Identifying oneself, not in isolation, but as a member of a complex organization allows a learner to comprehend the will of one's actions and learning as reflected positively or negatively (rarely, if ever, neutral) within one's community. Individuals then begin to set goals that reflect a benefit toward society as a whole, not just for personal gain.¹⁰⁸

Smith theorized that self-direction can lead to autonomy in that self-directed learners operate heavily in the realm of intrapersonal communication. Smith reasoned that intrapersonal skill includes the following characteristics: (a) self-concept (how people see themselves, including beliefs, values, and attitudes); (b) perception of the outside world; and (c) personal expectations (future-oriented roles and goals) as what drives these learners.¹⁰⁹ As such, with maturation, autonomy can lead to homonomy.

If autonomy (and homonomy) is the ultimate goal, Smith established that one must not only be proficient in intrapersonal skills, but also have the ability to operate well with interpersonal communication, or, communication that occurs between multiple people. Autonomous individuals, Smith suggested, are astute at three aspects of interpersonal communication: (a) dyadic (between two people), (b) group communication (between three or more people), and (c) public communication (mass communication such as national Breast Cancer Awareness campaigns).¹¹⁰

Smith defined autonomy (or as Boucouvalas and probably Knowles would include homonomy) as a blending of intrapersonal and interpersonal skills that occurs within an individual who understands how one's decisions affect others. Thus, autonomous adults have the ability to make non-coerced decisions. Often decisions are used as the basis for determining moral responsibility and accountability for one's actions.¹¹¹ Together, these principles refer to the learner's ability to set and achieve goals as well as see how the learner's goals may affect others and their environment. They are also individuals who have an ability to solve problems in unique ways. Smith's ideas on autonomy are also in alignment with Gibbs,

An autonomous individual must have both independence from external authority and mastery of himself and his powers. He must be free from the dictates and interference of other people, and free also from disabling conflicts or lack of coordination between the elements of his own

¹⁰⁸ Boucouvalas, "Revisiting the Concept of Self in Self-Directed Learning".

¹⁰⁹ Ronald D. Smith, *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

¹¹⁰ Knowles, *Designs for Adult Learning*.

¹¹¹ Smith, *Strategic Planning for Public Relations*.

personality. He must have the freedom to act and work as he chooses, and he must be capable of formulating and following a rule, pattern or policy of acting and working.¹¹²

Dearden also described qualities of an autonomous person. These characteristics include,

(a) wondering and asking, with a sense of the right to ask, what the justification is for the various things which it would be quite natural to take for granted; (b) refusing agreement or compliance with what others put to him when this seems critically unacceptable; (c) defining what he really wants, or what is really in his interests, as distinct from what may be conventionally so regarded; (d) conceiving of goals, policies and plans of his own, and forming purposes and intentions of his own independently of any pressure to do so from others; (e) choosing amongst alternatives in ways in which could exhibit that choice as the deliberate outcome of his own ideas or purposes; (f) forming his own opinion on a variety of topics that interest him; and (g) governing his actions and attitudes in the light of the previous sort of activity. In short, in order to be autonomous, one must live in the context of trusting one's instincts and ability to learn and make decisions with the courage to act accordingly.¹¹³

However, with autonomous behavior comes the danger of cultural and social abuses by select groups and peoples who try to use bias or control tactics to undermine well-meaning intentions of others. Therefore, autonomy brings the responsibility of safeguarding information and efforts without fear of retribution (either real or imagined). In reference to the importance of maintaining autonomous thinking, yet mindful of those who may abuse creativity for their own gain, Ana Maria Araujo Freire declared,

Men and women invent technologies through their capacity to think and to create their own survival in the construction of their histories. All these inventions are up-to-the moment products of their times, advances never before seen. Plantation, irrigation, the wheel, writing and reading, the printing press the compass, navigation, commerce, the steam engine, modern industry, trains, electric light, the telephone, radio, automobiles, airplanes, television and video-tape, and so on, have brought us the "communication age." ...

¹¹² Benjamin Gibbs, "Autonomy and Authority in Education," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 13, no. 1 (1979): 119-20.

¹¹³ R. F. Dearden, "Autonomy as an Educational Ideal.", 17-18.

In the meantime, this human creative capacity is being distorted, in a generalized and contradictory way, in acts and action that negate the ethicality we have to have inside of us to guide and prescribe our social behavior.... True communication, which would widen contacts and knowledge indispensable for the progress and equality of the different peoples and social segments of the world... in service of the globalization of the economy, is holding us all hostage to a few “world bosses.... in a vast field of lovelessness.... This devastation by chaos of the legitimate interests and aspirations of the majority of the population needs to be furiously denied.¹¹⁴

Accumulated Life Experiences and Goal Setting

Adults need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instructional experiences. Knowles noted that as people mature, they accumulate a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning.¹¹⁵ All experience, including making mistakes, should be honored as providing a foundation to use as a base for developing learning activities. As such, adults are most interested in subjects that have immediate relevance to their job or personal life, whether that be general curiosity or for a specific purpose, rather than content oriented.

Additionally, Knowles stated adults need to know *how* what they are learning will assist in meeting their goal of satisfying their curiosity on a topic or theme. Adults learn by doing, and approach learning as problem solving. He also stressed that the learning must be of immediate value.¹¹⁶ Merriam agreed that adults need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction and are most interested in subjects that have immediate relevance to their job or personal life.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ Ana Maria Araujo quoted in Peter McLaren, *Che Guevara, Paulo Freire, and the Pedagogy of Revolution*, (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000); xiv.

¹¹⁵ Malcolm S. Knowles, Elwood F. Holton III, and Richard A. Swanson, *The Adult Learner* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

¹¹⁶ Knowles, *Andragogy in Action: Applying Modern Principles of Adult Learning*, 480.

¹¹⁷ Sharan B. Merriam, “Andragogy and Self-Directed Learning: Pillars of Adult Learning Theory,” *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 89 (2001): 3–14.

Transformative Change

Transformative learning relates to the ability of how people positively change for the betterment of themselves and/or society through educational experiences. John Dirkx listed three phases of transformative learning: (a) transformation as consciousness raising, such as apartheid in South Africa, (b) transformation as critical reflections steeped in cognitive and developmental psychology, where one reviews and contemplates knowledge, belief systems, and values of oneself, and (c) transformation as development, meaning constructing new meaning to comprehend an ever-changing world.¹¹⁸

To achieve transformative change, Mezirow's theory consisted of four main components that need to be in place. They were (a) experience, (b) critical reflection, (c) reflective discourse, and (d) action. Transformation may happen through exploring opinions of others, via either conversations or research and then making a decision as to how to use this new learning for the good of oneself and that of society. Therefore, transformative change has two participants (a) the learner and (b) society. As Mezirow said,

Transformative learning occurs when there is a transformation in one of our beliefs or attitudes (a meaning scheme), or a transformation of our entire perspective (habit of mind).¹¹⁹

Historical Context of the American Progressive Movement

Just as the Progressives were involved in a movement to improve the lot of the common man in a time of technological change, so did the progressive historians see the fighters of the Revolution as fighters for the lot of the common man.¹²⁰

Historians dispute whether what is commonly known as the Progressive Era should be considered a bona fide movement of reform or simply a time in which individuals or groups, holding common ideology for social improvement but lacking a conscious effort to organize,

¹¹⁸ John M. Dirkx, "Transformative Learning Theory in the Practice of Adult Education: An Overview," *PAACE Journal of Lifelong Learning* 7 (1998): 1–14.

¹¹⁹ Jack Mezirow, et al', *Learning as Transformation: Critical Perspectives on a Theory in Progress* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 30.

¹²⁰ "Progressive Historiography of the American War for Independence," Mike Crane, accessed November 12, 2012, <http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/essays/before-1800/progressive-historiography-of-the-american-war-for-independence>.

worked independently of each other. Large social movements often have their genesis in grassroots organizing. Willie, Ridini, and Willard said that before any movement is popularized and commonly definable by the masses (such as the Civil Rights or Gay Rights Movements), small pockets of individuals or groups working toward a goal arise simultaneously and often without any knowledge of actions taken by others with the same goal.¹²¹

Over time, like-minded individuals and groups find one another and slowly join together to promote their cause. This continues until a bona fide movement arises (or fails to gel), and their issue becomes common knowledge or widespread interest in their issue declines. Progressivism has followed this path over the past 130 years, demonstrating how a successful social movement comes into being, grows, and transforms itself over time.

According to Stubblefield and Keane, “The adverse conditions of city, life, factory, and immigration inspired ‘progressivism’, which began first as a local and state response ... and then grew into a national reform movement.”¹²² Therefore, for the purposes of this study, *progressivism* is defined as an ideology steeped in optimism, environmentalism, and self-help.

Progressivism also held the position that those of great economic means were morally bound to put into place stopgap measures to ease the plight of the poor and oppressed. Progressivism promoted the concept that it was everyone’s responsibility and duty to preserve the environment as well as aid in the conservation of nature’s beauty given to man by a higher power. Progressivism included a loathing for monopolies and capitalism gone amuck at the expense of society’s well-being. Finally, Progressives were not afraid of political activism to achieve their goals and objectives.

Viewed within this framework, Progressivism arose and flourished in the late 19th century. Founders of the early Progressive Movement included academics and social activists who tried to address the economic disparity between capitalists and the labor force, education of both children and university students, and other political issues. This was also a time in which the country tried to ascertain the identity of what it meant to be an American and a discussion of how government could be used as a vehicle to rid society of its ills.¹²³ As Woodrow Wilson said,

¹²¹ Charles Willie, Steven P. Ridini, and David A. Willard, *Grassroots Social Action: Lessons in People Power Movements* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008).

¹²² Harold W. Stubblefield and Patrick Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience from the Colonial Period to the Present*, (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1994), 7.

¹²³ Thomas G. West and William A. Schambra, *The Progressive Movement and the Transformation of American Politics* (Washington, DC: Heritage Foundation, 2007).

All that progressives ask or desire is permission—in an era when “development,” “evolution,” is the scientific word—to interpret the Constitution according to the Darwinian principle; all they ask is recognition of the fact that a nation is a living thing and not a machine.¹²⁴

Examples of this reinterpretation appeared in the early days of the Progressive Movement, when women’s suffrage and the idea of prohibition were added to Progressive agenda.

The growth of Progressivism ran parallel to economic, demographic, technological, and sociological seismic shifts in American society. The very composition of society was in flux. “Old” immigrants of English-speaking Europe were being compared to the “new” immigrants of eastern and southern Europe who spoke a language other than English. Immigration restriction was at its peak. Scientific innovations such as Mendeleev’s periodic table, medical advances such as Pasteur’s germ theory, and innovations such as Darwin’s theory of evolution and natural selection were accepted and transforming academia, professions, and society as a whole. The study of academic disciplines, in turn, was expected to become more “scientific” and research based, thus demanding greater credibility and professionalism.¹²⁵

This was a time of great advancements in technology and its management. Examples in business are Carnegie’s integration of the steel industry and Ford’s automobile created on an assembly line. At the individual level, homesteaders and prospectors moved their families to the prairies and California in search of the American Dream of land ownership and prosperity.

However, although timing of specific events may be undisputed, Arthur Link stated that one difficulty in assessing this period in American History is that,

The progressive movement never really existed as a recognizable organization with common goals and political machinery geared to achieve them. Generally speaking ... progressivism might be defined as the popular effort, which began convulsively in the 1890’s ... there were many “progressive” movements on many levels seeking sometimes contradictory objectives.”¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Woodrow Wilson, *The New Freedom: A Call for the Emancipation of the Generous Energies of a People* (New York: Doubleday, 1913), 48.

¹²⁵ Richard Hofstadter, *The Progressive Historians: Turner, Beard, Barrington* (New York: Knopf, 1968).

¹²⁶ Arthur S. Link, “What Happened to the Progressive Movement in the 1920’s?” *American Historical Review* 64, no. 4 (1959): 836.

Leaders of the Progressive Movement came from all walks of life. They included women, scholars, African Americans, politicians, conservationists, writers, ministers, and businessmen. These reformers all advocated for a new vision of society in one niche or another but had a common goal: to create a thriving nation. The plethora of activism included reforms in education, the environment, labor practices, women's suffrage, prohibition, politics and the role of government, as well as efforts to improve the health of the body, mind, and soul.

Although prominent historians such as Johnston, Painter, and McCormick had differing opinions of the times, there seems to be consensus that this was a period that was multidimensional and multilayered during an era touching all facets of American life.¹²⁷ However, current-day historians disagree as to whether or not this period should be classified as a genuine, distinct, and independent movement. For example, Link and McCormick discussed the issues of time period as fragmented, rather than as part of a coherent and monolithic “movement.”¹²⁸

Attempting to place diverse issues such as agrarian discontent, nativism/assimilation, intellectualism, social gospel/religious controversies, politics/judicial leadership, and labor all into a single movement indicates a muddling of messages and interests similar to those of the 2011-2012 Occupy Wall Street movement.¹²⁹ Many changes in thought and in educational theory were developing across a theoretical continuum, which included the responsibilities of educating children in public schools, skilled tradesmen, and university students; and the disparity of these issues that calls into question the homogeneity or even existence of a coherent Progressive Movement into question.

Peter Filene stated that historians have often been divided as to whether or not the Progressive Era should really be defined as an era or should be split into two social movement classifications: (a) the more conservative “political Progressives” and (b) the more liberal “social Progressives.” Like Link, Filene listed objectives he felt were prevalent during that time period:

¹²⁷ Robert D. Johnston, “Re-democratizing the Progressive Era: The Politics of Progressive Era Political Historiography,” *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 1, no. 1 (2002), 68-92. Also see Nell Irvin Painter, *Standing at Armageddon: A Grassroots History of the Progressive Era* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011); Richard L. McCormick, *Party Period and Public Policy: American Politics from the Age of Jackson to the Progressive Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

¹²⁸ Arthur S. Link and Richard L. McCormick, *Progressivism* (Arlington Heights, IL: Harlan Davidson, 1983).

¹²⁹ Link, “What Happened to the Progressive Movement,” 836.

...constraints on monopolies, trusts and big bank interests; regulation of railroad rates; lower tariffs; the direct primary; initiative, referendum and recall; direct election of U.S. senators; women's suffrage; child- and female-labor laws; pure food and drug laws and conservation.¹³⁰

Filene also noted that present-day historians are divided in the interpretation of specific events. One example of conflicting views is the topic of the “new” immigrants coming into the United States in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Filene posed the following example:

Richard Hofstadter and Oscar Handlin stressed...the progressives' more or less vehement repugnance toward the immigrants crowding into urban slums. ... But Eric Goldman and John Higham dispute this portrait. Although conceding that many progressives were troubled by the influx of foreigners and that a few favored restrictive laws, these two historians claim that progressive sentiment tended to look favorably upon the newcomers.¹³¹

Hofstadter pointed out that among historians there are differences of opinion as to how to classify the period between 1890 and the early 1900s. Like Link and Filene, Hofstadter also gave a definition to this time period in American History:

For all internal differences and counter-currents, there were in Progressivism certain general tendencies, certain widespread commitments of belief, which outweigh the particulars. It is these commitments and beliefs which make it possible to use the term “Progressive” in the hope that the unity it conveys will not be misconstrued. ... Optimism and activism—these are the ideological or temperamental traits distinguishing progressives.¹³²

Mowry discussed the varied ways in which this time period could be generalized. He outlined the era as progressivism, but did not define it as a conscious attempt of the public to collectively attempt specific change for all citizens:

The progressive mentality was a compound of many curious elements. It contained a reactionary as well as a reform impulse. It was imbued with a burning ethical strain which at times approached a missionary desire to create a heaven on earth. It emphasized individual dynamism and leadership. One part of it looked backward to an intensely democratic

¹³⁰ Peter G. Filene, “An Obituary for ‘the Progressive Movement,’” *American Quarterly* 22, no. 1 (1970): 21.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 23. Also see Link, “What Happened to the Progressive Movement”.

¹³² Hofstadter, *The Progressive Movement*, 15. Also see Link, “What Happened to the Progressive Movement”.

small America; another looked forward to a highly centralized nationalistic state. . . . The progressive mentality was generated in part from both a fear of the loss of group status and a confidence in man's ability to order the future.¹³³

The disagreement as to the positive and negative nature of this time in American History continued with ideas presented by Michael McGerr, who defined the Progressive Era as:

Progressivism, the creed of a crusading middle class, offered the promise of utopianism—and generated the inevitable letdown of unrealistic expectations. . . . The progressives developed a stunningly broad agenda that ranged well beyond the control of big business, the amelioration of poverty, and the purification of politics to embrace the transformation of gender relations, the regeneration of the home, the disciplining of leisure and pleasure, and the establishment of segregation.¹³⁴

McGerr attempted to establish the concept that this period in American History was created by the middle class to bring to the forefront the need to understand social injustices and rectify them by establishing a value system in which being an American meant that all of society should benefit from policies. These values included social transformations such as in education or political responsibility to the nation as a whole. Examples of this type of thought consisted of the curtailment of monopolies while protecting the viability and economic stability of the labor force.¹³⁵

Regardless of how this time period is defined by historians, it can be agreed upon that this era had a unifying principled ideology and was comprehensive in scope and nature. Its ideology was framed by the belief that for America to continue to prosper, consideration of the consequences of actions as they pertained to society as a whole needed to be brought to the forefront of thought. A synthesis of the disparate historical points of view leads me to the conclusion that regardless of whether change of that time was accomplished via social, political, or intellectual efforts, the endeavors to evoke change started out small, perhaps with only a few individuals seeking the same reform, and through time, an organized national movement with continuity in the vision and message matured.

¹³³ George Mowry, *The Era of Theodore Roosevelt, 1900–1912* (New York: Harper, 1958), 103–5.

¹³⁴ Michael E. McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870–1920* (New York: Organization of American Historians, 2003), preface.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

For the purposes of this study the term Progressive Movement, Progressive Era, and any variation of the term *progressive* should be seen as synonyms for the events that took place between the years of 1890 and the early 1900s. In this context, specific movements evolved from isolated efforts of like-minded individuals and groups until enough events transpired to bring an issue to a national level and a call for action was necessary (or the issues declined in importance and dropped off the Progressive agenda.)

Several key topics, discussed below, characterize the activities and interests of the early Progressive Era and provide a basis for considering the works and contributions of Frederick Jackson Turner.

Urbanization, Industrialization, and Labor

During the years shortly before 1890 through the mid-1900s America's population was growing rapidly. This growth is attributed to two sources: (a) the mass immigration of the new immigrants and (b) the generational growth of families already living in the states. In the decade of 1910–1920, almost nine million immigrants came to the United States. This number decreased in the decade following to less than six million immigrants—partially because of the disruptions to travel caused by World War I.¹³⁶ Much of this growing population flocked to cities where job opportunities at large-scale manufacturing plants were located. Census data show that in 1900 the U.S. population was 75,995,000, with 29,215,000 in cities (39% urban). By 1930 the population grew to 122,775,000, with 64,586,000 residing in urban areas (53% urban).¹³⁷

Some immigrants planned for a short period of city life followed by a move westward, whereas for others the cities provided long-term economic opportunities for skilled laborers.¹³⁸ However, during this time, working conditions were often poor, hours were long, and children lost the opportunity to be schooled because they needed to bring home wages for families to survive. The dichotomy between capitalism and the plight of the workers was a driving force in

¹³⁶ Roger Waldinger, *Strangers at the Gates: New Immigrants in Urban America* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001), 32.

¹³⁷ Linda Harris Dobkins and Yannis M. Ioannides, "Spatial Interactions among US Cities: 1900–1990," *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 31, no. 6 (2001): 709.

¹³⁸ George J. Borjas, *Friends or Strangers: The Impact of Immigrants on the US Economy* (New York: Basic Books, 1990).

evoking change to labor laws which led to what Davis called “the birth of mass labor politics in America.”¹³⁹

Westward Expansion and Railroads

Turner and his writings on the significance of the frontier dramatized the importance of the westward expansion and listed three key characteristics of American culture. They included individualism, political democracy, and economic mobility. He popularized the concept that people were hopeful of leaving the industrialized urban cities and eager to start over by homesteading land in the West. One reason why development of the West was a viable option was support for the development of a railroad system to span the country from east to west.¹⁴⁰

By 1840 the United States had invested approximately \$75,000,000 in railway transportation. By 1850 there were nearly 9,000 miles of rail connecting cities with local depots. Within a decade, more than \$300,000,000 had been invested. Only 50% of this investment was made by private donors. The rest was financed by government stock, although ownership stayed with private capitalists who were often given special privileges such as exemptions from state taxation and eminent domain (ability to take property to build a specific route).¹⁴¹

Through the passage of the Pacific Railroad Acts of 1862, 1864, and 1867, a railway that spanned the entire United States became an achievable goal. Between 1863 and 1869, over 1,928 miles of rail were laid in the hopes of creating a cheaper and safer way to transport a variety of goods from one state to another as well as, in the future, from one coast to the other. By 1939, an additional 131,534 miles of track had been laid.¹⁴² There was not enough manpower to achieve such an endeavor. Therefore, new immigrant workers were highly important to the construction effort. For example, approximately two-thirds of the Transcontinental Railroad workforce came via immigration of Chinese citizens, with much of the remainder coming from Ireland.¹⁴³

¹³⁹ Mike Davis, *Prisoners of the American Dream: Politics and Economy in the History of the US Working Class* (London, UK: Verso, 1986), 4.

¹⁴⁰ Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” (address given at the Ninth Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, Chicago, July 12, 1893).

¹⁴¹ John F. Stover, *The Life and Decline of the American Railroad* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970).

¹⁴² Robert S. Henry, “The Railroad Land Grant Legend in American History Texts,” *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 32, no. 2 (1945): 194.

¹⁴³ Stephen E. Ambrose, *Nothing Like It in the World: The Men Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad 1863–1869* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001). Also see Edwin Legrand Sabin, *Building the Pacific Railway: The*

Railroad mileage continued to increase both in localities (i.e., “short lines”) and across America. Depew outlined the expansion of railroads by categorizing the country into five clusters of states and charting railway development: the New England States, the Middle States, the Southern States, the Western States and Territories, and Pacific States and Territories. In 1850 the United States had 9,021 miles of rail, but by 1890, nearly 130,000 miles of track spanned the country from north to south and east to west. In only four decades, the rail system grew by approximately 121,000 miles.¹⁴⁴

The dream of a nationwide system became reality in 1869 when the Central Pacific Rail united with the Union Pacific Railroad Company. They joined together in Utah, making a nationwide transportation network. Railroads now extended approximately 2,500 miles, spanning across the country with thousands of local rail connections. Until this point, railroads were merely seen as ways of travel and shipment within surrounding localities. However, with the new transcontinental railroad, the United States had a system that not only was faster but allowed for larger quantities of goods to be moved. Better yet, the system provided access to cheaper shipping rates.

With a vast railway system, the nineteenth century regional economy of the United States transitioned into a continent-wide system and contributed to America’s growth into a global economic power. The ability to rapidly and cheaply move wheat, cattle, raw materials, and a plethora of manufactured objects from farm to city and back again transformed the economy and living standards of the United States.¹⁴⁵

However, there was a steep price paid for a rail system that spanned the country. Although the railroad was seen as a way for America to prosper economically, building the system triggered two depressions (in the 1870s and again in the 1890s) as well as two major strikes among the workers, one in 1877 and again in 1894. Many state governments were almost bankrupted by their commitment to finance the railroad system—most notably from land grants

Construction-Story of America's First Iron Thoroughfare between the Missouri River and California, from the Inception of the Great Idea to the Day, May 10, 1869, When the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific Joined Tracks at Promontory Point, Utah, to Form the Nation's Transcontinental (Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott, 1919).

¹⁴⁴ Chauncey Mitchell Depew, ed. *1795-1895: One Hundred Years of American Commerce...: A History of American Commerce by One Hundred Americans, with a Chronological Table of the Important Events of American Commerce and Invention within the Past One Hundred Years* (New York: Haynes, 1895), 111.

¹⁴⁵ Michael V. Uschan, *The Transcontinental Railroad* (Milwaukee, WI: Gareth Stevens Secondary Library, 2003).

given to finance construction.¹⁴⁶

One example is the state of Texas. According to S. G. Reed, from 1836 to 1852 thirteen charters for railroads were granted by the state; the last charter issued in February 1852 in which the railroads received a total of 32,153,878 acres of land.¹⁴⁷ The state issued bonds that eventually left so much debt that its only recourse was to change the state's constitution, allowing an exchange of land for money owed to railroad companies.¹⁴⁸ Another way in which railroads affected the westward expansion was to open cattle grazing ranges to ranchers and to begin the transition from family-owned farms to today's agribusiness leaving family-owned farms struggling to compete.¹⁴⁹ Thus, the railroads were not an unmitigated blessing—and became a factor in the discontent motivating Progressives.

Print Media and Photography

A key reason why social issues of the times were able to gain momentum was the availability and affordability of mass media. Because of innovations in printing, newspapers, magazines, and book making print media became inexpensive. Social reformers and activists found multiple venues to bring their concerns and ideas for remedy to the masses. In *The Labor of Words: Literary Professionalism in the Progressive Era*, Christopher Wilson wrote,

Gradually, what emerged was a social and cultural history of the mass literary marketplace which arose in America during the three decades after 1885 ... as in newspapers; the success of the cheap magazines cannot be solely attributed to their managerial wizards. ... Historians have long been aware of how a series of related developments—the passage of the Postal Act of 1879, technological advancements in printing, engraving, and paper-making, and the growth of national advertising itself—opened new vistas of circulation.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ John F. Stover, *American Railroads* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

¹⁴⁷ S. G. Reed, "Land Grants and Other Aids to Texas Railroads," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 49, no. 4 (1946): 519.

¹⁴⁸ Gordon L. Hooper, *Pioneer History of Crane County Before 1925* (Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2012).

¹⁴⁹ John T. Schlebecker, *Whereby We Thrive: A History of American Farming, 1607–1972* (Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press, 1975).

¹⁵⁰ Christopher P. Wilson, *The Labor of Words: Literary Professionalism in the Progressive Era* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2010), preface, p. 48.

People read newspapers and magazines to inform themselves and learn about economics, politics, editorial indoctrination, or local issues. Books such as Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* about the meatpacking industry or Jacob Riis's *How the Other Half Lives* were used to educate and often horrify the public about social ills. In addition, photography was becoming more accessible and used as a way in which people could be exposed to affairs happening throughout the United States. Powerful photos could represent issues and be understood regardless of the literacy level of those who saw them. For example, Lewis Hines was very effective at using photographs of child laborers to promote social reform of working conditions and labor laws.¹⁵¹ The visibility that print media and photography brought to the American people was a key factor in marshaling support for Progressive causes.

American Indians

As with the American Indians in the East, throughout the westward expansion the indigenous peoples were systematically moved off their land and onto reservations. According to Robert Coulter,

In many instances there simply is no evidence of a voluntary merger by treaty agreement or another manner. One will search the treaties of the Six Nations Confederacy [Iroquois peoples] and no doubt many other Indian nations in vain for such evidence. ... Very few treaties, perhaps none, include provisions even remotely suggesting voluntary merger or voluntary surrender of sovereignty [although a] few treaties contain provisions subjecting the Indian parties to United States law. ... Many Indian nations such as the Hopi have never made a treaty or agreement with the United States and [therefore] cannot be said to have assented to a merger.¹⁵²

In addition, it was popular belief that measures be taken to figuratively “kill the Indian” and “rid them of savagism.” By the 1890s, most Indians were placed on reservations per the Davis Act of 1887. American Indian boarding schools were opened. Often these schools were hundreds of miles away from the children's families. The children's hair was cut, they were

¹⁵¹ Lewis Hine, “Social Photography,” *Classic Essays on Photography* (New Haven, CT: Leete's Island Books, 1980): 109–13.

¹⁵² Robert T. Coulter, “Contemporary Indian Sovereignty,” *Committee on Native Struggles, Rethinking Indian Law* (1982): 117.

forbidden to speak their native (or home) language, and English was taught as the only form of communication. In addition, Indian children were given English names and expected to accept Christianity. Such measures yielded a plummet in self-esteem, generated a sense of self-loathing, and drove a wedge between respect for their Indian customs and tribes' members. Adams, in *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875–1928*, encapsulated the process of how educational policy was translated into institutional practice, describing the entire process whereby Indian agents, school superintendents, teachers, and staff went about the business of “civilizing” Indian youth and the devastating effects to the Indian nations' culture and way of life.¹⁵³

Minimal Progress for the Invisibles

During the Progressive Era, history was written in the same manner as in previous times—through the eyes of the mainstream, predominantly white males. Finding written accounts of social outreach spearheaded by women, poor, and minorities is more difficult than finding documentation of the contributions of white men.¹⁵⁴ Therefore, much of the rich history or knowledge of such leaders, events, and plights of women, minorities, and immigrants may appear to be neglected; and accessing historical records of such experiences difficult. For that reason I have used the term *invisibles* to identify these populations.

Although not recognized by the white male-dominated power structure, women, minorities, and the poor were not absent in contributing to social justice issues. Nor can it be ignored that with the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, with women gaining the right to vote, women's voices began to be heard, even though historical accounts of the impact of the women's votes may be hard to uncover.

One example of how women supported leveling the playing field between the have and have-nots was through settlement house initiatives. Settlement houses were established as a way for the wealthy to provide resources to the poor and disenfranchised to have access to literacy proficiency, a skilled trade, and economic stability. Jane Addams and Helen Gates Starr's Hull

¹⁵³ David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875–1928* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1995).

¹⁵⁴ Glenda Riley, “Frederick Jackson Turner Overlooked the Ladies,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 13, no. 2 (1993): 216–30.

House in Chicago is one notable successful settlement house that became a model for such endeavors as those in Boston and New York City.

Between the late 1880s and early 1920s more than 400 settlement houses were founded in the United States.¹⁵⁵ Today, the principles of settlement houses can be found in local community centers, initiatives such as Dorothy Day's Catholic Worker Houses, the nationwide Covenant House movement, and senior citizen outreaches.¹⁵⁶

Another example of minorities struggling against the social and economic injustices of the times is that of three prominent African American activists: Nannie Burroughs, W. E. B. DuBois, and Booker T. Washington. Nannie Helen Burroughs was an educator, religious leader, and civil rights activist. Burroughs founded the National Training School for Women and Girls in 1909.¹⁵⁷ DuBois was the first African American to earn a doctorate degree from Harvard in 1895. In 1909 DuBois became one of several cofounders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). In 1895 Washington, a graduate of Hampton Institute in Virginia, helped establish and presided over the Tuskegee Institute (later Tuskegee University). He also organized protests against the Jim Crow laws of the South.¹⁵⁸

Each of these leaders had different approaches to meet their goals, working in their own niche to gain civil equality and educational opportunities. Burroughs who was soft-spoken, chose to spread her message through religious gatherings, and emphasized the moral responsibility of society. DuBois, the most radical of the three, was outspoken and confrontational in his approach. Finally, Washington, a conservative and quiet giant, used his position at Tuskegee Institute to focus on developing quality educational opportunities in higher learning.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ Ruth Gilchrist and Tony Jeffs, *Settlements, Social Change and Community Action: Good Neighbours* (London, UK: Jessica Kingsley, 2001).

¹⁵⁶ Brian Greenberg and Linda S. Watts, *Social History of the United States: 1900s* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2009).

¹⁵⁷ Traki L. Taylor, "'Womanhood Glorified': Nannie Helen Burroughs and the National Training School for Women and Girls, Inc., 1909–1961," *Journal of African American History* 87 (2002): 390–402.

¹⁵⁸ Cari Goetcheus, "Booker T. Washington—The Man and His Landscape," *Certified Risk Management-Washington* No. 22 (1999): 31–33.

¹⁵⁹ Jacqueline M. Moore, *Leading the Race: The Transformation of the Black Elite in the Nation's Capital, 1880–1920* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1999).

The Progressive Era and Adult Education

During this period, educational opportunities were perceived as a way to advocate for a multitude of social issues. Although these issues were connected to geography, economics, gender, age, social status, etc., this study focused on the academic challenges and changes of the intellectual efforts for the advancement of adult education during the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Stubblefield and Keane, in *Adult Education in the American Experience*, discussed that the first popular use of the term adult education was in Europe in the early 1800s. In the United States the term grew from educational outreach in the late 1800s and into the 1900s, although it was called by several different names. They noted that,

Historian Herbert Baxter Adams preferred [to use] the term *popular education or educational extension*, while Melvil Dewey used the term *home education*. By the 1910s, however, the term *Adult Education* was preferred for designating and classifying educational programs for adults.¹⁶⁰

According to Patricia Graham, there were five characteristics of the progressive education movement. They were (a) a commitment to the centrality of the child and adult in the educational process, (b) a sense of social responsibility (akin to Paulo Freire's work on illiterate poor in Brazil),¹⁶¹ (c) a concern for a defined philosophy of progressive education (as discussed by Merriam, Caffarella and Baumgartner),¹⁶² (d) an orientation toward science and research, and (e) an increasing homogeneity and isolation (Americanization and assimilation).¹⁶³

Although emphasis was placed on vocational training, health education, and teaching the new immigrant population, a wide range of other programs and venues in which adults could educate themselves existed including both formal and informal programs with varying goals and agendas. The rest of this section provides an overview of the types of adult education programs that spread throughout the nation during this period, many which are still in existence today.

¹⁶⁰ Stubblefield and Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*, 2.

¹⁶¹ Freire's work is also known as Critical Pedagogy. In the United States the Freire Institute operates at University of California Los Angeles. Works to review include Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1972). Also see Paulo Freire and Ana Maria Araújo Freire. *EPZ Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. (New York: Continuum, 2004).

¹⁶² Sharan B. Merriam, Rosemary S. Caffarella, and Lisa M. Baumgartner, *Learning in Adulthood: A Comprehensive Guide* (New York: Wiley, 2012). Also see Sharan Merriam, "The Changing Landscape of Adult Learning Theory." *Review of Adult Learning and Literacy* 4 (2004): 199-220.

¹⁶³ Patricia Albjerg Graham, *Progressive Education from Arcady to Academe: A History of the Progressive Education Association, 1919-1955* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1967).

Mechanics' Institutes

According to Stubblefield and Keane, the Mechanics' Institute philosophy stemmed from the mindset of self-improvement through education in the sciences. The first Mechanics Institute to open in the United States was The Mechanic Library Society of New Haven, Connecticut (functioning today as The Institute Library) in 1792.¹⁶⁴ Its focus was to develop an open forum to disseminate “useful information”—knowledge that furthers one’s social and economic success. In the beginning, Mechanics’ Institutes taught practical technical proficiency tailored to refine specific skills.¹⁶⁵ In time, some Mechanics’ Institutes began to broaden their definition of “knowledge” to include entertainment and the arts, chess clubs, reading rooms, and poetry writing, which angered those people who felt that the societies should continue to focus only on personal economic success.

As time passed resources dwindled and the establishment of land-grant colleges, thanks to the Morrill Act in 1862, occurred. Mechanics’ Institutes began to combine, with the idea that by joining together, more benefits and courses could be offered to their clientele.¹⁶⁶ Eventually Mechanics Institutes faded, restructuring their focus into broad based public education facilities and museums or replaced by programs like modern-day vocational education and technical certificate programs.

According to Bruce Sinclair, the original mission of the institutes was to provide low-cost technical education to the poor. Two successful Mechanics’ Institutes included the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen in New York City (established in 1820 and which continues to operate today providing tuition-free courses and the General Society Library which is open to the public) and the Philadelphia Franklin Institute (established in 1824 and now operates as a museum dedicated to public education of science and technology). At institutes across the country, priority was given to teaching the workforce to build, maintain, and repair industrial machinery to enhance apprenticeships.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ Wilberforce Eames and Robert William Glenroie Vail, *Biblioteca Americana: A Dictionary of Books Relating to America, from its Discovery to the Present Time*, Vol. 16 (New York: Sabin and Bibliographical Society of America, 1886).

¹⁶⁵ Stubblefield and Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*.

¹⁶⁶ Michael D. Stephens and Gordon W. Roderick, “Science, the Working Classes and Mechanics' Institutes,” *Annals of Science* 29, no. 4 (1972): 349–60.

¹⁶⁷ Bruce Sinclair, “Mechanics Institutes,” in *Dictionary of American History*, 3rd ed., Vol. 5, ed. Stanley I. Kutler (Boston, MA: Blackwell Publishers, Inc., 2000), 280. Also see Donald S. McPherson, “Mechanics' Institutes and

In addition to teaching specific courses, Mechanics' Institutes were used as libraries where the adult working class could use in their free time. Institute libraries had no or nominal fees attached to the privilege of using the libraries, for it was believed everyone should have access to knowledge, even the poor. Some of these libraries only lasted a decade or two, with others eventually becoming public libraries or were absorbed into already established local public libraries.¹⁶⁸

Community Education

Lyceums

The first lyceum, Millbury Branch Number 1 of the American Lyceum in Worcester County, Massachusetts, was founded by Josiah Holbrook in 1826. His intention was to create a National American Lyceum organization to open educational opportunities to anyone in a community who sought participation in learning experiences. Lyceums were popular during the Antebellum Era (1781 – 1860). Those with similar interests grouped themselves together to form education associations that tried to cater to the entire community regardless of prior formal education or expertise. Lyceums differed from Mechanics' Institutes by not only encouraging self-study but attempting to develop cognitive learning through discussions of issues, including controversial ones. Mission statements were encouraged to be developed as a framework for each lyceum. Lyceums also had a commitment to the philosophy that spirituality can come through knowledge and serenity.¹⁶⁹

Lyceums promoted the concept that one could not only be in charge of bettering his own life but could also find enjoyment in living through informal academic and religious study. In 1829 Josiah Holbrook, wrote,

*Self-education and self-support is, in all the departments and all operations of the lyceum system, its most prominent feature. It acknowledges the benevolence, the overflowing goodness of our Creator, in furnishing all his rational creatures with the faculties, and in surrounding them with the material, or means, of growing and rising in physical, intellectual and moral strength.*¹⁷⁰

the Pittsburgh Workingman, 1830–1840,” *Western Pennsylvania History* 56, no. 2 (1973): 155–70.

¹⁶⁸ Michael H. Harris, *History of Libraries of the Western World* (New York, Scarecrow Press, 1999), 153.

¹⁶⁹ Stubblefield and Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*.

¹⁷⁰ Josiah Holbrook, *American Lyceum, or Society for the Improvement of Schools, and Diffusion of Useful*

According to Richard Weaver's *Josiah Holbrook: Feeding the Passion for Self-Help*, lyceums saw their height of popularity between the late 1820s and 1850s. The format giving local citizens opportunities to speak, debate, and discuss local issues affecting their lives and livelihoods acknowledged the principle that one had an intrinsic motivation to determine his own learning goals.¹⁷¹

Cady Stanton, an American social activist, abolitionist, and voice of the early Women's Rights Movement, enjoyed the environment and atmosphere of lyceums, often using the venues to speak and publicize her message. Writing about one of her trips,

The pleasant feature of these trips was the great educational work accomplished for the people through their listening to lectures on all the vital questions of the hour. Wherever any of us chanced to be on Sunday, we preached in some church; and wherever I had a spare afternoon, I talked to women alone, on marriage, maternity, and the laws of life and health.

We made many most charming acquaintances, too, scattered all over our Western World, and saw how comfortable and happy sensible people could be, ... with none of the luxuries of life. If most housekeepers could get rid of one-half their clothes and furniture and put their bric-a-brac in the town museum, life would be simplified and they would begin to know what leisure means.¹⁷²

After the Civil War, Lyceums began to blend with a new tradition called Chautauqua, whose ideals and programs included both academic and entertainment programs. When lyceums did not integrate with Chautauqua, they consolidated with public library programs or became defunct. However, their legacy continued in the other adult-focused educational programs that existed during Turner's lifetime.¹⁷³

Knowledge (Boston, MA: T. R. Marvin, 1829), 4.

¹⁷¹ Richard L. Weaver, "Josiah Holbrook: Feeding the Passion for Self-Help," *Communication Quarterly* 24, no. 4 (1976): 10–18.

¹⁷² Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *Elizabeth Cady Stanton as Revealed in Her Letters, Diary and Reminiscences* (New York: Harper, 1922), 220–21.

¹⁷³ James Jasinski, "The Lyceum and Public Culture in the Nineteenth-Century United States," *The Journal of American History* 93, no. 1 (2006): 208-209.

Chautauqua

Chautauqua Institutes were popular inexpensive community programs that afforded everyday people, not just the elite, opportunities to enrich themselves in a serene and peaceful environment. Stubblefield and Keane noted in *Adult Education in the American Experience*,

By the early 1900s, more than 150 lecture bureaus were in operation, and the 6 largest booked three thousand dates each winter. ... Chautauqua rose in prominence as an educational and cultural center just as increased leisure time—including vacations—became available to the middle class.¹⁷⁴

The Chautauqua program, founded by John Vincent and Lewis Miller in 1874, began as a two-week summer training institute for Sunday school teachers and church workers. The first courses were held at Lake Chautauqua in New York. The program grew to include general education classes such as sewing and literacy skills as well as training for public school teachers. The ideals and purpose of Chautauqua quickly became popular and began to expand all across the country, with people meeting in churches, libraries, and, at times, private homes.¹⁷⁵ Chautauqua was so valued in education assemblages that in 1880 the National Education Association, eager to promote the efforts of Chautauqua, held its national convention at the New York Chautauqua.¹⁷⁶

Later, programs included music and arts, concerts, and plays, as well as calisthenics and Shakespearean studies. According to Morrison, the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle (CLSC) was one of its most influential programs. Small groups of individuals, called circles, all seeking common intellectual interests, would meet to read, discuss, and learn about a myriad of topics such as history, literature, sciences, and foreign languages. The CLSC was one of the first correspondence schools in the United States, reaching 225,000 enrollees by 1894.¹⁷⁷ Of the three mass educational movements that preceded the Progressive Era and unlike the Mechanics' Institutes and Lyceums, it was only Chautauqua that entered the era as a homogeneous entity, and continued to exist into the 1930s beyond the demise of the first wave of Progressivism.

¹⁷⁴ Stubblefield and Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*, 136–37.

¹⁷⁵ Hugh Anderson Orchard, *Fifty Years of Chautauqua* (Cedar Rapids, IA: Torch Press, 1923).

¹⁷⁶ Theodore Morrison, *Chautauqua: A Center for Education, Religion, and the Arts in America*. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1974).

¹⁷⁷ Anne Klonsky, *Milestones in the History of Adult Education: Learning as a Way of Becoming Free* (Chicago, IL: National Louis University, 1997).

Lecture Circuits

Stubblefield and Keane established that in the late 1830s and early 1840s, professional groups, individuals such as professors and travelers, and associations tapped into the nation's desire for self-improvement. Lecture needs fell into categories that differed depending upon the geographic area, class status, and various topics of community interest. Each category had its own unique criteria for learning needs that required a specific bank of knowledge or expertise. In the beginning, most lecturers volunteered their time and were a source of free learning. However, Americans soon were paying for the information (or entertainment) they wanted. Thus began the lecture tours offering "experts in the field." By the 1870s the demand for bona fide experts to fill lecture requests led to the development of commercial lecture bureaus which created credentialing processes to accommodate requests for authentication of expertise and tap into the potential for lecture circuits to become capital enterprises.¹⁷⁸

Donald Scott noted public lecturing began to emerge in the early 1830s. This form of instruction distinguished itself from sermons, speeches, orations, editorials, and essays. One reason for its popularity was its form of instruction that borrowed components from these typical, comfortable, and familiar formats of the time.¹⁷⁹ In Robert Greef's *Public Lectures in New York, 1851–1878*, he supported the notion that lecturing was a popular event during this era. In New York alone more than 3,000 advertised lectures were given between 1840 and 1860, and by 1836 Boston citizens could choose from twenty-six different "course" lectures that rotated throughout the year. Popularity of lectures was not exclusive to large cities however. For example, in 1840 between 3,500 and 4,000 communities, both large and small, had society-sponsored lectures.¹⁸⁰

Joseph Schick, who studied the lecture circuit during the Progressive Era, discussed the appeal of lecturing. One of the first orders of business in a newly formed town was to establish a venue where orators could speak. Lectures were considered a public event and were often deemed by the conservative town fathers as an appropriate and acceptable way to spend leisure

¹⁷⁸ Stubblefield and Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*.

¹⁷⁹ Donald M. Scott, "The Popular Lecture and the Creation of a Public in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America," *Journal of American History* 66, no. 4 (1980): 791–809.

¹⁸⁰ Robert J. Greef, "Public Lectures in New York, 1851 - 1878: A Cultural Index of the Times", University of Chicago, ProQuest, UMI Dissertations Publishing 1945.

time.¹⁸¹

In the beginning, typical lecturers were members of the town and included farmers, lawyers, doctors, accountants, clergymen, and political debaters. In time, luminaries from presidents to professors joined the public lecture circuit. Journalists, reformers, activists, and essayists such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Mark Twain, and Oliver Wendell Holmes were popular speakers and highly paid.¹⁸²

Public lecturing was seen as an intellectual endeavor, and thus, presentations from townsfolk were sidelined in favor of discussions by experts who were of sound civic character and had scholarly knowledge of the “useful information” being sought. For many, the lecture circuit was a way to expand their professional careers.¹⁸³ In reference to the aspirations of some who lectured, Scott stated,

As a profession, public lecturing provided occupational identity and prestige, an income, and a public intellectual role. It gave the lecturer “an honorable” place among the intellectual sovereigns of the land.¹⁸⁴

At the same time, lectures filled a role in popular entertainment that pre-dated radio, the cinema, and television—and were often geared to the lowest common denominator of the audience. However, the Progressive Movement typically used lectures that were on a higher intellectual plain.

Evening Schools

Mary Van Kleeck’s 1914 study found that in cities such as New York and Boston, evening schools were open four days a week, Monday through Thursday, from September to April or May, and open to both men and women. English reading and writing were some of the most popular courses as were any courses that would advance one’s trade or skill. In addition, many evening schools were held in public school buildings and provided another avenue for citizens to earn a high school diploma.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸¹ Joseph Schlueter Schick, *The Early Theater in Eastern Iowa* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1939).

¹⁸² David F. Allmendinger, *Paupers and Scholars* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1975).

¹⁸³ Ballard C. Campbell, *The Human Tradition in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* (Portland, OR: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999).

¹⁸⁴ Scott, “The Popular Lecture and the Creation of a Public,” 791–809.

¹⁸⁵ Mary Van Kleeck, *Working Girls in Evening Schools: A Statistical Study* (New York: Survey Associates, 1914).

According to Stubblefield and Keane, evening schools were first developed in New York City, Boston, and Louisville, and soon appeared across the continental United States. The goal of these school programs was to educate young adults who worked during the day in factories or mines. In time, these programs included English language study and a wide variety of other subjects.¹⁸⁶ In her dissertation, “Evening Schools and Child Labor in the United States, 1870–1910,” Linda Carter noted that during the Progressive Era evening schools were common in the United States. By 1900 there were 845 evening schools, with an enrollment of 203,000 students.¹⁸⁷

University Extension Programs

In its *Ten Years' Report 1890–1900*, the American Society for the Extension of University Teaching stated that the mission of the organization was,

...to attempt to solve the problem of how much of what the Universities do for their own students can be done for people unable to go to Universities. ... To instruct people who are not obligated to go to school ... to awaken a desire to learn ... the University Extension found lodgment in all parts of the county. Nothing comes out of University Extension unless a great deal is put into it; the desire to give, of the best, should always be somewhat more intense than the wish to receive.¹⁸⁸

In Kevin Mattson’s review of university extension programs, he emphasized that extension programs saw their height of popularity by the 1890s, declaring that the University of Wisconsin and the University of Chicago led the way in developing curricula and offering a myriad of options for the working class. These university extension programs were considered a priority by the universities and produced high-quality experiences. Many university professors wrote textbooks to accompany the stated curriculum.¹⁸⁹ Extension programs included lecture courses, off-campus university courses, and correspondence studies. Courses included academic study of the sciences as well as child rearing, decorating, sports, civic and moral improvement,

¹⁸⁶ Stubblefield and Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*.

¹⁸⁷ Linda K. Carter, “Evening Schools and Child Labor in the United States, 1870–1910” (PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 2009), ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis.

Theses.<http://ezproxy.lib.vt.edu:8080/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/305007424?accountid=14826>.

¹⁸⁸ American Society for the Extension of University Teaching, *Ten Years' Report of the American Society for the Extension of University Teaching* (Philadelphia, PA: American Society for the Extension of University Teaching, 1900).

¹⁸⁹ Kevin Mattson, *Creating a Democratic Public: The Struggle for Urban Participatory Democracy during the Progressive Era* (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2010).

religion, military preparedness, and food preparation, to name a few.¹⁹⁰

Workers' Education and Organized Labor

Mary Ritter Beard explained that early labor leaders saw worker education as the “real hope of workingmen in their struggle to improve their lot.”¹⁹¹ Catherine Casey agreed with this view and noted that much of the focus of worker education in America was as an agent of social transformation and economic advancement as well as an opportunity for social justice to prevail:

Numerous activities, programs, classes, and longer-term courses in residential labor colleges were established within two decades. Many thousands of American workers participated in educational programs in a wide range of subjects that included both specific union-organizing matters and courses in literature, social science, and the arts.¹⁹²

Labor organizing was not new during the Progressive Era. For example, the Knights of Labor (K of L) was established in 1869 and thrived; it was the largest union organization in America in the mid-1880s. By 1886 membership reached nearly 800,000 and included workers of all backgrounds, both skilled and unskilled. The Knights formed collaborative boycotts and fought for workers' rights through the court system. They also encouraged labor-sponsored classes and discussion groups on social and economic issues. The K of L also contributed to established libraries or formed their own in order for workers to educate themselves and have access to necessary resources. Artisan members, such as masons, carpenters, cabinet makers, and tailors/seamstresses encouraged group meetings to include lesser skilled workers to educate from within as opposed to depending on exclusive trade unions.¹⁹³

In 1886, the first federation of labor unions was organized. The American Federation of Labor (AFL) was conceived by disgruntled members of the K of L who had a falling out over leadership, trade union competition, and a disagreement of how to define the mission and

¹⁹⁰ Stubblefield and Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*.

¹⁹¹ Mary Ritter Beard, *A Woman Making History: Mary Ritter Beard through Her Letters* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 40.

¹⁹² Casey, “Building for a Long Future: Worker's Education in the Progressive Era”.

¹⁹³ Kim Voss, *The Making of American Exceptionalism: The Knights of Labor and Class Formation in the Nineteenth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993).

purpose of a labor group.¹⁹⁴ The AFL focused on securing higher wages, better working conditions, and a shorter work week. The AFL also publicly supported education, advising that curricula “teach the dignity of manual labor and give a proper understanding of the labor movement.”¹⁹⁵

In 1921 two milestone organizations were created, the Workers’ Education Bureau, which was established to assist labor colleges and other worker training centers, and the Bryn Mawr Summer School of Working Women. The distinction that set these two bodies apart from other work-related organizations was their priority to educate women. One characteristic of these summer schools was their strong collaboration with university professors, yet they had autonomy and the ability to be independent. Other labor colleges followed suit, such as the Labor Temple in New York City, which catered to Jewish study groups.¹⁹⁶

It was not until the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 passed that a national wage was established (\$0.25/hour), the work week could not be longer than 44 hours without paying time and a half to laborers, and the ability of employers to hire children was restricted.¹⁹⁷ In turn, this strict guideline allowed workers more leisure time, much of which adults used to continue their educational pursuits in both formal and informal ways.

Literacy

In their historical studies of literacy campaigns, Arnove and Graff concluded that these campaigns formed as a larger part of transformations in societies. The goal was to integrate individuals into social, political, or religious dogma. They stated,

Historically, the initiation of a literacy campaign has been associated with major transformations in social structures and belief systems. Typically such campaigns have been preceded and accompanied by gradual changes, such as the spread of religious doctrine, growth of market economies, the rise of bureaucratic and legal organizations and the emergence of national

¹⁹⁴ Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

¹⁹⁵ Warren Benjamin Catlin, *The Labor Problem in the United States and Great Britain* (New York: Harper, 1935), 485.

¹⁹⁶ Richard Dwyer, “Workers’ Education, Labor Education, Labor Studies: An Historical Delineation,” *Review of Educational Research* 67, no. 1 (1977): 179–207.

¹⁹⁷ Deborah Kaplan-Wyckoff, “Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938,” *Encyclopedia of Human Resource Management, Key Topics and Issues* 1 (2012): 222.

political communities. But usually there is a profound, if not cataclysmic trigger event: a religious reformation or political revolution, the gaining of political independence and nationhood.¹⁹⁸

In the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the United States had a shared ideal that the spread of literacy would serve to help form national character. Literacy leaders believed education would resolve social, economic, and political tensions. Issues included both education for young and old. During the early part of the Progressive Era, an adult's work week could last six of the seven days for ten to twelve hours per day. With so much time spent in factories or trade labor, adults had little time for education.¹⁹⁹

According to Jane Greer, during this period a focus on literacy instruction for immigrant workers and American Indians was needed as these populations needed to assimilate into "American" culture, communicate in English, and ensure the nation's economic success.²⁰⁰ One principle of this conviction was that people needed to be functionally literate for a specific standard of civil behavior to be maintained in a productive and morally responsible society. Kintgen, Barry, and Rose, in *Perspectives on Literacy*, stated that a national focus on literacy education was a serious focal point for educators throughout the Progressive Era in that "literacy was thus scientifically dissected into individually teachable and testable sub-skill units," thereby bringing credibility to the literacy movement.²⁰¹

Rosenwaike noted that because of the increase in new immigrants, by 1845 over one-third of the city's populations were foreign-born and did not or could not communicate well in English.²⁰² Concerned about immigrant laborers' inability to understand foreman instructions, thus slowing productivity and increasing the risk of accidents and/or waste, many companies began to sponsor English speaking, reading, and writing classes in the evenings for their employees. These classes also included material and discussion on American culture.

Another reason for the drive to make sure Americans were able to do "book learning" stemmed from religious intentions. According to Labaree, throughout the Progressive

¹⁹⁸ Robert F. Arno and Harvey J. Graff, *National Literacy Campaigns* (New York: Springer, 1987), 4.

¹⁹⁹ William J. Reese, *Power and the Promise of School Reform: Grassroots Movements during the Progressive Era* (Boston, MA: Teachers College Press, 2002).

²⁰⁰ Jane Greer, ed., *Girls and Literacy in America: Historical Perspectives to the Present* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2003).

²⁰¹ Eugene R. Kintgen, Barry M. Kroll, and Mike Rose, eds., *Perspectives on Literacy* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988).

²⁰² Ira Rosenwaike, *Population History of New York City* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1972).

Movement, ignorance was equated with tyranny and indolence. Logically, religious reformers reasoned, the only way to keep from such unbecoming behavior was to respond to God's gift of grace. Therefore, to develop one's faith, reformers proclaimed it important to rid adults of the plight of ignorance by teaching them to read the Bible, which in the United States was published in English. Thus, the only way to be ethically and morally sound was not only to speak English but also to read English.²⁰³

Carnegie Foundation

Andrew Carnegie was born in 1835 in Scotland. His family lived in abject poverty and starvation was rampant. The family decided to immigrate to the United States, ending up in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, in 1848. At the age of thirteen, Carnegie worked in a textile factory for twelve hours a day, six days a week, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Carnegie soon became a telegraph boy and quickly moved up to the position of operator. An avid reader, Carnegie was fortunate enough to have a substantial library at his disposal, and used it to educate himself. A hard worker who was persistent, dependable, and frugal, Carnegie worked his way up the corporate ladder, eventually founding Carnegie Steel, which he sold to J. P. Morgan in 1901. With this sale Andrew Carnegie became the richest man in the world.²⁰⁴

Although historians do not agree on whether Carnegie forgot his humble roots while amassing his fortune, there is little argument that philanthropy was a motivation that drove his decision making toward the end of his life. In his 1891 work *The Gospel of Wealth*, coauthored with Edward Chase Kirkland, Carnegie explained his commitment to philanthropy in educational endeavors:

This, then, is held to be the duty of the man of Wealth: First, to set an example of modest, unostentatious living, shunning display or extravagance; to provide moderately for the legitimate wants of those dependent upon him ... he is called upon to administer, and strictly bound as a matter of duty to administer ... [that which] is best calculated to produce the most beneficial results for the community ... doing for them better than they would or could do for themselves.²⁰⁵

²⁰³ David F. Labaree, *Someone Has to Fail* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

²⁰⁴ Andrew Carnegie, *Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie*, Vol. 3 (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1920).

²⁰⁵ Andrew Carnegie and Edward Chase Kirkland, *The Gospel of Wealth* (New York: F. C. Hagen, 1889), 11.

From 1900 to 1917 the Carnegie Foundation built approximately 1,700 libraries. Although Carnegie promised to finance the construction of these libraries, no groundbreaking commenced without assurance from the local government that taxes would be levied to support the venture for decades into the future.²⁰⁶ As a businessman, Carnegie knew that without guaranteed future revenue, the libraries could subsequently be sold to private collectors or industrialists who would refuse the public access to the collections or buildings. This was a practical and functional decision by Carnegie for at that time, funding for public libraries was provided by local donations, endowments, or personal benefactors. Carnegie had a large presence in financing and erecting libraries in his native Pittsburgh as well as across the span of the United States.

Carnegie also supported funding of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (CFAT), an education policy and research center that determined, through research, educational standards and objectives. CFAT was established in 1905 and was instrumental in the development of professional organizations such as the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association (TIAA), a pension program for college professors; the Educational Testing Service (ETS), which develops and publishes the SAT, GRE, and other standardized tests; and the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, which provides criteria for and ranking of college accreditations.²⁰⁷

American Association for Adult Education

According to C. H. Grattan, the American Association for Adult Education (AAAE) was the brain child of the Carnegie Foundation and was founded “to create a national organization to gather all varieties of adult education into a single fold to co-ordinate efforts, promote ideas, or influence standards.”²⁰⁸ It was Andrew Carnegie’s belief that the spread of knowledge (scientific and historical fact), which was initially done via libraries, had not worked as well as hoped. Grattan credits William S. Learned, a staff member of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, for bringing the corporation’s attention to the dilemma that adult

²⁰⁶ William A. Katz, *Dahl's History of the Book*, No. 2 (New York: Scarecrow Press, 1958), 238.

²⁰⁷ Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, *The Politics of Knowledge: The Carnegie Corporation, Philanthropy, and Public Policy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

²⁰⁸ C. H. Grattan, *In Quest of Knowledge: A Historical Perspective on Adult Education* (New York: Associated Press, 1955), 276.

education was sporadic, yet widespread and needed to be organized and systemized.²⁰⁹

Stubblefield and Keane noted that in the early 1920s, the Carnegie Corporation's initiatives became the catalyst for a social movement in adult education. Examples of these endeavors included commissioning several adult education studies that eventually led to the organization of the AAAE in 1926. One function of the AAAE was to conduct research studies on how adults learn, examine to what extent adults had the ability to continue learning, and in which formats the best learning took place. However, the AAAE studies of that time looked exclusively at liberal education and worked under the hypothesis that teachers are not social activists, but instruments of knowledge.²¹⁰

The organization later merged with the Department of Adult Education of the National Education Association in 1951 to become the adult education Association of the U.S.A. (AEA-USA). It continued to be influential and collaborative. In 1982, the AEA-USA combined with the National Association of Public School Adult Educators to form the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE), which continues to thrive.

Today the mission of the AAACE is to provide leadership in the field of adult education, promoting standards for the field and working on public policy and social change initiatives. The current vision statement reads as follows:

The American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) is dedicated to the belief that lifelong learning contributes to human fulfillment and positive social change. We envision a more humane world made possible by the diverse practice of our members in helping adults acquire the knowledge, skills and values needed to lead productive and satisfying lives.²¹¹

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Stubblefield and Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience*. Also see Amy D. Rose, "Beyond Classroom Walls: The Carnegie Corporation and the Founding of the American Association for Adult Education," *Adult Education Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (1989): 140–51.

²¹¹ Overview of the Adult Education Association (AEA-USA)/American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) Records Collection, Syracuse University Library, accessed February 25, 2014, <http://library.syr.edu/digital/guides/a/aaace.htm#d2e51>.

CHAPTER THREE: METHOD AND RESEARCH STRATEGY

Introduction

In order for this study to be successful, understanding the motivations and actions of Turner within the context of the era in which he lived was essential. Now that the extensive framework of his era and the social norms and reformations in political, economic, urbanization and rural homesteading, and educational thought of the American Progressive Movement are established, as well an overview of the types of adult education programs available and/or developed during the Progressive Era, Turner and the work he accomplished can be examined through the lens of the late 1800s and early 1900s and not the viewpoints or expectations of the 21st century. Since the study sought insight into a potential connection between adult learning theory, practices, and principles and Frederick Jackson Turner the study can now focus on Turner's actions within the context of the time he lived juxtaposed with andragogical practices and the adult learning leaders previously introduced.

The research was done as a case study with the following guiding questions:

1. Did Frederick Jackson Turner knowingly or unknowingly reflect andragogical philosophy and practices in his teaching and learning experiences?
2. What previous instruction and/or formal training, if any, did Frederick Jackson Turner have in adult education as a field and as an area of practice?
3. Would Frederick Jackson Turner have described himself as an adult educator, and would modern-day adult educators have considered him a colleague?

I selected a case study approach on the basis of its usefulness and appropriateness for qualitative research that focused on one person. According to Yin, a case study is a special kind of qualitative work that investigates a contextualized, contemporary phenomenon within a specified boundary. He also maintains that there are times in which exploring a single case is a

valid form of scholarly inquiry because of the uniqueness of the boundaries.²¹² Merriam concurred that a case study is appropriate for “a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution, or a social group.”²¹³

Further support for case study as a vehicle of research comes from Creswell, who explained that case study research characteristics include the examination of a particular topic or person bound by parameters chosen by the researcher. He stipulated that a case should provide a detailed description of contextual material about the case setting, gather extensive material from multiple sources to provide an in-depth picture of the case, and use the researcher as an instrument of data collection. This is true whether the research includes a single-case or a multiple-case analysis.²¹⁴

Rationale for Design Type

Strauss and Corbin defined a qualitative study as “any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification.”²¹⁵ They clarified that qualitative methods can be used to better understand any phenomenon about which little is known. Trying to determine Turner’s involvement or lack thereof in the field of adult learning, in an era when social thinking toward the United States’ educational framework and philosophy was at a pivotal stage of change, qualifies this study as a topic that has not yet been explored. Throughout my research, I found no less than 200 master’s thesis and dissertation studies referring to Turner and his written works on American History; however, these studies have been in the fields of history, psychology, and English. I have yet to find any research in the field of adult education about Turner.

Guba and Lincoln suggested that a case study “must have a specific framework structure of identifying a problem, having a context of the problem, a possible resolution of the identified issue and a lesson learned.”²¹⁶ This study met all four criteria. The specific framework is the life of Turner and his potential role in adult education. The context is time-bound as the American

²¹² Yin, *Case Study Research*.

²¹³ Merriam, “The Case Study in Educational Research,” 213.

²¹⁴ John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998).

²¹⁵ Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1990), 17.

²¹⁶ Egon G. Guba and Yvonna S. Lincoln, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1981), 36.

Progressive Era of the late 1880s and early 1900s. The resolution of the identified issue is that of exploring the qualities and actions through which Turner emulated adult learning theories, principles, and practices in his teaching style. Finally, lessons learned determined whether, and to what extent, Turner should be considered a contemporary practitioner in the field of American adult learning.

According to Yin, a case study design should be considered when (a) the focus of the study is to answer “how” and “why” questions, (b) one cannot manipulate the behavior of those involved (e.g., they are deceased), (c) one wants to cover contextualized material within a set of specific boundaries, and/or (d) the information is relevant to a specified phenomenon or field of study.²¹⁷ Since Turner lived at a time in American History when scientific inquiry was taking shape, new technological advances were being made, and new educational thought was developing, a case study on Turner was apropos in light of what Stake described as “issues [that] are not simple and clean, but intricately wired to political, social, historical, and especially personal contexts. All these meanings are important in studying cases.”²¹⁸

Case study analysis was an appropriate choice for this study because I was able to investigate holistically and in depth Turner’s relationship with adult education in the era in which he lived. The purpose was to find parallels between events in Turner’s life and the underlying principles of known practitioners of adult learning and lifelong learners. The specific research questions of this study examined and explored interactions and events that occurred between Frederick Jackson Turner, his students, and his colleagues. Stake strengthened the case for the choice of method. He defended the validity of using case study models by stating that case study research is “appropriate to use exploratory research because such research allows for specific questions about a very narrow topic.”²¹⁹

Researcher’s Role

I had been trained as an elementary teacher and school administrator. Until my doctoral matriculation I had never had the opportunity to work with classmates employed by corporate America, Government agencies such as the FBI, or contract work. As an elementary school

²¹⁷ Yin, *Case Study Research*.

²¹⁸ Robert E. Stake, *The Art of Case Study Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1995), 17.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

teacher, I was amazed at how much I did not know about creating sound staff development and training curricula and the methodology of teaching adults. I must admit I struggled for a long time to view information and ideas through an adult learning lens. Finally, I was able to contextualize that a school system had its own unique construct of a defined organization, like that of a corporate organization. Once this realization was made, I was better able to internalize the theories, concepts, and principles being presented to me.

However, another struggle commenced. As I began to recognize what it meant to view a school system as an organization, I found that I once again was like a fish out of water. I now had knowledge about adult learning principles and practices from my coursework that my colleagues at the school where I worked did not. Although I was able to look holistically at mandated policies and practices made by people who were not directly connected to those who worked at a school level, I found it problematic when I could not rationalize why certain policies were made by those who may have never worked as a public school educator. I understood that the school board's and superintendent's obligations were to serve the collective student body and community, but at times I found their inflexibility to refine those policies to fit the specific student and parent population of each school community difficult.

I tried to conceptualize how these policies could affect my ability to do my job and be successful. I found myself asking my direct supervisors questions about long-term goals and rationale for certain decisions. I also articulated ways in which I thought new protocols could be implemented more easily in our particular school. It was not until I began to understand that I had not made it clear to others that my questioning was not because of insubordination or arrogance, but simply my way of trying to integrate what I had been learning about andragogy and adult learning into the context of my job, that I saw their point of view more clearly. Therefore, one of my most important roles as a researcher of this study was to make sure that I was clear in my expectations and did not allow inaccurate assumptions or misunderstandings to occur, whether that be in the type of data I reviewed, how it was coded, or how it was represented in the narrative I wrote.

I first became familiar with Turner in a historical research methods course I took in my Adult Learning and Human Resource Development studies. We had been discussing immigration and how a seminal piece Turner wrote sparked a national debate as to what it meant to be an American. This topic was of particular interest to me because my husband immigrated to the

United States on asylum and was in the process of preparing for his citizenship test. Also, as an English as a Second Language teacher, I worked with students and families trying to navigate the American educational system and the difficulties of daily life when one does not speak the language of the country in which one lives.

Because of my previous life experiences, I wanted to make sure that I focused my research on Turner in terms of andragogy and adult learning practices. For example, I could not allow myself to get distracted with other topics of interest, such as immigration restriction, which was also happening at the time of Turner's life and of great interest to me. I needed to stay cognizant of the greater context. If I was not conscious of this potential distraction, I risked inaccurately depicting Turner's role and could have allowed myself to be clouded by sentiments of the era, potentially editorializing about Turner's actions instead of simply laying them out logically and reporting on them within the proper construct. It was also incumbent upon me to look at multiple sources of data to verify patterns with open-mindedness, not judging Turner but understanding what was learned about him in the context of the era in which he lived.

Creswell defined the role of a researcher in qualitative inquiry as follows: "The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting."²²⁰ As a researcher, it was my duty to learn about the experiences of Frederick Jackson Turner and to present any new understandings of his practices and educational experiences via the lens of adult learning theory and principles. By trying to understand as much as possible and digging deeply, I hoped to create a thorough understanding of Turner's point of view and how it related to andragogy and the field of adult education, i.e., perhaps as an example of someone who taught adults with respect and honor for their intellectual abilities.

Data Collection

Case study through qualitative design allows the researcher to "retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events."²²¹ Yin stated,

An exploratory case study consists of: (a) an accurate rendition of the facts of the case, (b) some consideration of alternative explanations of these facts, and (c) a

²²⁰ Creswell, *Research Design*, 15.

²²¹ Yin, *Case Study Research*, 4.

conclusion based on the single explanation that appears most congruent with the facts.²²²

Informative data collected in this study included document reviews of Turner's published works, personal letters, and journals; biographies; newspapers; and archived documents. I reviewed commentaries about Turner written by students, protégés, and colleagues such as Herbert E. Bolton and Edward Everett Dale. It was important to make sure that data were collected from many sources to create a complete picture of Turner and his teaching philosophy, practices, and personal learning experiences. I then integrated the data into a holistic view of Turner and his potential role as an adult educator. Along with information specifically about Turner, the parameters of the data collection included:

- the era of the late 1800s to the early 1900s, with occasional forays into earlier periods that informed the case study's timeframe of focus
- andragogy, defined broadly as having to do with the learning by adults, including
 - self-concept
 - experience
 - readiness to learn
 - orientation to learning
 - motivation
- the adult learning theories of Eduard Lindeman, Malcolm Knowles, Allen Tough, Jack Mezirow, and John Henschke – selected for their respected positions within the adult education establishment
- adult learning principles of self-directedness and homonomy, accumulated life experience and goal orientation, and transformative learning – selected for their key roles within adult education theory and practice
- characteristics of an adult educator
 - a. knowledge of learners

²²² Robert K. Yin, "The Case Study Crisis: Some Answers," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 26, no. 1 (1981): 58.

- b. knowledge of andragogical practices
 - c. knowledge about subject matter
 - d. expectations of teacher-learner relationships in relation to the three research questions listed at the beginning of this chapter
- factors that identify the beliefs, feelings, and behaviors of adult educators
 - a. planning and delivery of instruction
 - b. learner-centered learning process
 - c. facilitator's empathy with learners
 - d. accommodating learner uniqueness
 - e. facilitator's trust of learners

The areas for particular exploration were Turner's post-secondary educational experiences, his work as a professor at the University of Wisconsin and Harvard, his involvement in the Chautauqua Institute and university extension programs, and his activities in retirement that aligned with adult education.

Data Analysis

Yin compared data collection and analysis to that of detective work. He suggested using the "logic model," which tries to outline relationships that link information with outcomes and then aligns them with what is being studied. Like a detective, a researcher must put together pieces of information that may or may not be relative to the case. This information then needs to be organized into themes or patterns to determine the relevance of the information.²²³ Similarly, Bogdan and Biklen defined qualitative data analysis as,

...working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others.²²⁴

²²³ Interview with Karen Horsch and Cami Anderson, *The Harvard Evaluation Exchange*, 3, no. 1, 4.

²²⁴ Robert C. Bogdan and Sari Knopp Biklen, *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods* (Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 1982), 145.

Therefore, since Turner and his contemporaries are no longer available for direct quotes or comments, I scoured written data of all kinds, which is the fundamental task of a historian who is writing traditional (as opposed to oral) history.

Continuing the discussion of the importance of multiple data sources, Merriam suggested checking, verifying, testing, probing, and confirming collected data as one goes. She argued that this process will follow in a funnel-like design, resulting in less data gathering in later phases of the study along with a congruent increase in analysis checking, verifying, and confirming.²²⁵ This multidimensional comprehensive approach aided me in putting together the context, social attitude, and activities of the time of Turner, gave meaning and continuity to the study, and helped me draw conclusions about outcomes of events and activities. It also allowed me to identify and reconcile inconsistencies in the data.

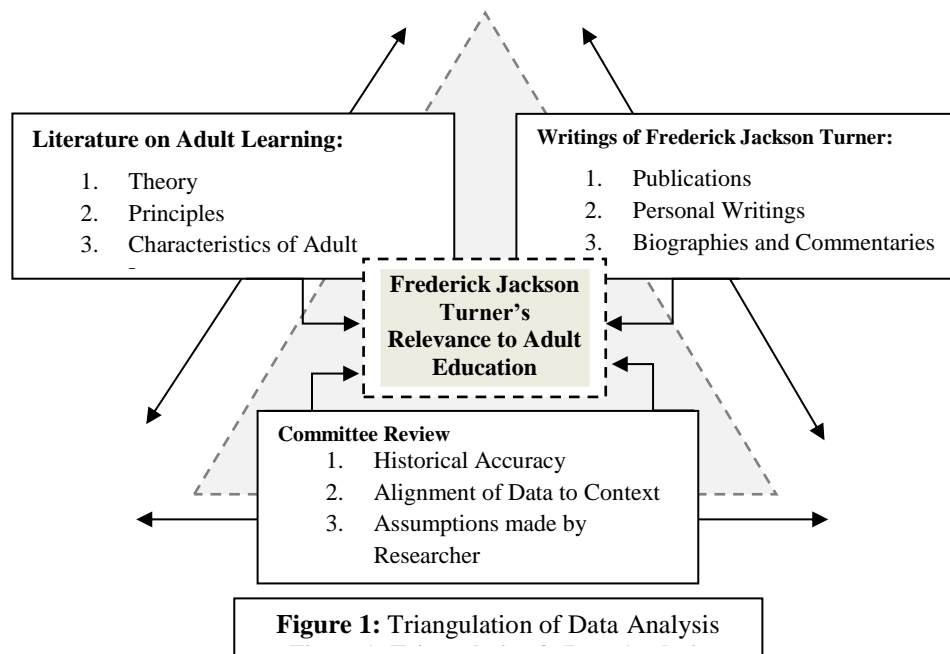
Data Triangulation

I needed to have specific data quality procedures in place to ensure that the study was credible, valid and the methods were dependable. Guion, Diehl, and McDonald stated that data triangulation involves using different types of information to increase the validity of a study's outcomes. This type of triangulation is perhaps the most popular because it is the easiest to implement.²²⁶ This study used a triangulation strategy that assumed (see Figure 1):

- more than one piece of data supported patterns or themes
- subsets of my committee would be used as secondary reviewers to ensure
 - historical accuracy
 - data and analysis alignment with theories, principles, and characteristics of andragogy and adult learners
 - conclusions and/or assumptions in the analysis were logical and not editorialized

²²⁵ Merriam, "Case Study in Educational Research," 204–17.

²²⁶ Lisa A. Guion, David C. Diehl, and Debra McDonald, "Triangulation: Establishing the Validity of Qualitative Studies" (Paper presented at the Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Gainesville, FL, 2011).



This cross-checking of data was important when simultaneously conducting data collection, interpreting data, and writing conclusions to keep coherent track of themes and patterns. As such, this task was done through coding patterns and themes.

Stemler wrote that interpretation should be made through the support of facts and not predisposed assumptions.²²⁷ At times facts supported presuppositions, namely, the idea that Frederick Jackson Turner did, indeed, model adult learning principles and practices, whereas other data challenged or negated suppositions. It was important for me to keep an open mind, forcing myself not to look for information that leaned toward any biases I had about Turner. It was essential to constantly reread conclusions or interpretations I had made to make sure they were an accurate account of what happened, not pontificating or speculating about what I “thought” happened, and to put together a concrete and logical path when I made conclusions.

Another strategy I employed when determining patterns and themes was to make sure I weeded out material not in alignment with the objectives of the study. Tesch called this “de-contextualizing” and “re-contextualizing.”²²⁸ For example, I had to resist my tendency to want to keep anything related to immigration. This information would not have been appropriate for

²²⁷ Steve Stemler, “An Overview of Content Analysis,” *Practical Assessment, Research and Evaluation* 7, no. 17 (2001): 137–46.

²²⁸ Renata Tesch, *Qualitative Research: Analysis Types and Software Tools* (New York: Routledge Falmer, 1990), 97.

this study and would have caused me to come to inaccurate conclusions about Turner's actions or motivations. Tesch stated, "While much work in the analysis process consists of 'taking apart' ... the final goal is the emergence of a larger, consolidated picture."²²⁹ Tesch added that determining what data to keep and what data would lead the researcher away from the tenets of the study is a form of higher-level analysis.²³⁰

Credibility

Since I was the instrument of data collection, I needed to make sure that the data were high quality from credible resources, accurate, and triangulated. This particular type of data assisted me in making sure that bias and error did not creep into the coding or results, thus safeguarding credibility. Therefore, I had to focus on using primary sources whenever they were in existence and did not use secondary sources that were not readily verifiable.

Validity

External validity needed to be confirmed. Internal validity refers to the confidence one has in a relationship existing, in this case between Frederick Jackson Turner, his teaching practices, and adult learning principles. External validity refers to the confidence in the study results. A threat to external validity would have been if themes or patterns I derived were not based on logic or credible information. Patton noted that triangulation is an important way to strengthen a study design and strengthen validity.²³¹ Therefore, it was crucial that I was in constant contact with my committee, asking questions in reference to data types and coding, particularly to ensure that bias was not leeching into the study and historical references were interpreted correctly.

Subjectivity and Generalizations

In reference to subjectivity, I needed to be cognizant of my biases. I had to be conscious of the andragogical principles defined in this study and re-examine the events I documented in

²²⁹ Ibid., 98.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1990).

order to assure accuracy and authenticity of the time period. I also had to make sure that footnotes were accurate so that anyone who wanted to research this topic in the future would have a path to finding documents I used. Further, I needed to go to great lengths to make sure that my interpretation of the data was logical and factually plausible. As Merriam suggested, I engaged in peer consultations to establish a “pooled agreement of judgments.”²³²

For example, I had a colleague who knew nothing of Turner and is not schooled in adult learning theory periodically look at the data I collected, to (a) determine if the data source appeared to be appropriate, (b) review the patterns and themes for agreement, (c) determine whether generalizations made were reasonable, and (d) determine whether the writing of the narrative was too broad or needed more detail to make themes and patterns clear, concise, and specific.

Conclusion

Because there were so many facets to this era, it was important for me to concentrate on documentation that referred to elements of Frederick Jackson Turner in relation to adult education. I needed to make sure I placed data from other aspects of this era, such as immigration restriction and social reforms outside of education, aside in order to stay on course. It was imperative that I followed my triangulation format and frequently conversed with committee members.

I had to be diligent in working with the committee member who had a background in history and historical research. I also had to communicate with the committee member whose life work evolved around andragogy and adult learning theories and practices. This collaboration was essential so that I did not misinterpret data or quotes from that time period, thereby potentially coding a theme where it did not belong.

This study had its challenges, but I accepted these challenges so that I could provide due diligence and stay the course, not falling victim to overgeneralizations or coding patterns/themes that were outside the purview of this study. By doing so, I feel confident that I was able to honor Frederick Jackson Turner’s integrity as a historian in reference to his diligence toward the accuracy of the historical process and his rigorous attention to historical fact and context, as well as to add to his legacy by documenting his qualities as a talented and dedicated adult educator.

²³² Merriam, “Case Study in Educational Research,” 204–17.

CHAPTER FOUR: FREDERICK JACKSON TURNER, THE MAN

Early Life

Frederick Jackson Turner graduated from the University of Wisconsin (now the University of Wisconsin–Madison) in 1884. He won an oratorical medal in his undergraduate work and is often depicted as being a gifted and active public speaker.²³³ Turner continued his education at his alma mater and received a master's degree in history in 1888. Turner then went to Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, where he studied with the likes of Woodrow Wilson. Turner's dissertation, "The Character and Influence of the Indian Trade in Wisconsin," earned him a Doctor of Philosophy degree in the field of history in 1890.

Turner was the eldest of three children in the Andrew Jackson Turner and Mary Hanford Turner family. He was born on November 14, 1861, in Portage, Wisconsin, a town of the "Old Northwest," where the sense of being on the frontier still existed. At that time, Portage was a very small town with a population of little more than 2,800. The residents of Portage were far from homogeneous Anglo-Saxons. The diverse cultural background included townsman who were of French, German, Canadian, British Isles, Scottish, Swiss, and Italian descent, as well as from neighboring Indian tribes.²³⁴

Prior to their marriage, Mary Hanford was a school teacher. Andrew Turner worked as a typesetter at the *Portage Independent*, but a year after the birth of Andrew's first child he decided to buy the *Portage Record*. Entrepreneurial in spirit, Andrew then acquired a rival newspaper that was struggling to stay solvent. The two enterprises merged and became a successful newspaper until 1878 when Andrew sold the paper. A journalist at heart, Andrew Turner was also a frequent editor of the *Wisconsin State Registrar*, a weekly newspaper of which he was later part owner.

There were many sides to Andrew Turner. He was multitalented, and his career as a newspaper owner was only one of his roles in life.²³⁵ Mr. Turner valued sportsmanship and the outdoors, and education. He was an investor in ventures such as the expanding railroad. He amassed a personal library of over 400 works that included classics such as *Don Quixote* and *The*

²³³ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

²³⁴ Bogue, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Strange Roads Going Down*.

²³⁵ Martin Ridge, "The Life of an Idea: The Significance of Frederick Jackson Turner's Frontier Thesis," *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 41, no. 1 (1991): 2–13.

Federalist. His son, Fred, as he was called by his family, was often found reading books from this large collection. Andrew Turner was also an active member of the Republican Party. He once represented Columbia County in the state assembly, was a four-term mayor of Portage, and was appointed by the governor to the Wisconsin Railroad Commission.²³⁶

Fred spent much of his time with his father and discussed this relationship in an 1887 letter to his future wife, Caroline Mae Sherwood,

He [Turner's father] has always been the best of fathers; undemonstrative, often taciturn, but always kind and full of that deep affection that does not show itself at the surface so much—but which abides.²³⁷

Some of the duo's favorite activities were hunting, fishing, and playing sports such as curling. Fred also enjoyed discussing politics with his father, working at his newspaper, and attending Lyceum lectures with him.²³⁸

Fred excelled at school and was consistently first or second in his class. This earned him placement on the honor roll for each reporting period. His ending grade point average was 90.8%.²³⁹ Because of his school record, Turner received top honors at his high school graduation in 1878, which later paved the way for university admission. Already an excellent speaker, he was one of the eighteen graduates required to give a speech as part of the commencement. One of these addresses would be chosen as the best—today, this honor would be equivalent to being named Valedictorian. Fred's title was "The Power of the Press," and the *Wisconsin State Registrar* would report that not only did Turner walk away with first prize but he also captivated the audience, stating "his thought was original, his style clear and forcible, and his manner self-possessed and very earnest."²⁴⁰

²³⁶ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

²³⁷ Turner to Caroline Mae Sherwood (hereafter Mae), June 15, 1887, HEHT box A.

²³⁸ Turner to Mae, February 6, 1887, HEHT box A.

²³⁹ Frederick Jackson Turner Transcript, University of Wisconsin Archives, Frederick Jackson Turner Miscellaneous File.

²⁴⁰ "High School Graduation Exercises – reprinted Prize Oration, June 20, 1878 F.J. Turner", *Wisconsin State Register*, July 6, 1878.

Perhaps Turner won because of words such as,

...a necessary adjunct of every free government. ... The people will make known their power through it, and will resist all tendency toward oppression ... as Freedom of the Press increases, so does the freedom of the people ... a want of education among the lower classes of the nation is shown by the rise in our midst of Communism, that fell child of ignorance and crime ... with the aid of the press, however, that great long wished for reform—the education of the masses—becomes not only a possibility, but even a probability.²⁴¹

Or his conclusion,

Books are the true Elysian fields where spirits of the Dead converse, and into these fields a mortal may venture unappalled. – What king's court can boast such company? What school of philosophy such wisdom?²⁴²

Although we will never know the conversation that transpired among the judges, what can be said is that Turner, at a young age, was able to show his intellect through writing and voice. This also gives a glimpse into his thought development. He was a product of the Progressive Era and influenced by his family, teachers, studies, and community. He embraced the prevailing belief that in order for America to be a free and prosperous nation, education, democracy, and the responsibility one must take within society were important.

Even as a young man, Turner began thinking about people living in the western part of the United States and how he, particularly, fit in the tapestry of American society. In 1887 Turner wrote his future wife,

I am placed in a *new* society that is just beginning to realize that it has made a place for itself by mastering the wilderness and peopling the prairie, and is now ready to take its great course in universal history.²⁴³

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Reprinted in Ronald H. Carpenter, *The Eloquence of Frederick Jackson Turner* (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1983), 119–20.

²⁴³ Turner to Mae, September 5, 1887, HEHT box A.

College Bound

Turner was accepted by the University of Wisconsin (UW) at Madison and began in September 1878. At that time the university only had approximately 450 students. Although he expected to finish his education in four uneventful years, family emergencies and his own poor health made the journey more difficult. For example, in the summer of 1879 Fred was stricken with spinal meningitis, which almost took his life and kept him from his studies for two years.²⁴⁴ This life experience, cheating death at a time when that disease was often fatal, also helped shape Turner's philosophy about learning, life, and being.

However, his illness did not deter him from his studies. Whenever able, he took the time to read texts that other UW students from Portage reported they were reading and discussing in their coursework, as well as other works considered the literature of scholars. Although he could not physically participate in any of the discussions taking place in Madison, he often jotted notes to himself in his commonplace book, a journal or notebook that students were required to keep. This learning tool was used to keep reflections of thoughts that transpired from given readings or class discussions, noteworthy quotations, and any information students felt were necessary to use as a basis for further instruction. From 1879 to the spring of 1881, Fred recorded 36 books he had read by authors such as Dickens, George Eliot, Cooper, and Hawthorne.²⁴⁵

Once back at UW in the fall of 1881 for his sophomore year, Fred made up for lost time. In addition to his coursework, he exposed himself to the plethora of social opportunities offered in and around Madison. He watched performances of Shakespeare's plays and frequently went to lectures offered by luminaries such as Henry Ward Beecher and John Fiske. Fred also continued to be active in extracurricular activities. In his junior year he was elected to the Athletic Association—an interesting post considering his poor health. However, athletics were not what motivated Fred in this venture. He simply wanted a chance to serve his college, and the association included activities such as fundraising, organization of uniforms, scheduling, and finding ways to improve school spirit.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁴ Turner's health issues were chronicled in the *Wisconsin State Register* from August 1879 through May 1880.

²⁴⁵ Turner, *Commonplace Book*, 1881, HEHT vol. 3.

²⁴⁶ Turner, *Commonplace Book*, 1881, HEHT vol. 3; Also see *The Badger* (weekly campus newspaper of the University of Wisconsin (beginning January 5, 1882 name changed to *The University Press* in 1885), February 23, 1882, HEHT box 59.

Fred also spent much of his time working on the school's weekly newspaper, *The Badger* and participating in intra-society oratorical competitions. In his role at *The Badger* Fred later became the secretary-treasurer of the Badger Association in his junior year and its president senior year.²⁴⁷ Fred also excelled in his oratory endeavors. At the end of his junior year he won the Burrows Prize, which was given to only five students yearly.²⁴⁸ His success in oration was due to the help of two professors, David B. Frankenburger, professor of rhetoric and oratory, and William Francis Allen, professor of ancient languages and history. Frankenburger was an admired teacher, and later became Fred's friend. Turner described him as,

[a] teacher, who taught ... more than the formal art of expression ... [his] rare, questioning smile ... the best and the highest lying like the seed within our souls.²⁴⁹

However, it was Professor Allen who had the most influence on the young Turner. In Allen's classes Turner began his passion for the study of history. He especially enjoyed these because of the way Allen conducted them. Allen took a Socratic approach. Although Allen had content and objectives he wanted the students to understand, Turner noted in one of his commonplace books that he appreciated how Allen would approach a lecture by asking a question. One example is when Professor Allen posed the question, "Is society necessarily progressive?" With these questions, Allen would entice the class to pull from what they had read, interject reflections of the subject matter, and apply it to the question at hand.²⁵⁰

Allen would also require the students to investigate topics he assigned and prepare fifteen-minute presentations for the class, complete with documentation. Fred enjoyed this approach to teaching and thrived on independent inquiry. In time, Turner became a protégé of Allen, taking over teaching Allen's courses when the professor became ill.²⁵¹

Oration continued to be an exceptionally enjoyable extracurricular activity for Turner. Graduating with honors in 1884, he gave the prize-winning senior oration, "Architecture through Oppression." In his speech, Turner argued that societies of the past produced wonderful

²⁴⁷ *The Campus* (weekly campus newspaper of the University of Wisconsin from Oct. 6 to Dec. 15, 1881, name changed to *The Badger* on January 5, 1882), October 6, 13, 1881, and *The Badger*, June 23, 1883.

²⁴⁸ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

²⁴⁹ Frederick Jackson Turner, "Eulogy of David B. Frankenburger," in Carpenter, *Eloquence of Frederick Jackson Turner*, 132.

²⁵⁰ Frederick Jackson Turner Papers, box C, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Manuscript Collections.

²⁵¹ Bogue, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Strange Roads Going Down*.

architectural achievements from the sweat of its citizens. He continued by stating lessons should be learned not only by observing the power structures imposed upon individuals but also understanding individuals have the ability to fight against the exploitation of the less fortunate:

Millions groaning, that one might laugh, servile tillers of the soil, sweating that others might dream; drinking the logwood [lopwood] of life, while their masters quaffed its nectar. . . . [in] a wave of democratic totalitarianism, the 19th century [was] striving to build humanity into a glorious temple to its God . . . when life's tragedies shall cease to clash with life's romance, and the squalor of the hobbles shall no longer mark the cathedral's beauty, then again may music freeze into marble and force bloom into stone.²⁵²

From Allen's coursework Fred began to see the value of looking at the world in a context based on the political, economic, cultural, and environmental milieu of the citizens in a locality. He saw the value of Allen's belief that rigorous scientific techniques Allen learned at Harvard would revolutionize historical studies in the United States. Harvard embraced Darwin's evolutionary theory and the practice of scientific inquiry and began to incorporate the process into other disciplines of study. Professor Allen wanted his classes to embody Charles Darwin's principal of biological evolution and apply such scientific inquiry to the field of history. Additionally, Allen did not believe that traditional rote-memorization begat the best learning. Therefore, he encouraged his students to think more broadly and creatively about finding tools and reading material to inform their scholarship.²⁵³

Turner was impressed by Allen's method of encouraging students to find the cause and affect relationships of historical events by attempting to understand the influences that surrounded the event. Allen's words became a blueprint for how Turner would conduct academic scholarship for the rest of his life: "No historical fact has any value except so far as it helps us to understand human nature and the working of historical forces."²⁵⁴

Turner eventually applied the techniques he learned from Professor Allen when he was given an opportunity to work on a research project requested by Professor Herbert Baxter Adams

²⁵² Carpenter, *Eloquence of Frederick Jackson Turner*, 125–226. Although the text says "logwood," Turner probably used the term "lopwood," which means wasted materials. Also see Turner, *Commonplace Book for 1883*, HEHT vol. 3(2).

²⁵³ Herbert Baxter Adams, *Historical Scholarship in the United States, 1876–1901: As Revealed in the Correspondence of Herbert B. Adams* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1938), 88.

²⁵⁴ William F. Allen, *Essays and Monographs* (Boston, MA: Ellis, 1890), 13.

of John Hopkins University. Instead of conducting the work himself, Professor Allen asked six of his students to aid in the process, and Turner was one of these students. He eagerly accepted the offer, thus embarking on a journey that eventually became a piece printed in the *Wisconsin State Register* on June 23, 1883. His work was also accepted by Professor Allen and forwarded to Adams.²⁵⁵

It was during this project that Turner began to develop his theories as to how and why society behaved as it did. He reasoned that if man evolved, then surely society evolves since society is made up of living organisms. In keeping with the intellectual trends that were sweeping America in the 1880s and incorporating Darwinist theory into sociology and many other fields Turner, in his commonplace book noted,

They [Darwin and Herbert Spencer] have given us a new world ... the persistence of historical forces in the light of the development hypothesis. An intellectual understanding of the past by this key would give so many generalizations that the proper completion of such a work would inaugurate a new era. Science has of late years revolutionized Zoology, Biology, etc. It must now take up recorded History and do the same by it. This I would like to do my little to aid.²⁵⁶

On His Own for the First Time

After graduation Turner had no real plans for the future. He saw his choices as working in journalism, teaching high school, or obtaining a professorship in rhetoric and oration — although he found the study of history more enticing. Turner did not consider a professorship in history for at that time few American colleges had a Department of History, let alone offered degrees in history. In fact, students would be lucky to find any history courses in course catalogs of most colleges.²⁵⁷

With familiarity of the newspaper business, the ability to do research, his keen sense for the use of words, and his role as a part-time journalist for the *Milwaukee Sentinel* (which he began his last year of undergraduate study), Turner decided to begin his professional life with a

²⁵⁵ The original request for aid in research from Adams to Alan came in a letter dated April 16, 1882, HEHT box 1. Also see letter published in the *Wisconsin State Register*, June 23, 1883.

²⁵⁶ Turner, *Commonplace Book for 1883*, HEHT vol. 3(2). Herbert Spencer was a biologist and sociologist, from England, who wrote about evolution before Darwin's writings became popular.

²⁵⁷ David John Frank, Suk-Ying Wong, John W. Meyer, and Francisco O. Ramirez, "What Counts as History: A Cross-National and Longitudinal Study of University Curricula," *Comparative Education Review* 44, no. 1 (2000): 29–53.

career as part of the press. He was offered a full-time position with the *Milwaukee Sentinel* and obtained a part-time post as a correspondent for the paper in Madison.²⁵⁸

Turner was a successful newspaper reporter. In June 1884, he uncovered and researched a plot to oust current UW president John Bascom.²⁵⁹ However, instead of being rewarded for investigative prowess, a more experienced correspondent was sent to continue reporting on the issue which was disheartening to Turner. Ever resourceful, Turner landed jobs writing columns about Madison's news at both the *Chicago Inter-Ocean* and the *Wisconsin State Register*.²⁶⁰ His reputation grew as a reporter with integrity and his ability to document his research. Although progressing in a promising career, Turner did not find newspaper work as exciting as he had hoped. However, fate would intervene, and a new door soon opened for him.²⁶¹

A New Career Path

In the spring of 1885, Professor Allen provided Turner with an opportunity to try teaching at the university level, as Allen was hoping to study in Europe. His reasons for approaching Turner and leaving UW were twofold: (a) he had had an extremely heavy teaching load in the past years and felt he needed to reconnect himself with present-day living European History, and (b) his health had begun to fail. Taking the opportunity to study in Europe would provide him an opportunity to gain back his strength. Turner eagerly agreed, excited for the opportunity to teach, but was also pleased to help his trusted mentor. He immediately began preparing to teach Allen's rhetoric and oratory courses.²⁶²

Little did Turner know that by accepting this position he would forever change his life. He had continued reading and studying history even after he had graduated from UW with the hope of someday teaching one of Professor Allen's history courses. This dedication to continued study was critical when preparing coursework for his students. Although the preparation required long hours and endless reading and planning Turner enjoyed his stint

²⁵⁸ Fulmer Mood, "Frederick Jackson Turner and the *Milwaukee Sentinel*, 1884," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 34, (Autumn 1950): 21–28.

²⁵⁹ No Author, No Byline. *Wisconsin State Journal*, April 17, 1884.

²⁶⁰ Fulmer Mood, "Frederick Jackson Turner and the *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, 1885," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 35, no. 3 (Spring 1952): 188–218.

²⁶¹ Bogue, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Strange Roads Going Down*.

²⁶² Martin Ridge, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Wisconsin's Historian of the Frontier* (Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 1986).

substituting for Allen. By the time Allen returned, Turner was convinced that he had found his true vocation.

Turner discussed with Allen his desire to join the ranks of those educating youth seeking a university education. Turner told Allen he would be willing to do whatever was necessary to reach his lofty goal. Allen agreed to help in whatever way he could and began to guide Turner in a direction that would make his newfound dream a reality.

Turner wanted to start immediately and Allen looked for vacancies that would accommodate Turner's skills. There were no openings available to teach history courses, which Allen knew Turner would prefer, but an assistant was needed by Professor Frankenburger in the Rhetoric and Oratory Department.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, reciting essays was one requirement for freshman and sophomore students.²⁶³ Frankenburger took advantage of Turner's enthusiasm and gave him a heavy load of approximately 400 students, each of whom had a minimum of six rhetorical exercises per semester. Turner spent hours meeting with his students, individually preparing them for their oral exams. Although frustrated by the inadequacy of his students' initial skills, Turner was satisfied with his semester's work. The May 29, 1886 issue of the *Wisconsin State Journal* discussed the oration event, "The whole programme spoke well for the efforts of Mr. Fred J. Turner, instructor in elocution."²⁶⁴ Overjoyed but exhausted, Turner went home to Portage with plans not to work or read but to relax and enjoy nature, hunting, fishing, and taking time to reconnect with family and friends.

Perhaps the gods of Academia were determined to bless Turner in his choice of career. An unexpected increase in student enrollment for the fall of 1886 provided an opening at UW for Turner. The freshman class had almost doubled. Professor Allen's courses were extremely full and overscheduled. Overwhelmed by his workload, he petitioned the Board of Regents to divide the courses up into two or more sections, suggesting that Turner take on the extra workload with the title of "Instructor."

Since Allen was the only professor who taught history as part of his other duties, to alleviate his load, the board agreed to have Turner teach the American History courses. So as not to be accused of inequity of course load, as Allen had done, the board relieved Turner of half of

²⁶³ University of Wisconsin, *Catalogue of the University of Wisconsin for Academic Year 1886* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, 1885).

²⁶⁴ No Author, No Byline. *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 29, 1886.

the oration students he had originally commissioned to teach.²⁶⁵ This change allowed enough time in his schedule for Turner to begin graduate work with Professor Allen as his advisor. Turner completed his master's degree in 1888 with his master's thesis on the Indian Fur Trade in Wisconsin.

Again, fate would intervene in Turner's life. Teaching at the university full-time meant that Turner needed a permanent residence. Since 1885 he had been boarding on and off at the home of Mrs. Bross, both during his enrollment at the university and during his time at the *Sentinel*. He made arrangements for full-time residence there in 1887.

Previously, in June of 1886, Lucinda Sherwood, along with her daughter Caroline Mae, had come to visit her nephews who were staying at the same boarding house. Turner and Mae, as he always called her, had begun a friendship that continued through correspondence shortly after Mae and her mother returned to their home in Chicago.²⁶⁶ Turner quickly knew he wanted to marry Mae. In a letter to Mae on June 27, 1886, Turner wrote how difficult it had been without her company and that meeting up with her again "will be like a plum pudding when all the plums were at the top."²⁶⁷

As much as he wanted Mae in his life permanently, Turner knew it was best to wait until he had a solid career path and a reliable income. Now, with the prospect of continued full-time employment at the university, Turner decided that the time was right. Turner and Mae Sherwood became formally engaged during Christmas of 1887.²⁶⁸ On his way back to Madison and full of joy, Turner wrote to Mae,

I love you as I fancy in the old mediaeval days a Catholic loved the pure face of the Madonna. ... You seem to me a bit of God's best work. ... I feel something within me say that I will justify that love if God will let me.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁵ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

²⁶⁶ John Herbert Roper, *UB Phillips, a Southern Mind* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984).

²⁶⁷ Turner to Mae, June 27, 1886, HEHT box A.

²⁶⁸ Bogue, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Strange Roads Going Down*.

²⁶⁹ Turner to Mae (no date, estimated timeframe Christmas 1887), HEHT box A.

Setting Sights on Professorship

Although convinced he was intellectually prepared to move toward his goal of becoming a tenured professor, Turner embarked on a journey he was not emotionally equipped for at the time. With the ambition to prove himself worthy of tenure Turner began the endeavor with great optimism and confidence. It did not take long, however, for Turner to see that becoming an educator worthy of tenure would be an arduous task and began to second guess his ability to succeed. At the end of this second year as Instructor, Turner was beginning to doubt he would be placed on a tenure track. His concerns were substantiated when an opening in the history department became available and Turner was not considered for the post. Writing to his friend Woodrow Wilson, Turner discussed his discouragement,

When Prof. Allen died [December 9, 1889], he [UW President Chamberlin] came to me after a week, to inquire who would make a good successor to him, and particularly what young men had distinguished themselves. I mentioned as the only men who would satisfy his requirements... He consulted me about a number of men ... and left me the impression that he desired to select a new man ... and I was not on his list of candidates. ... In his conversations with me he has steadily avoided any distinct statement of his plans for next year. ...

Thus, I am left to await the spring market, and in the meantime to be tested, I suppose. I am not entirely pleased with the arrangement, for Pres. Chamberlin's actions will be entirely impossible of prediction, and in the meantime I am kept like Mohammed's coffin. Still I am trying to possess my soul in patience, spite of the fact that I begin to grow weary of having to keep one eye off my work in order to look out for my "official hand."²⁷⁰

Preparing coursework for his students as well as working on his master's thesis was time consuming and difficult. Earning his master's degree was taking longer than he anticipated. Although familiar with his topic, "The Wisconsin Fur Trade," Turner needed to research documents from the French Canadian traders. Delay in his work came from Turner's need to translate multiple documents from French to English. Although he had familiarity in the language, Turner was not a fluent speaker of French and needed to acquire more proficiency in his skills before he could piece together his thesis. Always persistent however, Turner finally

²⁷⁰ Turner to Wilson, January 23, 1890, HEHT box 1.

finished the piece in 1888.

Discouraged but steadfast in his desire to gain a professorship, Turner contemplated his next move. He decided that part of the emotional drain of this undertaking was the myriad of unknowns in his future. Three unknowns pressing on him were: (a) he was not in control of his salary; (b) he was not in control of the Board of Regents' decision to add a tenured position; and (c) he was not in control of which candidates would apply for a full-time tenure-track opportunity once a position opened. Ever the optimist, Turner reflected on what he could control.

Turner reasoned he could control his sense of awareness as to what the university looked for in a candidate such as the behaviors, knowledge, and expertise they would expect from a professor. He could control constructing a plan to take steps to acquire such knowledge and expertise. He could also control his dedication to his craft.²⁷¹ Turner knew from his dealings with his students and the evaluations he had received that he was well liked by the student body and that Professors Allen and Frankenburger thought him competent and capable.²⁷²

Reflecting on how he might align himself in a way that the Board of Regents would take notice of him and his accomplishments, he began devising a way to make them aware of the benefits of employing someone who was already familiar with the university's mission and protocols. Seeing an advertised position for a full-time high school teaching post in the area in which he felt clearly qualified for, Turner began to wonder if he could use the threat of taking the opening and leaving the university to his advantage. Writing to Mae,

I do not propose to be placed at the mercy of the regents next year. If I can say to them that I have an offer of twice the salary it may help me, you see— to make them do what I wish them to.²⁷³

Another decision that brought Turner closer to his goal was to earn a doctoral degree. He applied to and was accepted by Johns Hopkins University in Maryland. He was hopeful that his dissertation chair would be amenable to continue his research on the fur trade. He had spoken of this in his interview to Hopkins; all the while knowing that he still needed to work on his proficiency skills in French and German. Speaking of the interview process, Turner wrote to Professor Allen about a year before Allen's death discussing his aspirations to finish his

²⁷¹ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

²⁷² See multiple correspondences between Turner and Mae, HEHT boxes A and B (at times not dated), as well as box 62, Diary Pages, Also see Bogue, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Strange Roads Going Down*.

²⁷³ Turner to Mae, May 11, 1887, HEHT box A.

doctorate and the obstacles of completing it in a timely manner:

I have just returned from an interview with Dr. Adams [of Johns Hopkins]. On consultation with him I find that it may be possible for me to take my Ph.D. degree with only this year's residence here, provided I can get up reading French and German at sight at the end of the year ... Indeed, Dr. Adams thought I could take the degree this year before he knew that I could not read French and German at sight.²⁷⁴

Turner also knew making his name known in the academic world meant he would need to begin publishing. Although he wanted to teach at UW, he was concerned that a tenured position may not become available. Knowing he might not receive an offer from UW, he understood the need to be open to other options and consider alternative university positions. His thought process was evident in a letter he wrote to Mae, "Just now, my vision embraces only one object—a reputation sufficient as a basis for demands upon the university."²⁷⁵

With newfound energy, Turner spent every waking moment pursuing his new goals. Once his teaching responsibilities with students were completed, he spent part of each day in the library studying at least two hours. The rest of the time he would spend revising and planning course materials, a process he decided needed more rigor. He studied extensively to make sure that the information he presented to his students and the required readings he expected would not only be informative, but also thought provoking.

Turner wanted to teach in the manner of his mentor, Professor Allen—to stimulate independent thinking and lead students to their own sense of inquiry and wonder. Turner wanted to develop lessons from what he called a "genetic viewpoint." For Turner, a genetic viewpoint was the belief that all living things are interconnected in one way or another. He most likely created this term by aligning principles of Darwinism to the field of history. One example of this genetic viewpoint was how he opened his courses. He would grab the students' attention with a statement such as:

Society, is an organism developing upon certain land, with changes at certain times. History takes account of these changes and their causes, and needs geography and chronology. ... Once these are understood, the organism could be studied in four ways: vertically (inheritance),

²⁷⁴ Turner to Allen, October 8, 1888, HEHT box 1.

²⁷⁵ Turner to Mae, March 10, 1888, HEHT box A.

horizontally (interaction of neighboring organisms), physically (the impact of the environment), and sympathetically (understanding the peculiar conditions of the time).²⁷⁶

Turner was surprised by how much time was needed to prepare a one hour lecture. In a letter to Mae he discussed his frustration that constraints of time made it difficult to prepare the types of lessons he required of himself, “It demands a year to get fully into the spirit of the things ... and a lifetime to be an expert on the subject.”²⁷⁷

He also began to publish. In 1887 he contributed a paper on the Old Northwest (which in today’s geography included states such as Wisconsin, Michigan and Illinois) for the Contemporary Club of the Unitarian Society. He also collaborated with Thomas C. Chamberlin, on an article about Wisconsin for *Encyclopedia Britannica*.²⁷⁸ Professor Allen also asked Turner to develop an adult education course syllabus (with lecture notes) about the Northwest for the National Bureau of Unity Clubs. Reuben Gold Thwaites, editor of the *Wisconsin State Journal*, also asked Turner to develop a paper and present it to the Wisconsin State Historical Society.²⁷⁹

Turner also began to publish book reviews. His first was in May 1887 for *The Dial*, in which he reviewed *Franklin in France* by Edward E. Hale.²⁸⁰ As Turner prepared for these published pieces, he began formulating a thesis of American Western History. This intrigue of the West would continue to be investigated and researched by Turner for the rest of his academic career. He apologized to Mae that his aspirations were taking much of his time and begged her to understand that it was for their future: “[I know it is] awful. ... I seem less loverlike in the amount of my letters, —more serious—it is because I am wrapped up in that desire [to obtain a professorship for our future].”²⁸¹

Earning Credentials: Doctoral Studies

Working diligently, Turner was able to chip away at his task list. In the fall of 1888, he enrolled at Johns Hopkins in his doctoral studies program. One reason for choosing this institution was his prior experience working with Herbert Baxter Adams while at UW assisting

²⁷⁶ Turner, Americana History Notebooks, 1887–1888, HEHT vols. 14(1, 2), 15(1, 2).

²⁷⁷ Turner to Mae, September 11, 1887, HEHT vols. 14(1, 2), 15(1, 2).

²⁷⁸ Thomas C. Chamberlin, *On the Extent and Significance of the Wisconsin Kettle Moraine* (C19: The Nineteenth Century Index, 1878), accessed April 1, 2014, <http://c19index.chadwyck.com.ezproxy.lib.vt.edu:8080/home.do>

²⁷⁹ Reuben Gold Thwaites, *The Boundaries of Wisconsin* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 1888).

²⁸⁰ Turner to Mae, May 11, 1887, HEHT box A.

²⁸¹ Turner to Mae, March 5 and 10, 1888, HEHT box A.

Professor Allen with a research requested by Adams. Professor Allen maintained this collegial relationship with Adams and wrote a recommendation for admission for Turner. Another reason was that Hopkins had a strongly positive reputation for its programs in Political Economics and History. Graduates from the Hopkins program included Woodrow Wilson and Newton D. Baker, U.S. Secretary of War from 1916 to 1921.

Once accepted, Turner traveled to Baltimore to attend a reception for new students. There, he became acquainted with other students and associates from the university, such as William S. Bayley of the U.S. Geological Survey (formerly located at Johns Hopkins). In letters to Mae he wrote,

[They talk] very well and gave me an excellent idea of what the institution is. It would be a grand place to go to—containing as it does the most eminent specialists in the separate branches. [And I was] greatly interested for an hour ... with an account of the institution.²⁸²

Turner's goal was to do exceptional scholarly work and excel in his studies, and he was determined to do it as quickly as possible. One incentive was that President Chamberlin of UW, although not giving Turner complete assurance that he would be considered for tenure work, did agree that once Turner obtained his doctorate he would be in a position to be considered a "qualified candidate."

However, a stronger motivation to quickly obtain his degree was that he would finally be able to plan his wedding with his beloved Mae. She had confidence in Turner's ability not only to complete his degree but to do so quickly, and encouraged him to move forward. Moreover, Mae was not his only cheerleader. In June 1888 a *Wisconsin State Journal* editorial stated,

It is hoped that at the end of his course at Johns Hopkins he may return to Madison and again take up his work as instructor of oratory and history, for which he is so well fitted.²⁸³

Turner spent only two years at Hopkins, the school years of 1888–1889 and 1889–1890. He graduated in the spring of 1890, successfully completing his dissertation "The Character and Influence of the Indian Trade in Wisconsin" under the direction of his

²⁸² Turner to Mae, September 6, 1887, and October 23, 1887, HEHT box A.

²⁸³ No Author, No Byline. *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 20, 1888.

chair, Herbert Baxter Adams.

Love, Marriage, and Home Life

As his studies at Hopkins progressed, Turner became confident that he would not only obtain his doctoral degree but also have a promising prospect in university teaching. Turner decided to suggest to Mae that they not wait until graduation to marry. One of the reasons Turner was so smitten with Mae was that although she was fully supportive of his endeavors, she never really had a desire to emulate his scholarly ways, which suited Turner. He did not want to marry an intellectual peer or colleague. In his mind, this difference would allow Mae to listen to his frustrations and stresses without judgment, all the while encouraging him and providing an atmosphere in which to relax.

Although Mae did not have an interest in an academic career, this is not to suggest that she was unintelligent. In Mae, Turner found a confidant, comforter, and partner in family life. She was content to play the role of the doting, loving, supportive wife. Because of this, Turner knew that he would be able to completely depend on her to make their home a loving sanctuary in which he could leave the world behind once the door closed. In a gesture to show his utmost respect for his bride-to-be, he wrote Mae, “American domestic life is of far higher type than European. A woman is neither a doll nor a drudge, and I think we recognize that here more than they do there.”²⁸⁴

Embracing his suggestion for an early marriage, Mae eagerly agreed and immediately began the dubious task of making the arrangements for a wedding that would take place in a month. The first order of business was for the two to find housing. They were able to secure a larger room on the upper level of Mrs. Bross’s boarding house. The room also contained a smaller attached room that Turner could use as a study. The creation of the invitation list yielded three hundred names; decisions were made about who would be in the wedding party and what each member would wear. They made arrangements for furniture and incidentals to be moved into Mrs. Bross’. Everything was a flurry, but pleasant. Of the upcoming nuptials and the atmosphere of those around him, Turner wrote, “Everybody looks at me very smiling and cheerful.”²⁸⁵

²⁸⁴ Turner to Mae, September 8, 1888, HEHT box C.

²⁸⁵ Turner to Mae, November 19, 1889, HEHT box E.

Finally, on November 16, 1889, Frederick Jackson Turner and Caroline Mae Sherwood were married at the Kentwood Evangelical Church in Chicago. After a reception at the home of Mae's parents, the two set off for a short trip to Milwaukee and then to Turner's parents' home for a second reception, followed by arrival at their new home just in time for Turner to resume his duties.²⁸⁶

However, the bliss one would expect at the onset of their married life was not to be. Shortly after Turner and his new bride returned to their new home, Turner became ill with the measles, rendering him bedridden. Mae, whose immune system had always been fragile, decided that although she loved her husband, it would be in their best interest if she went back to her mother's in hopes of avoiding contagion from the disease. Early the next spring Mae returned, grateful that her husband had been able to overcome his illness and looking forward to truly beginning their wedded life together.²⁸⁷

Although it seemed that sickness and death had once again passed by their door without consequence, within weeks of their nuptials, Professor Allen, Turner's beloved mentor and friend, and the one with whom Turner had planned to organize a Department of History at UW, once again contracted pneumonia but this time with devastating results. Professor Allen succumbed to the disease, leaving Turner heartbroken. He wrote to Professor Adams at Hopkins, "The gentlest, justest, most scholarly man I ever knew, has gone."²⁸⁸

However, the couple's first year of marriage was not all tragedy. A little more than a year after their nuptials, daughter Dorothy Kinsley Turner, arrived on September 1, 1890. Soon came Jackson Allen Turner born on June 26, 1892 and their last child, Mae Sherwood Turner, was born on April 27, 1894. Wanting a place for his family to live comfortably, in 1894 Turner built a home at 629 Francis Street in Madison, Wisconsin, where many of the UW faculty had also built their homes. The Turners were able to support this project with the help of funds borrowed from Turner's father. From the modest home, the Turners were able to see Lake Mendota where a canoe was always at the ready to enjoy the serenity of the water. Houseguests were frequent, family and social activities there were abundant, and Mae enjoyed her duties as a faculty wife hosting many events in their home.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁶ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

²⁸⁷ Bogue, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Strange Roads Going Down*.

²⁸⁸ Turner to Herbert Baxter Adams, December 10, 1889, HEHT box 1.

²⁸⁹ Bogue, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Strange Roads Going Down*.

A Chance for Tenure

Professor Allen's death took a toll on Turner, but it also opened another opportunity. Still formally an Instructor, Turner knew if he was willing to teach extra courses to aid President Chamberlin with the dilemma of losing a scholar right before the new term was about to begin, he might be able to secure himself a tenure-track position in the near future.

Understanding Chamberlin's ambitions for the school to become not only nationally, but internationally renowned, Turner promised to complete a book called *A Short History of the Roman People* that Allen had been working on for some time. In this way, the university would be able to continue its path forward—the more publications of merit published, the more recognizable the institution. To be clear, however, Turner's dedication to Allen, the man, was truly the impetus for his promise. It was merely by chance that it also aided Turner in achieving his goals. In fact, he was so grateful to Allen that Turner made sure the publication's author was listed as William Francis Allen, with no acknowledgment of his co-authorship.²⁹⁰

Although impressed that Turner was indeed taking on more responsibility than required, the president was not inclined to consider Turner at first. He was hoping to replace Allen in the fall semester with someone of the same stature and with an established reputation. At the same time, Turner had allies within the university, including Wisconsin State Journal editor Reuben Thwaites, who unbeknownst to Turner, began to spread the idea that a promising historian and teacher would be snatched up by another university such as Princeton or Harvard. Thwaites even encouraged Woodrow Wilson and Herbert Baxter Adams to write recommendations for Turner. In a letter to Wilson, Thwaites wrote, “[Turner is] too modest to lift a hand to shape the result.”²⁹¹

Ultimately, patience and hard work paid off when President Chamberlin was convinced to invest in Turner and given assurances Turner would become a scholar of national reputation. In the spring of 1891 Turner was offered professorship as well as the opportunity to chair the Department of History.²⁹²

In a thank you letter written by Turner to Woodrow Wilson (who at the time was a professor at Princeton), Turner acknowledged that he was not the most sought-after candidate for

²⁹⁰ William F. Allen, *A Short History of the Roman People* (Boston, MA: Ginn, 1890).

²⁹¹ Reuben Gold Thwaites to Woodrow Wilson, December 23, 1889, HEHT box 1.

²⁹² Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*. Also see Bogue, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Strange Roads Going Down*.

the position at UW. He stated,

Mr. Thwaites has informed me of your more than kind letters in regard to the succession to Prof. Allen's chair. I know the value of such an endorsement. ... The knowledge that this was his own [Professor Allen] wish, however, and that such men as yourself ... think me worthy of this place, is chiefly what permitted me to allow my name to be used. When I came to the present position last year I discovered that Pres. Chamberlin ... was very reticent to make any tangible arrangement with me, until practically forced by Prof. Allen's wishes and my decision that I would wait no longer.²⁹³

While at Johns Hopkins, Turner had begun to think about the type of professor he aspired to be. He made comparisons between the experiences he had at UW and those at Johns Hopkins. In a letter to Professor Allen he discussed how freshmen students had difficulty being able to differentiate between what they knew, what they needed to know, how to set realistic goals, and develop a plan to accomplish those goals. Turner understood the importance of guiding freshmen, as well as any student, through the valuable, albeit difficult, experience of this type of process. Contemplating how he might conduct himself in the classroom Turner surmised that teachers at Hopkins were:

... withdrawn at the very time in the student's career when he is most needed. It is true that the teacher co-ordinates the topics; but if his work is effective he must also go over the topic himself, disentangling the meshes of detail into which the Freshman has snarled himself and emphasizing vital points.... What is needed at this period, if I correctly apprehend it, is:

- I. A love for history, derived from the stimulus of an earnest teacher, who gives a liberal amount of guidance
- II. A knowledge of how to find books and use them.... the amount of aid that will enable intelligent *self* help, however, is all that should be given—
- III. A body of knowledge, and a historical *spirit* should be acquired – and disciple should be given.²⁹⁴

Turner loved working with his students, both while he engaged with them and later when reflecting upon his career. His students, in turn, not only respected Turner but saw that he was genuinely engaged in their studies and were grateful for the confidence he had in their intellectual ability. It was important for Turner to make sure that “the interest in which he took

²⁹³ Turner to Woodrow Wilson, January 30, 1890, HEHT box 1.

²⁹⁴ Turner to William F. Allen, dated March 14, 1889, HEHT box 1.

his students' work convinced the student of its importance."²⁹⁵ Phillips also wrote of Turner's relationship with his students stating, "This gave the youngster an impression that what they were doing was immensely worthwhile. His eagerness was of the contagious kind."²⁹⁶

The student-teacher relationship was so vital to Turner that he commented to Carl Becker,

As I grow older the more I realize how much the companionship of my research has meant to me. Not the educational aspect, not the teaching, but the companionship of man out for the adventure after historical truth, and incidentally the desire to help them outstrip their guide in finding the trail and the new horizons.²⁹⁷

Jacobs also commented on Turner's dedication to his students, stating,

Turner assumed the twofold task of training young men for the work before them and of leaving the results of his own investigations in printed form. ... [Turner believed] we must build foundations, and furnish real bricks for those who come after us, and profit by our mistakes ... [for] there is a real danger of merely thinking by and large.²⁹⁸

Publish or Perish?

Turner was not a prolific writer, although he was often recruited by publishers for work. Many of his writings were reworked versions of original pieces with added information, clarifications, and interpretations derived from his continuing research. The reason was most likely because his life's work was dedicated to one topic—the American fabric of sections—in which he detailed the importance of locality and culture pocketed throughout the United States, which he called, Sectionalism of America.

Turner found writing for publication a difficult task. This was not because of the actual researching, note taking, and drawing of conclusions, but because writing history for the masses

²⁹⁵ Wilbur R. Jacobs, John Walton Caughey, and Joe Bertram Frantz, *Turner, Bolton, and Webb: Three Historians of the American Frontier* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1965), 26.

²⁹⁶ Ulrich Bonnell Phillips, "The Traits and Contributions of Frederick Jackson Turner," *Agricultural History* 19, no. 1 (1945): 22.

²⁹⁷ Carl Becker, *Frederick Jackson Turner* (Beltsville, MD: National Agricultural Library Press, 1927), 25.

²⁹⁸ Wilbur R. Jacobs, *Frederick Jackson Turner's Legacy: Unpublished Writings in American History* (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1965), Introduction.

meant doing so in a narrative style. Because Turner was so methodological in his research he found transferring his notes into readable and accessible story-like writing to be arduous. This was most likely because he did not classify himself as an expository writer but more of a documenter of time and events.²⁹⁹

Another factor that made publishing difficult for Turner was that he developed his theories by combining data from multiple disciplines and sources. Although this process is considered essential today, it was novel for the times and made the investigation and writing of history very time-consuming, and Turner referred to himself as a “glutton for data.”³⁰⁰ This description of Turner is confirmed by Jacobs, Caughey, and Frantz:

[Turner was interested in], the interplay—social, political, cultural, diplomatic, economic, geographical—and absorbed in the talk of documenting the evolutionary aspects of the interplay, rather than in depicting the character of man, the mood of the dramatic historical scene of the appearance of place.³⁰¹

In order to be objective when researching, Turner believed it was important to acquire massive amounts of evidence to support findings. He did not like to oversimplify any person or event for fear misinterpretations or improper historical perspectives would be made about his research and work. Therefore, condensing his notes and information into a narrative format was difficult for him.³⁰² Turner admitted to his hardships in writing for the sake of publishing. In a letter to Arthur H. Buffington, he stated, “Some of my own difficulty in publishing, arises from my realization of the many factors essential to a fundamental treatment, and dislike to issue a partial survey.”³⁰³

He also found it difficult to take credit for what he considered to be a collective and collaborative process that could not have been done without the help of others. Jacobs, Caughey, and Frantz noted,

²⁹⁹ Jacobs et al., *Turner, Bolton, and Webb*.

³⁰⁰ Ray Allen Billington, “Why Some Historians Rarely Write History: A Case Study of Frederick Jackson Turner,” *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 50, no. 1 (1963): 14.

³⁰¹ Jacobs et al., *Turner, Bolton, and Webb*, 4.

³⁰² Wilbur R. Jacobs, “Turner’s Methodology: Multiple Working Hypotheses or Ruling Theory?” *Journal of American History* 54, no. 4 (1968): 853–63.

³⁰³ Turner to Arthur H. Buffington, June 7, 1924, HEHT box 33.

Turner was painfully aware of his own shortcomings as a historian and eager to acknowledge his indebtedness to others. . . . Furthermore he was eager to disclaim any praise which might come to him as the creator of the frontier theory.³⁰⁴

Regardless of his personal struggles with completing historical works, Turner did publish his most notable work—*The Significance of the Frontier in American History*—which he presented at the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair.³⁰⁵ It was formally published later that year and was reprinted multiple times throughout the next decade. This piece is known today as “The Frontier Thesis” and is still fodder for discussion.

Turner’s other notable writings included:

- *A Half Century of American Politics*, published in 1894, discussing the Whig Party among other political influences³⁰⁶
- *Rise of the New West, 1819–1829*, published in 1908, which is one book of a twenty-eight-volume series called *The American Nation: A History*, chronicling developments of the United States from English occupation³⁰⁷
- *Is Sectionalism in America Dying Away?*, published in 1908, in which Turner directly addresses his critics on the validity of his Frontier Thesis³⁰⁸
- The first edition of *List of References on History of the West*, published in 1913, which Turner required as reading for his students of history at Harvard (no less than 120 pages per week)³⁰⁹
- *Guide to the Study and Reading of American History*, published in 1912, which he coauthored with Edward Channing (who was a professor at Harvard and was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for History in 1926)³¹⁰ and Albert Bushnell Hart (a graduate of Harvard and then professor there)³¹¹

³⁰⁴ Jacobs et al., *Turner, Bolton, and Webb*, 30–31.

³⁰⁵ Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History.”

³⁰⁶ Frederick Jackson Turner, *A Half Century of American Politics, 1789 – 1840* (Madison, WI: Tracy, Gibbs & Co. 1894).

³⁰⁷ Frederick Jackson Turner, *Rise of the New West, 1819–1829* (New York: Harpers, 1908).

³⁰⁸ Frederick Jackson Turner, “Is Sectionalism in America Dying Away?,” *American Journal of Sociology* 13, no. 5 (1908): 661–75.

³⁰⁹ Frederick Jackson Turner, *List of References in History of the West* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1913), introductory note.

³¹⁰ “The Pulitzer Prizes,” Columbia University, accessed February 1, 2013, <http://www.pulitzer.org>, <http://www.pulitzer.org/bycat/History>.

³¹¹ Edward Channing, Albert Bushnell Hart, and Frederick Jackson Turner. *Guide to the Study and Reading of*

- The *Frontier in American History*, published in 1921³¹²
- *Sections and Nation*, published in the *Yale Review* in 1923³¹³
- *The Significance of Sections in American History*, published in 1932, which is the compilation of decades of work on a book in the making by Turner, and after his death, was completed by Avery Craven and Merrill Crissely, who together rummaged through Turner's unpublished (and at times unfinished) essays and crafted the completion of the book, which won Turner a posthumous Pulitzer Prize in History in 1933.³¹⁴

Branching Out Anew

Woodrow Wilson, while a professor at Princeton and by this time a good friend of Turner, wrote a letter to Turner on November 5, 1896, asking him to consider working at Princeton:

As you may have seen in the papers recently Princeton has just obtained an increase in endowment ... it seems reasonably certain that out of what has been left free, a chair of American History will, among other things be added; and I am going to take the liberty of asking you point blank, whether you would consider a call to such a chair here ... There is no place in the country where a man is more freely allowed to do his own work in his own way than at Princeton; the spirit of American History dwells here from of old.³¹⁵

Turner took much time considering Wilson's proposal, mulling over both the pros and cons professionally and how such a move would impact his family. In a letter to Wilson dated November 8, 1896, Turner discussed the pros and cons of working at Princeton, but not before he shared his gratitude for Wilson's thinking of him in such a capacity:

Nothing could have come to me as a great surprise than your enquiry. I will not deny that it gave me great pleasure to receive this evidence of your interest and confidence in me. Princeton is a college that any man might be proud to be connected with, and to have you as a colleague would give me even more personal satisfaction.³¹⁶

American History. Boston, MA: Ginn, 1912.

³¹² Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Holt, 1921).

³¹³ Frederick Jackson Turner, "Sections and Nation," *Yale Review* 12 (1923): 1.

³¹⁴ Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Significance of Sections in American History*. New York: Holt, 1932.

³¹⁵ Woodrow Wilson to Turner, November 5, 1896, HEHT box 2.

³¹⁶ Turner to Woodrow Wilson, November 8, 1896, HEHT box 2.

Throughout the letter Turner provides insight into his thought process as he contemplated Wilson's proposal. In consideration were his love of Madison and the West and proximity to family:

Madison is beautiful. I have a home by the lake recently built, and very pleasant. ... I should dislike to pull up stakes without pretty definite knowledge of the future home. ... My parents forty miles away, and [them] growing old. My wife's people live in Chicago. ... Finally, I have lived most of my life in the West and I like it.³¹⁷

He was also proud of the work he had accomplished in the field of Western History, "I have made for myself a field of study ... and if nothing unforeseen happens, I ought to grow more influential in this field as I grow older. There is an abundant opportunity for investigation here."³¹⁸ Finally, Turner was committed to scholarly pursuits in the UW library, where he spent countless hours assembling and organizing documents, books and manuscripts:

I have a library—State historical—which, in its newspapers and periodicals, government documents, local history, and documentary material on the Mississippi Valley, ranks with the four or five best in the country. This library is about to go into a fireproof and impressive building on the University grounds in two or three years, the foundation is now up. We shall have three historical seminary rooms there in which all our classes will meet, with free access to books and papers, and with abundant apparatus for lecturing."³¹⁹

There were also positive aspects of moving to Princeton:

Princeton is a noble old University, with evidences that her stature is augmenting rather than declining. ... I should be near to the centers of literary activity in the East. I think I could find opportunity for reconstructive work on the middle region and the backcountry of the South, quite equal to my Western field; and I should like to infiltrate some of my Western interpretation for national develop into an American History course in the East.³²⁰

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ Ibid.

³²⁰ Ibid.

Yet he also discussed his trepidation:

Of the library facilities at Princeton, in American history, I know nothing; and I must ask you for more information upon opportunities for investigation there. Where do you do your American history work? Are the students in earnest in their work? What chances are there for graduate development? How many hours of teaching would be expected? ... What is the winter climate of Princeton?³²¹

Ultimately there were several reasons why Turner declined the offer. In a letter to Wilson dated November 27, 1896, Turner outlined some of his thoughts:

My library here is certainly a very important element in the problem. ... So it comes to pretty merely this: ought I to exchange my library advantage here, for the greater dignity of a professorship at Princeton, for the stimulus of new and undoubtedly more inspiring contact with the intellectual activity of the seaboard with its many centers of culture within short distances, and for companionship with yourself ... Over against these advantages lie also the removal for my people and my wife's people, now growing old, the element of uncertainty in building up new work, and the separation from Haskins and my other friends in Madison. Here my work is shaping itself easily and naturally and I can look forward to increasing means, reputation and power in this University as it develops.³²²

In 1905 Turner was offered a position at Stanford by Max Farrand. Although the prospect interested Turner, he was concerned about the limitations of Stanford's library. In a letter to Farrand dated June 23, 1905, Turner stated, "at present, and for some years to come, probably, you cannot hope to supply library facilities comparable to those here [UW], and which are probably only essential conditions to my progress in scholarship and productivity in history."³²³ He was also concerned with the cost of living:

Again the plan increases cost of living owing to expense of travel, boarding etc. The salary of \$5000 is, all things considered, probably not equal to my present salary and its accompaniments—my salary is now \$4000 with the regular summer session provision, which allows me to teach six weeks for two summers, and thus secure absence on full pay for one semester.³²⁴

³²¹ Ibid. Note that Turner's wife and children were of poor health, and his physician was also concerned that the cold climate would eventually render Turner hard of hearing.

³²² Turner to Woodrow Wilson, November 27, 1896, HEHT box 2.

³²³ Turner to Max Farrand, June 23, 1905, HEHT box 5.

³²⁴ Ibid.

Turner was leaning toward declining the offer, but the 1906 earthquake in California made the decision for him. The earthquake had demolished or weakened so many buildings at Stanford that the offer to Turner was rescinded.³²⁵

Turner's fame as a well-respected historian as well as a valuable academic addition to any university was in part, as Billington contended, because his *Frontier Thesis*,

...blended so well with the spirit of Progressivism. Democracy—political and economic—was placed on a pedestal during those years, and Turner told the historians that American democracy was a homegrown product of the West. This is a comfortable theory, Jeffersonian rather than Marxist in its implications, offering a safe explanation of the conflict between eastern capitalism and western Populism, between the trusts and the people, between management and labor.³²⁶

Billington accounted for Turner's popularity when he stated, "Turner might not have convinced all his colleagues that his views were valid, but all were aware that his assault on traditionalism had open the door to fresh interpretations of the past. And all were grateful."³²⁷

Although Turner had declined offers to work not only at Princeton and Stanford but at least four other universities, he used these offers to entice UW to increase his salary. He showed his offers to then President Van Hise, explaining his total commitment and love for UW, but he had to consider that such offers to move to a different climate might better his wife's health. In the end Turner was able to negotiate more time for research and less time being burdened with the responsibility of a full load of teaching, changing to a half-time load.

However, the relationship between Turner and UW eventually began to wane. In the early part of the summer of 1908 the Board of Regents at UW was no longer happy with the arrangement made with Turner. Meeting minutes show this rift: "The ability to pursue original investigation research work, when not combined with teaching ability, should not constitute sufficient qualification for membership in the faculty of the University."³²⁸

Turner realized that for the first time he needed to seriously consider leaving his beloved university. In Turner's mind the atmosphere surrounding him and the Board of Regents could possibly have a negative impact on the university's History Department, which he had worked so

³²⁵ Jacobs, *Historical World of Frederick Jackson Turner*.

³²⁶ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*, 282.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*

³²⁸ University of Wisconsin Archives, Regents' Minutes, vol. 7, 199-200, Report of Committee, Board of Regents Executive Committee, 1888 to 1939, box 11, folder: Executive Committee Minutes, June 29–July 6, 1908.

hard to develop. When considering his options, he talked with his friend Richard Ely about his frustrations and his willingness to take a position at any other university.³²⁹ With regret, Turner began to actively look for a professorship at other universities.

He had written a letter to his friend Charles Homer Haskins of Harvard asking for advice. Haskins had long wanted Turner to join the faculty at his institution, as did others in the History Department. For years professors at Harvard believed that applicants had been lost to the University of Wisconsin because of Turner and the program he had created.

At the same time Turner requested advice; A. Lawrence Lowell had been named the new president of Harvard. Haskins and another professor at Harvard, Archibald Cary Coolidge, thought the timing perfect to approach the new president with the idea of bringing Turner on board. In 1910 the two were successful, and Turner was given a formal offer not only to teach at Harvard but to spearhead the development of a new department called the History of the American West. Turner accepted, although stunned by the offer. In a letter to Max Farrand he said, "I had been on the edge of accepting a call to U. of California - in fact, had practically decided to accept, but had not committed myself, when I was asked by Harvard people to delay my decision—The Harvard matter was a surprise to me."³³⁰

Turner decided to leave his post at the University of Wisconsin and transfer to Harvard. Although he loved both his memories and that of his students, Turner felt compelled to leave. The ultimate reason for his departure was his belief that the regents of the university had anti-intellectual mindsets and were not moving the school forward as a research institution. Turner had begun to question the Board of Regents motives for demanding more teaching time from professors than time for research. This he felt threatened the school's scholarship and credibility. Therefore, Turner joined Harvard in the fall of 1910, where he was enticed with the promise of having full control over the development of the new department.³³¹

Harvard Bound

Turner had clear ideas about how he wanted to organize his courses at Harvard. Some of these courses he wanted to run as a seminar in which guest speakers would talk about their

³²⁹ Richard T. Ely, *Ground Under Our Feet: An Autobiography* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), 196–97.

³³⁰ Turner to Max Farrand, October 28, 1909, HEHT box 13.

³³¹ Allan Bogue, "'Not by Bread Alone': The Emergence of the Wisconsin Idea and the Departure of Frederick Jackson Turner." *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 86, no. 1 (Autumn 2002): 10–23.

research and how their careers aligned with what Turner's students were learning. In a letter to Harvard professor Edward Channing, Turner wrote,

The kind of general combination which I had in mind... regarding the seminar ... was in line with your idea of a historical conference, with the meetings, say monthly, sometimes of a social character, in which instructors or students, or eminent outsiders might address the gathering, especially upon results of their work. Such informal meetings might, or might not be open to the public ... The suggestion that they might well be held in the houses of the instructor seems to me a good one.... There is a kind of graduate course which I have been accustomed to call "seminary," where a single limited field is co-operatively [studied and researched] For the direction of advanced students in their particular pieces of work, individual conferences seem a natural device; and students will of course select the instructor on whose guidance they would chiefly (but, I should hope, not exclusively), rely for such direction."³³²

Turner's first semester at Harvard began with a lecture course called *History 17, The History of the West*.³³³ Turner found it not only intriguing, but revealing teaching a classroom of students from the East, who knew little about or had never experienced the West. In a letter to a colleague at UW he stated, "They are engaging young rascals ... and I foresee that I shall have an interesting experience in attempting to guide them over western trails."³³⁴

As much as he loved the enthusiasm of the students, Turner also found teaching challenging. Until Turner's arrival, the students were schooled in Germ Theory, which was steeped in the ideal that American culture was an extension of European values and culture, not evolved out of the circumstances and learned ingenuity from specific American experiences as Turner believed. He realized that he would have to forgo teaching his theory of sectionalism until the students understood how he envisioned the proper and thorough research of history.

Turner also understood that he would have to slowly integrate how the West influenced American culture. As he said of the experience, "The course will be the study of a PROCEDURE rather than of REGION."³³⁵ By this he referred to his techniques of incorporating events beyond the political, including social, economic, and intellectual motives of human behavior; and was fully aware that this method of studying history differed from how

³³² Turner to Edward Channing, January 2, 1910, HEHT box 14.

³³³ Harvard Teaching List, Harvard University Course Lists, Harvard University Archives, 1910.

³³⁴ Turner to Joseph Jastrow, October 5, 1910, HEHT box 15.

³³⁵ Horace J. Smith, Lecture Notes: History of the West. Harvard University, 1910-1911, HEH TU vol. 23.

students' previously were instructed. "This lecture work, if adequately done, would engage all of my own energies except such as involved in consultation and advice."³³⁶

Another goal was to expand the Harvard Library collections about Western American History. A grant from Alice Forbes Perkins Hooper made this goal possible. With her sponsorship, Turner was able to create the Harvard Commission on Western History.³³⁷ Turner was eager to have the library become one of the best research facilities on the American West, reaching out to historians he respected for advice on the types of texts, maps and photographs to include.

Turner knew the importance of building positive relationships with other libraries and their archivists. In April of 1912, encouraging cooperation and mutual respect of a common goal which did not endanger the reputation of other libraries, Turner wrote to Henry Morse Stephens of the University of California,

I am enclosing the circular of the Harvard Commission on Western History – which I obviously am not responsible for, as you will see by its immoderate reference to myself – because I wish to make it clear that we wish to cooperate with yourself and the California group.

Our aim is to build up in the East an adequate center for the study of the West as a whole. We realize that we can't hope to rival your collections for Pacific slope history, of course. We do not expect material to which your institution has a superior claim, though we would not be given to another collection. But we wish to cooperate, – drawing from duplicates and extra material in Western libraries where possible, and adding interstate and interregional material which may legitimately come to us.

I hope to see here before long some travelling fellowships for American history which will enable our best men to work on the Coast and elsewhere on the special collections which we cannot hope to reproduce, even if we had the ambition to do so.³³⁸

Turner also hoped to have a dedicated space for a collection specific to the American West. To do so he would have to woo Archibald C. Coolidge, a colleague at Harvard and director of the university library. Turner felt the best way to approach Coolidge would be twofold. First, Turner would make clear his allegiance to Harvard and share his ideas to

³³⁶ Turner to Thomas P. Martin, September 29, 1916 box 56.

³³⁷ Jacobs, *The Historical World of Frederick Jackson Turner*, 101.

³³⁸ Turner to Henry Morse Stephens, April 25, 1912, HEHT box 17.

strengthen the scholarship and research capabilities it had to offer students. The second would be to suggest that he did not imply that he is defining his concept of Coolidge's responsibilities, but merely to act as a collaborator with other Harvard family members eager to aid in contributing to the collection.

In a letter to Coolidge, Turner discussed the benefits of archiving literature, maps and texts from the West,

I know from my own experience with Harvard students that they would be delighted to cooperate in sending photographs of western scenes and data illustrative of conditions that are rapidly passing way. Such cooperation helps to make them effective workers in other directions also. The room would be a visible sign that Harvard had an interest in the west. The various western alumni associations could be interested in contributing to it.

Illustrating the possibilities in this direction, suppose the library [was] to exhibit in such a room photographs or reproduction of drawings, etc. illustrating a city like Chicago or Denver or San Francisco or St Paul, from days of Indian treaties, block house forts, early frontier village life and building, on by decades to the present. This would have a scientific as well as a value in arousing interest, and it is only a type of many things which are possible now, with little or no expense for collecting if we will only meet our alumni and student half way in the matter.³³⁹

Continuing in this letter, Turner asked only for a humble and modest amount of room in the library, with a suggestion of placement in a space that would enhance another collection in the building. He gave a few suggestions about how adding photographs and other non-textual materials would help modernize the library.

Turner found it more difficult to win the confidence of libraries from the West than he had anticipated. Part of the difficulty lay in the commonly-held Western belief that Easterners did not have a true respect for the West's heritage. In an undated draft letter from his tenure at Harvard, Turner wrote to one critic associated with the St. Louis Missouri Historical Society, arguing that one of the purposes of the Harvard's Commission on Western History was to educate those who did not have opportunities to experience the West,

I am myself a western man engaged in teaching western history at Harvard, I do not find the same amount of ignorance about the West which

³³⁹ Turner to Archibald C. Coolidge, March 26, 1914, HEHT box 21.

you found here, though there is room for further understanding. I dare say that every one of the American sections need to know more about the others than it does if we are to avoid misunderstandings. That, I suppose, is one of the reasons I was brought to Harvard.³⁴⁰

Turner also found it disturbing that many whom he approached to aid in the acquisition of materials for Harvard's collection showed petty distain toward developing such a compilation in the East. Part of this frustration came from his inner belief that humanity should be committed to the betterment of society, regardless of location or circumstance. Likewise, such attitudes were not consistent with his philosophy that those who had the privilege to be employed in education had an obligation to do whatever possible to share knowledge and evoke stimulating discussions, without prejudice. He was surprised so many had forgotten that their now well-established collections were at one time in the same infancy as Harvard's.

Turner sometimes felt a sense of betrayal by his community and colleagues from the West. One example of this disloyalty came when his assistant, Thomas Martin, noted that a negative response had been received from Milo Quaife, the director of the Wisconsin State Historical Society, which mocked their request for collaboration. Turner, always the gentlemen, immediately responded to Quaife, tempering his emotions and trying to salvage the possibility of a partnership,

... my assistant, tells me that he learned from you in Washington that you were disposed to think Harvard's Commission on Western History an undesirable activity, on the ground that Harvard was creating a new field of collection and trespassing upon Western preserves.... I tried to avoid any collision of interests between our undertaking and those of Western societies in framing the policy of the Commission at the outset, and I should be sorry to have you misapprehend it. I trust you will understand that what I write, therefore, is in a friendly spirit, not in resentment of what you felt called upon to say at the meeting. I know that Harvard can help the cause of Western history by co-operative action... I think you would agree if we could talk it out together.³⁴¹

In the end, Turner had both successes and failures at Harvard. He was pleased that he had lived up to his own expectations as a professor; never giving the same lecture twice and constantly emulating the principles he espoused to his students. When he left he had the

³⁴⁰ Turner to Walter B. Douglas, approximately the Fall 1919, HEHT box 29.

³⁴¹ Turner to Milo M. Quaife, January 7, 1915, HEHT box 23.

satisfaction of a mostly gratified student following. For example, one student, remarked of Turner, “[He] is as full of ideas as a dog is of fleas.”³⁴² He also had the satisfaction of seeing many of his students recognized for their work after their graduation—particularly with the many books published by his former students.

He also had his ups and downs while developing the Commission on Western History as well as the expansion of the library collection. At the beginning of the venture, the university provided a large financial coffer for the endeavor, but by the end of Turner’s tenure in 1924 Harvard officials refused to continue to provide the support, both in time and money, that they had promised would continue when Turner first accepted the post.³⁴³

Turner left Harvard content with his accomplishments. He was a realistic man, who knew that not every student or faculty member would agree with him or befriend him. The positive experiences he had at Harvard far outnumbered his setbacks. He had made good friends and worked with consummate colleagues. His students had completed all that was asked of them. Perhaps most heartwarming was the knowledge that Turner established himself as the man who brought the West to the East.

Retirement

Turner retired from Harvard in 1924. In the first few years after retirement, Turner rested, spent time with his family, continued to help former students who continued their educations attempting to earn advanced degrees, and guest lectured at UW, where he and Mae had decided to relocate after his time at Harvard. Although Turner wanted to enjoy retirement, he was not as financially stable as he had been while he was teaching. Even though he had earned notoriety in his career as a university professor, scholars were offered very small retirement stipends. This meant Turner needed to supplement his income.

Turner was in demand as a speaker, and spent time lecturing at many institutions, including the Utah State Agricultural College in Logan, Utah, his alma mater, the University of Texas, and the California Institute of Technology. However, as time went on, the engagement with audiences was not what he had anticipated, for he considered them lackadaisical at best, and after a particularly long and hard schedule, Turner wrote to Mae, “I shall swear off all talking I

³⁴² Frederick Merk to Turner, July 4, 1927, HEHT box 37.

³⁴³ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

think after this.”³⁴⁴ Luckily for Turner, he would soon be given an opportunity to continue his work in scholarly historical research and well compensated.

In 1927 Turner’s friend Max Farrand invited Turner to become a research associate at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California. He would be paid well, \$5,000 per year, which supplemented his stipend from Harvard along with the rental of his Madison home. Interestingly, Turner’s humility allowed him to accept the generous salary, but only for a time. After 1929, Turner insisted the library cut his salary to \$3,500, for he and his wife could live satisfactorily, and the cut took into account his age, which would not allow him to be as productive as in his earlier years.³⁴⁵

In a letter to Farrand from March 1, 1927, Turner shared his enthusiasm at the prospect of going to California:

I had just written my postal of rejoicing over the Huntington announcement in the Los Angeles Times when in came your letter giving me the inside facts. I am truly happy over it all. ... I met Mr. Millikan, a delightful man as well as a great man. ... I could see the truth of what you had said and now say about the need of developing it into a well rounded institution for researchers whose interest are not primarily in the collection of Americana, but you can do this, and you will have a career as the organizer and leader of a new center for scholars in this wonderful land already produced such notable results in science and will in art, as well as the humanities in general. ... There is vitality, figure, initiative in the man out here, and already I have profited in my own health and spirits by the sojourn which my medical advisers thought helpful, though not necessary, for me.³⁴⁶

Turner felt at home at Huntington. There he was able to do what he did best— review data and critique the scholarly material that was available. Turner also felt invigorated by the sense that he once again was contributing to productive scholarship. Writing again to Farrand just a few weeks later on March 19, 1927, Turner discussed what he had observed about the Huntington Collection and what he could do to help improve it:

In the matter of American material I am coming to the opinion that the most serious gap is in the Congressional Public Docs—The program of

³⁴⁴ Turner to Mae, March 20, 1925, HEHT box J.

³⁴⁵ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

³⁴⁶ Turner to Max Farrand, March 1, 1927, HEHT box 36. Note, Robert A. Millikan was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1923 in Physics.

running from the Huntington to Los Angeles, and to remoter centers, to get such things is a matter that needs conference if the goal of your report is ever ultimately to be reached, and if the modern conceptions of what American history should be, are to be worked at *in loco*; for your *fields* all run together in a history of Anglo-American civilization.³⁴⁷

Turner continued to work tirelessly on his projects at Huntington, perfecting the archiving system and acquiring works to complete the collection. He was never good at judging when he needed to take time off or slow down once he was vested in a project. This intense commitment to detail and intellectual fortitude began to wreak havoc on his aging body. Turner himself admitted this flaw, stating in a letter to his friend, Alice Forbes Perkins Hooper, “I have never learned to work moderately when I get interested in a problem, and now have to pay the piper.”³⁴⁸ Yet, even with weakening health, Turner pressed onward with what he felt was his calling and duty, working until his death to leave a legacy that would aid future historians in their quest for understanding human nature and the forces that drive events.

Bereavement and Legacy

Turner died on March 14, 1932, at the age of seventy. The loss felt by the historical community was immense. The obituary section of the *American Geographical Review* summed up Turner’s importance to the field of history: “In Professor Turner was the rare combination of historical originality with geographical insight. His death is a loss no less severe to American geography than to the study of American history.”³⁴⁹

Everett Edward Dale, a former student of Turner’s and also a nationally known and respected historian himself, noted that in his courses Turner was continually engaging and, furthermore, his classes compelled one to think beyond what might be expected and reflect on possibilities that may be hidden in inference and innuendo. Dale also valued Turner’s exceptional ability to distinguish the forest from the trees while acknowledging the substance and value of each individual tree. He commented on Turner’s willingness to allow his students the freedom to choose topics of study while guiding them to meet their goals. Turner was

³⁴⁷ Turner to Max Farrand, March 19, 1927, HEHT box 36.

³⁴⁸ Turner to Alice Forbes Perkins Hooper, December 27, 1928, HEHTH TU-H box 7.

³⁴⁹ American Geographical Society, “Obituary: Frederick Jackson Turner,” *Geographical Review* 22, no. 3 (1932): 499.

respected for his expectations that students constantly form opinions, make decisions, and reflect, apply, and make new meaning from the research and information presented to them.³⁵⁰

Another student, Louise Phelps Kellogg, who also was a well-known and respected historian in her own right, also gave accolades for Turner when she wrote of his passing. She noted that Turner was a consummate educator and his influence on the field of history would most likely never be matched writing,

When Frederick Jackson Turner died on March 14, 1932 in Pasadena, all academic America recognized that one the most significant personalities in the historical profession left us. No man of his generation did more to promote historical studies or to direct the course historical research....³⁵¹

Wilbur R. Jacobs concluded that Turner's methodology and the way he approached the study of history are his legacy:

Turner stressed the interplay between history and economics, as well as relevance of history to sociology, geography, geology, and other social and physical sciences. ... He concerned himself with the present as well as the past, and thought of himself as both sociologist and historian.³⁵²

³⁵⁰ Everett Edward Dale, "Memories of Frederick Jackson Turner," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 30, no. 3 (1943): 339–58.

³⁵¹ Louise Phelps Kellogg, "The Passing of a Great Teacher – Frederick Jackson Turner," *Historical Outlook*, 23, no. 6 (1932), 270.

³⁵² Jacobs, *Historical World of Frederick Jackson Turner*, preface.

CHAPTER FIVE – SCHOLAR, THINKER, EDUCATOR

Turner's Legacy in the Field of History

Turner has long been recognized as one of our most distinguished historians, a scholar whose work on the phenomenon of the frontier and on sectional development helped transform the teaching and writing of American History. ... At a time when university scholars were more and more narrowing their fields of specialization, Turner was moving in the opposite direction, toward broad interdisciplinary and comparative study. ... He belonged to that rare class of scholar, the original thinker.³⁵³

Frederick Jackson Turner is considered one of America's formidable Progressive historians and academics. Understanding Turner as a scholar, thinker, and educator is to grasp the concept of how Turner took the training and principles of scholarship he experienced in his personal journey, reflected upon these experiences, and applied this knowledge to his profession. The result revolutionized the philosophy, methods, and techniques of teaching, analyzing, and interpreting history. So influential was his scholarship that these practices are considered today's standards for historical research. On the value and importance of Turner in the field of history, Barry D. Karl, a professor of Historical Studies at both Brown and the University of Chicago, stated,

Serious students with a professional interest in American History learn the name of Turner—like really serious students of geometry know the name of Euclid ... Turner's position in the field is, therefore, quite clear; and what we are given is the picture of a man who devoted himself so completely to his students. ... The relations between the man [Turner] and the idea, and the idea and the profession, and the profession and the nation in the first quarter of the twentieth century are ... to reveal the profound impact of the frontier thesis on all of American thought: the intellectual embodiment of a new nationalism, the cause of the fundamental nationalist debate.³⁵⁴

Although Turner is known by historians and students of history, his presence in adult learning is not as familiar, yet also important. The intensity with which he pursued knowledge,

³⁵³ Jacobs, *Historical World of Frederick Jackson Turner*, preface.

³⁵⁴ Barry D. Karl, "Frederick Jackson Turner: The Moral Dilemma of Professionalization," *Reviews in American History* 3, no. 1 (1975): 1–2.

the way he conducted research, the hours of reflection performed formulating meaning, and the techniques he used with his students to convey understanding and value the importance of continually returning to what was previously thought (e.g., rereading a book to experience the story in a deeper fashion) are reasons why Turner should also be studied in the field of adult education.

Pursuit of Knowledge and Making Meaning

Max Farrand holistically captured Turner as a lifelong learner and reflective thinker:

Turner was dominated by, a restless, inquiring mind. ... He was always asking if there were not something more to be learned, something new to be added, or some other point of view to be found that would offer a more complete explanation. No subject for him was ever exhausted, his conclusions were only tentative, and he was impatient of generalizations upon insufficient data. ... He had a rigorous insistence upon exact scholarship ... His curiosity made him eager to learn from others, and the breadth of his interests led him to hope for information from everyone with whom he was associated.³⁵⁵

This becomes evident when one studies how Turner absorbed information in his post-secondary experiences and processed that information into a new wave of thought. The progression of Turner's thought process can be illustrated when investigating how he took the accepted practices and methodologies of his day and modified them, resulting in a novel way to interpret history.

The prevailing historiographical model in late nineteenth century history education was a European paradigm. This process was rooted in a number of European concepts that arose with the ancient Greeks (e.g., Herodotus and Thucydides), continued through the Middle Ages, and became part of the structure of studying history in modern Europe. These processes can be likened to the germination of a seed in that the genetic material produced in the sprout was wholly and completely rooted in the genetics, or germ, of the seed. Similarly, historical events in the European paradigm were outgrowths of events that had happened within the national or continental context, or the germ of the society. This was known as "germ theory."

³⁵⁵ Max Farrand, *Frederick Jackson Turner: A Memoir*, 1935, May Meeting. Source: Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Third Series, Vol. 65 (Oct., 1932 – May, 1936), pp. 430–440. Published by: Massachusetts Historical Society.

The use of the word germ in this case comes from the Latin root *germ*, meaning “vital part.” Examples of the use of this root can be found in the English word *germane* or the phrase “a germ of an idea.” In the context of historical study, germ theory had nothing to do with microbes or disease; rather, it was related to the perspective of the initial stage in development of society or in framing the ancestral form of cultures and customs. Historians educated in protocols of germ theory were referred to as being Germanic trained. Although one might be tempted to equate the term *Germanic* with its cognate German or Germany, this type of training is in no way to be confused with the study of Germany as a country of culture.

Often, American historians from the East Coast, and infrequently some from the West, went to Europe to be trained in the process of studying history. Therefore, the prevailing historical thought among American scholars at the time was often influenced by a number of romantic and even racist European ideologies that had informed their appreciation of past events. Whether harkening back to the “free men” of the Roman-era Teutonic forests or the more modern Ku Klux Klan champions of white supremacy, historians often found justification for their own prejudices in the errors of the past—and translated those into a self-fulfilling view of how history occurred.

Herbert Baxter Adams, Turner’s mentor at Johns Hopkins, was Germanic trained and believed germ theory was the best way to depict the evolutionary pattern of individuals, social groups, and governmental institutions of the United States with the Anglo-American race, which at the time was believed to be the most educated and civilized of races.³⁵⁶ William F. Allen, another of Turner’s mentors, who taught him at the University of Wisconsin, was educated at Harvard and also Germanic trained. He too was a proponent of germ theory, believing that American culture was simply the germination of European culture. Allen, like Adams, subscribed to scientific and evolutionary methods that dominated American academia during the Progressive Era using science as a justification for the use of germ theory.

When Turner embarked on his collegial studies, most historians thought America’s way of life was simply an extension of European culture. Turner took a significantly different point of view toward historiography. Although the “historical seed” would still germinate from the soil of the past, new material would be added to the historical stalk by the environment that surrounded the seed, rather than just from the seed itself. One thing that made Turner unique

³⁵⁶ Martin Ridge, “Turner the Historian: A Long Shadow,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 13, no. 2 (1993): 136.

was that he addressed what he believed to be a flaw in germ theory. Although Turner greatly respected his mentors, he also had his doubts about strictly aligning American History with germ theory. In a letter to fellow historian Merle Curti, Turner said,

My work, whether good or bad, can only be judged by noting what American historians and teachers of history ... were doing when I began ... The attitude toward Western history was at the time, largely antiquarian or of the romantic antiquarian type devoid of conception of the “West” as a moving process— modifying East, and involving economic, political, and social forces ... the “West” with which I dealt, was a *process* rather than a fixed geographical region; it began with the Atlantic coast; and emphasized the way in which the East colonized the West. In short, the “frontier” was taken as the “thin line” that recorded the dynamic element in American History up to recent times.³⁵⁷

Formulating his philosophic ideas on American culture, he contended that the American experience was a spiraling, living entity, and his historical interpretation was culminated in his seminal piece, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*, later known as his “Frontier Thesis.” He publically delivered his essay in 1893 and published it later that year. In his essay he tried to expand the narrow concept that America simply emulated an evolved European culture with the idea that those who lived in the United States had developed their own societal norms. Turner recognized that Anglo-Saxons of European descent came to eastern North America prior to the Revolution and brought distinct customs with them. He also conceded that these customs reflected the country where they originated but did not want to discount the ingenuity and intellect of those individuals by sidestepping what transpired in their trek West.

Although Turner admitted much of American culture arose from European tradition, he reasoned that other, newer customs were exclusively American and formed by the experiences and adaptations required by the lifestyle of the frontiersmen. Considering the settlement of the West that began in the early and mid-1800s, Turner noticed that those reared in the East who moved to the West were influenced by the harsh and rugged environment. Those who settled in the forests and plains developed a well-defined culture rooted in the conditions to which they were exposed. Therefore, the characters of those who spent their entire lives in the West were noticeably different from those born in the East. He believed the identity of America was a

³⁵⁷ Turner to Merle Curti, June 11, 1927, HEHT box 37.

blending of both ancestries, not just the influence of Europe.³⁵⁸

Turner's intellect and maturity of thought reflected his disinclination to frame American History only in terms of germ theory. This was confirmed by Martin Ridge when he wrote of Turner's concerns:

In his essay Turner warned against the dangers of Americans writing nationalistic "tribal history," a situation that had "prevailed for many years in this country," where "a society ... looks with contempt upon the history and institutions of the rest of the world."³⁵⁹

As a learner and thinker, Turner used reflection of thought to establish his theory of how history should be studied and written outside of germ theory parameters. Historians such as Martin Ridge and William Brewer explained the importance of Turner's originality in thought, "When Turner published 'The Significance of the Frontier in American History' ... it would be the cornerstone of the twentieth-century arguments for American exceptionalism and a unique national character."³⁶⁰

Turner's leap as a unique individual thinker signaled the differences between Europe and the United States when he spoke of the vastness of the unpopulated acreage of the United States compared to the Europe. One example was Turner's belief that Americans were becoming careless and wasteful in their use of natural resources. They mistook the vastness of open space as a license to disregard the need to conserve and replenish what had been used. He was also concerned with how American ideology sanctioned the poor treatment of American Indians and immigrant railroad workers. Turner even went as far as to imply that a sense of white domination was considered acceptable in reference to the treatment of people of non-European stock, which he lamented. According to Ridge,

He [Turner] saw wastefulness as an aspect of the American character resulting from the frontier [open space]. ... He wrote at a time when white domination over the nonwhite world was at its zenith and when European and American ideologies postulated a racial, ethnic, and class hierarchy based on "immutable biological" laws, that mirrored the best science of the period.³⁶¹

³⁵⁸ Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History*.

³⁵⁹ Ridge, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Wisconsin's Historian of the Frontier*, 58. Also see Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of History," *Wisconsin Journal of Education* 21 (October–November 1891): 29.

³⁶⁰ Ridge, "Turner the Historian," 137. Also see William M. Brewer, "The Historiography of Frederick Jackson Turner," *Journal of Negro History* 44, no. 4 (1959): 240–59.

³⁶¹ Ridge, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Wisconsin's Historian of the Frontier*, 139–40. Also see Elazar Barkan,

Turner felt the sole use of germ theory would thwart the true personality of the characteristics of American culture, and inadvertently and unduly influence the future of American society and politics. He concluded,

Too exclusive attention has been paid by institutional students to the Germanic origins [germ theory of Europe], too little to the American factors ... The frontier is the line of the most rapid and effective Americanization. Little by little [the settler] transforms the wilderness, but the outcome is not the old Europe. ... The fact is that here is a new product that is American.³⁶²

This is not to say that Turner did not include elements of germ theory in his writings, but he did temper the ideology that the white race was supreme. Historian Thomas Hartshorne wrote,

Historians should also remember that Turner's essay overturns the equally racist implications of Herbert Baxter Adams and the Anglo-Saxon school by asserting that Americans were a "mixed race" that included most immigrants from Europe, if not others, who have been exposed to the frontier experience. Turner refused to accept the racial explanation of the genesis of national character.³⁶³

Turner wanted people to understand that he did not consider germ theory an invalid way to explain the social and political development of the nation but that the vast geographic area also had implications on culture. For this reason strict adherence to such philosophy was not appropriate. More simply put, because the United States was so large, each state had regional variations, just as each European country had variations in culture, language, and customs. Therefore, one would find similarities and differences between U.S. states, just as each European country would find similarities and differences between them throughout the continent of Europe as a whole.

To understand the uniqueness of Turner's work, one cannot read it through the lens of today's definition of equality and, instead, should view it through the lens of the nineteenth century. Only then can it be understood that his comments, within the context of the times, were

"Rethinking Orientalism: Representations of 'Primitives' in Western Culture at the Turn of the Century," *History of European Ideas* 15, nos. 4–6 (1992): 759–65.

³⁶² Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 4.

³⁶³ Thomas L. Hartshorne, *The Distorted Image: Changing Conceptions of the American Character Since Turner* (Cleveland, OH: Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1968), 24.

considered forward thinking. His thought process became the stepping stone to changing the conception of the American character. Turner's writings were written in a clear, succinct manner that included a type of empathy and humanness unlike much of the history done in the European hierarchical manner consistent with the day. "Because of that sympathy, clarity, and cogency, Turner's essay has become the prototype of national character study. Inquiry begins with Turner and may be regarded as a survey of attempts to discover an alternative to the frontier thesis."³⁶⁴

Thus, Turner developed a unique way of describing what it meant to be American. His goal, which he felt compelled to accomplish, was to shift the view that American society was solely influenced by European traditions and show that it was a separate and specific nation with its own cultural traditions.³⁶⁵

As a lifelong learner and reflective thinker, Turner's methodology and new way of thinking about history were important factors in changing how Americans described themselves. But what was more powerful was his ability to articulate that culture is ever evolving, with some elements staying the same while other aspects developed into something distinctly unique. This ideology struck a chord with many Americans who also sought a rationale for developing a national identity. This insight gave credence to what America had done for itself. He also gave citizens a model for appreciating the "American" characteristics of individualism, perseverance, inventiveness, and commitment to democracy that would be handed down from generation to generation.³⁶⁶

Turner's ability to take what he had learned, process the information in terms of his own reality, formulate an authentic way of determining a national identity and establish a new formula for interpreting history demonstrated several characteristics of adult learning principles. His Frontier Thesis took into account that, as people encounter experiences, they make meaning and practical use of these experiences. He also understood that humanity is ever evolving and transforming. Among historians, Turner is praised for his intellect and application of knowledge—two additional reasons why both scholars and professional practitioners of adult learning would benefit from studying this insightful thinker.

³⁶⁴ Ibid.,52.

³⁶⁵ David M. Potter, *People of Plenty: Economic Abundance and the American Character* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

³⁶⁶ Ridge, "The Life of an Idea: The Significance of Frederick Jackson Turner's Frontier Thesis," 12–13. Also see Gerald D. Nash, *Creating the West: Historical Interpretations, 1890–1990* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1991), 197–257.

The Power of an Idea

Turner is credited with providing clarification about why politics became more complicated as the country's vast expanse became more populated. One way he developed his concept of the distinct establishment of American culture was through his use of mapping and geographical sectional studies. Organizing data by categorizing it by geographic areas showed the logic in establishing the interaction between man and environment in physiographical terms, not just through the amplification of European influence. This process provided an explanation of the interplay between societal forces relative to people's geographical experiences and an explanation of the development of differing opinions on politics and policy dependent upon where one lived in the United States.³⁶⁷

Turner turned the field of historical studies on its head. Rear Admiral S. E. Morison, a respected naval historian of the twentieth century, explained the value and importance of Turner's theories in the field of historical study:

As a scholar, Turner's influence upon the writing of American History was profound. . . . In this short paper, the most influential ever written on American History, Turner stated his thesis: that the continuous movement of civilization into the wilderness, the progressive advance of the frontier, released those forces which have produced the most characteristic features in American History of life. The essay made necessary every appraisal of the forces of American History, a process of revision which is still going on.³⁶⁸

Morison's comments are confirmed through the life changes Turner experienced after the publication of his Frontier Thesis. Turner's contemporaries began to see the wisdom in his abandonment on the European style of historiography and slowly began to adopt Turner's methodology. He became in demand as a speaker and guest lecturer and was courted by the best universities in the nation. With such demands on his time, Turner did his best to accommodate requests. He did not do so for monetary reasons, although he was often paid, but because he felt an obligation to the field of American History to train would-be historians to ensure accurate accounts and interpretations of events for future generations.

³⁶⁷ Samuel E. Morison, "Frederick Jackson Turner (1861–1932)," quoted in *Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1933), 685–86.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

Those who adopted Turner's philosophy and new methodology and used his systematic style of the study of history were coined "Turnerians" and are credited with the formation of the concept of American nationalism and the documentation of the American experience in the days of settlement and development from the Midwest to the Pacific coast. According to Grace Lee Nute, a former student of Turner,

[Turner] ... revolutionized the entire conception of the history of the New World. Its central theme, that the enforced adaptation of Europeans to their new environment west of the Atlantic produced new points of view expressed in ways that are now recognized as characteristically American, was so obvious that historians had overlooked it almost completely.³⁶⁹

With the thought process behind his essays such as the Frontier Thesis and *Middle Western Pioneer Democracy*, Turner became a Progressive historian, aligning himself with a group that included Charles A. Beard and Vernon Louis Parrington. Progressive historians promoted the necessity to investigate history through the varied contexts that affected a historical event, which included the social and natural environment, politics, and economic conditions that affected the population involved in the event. They inspired professional scholarship in American History with characteristics that included (a) a vivid sense of social, economic, and intellectual process which placed the man, his institutions, and his ideas firmly in the stream of evolution; (b) a viewpoint that citizens had an obligation to pragmatism to create solutions for the betterment of the collective society because of its emphasis on the moral and social utility; (c) a thinking of "being in the present" which stressed the continuity of the past, present, and possible future; (d) an interpretation of American History which stressed economic geographical forces—or combination of the two—and found a central theme in the conflict of agrarianism with commercialism and capitalism.³⁷⁰

As previously discussed, Turner was taught history steeped in the principles of germ theory. His new view of history, a product of his insight and scholarship, was extraordinarily different from the paradigm of his time and is more consistent with the way history is taught and interpreted today. Turner challenged the historical establishment in their assumption that,

³⁶⁹ Grace Lee Nute, "Frederick Jackson Turner," *Minnesota History* 28, no. 2 (1929): 89. Also see Frederick Jackson Turner, "Middle Western Pioneer Democracy," *Minnesota History Bulletin* 3, no. 7 (1918): 393–414.

³⁷⁰ Charles Crowe, "The Emergence of Progressive History," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 27, no. 1 (1966): 112.

American political institutions were simply the spontaneous reproduction ... of the government which in the ancient Teutonic forests. Those same [Germanic] racial germs, carried to America both directly and by way of England, had produced those same Germanic forms of free political life.³⁷¹

Another example of Turner's ability to reflect and process learned information arose when his dissertation chair, Herbert Baxter Adams, wanted Turner to continue the research Turner had done on his master's thesis, which focused on the Indian fur trade. Baxter encouraged Turner to dig more deeply and follow the path of the American traders as opposed to giving equal deference to the importance of the American Indians. Turner did not want to go down the path suggested by Adams—following or mapping how European Anglo-Saxons from the East influenced this trade.

In later years, Turner would concede that his unwillingness to adhere strictly to Adams' wishes was "pretty much a reaction due to my indignation [at Adams' belief that germ theory and all things retrace backed to Europe's influence]."³⁷² Turner also shared his reservations about strict adherence to germ theory in *The Frontier in American History*:

Exclusive attention has been paid by institutional students to the Germanic [European] origins, too little to the American factors ... The frontier is the line of the most rapid and effective Americanization. Little by little [the settler] transforms the wilderness, but the outcome is not the old Europe ... The fact is that here is a new product that is American.³⁷³

As an adult learner who grew up in the West but studied in the East and stayed true to the meaning he had made from his experience in the classroom, Turner's reluctance to embrace the idea that American identity should be viewed solely through the lens of Europe was nothing less than courageous. He knew he needed the credential of an earned doctorate degree to secure a professorship, so one might ask, "Why would Turner risk upsetting his doctoral chair by daring to go down a path that was in direct opposition to Adams?" His obstinacy could have cost him his degree and his career. However, he could not compromise on his principles nor reject what he had deduced was right. Perhaps Adams was won over by Turner's meticulous description and detailing the process, development, and evolution of his ideas. Turner's ability to explain how

³⁷¹ Gilman M. Ostrander, "Turner and the Germ Theory," *Agricultural History* 32, no. 4 (1958): 258–61.

³⁷² Hofstadter, *Progressive Historians*, 68.

³⁷³ Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 4.

and why the environment influenced citizens in a way that was unrelated to their European ancestry was the source of his credibility.³⁷⁴

True to His Roots

With his upbringing in the West, his studies at the University of Wisconsin, and his education in the East at Johns Hopkins, Turner felt his experiences and education gave him the scholarly skills he needed to straddle the mindsets of both regions. Turner also believed he had the fortitude to accomplish his goal of obtaining a professorship. He also understood that he was not completely aligned intellectually with those in the East. He knew that he was a Midwesterner at heart. He assumed he would always be considered simply a visitor to the East and never accepted as a genuine Eastern intellectual. This belief was logically accurate because those in the East could not comprehend the lifestyle and culture of the West because few had written about or explained the reasons for such differences. Therefore, Turner felt duty bound to find a way to bridge the gaps between the East and the West.³⁷⁵

Turner was content with his identity and acknowledged the salient differences between easterners and westerners. He took the training and knowledge he obtained in his scholarship, and with an understanding of germ theory, he began to reflect upon it to make his own meaning but also to decide how to inform others. The result was “a new theme was waiting to be exploited, the grand story of Western development. A new historical figure was waiting impatiently in the wings—the Western pioneer.”³⁷⁶

Turner used his intellectual skills to ponder what he knew from his own life experiences in the West and that of the culture he experienced in the East. He blended the tapestry of the West with that of the East by pulling from European roots of the settlers, then describing the ways in which and reasons why the settlers were forced to modify and adapt their behavior based on the environment in which they now lived. He asserted that,

... up to our own day American History has been in a large degree the history of the colonization of the great West. The existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of the American settlement westward, explain American development.³⁷⁷

³⁷⁴ Merle Eugene Curti, *The Growth of the American Thought* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), 554.

³⁷⁵ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

³⁷⁶ Hofstadter, *Progressive Historians*, 69.

³⁷⁷ Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 1.

Turner was concerned that many American historians would not agree with him, particularly those he had studied with in the East. However, by modifying a commonly held ideal was one reason why Turner was considered so visionary. His insight into the genesis of American character, so different from that of his contemporaries, arose from his vision of a more complicated path than a simple germination from European roots. He tried to explain the need to broaden the definition of the American character and branched out from strictly abiding by the principles of germ theory when he stated,

American institutions ...have been compelled to adapt themselves to the changes involving crossing a continent, in a winning wilderness, and in developing at each area of this process out of the primitive economic and political conditions of the frontier into the complexity of city life.³⁷⁸

What made Turner unique can be seen in a statement from and adaption of his original Frontier Thesis: “American social development has been continually beginning over again on the frontier.”³⁷⁹ This statement is in direct conflict with germ theory in that Turner implied from generation to generation changes within the context of life forces push society to constantly reevaluate, modify, and change attitudes and behaviors based on the circumstances of the day within the context of one’s nation.

Turner’s ideas could have been considered radical and therefore groundless, but his thought process was well defined and clearly written, and his sincerity was conveyed with deference to those with whom he had studied and whom he admired. He was able to avoid offending the professors and colleagues with whom he studied and worked. On the contrary, his ideas began to take hold and be accepted by his mentors, colleagues, and peers, who acknowledged the validity of his ideas.

Turner’s bold attempt to trace and define the essence of America eventually shifted the paradigm of how history was to be studied and interpreted. Changes in the paradigm included discussing the importance of the process of how the geography of America changed the culture of the original European settlers into a specific and unique American culture. Turner’s thought process began a national debate emphasizing how “the environment of the nation made the

³⁷⁸ Ibid., 2.

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

nation; made the people; transformed the European into the American.”³⁸⁰ According to Hofstadter,

[Turner] was far less interested in European germs and the heredity side of political evolution than he was in the effects of the American environment [American experience]. . . . For a Westerner it was hard to escape the workings of the massive untenanted continent and the necessity for men to find ways of coping with it; by comparison, the inherited apparatus they brought to it, in ideas, habits and institutions, seemed quite frail.³⁸¹

Another unique characteristic of Turner was his reluctance to embrace the idea that the identity of America could only be viewed through a lens focused on the Atlantic coast because of his strong impression that society did not stay fixed, but was ever evolving. Turner insisted that human beings were constantly adapting and improving their lives socially, emotionally, economically, and technologically. To Turner, American citizens were incapable of resting on their laurels. They were compelled to be true to their individualism, yet they respected their obligation to the betterment of the nation as a whole. Thus, in his view of history, the American character embodied the importance of individualism as an integral entity within the concept and complexity of the mechanism called society. This interplay between personal identity and one’s relationship to society is an approach used to interpret modern-day historical thought.³⁸²

Turner’s interpretation of what constituted the character of American society was determined because he recognized most professors of history teaching in the West had migrated from the East. The migration to the West was instigated by the professional and sometimes lucrative opportunities presented to them by newer universities developing history departments and seeking credibility through the faculty they hired—however, professors from the East often were not open to understanding or changing their perspective of the West. Because Turner had been born and bred in the West, he had the intuition of a westerner and the cognitive ability to present ideas in a scholarly way. Turner gained credibility through his narratives, allowing both the easterners and westerners to share equally as relevant contributors to the American identity.³⁸³

³⁸⁰ Ronald Vierling, “The New Western Mythology: A Study of Frederick Jackson Turner’s Frontier Thesis, Its Origins and Relationship to American Thought and Literary Themes” (PhD diss., University of Wyoming, 1973), 31.

³⁸¹ Hofstadter, *Progressive Historians*, 68–69.

³⁸² Curti, *Growth of the American Thought*.

³⁸³ Henry Steele Commager, *The American Mind: An Interpretation of American Thought and Character Since the*

To Turner, the variances that arose from these geographic areas provided crucial context and therefore shaped his belief that germ theory needed to be modified to be applied to the American landscape. To him, the key to establishing what it meant to be an American required considering European heritage and ancestry but not discounting the hard work and experiences of the pioneers. He pointed out the necessity of taking the fabric from the East and that from the West and weaving them together to complete the portrait of America.

Turner also provided evidence for his insistence that American History be explained in broader terms than that of simple European origins. He argued the institutions and lifestyle of American society of the late 1800s operated quite differently than that of colonial America and asked the important question of *why*. Turner was not comfortable with defining American society as an evolution out of stagnated European thought. He theorized that the United States was no longer able to be discussed in terms of old Europe. Somewhat ironically, he contended that the Europe of the nineteenth century was a far cry from the Europe of the 1700s—applying his theories about historical evolution to the source of germ theory, and demonstrating that even Europe was subject to some of the sociological forces that he perceived on the American frontier. To him, it would be primitive to continue to debate the evolution of American society through an antiquated lens of European ideals of old.³⁸⁴

Turner was not alone in his view of American historiography. Contemporary historians welcomed a fresh look at the way American History was approached and conceptualized. One theme of the 1893 convention of the American Historical Association, where he presented his Frontier Thesis, was to discuss the concept of American culture in terms of scientific examination. This is one reason Turner's Frontier Thesis was greeted with admiration and invoked the willingness of the historians who attended the convention to reconsider the protocols in which history was being studied.³⁸⁵

Turner had found the key that unlocked understanding the evolution of American society. This commentary also resonated with historians struggling to extricate themselves from the “box” of European genesis. “From that day ... until now it may be truly said that Turner has so completely dominated American historical writing that hardly a single product in all that time

1880's (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1950), 297.

³⁸⁴ Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 49.

³⁸⁵ P. M. Maginnis, “The Social Philosophy of Frederick Jackson Turner” (PhD diss., University of Arizona, 1969), ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 9.

has failed to show the marks of his influence.”³⁸⁶ Receiving a warm reception and complimentary statements about his analysis of the American character, he continued to critique the work of those who did not integrate his broader view of the various factors shaping national identity into their analysis of American History. For example, of Hermann Von Holst’s *Constitutional History of America*, Turner said,

In my opinion more harm may be done by improper prescription or omissions ... in regard to accuracy of a statement. If I am to describe an elephant, and give only an account of his feet, alleging at the same time that this constitutes the elephant, the microscopic accuracy and keenness of criticism of these organs will not stand for the failure to speak for the rest of the animal. Nor will it do to speak of the feet or the trunk as seen simply in a state of rest. Unless I describe them in action and in growth, I have failed to describe the organ.³⁸⁷

All-Encompassing Thinker

Turner did not like to be boxed into one aspect of study and focused his research in an interdisciplinary manner. To him, society was an organism dependent on its symbiotic components in addition to its environment. He sought a wide-view lens to interpret history and thought a broader view crucial if appropriate interpretation of history was to be made. In a letter to Max Farrand in 1904 Turner wrote,

No satisfactory understanding of the evolution of his people is possible without calling into co-operation many sciences and methods hitherto but little used by the American historian. Data drawn from studies of literature and art, politics, economics, sociology, psychology, biology, and physiography, all must be read. The method of the statistician as well as that of the critic of evidence is absolutely essential.³⁸⁸

³⁸⁶ Louis M. Hacker, “Sections or Classes.” *Nation* 137, no. 26 (1933): 108-110. Also see George Rogers Taylor, ed., *The Turner Thesis: Concerning the Role of the Frontier in American History*, Vol. 2. (Boston, MA: Heath, 1971).

³⁸⁷ Frederick Jackson Turner in Wilbur R. Jacobs, “The Many-Sided Frederick Jackson Turner,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 1, no. 4 (1970): 371.

³⁸⁸ Turner to Max Farrand, approximate date 1904, HEHT box 4. Also see Max Farrand, “Frederick Jackson Turner at the Huntington Library,” *Huntington Library Bulletin*, no. 3 (1933): 156.

Turner did not see himself as one-dimensional or fixated on one particular topic and often lamented about whether he had done a wide enough survey of an issue under study. This viewpoint may explain why Turner did not publish profusely, an expectation of university professors. Yet, the amount one publishes does not determine, nor make, an excellent adult educator. His reasoning for his lack of ability to profusely publish was that he did not want to put into writing a flawed interpretation of an event without a thorough investigation. He took pride in teaching his students to use a wide lens when delving into history. In a letter to Merle Curti in 1927, Turner discussed the importance of keeping a broad perspective when considering an interpretation of historical events:

At any rate I think political, economical, and social history is all tied together and the interaction of these factors must be considered in any investigation into any one of them. And if I had any influence upon students it was by pounding hard on this conception, and then keeping pretty much out of their way, while they blazed their own trails.³⁸⁹

Acceptance of a Hypothesis

Wilbur Jacobs spoke about Turner in the perspective of a many-sided genius when he wrote,

Turner made a powerful impact upon the historical world as a teacher ... His searching, suggestive mind, his magnetic personality, and his warm sincerity made lifelong friends of his students ... [and] fellow professors and two future American presidents, Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, were among his devoted disciples.³⁹⁰

Turner developed his own methodologies for studying history. He believed that to gain a complete picture of history, one should include study and research from other disciplines such as geography, statistics, economics, and sociology. His way of studying and writing about history were so nontraditional that at times other historians would openly question whether he was truly a scholar of history. However, Turner responded that historians would be remiss if they did not use whatever tools and knowledge were available to help interpret the past.³⁹¹

³⁸⁹ Turner to Merle Curti, approximate date 1927, HEHT box 36.

³⁹⁰ Wilbur R. Jacobs, "Frederick Jackson Turner: Master Teacher," *Pacific Historical Review* 23, no. 1 (1954): 49.

³⁹¹ Kerwin Lee Klein, *Frontiers of Historical Imagination: Narrating the European Conquest of Native America, 1890–1990* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997).

Committed to this philosophy, Turner collaborated with Edward Channing and Albert Bushnell Hart in the revision of the *Guide to the Study and Reading of American History*.³⁹² Turner also intentionally trained hundreds of students in his methodology. Although some of his students later disagreed with Turner's interpretations of historical events (e.g., Carl Becker), they rarely questioned his methodology; even today, historians continue to use his process of inquiry.

Turner's students were quite diverse. He worked with men and women of all socioeconomic backgrounds. He had a reputation as being a dedicated and caring teacher who was willing to mentor students' intellectual potential. One of his students described his seminars as a "clash of mind on mind" and praised Turner's genius at creating a sense of "comradeship" and an atmosphere of "intellectual democracy."³⁹³

Turner's method of investigation incorporated the use of statistics. This allowed Turner to feel confident in any suppositions he inferred on the basis of the data he collected.³⁹⁴ He was so concerned with distorted interpretations of the past that he wanted to reinvestigate accounts of American History to ascertain if prior historical events were accurately described by previous historians. He was compelled to teach his students to investigate meticulously. Turner wanted to impress upon his students that they should reflect and when appropriate, question other's work because he was concerned with how documents and information about the past were being researched, analyzed, and potentially misconstrued.³⁹⁵

Turner wanted to understand the relationship between what he called "confused memory," testing the "reality of the present" and the actuality of the past. According to Jacobs, "Turner's constant emphasis on evaluating source materials stemmed from his belief that a central idea should emerge from the survey of data." Turner felt his profession had a responsibility not to make casual judgments since historical events were complex in nature.³⁹⁶

Turner stood as an intellectual giant and innovator in a world populated by classically germanic-trained historians whom he felt had limited views of what "history" signified. However, he never wanted to confine himself to a particular set of methodologies and would

³⁹² Edward Channing, Albert Bushnell Hart, and Frederick Jackson Turner. *Guide to the Study and Reading of American History*.

³⁹³ John Mack Faragher, "The Frontier Trail: Rethinking Turner and Reimagining the American West," *American Historical Review* 98, no. 1 (1993): 110.

³⁹⁴ Merle Eugene Curti, *Frederick Jackson Turner*. Vol. 11. Mexico City, MX: Institucion Panamericano de Geografía e Historia, 1949.

³⁹⁵ Jacobs et al., *Turner, Bolton, and Webb*.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 363.

consider all aspects of scholarly thought, even principles of germ theory. Paramount to Turner was that he understood previous events in order to deal more intelligently with present-day societal issues as well as prepare for the future. He did not want to close his mind to any methodology that could help inform him about past events.³⁹⁷

Turner spent much of his life making sure that he and his students understood the importance of avoiding broad generalizations or interpreting history without thorough and vigorous research involving all aspects of the event, including the socioeconomic, geographic, and political issues that affected the event. He also wanted to make sure that historians avoided flaws in the interpretation of events that would taint the truth about the urbanization and settlement of the United States or the characterization of American citizenship.

Adult Educator

Turner served as a university professor from 1889 to 1924, first at the University of Wisconsin from 1889 to 1909 and then at Harvard from 1910 to 1924, when he retired from teaching. As a university professor, he believed historians did not devote enough time to research and risked falling prey to revisionist writing.³⁹⁸ In 1910, during his American Historical Association presidential address, he urged his colleagues to adopt social science's methods in their work. In Turner's mind, a professor's first job was to promote interdisciplinary reading in history, which informed the historian of the social, economic, and geographic context of the times. He also believed practicing an interdisciplinary approach, using quantitative methods, would help the historian find the true meaning of what transpired in the past.³⁹⁹

Turner's courses created an inviting environment. His willingness to support his students made them eager to impress him with their accomplishments and learning. When students walked into Turner's classroom, they immediately sensed Turner's joy of living and the genuine happiness he felt working with them. These feelings were often reciprocated by his students and they embraced the hard work and scholarly expectations set by their teacher.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁷ Jacobs, "The Many-Sided Frederick Jackson Turner,".

³⁹⁸ Bogue, "Not by Bread Alone," 10–23.

³⁹⁹ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

⁴⁰⁰ Nute, "Frederick Jackson Turner," 161.

Turner was approachable, stimulating, and exuded intellectualism without presenting an ego that was demonstrative. His modesty and honesty were present in his conversations and course workshops. He was committed to helping his students become successful historians, doing so by piquing his students' desire to find the truth through investigation and observation. Because of these qualities, Turner was admired and respected not only by his students but his colleagues and contemporaries as well.⁴⁰¹

Turner often spoke affectionately to and about his students. He took the success of his students as a testament to whether or not he was fulfilling his obligation. Often he dedicated hours of his personal time to working with students, even at the deficit of his own research and writing.⁴⁰² He successfully converted his students to his way of thinking about historiography. Many went on to become highly successful historians. Most credited Turner with providing them the tools they needed to succeed in their field.⁴⁰³

Joseph Shafer spoke of his respect for Turner as an educator by describing the salient difference between Turner and other professors of the time. Students were amazed that Turner never relied on reading from his published works and only read from note cards he prepared for each course. Unlike other professors, Turner would pose real-world questions in the context of the history being discussed. He was willing to receive student input when he himself was having difficulty with his own research. In addition, Turner was willing to examine and adopt or reject any previous historical interpretations he had made as long as documentation could support the reinterpretation.⁴⁰⁴ Edgar Eugene Robinson indirectly described Turner's embodiment of an adult educator when he said, "It is doubtful whether he [Turner] ever really separated teaching and research."⁴⁰⁵

Additionally, Turner encouraged students to work in other fields, not strictly in the discipline of history, so they would have the complete context of the time in which the event under study occurred. He took pride in how his students diversified in their careers and the high

⁴⁰¹ Edgar Eugene Robinson, *Frederick Jackson Turner* (Bismarck, ND: State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1932). Also see Richard Jensen, "On Modernizing Frederick Jackson Turner: The Historiography of Regionalism," *Western Historical Quarterly* 11, no. 3 (1980): 307-22.; Fulmer Mood and Frederick Jackson Turner, "Frederick Jackson Turner's Address on Education in a United States without Free Land," *Agricultural History* 23, no. 4 (1949): 254-59; and Jacobs, "Frederick Jackson Turner: Master Teacher," 49-58.

⁴⁰² Karl, "Frederick Jackson Turner: The Moral Dilemma of Professionalization," 3-4.

⁴⁰³ Morison, "Frederick Jackson Turner (1861-1932)," 686.

⁴⁰⁴ Joseph Shafer, "Turner's Frontier Philosophy," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 16 (Jun. 1933): 451-69.

⁴⁰⁵ Robinson, *Frederick Jackson Turner*, 260.

standards of scholarship they employed. Because Turner displayed such characteristics, he was regarded as a friend, teacher, and welcomed critic.⁴⁰⁶

Turner was at his best when conducting his seminars. There his intellectual integrity and knowledge of his subject matter shined. While disseminating knowledge, he encouraged his students to work together on projects and present their findings. During these projects Turner was helpful, encouraging, and willing to set aside private time to help those who needed guidance in completing assignments.⁴⁰⁷ He also instilled the importance of supporting investigative work with supporting documentation. He would accept no conclusions made by students that were unsubstantiated by facts, for it was his belief that doing so was death to the truth, leading to misinterpretation and poorly formulated perspectives.⁴⁰⁸

Seminars were organized to allow Turner and his students to work in tandem with each other. He made it clear that he was eager to learn from his students and considered it a privilege to deliberate with them. He allowed students the freedom to choose topics from a general framework and was open to suggestions in reference to projects that students were eager to examine. Time was given during his courses for students to study and ask questions, with Turner eager to guide them in their investigations. The students later presented the results of their inquiry, with Turner joining in on the question and answer session afterward.⁴⁰⁹

Turner encouraged student engagement. Students likened Turner's role to that of a coach who participated as a member of the team. Although enjoyable, Turner's courses took much preparation and study time both in and out of the classroom walls. Many students were unprepared for the demands of the reading required by Turner and for the mental preparation and insight he expected students to establish upon reflection of the readings and class discussions. However, his students appreciated the informal way in which he approached each class session.⁴¹⁰

The theme of Turner's informal classroom forum and facilitation method in no way implied his lack of preparedness. His seminars were well organized, intuitive, and thought provoking. Students at times would get annoyed waiting for Turner to go through his plethora of

⁴⁰⁶ Farrand, "Frederick Jackson Turner at the Huntington Library."

⁴⁰⁷ Avery Craven, "Frederick Jackson Turner," in *The Marcus W. Jernegan Essays in American Historiography*, (Chicago, IL: Russell & Russell, 1937), 267.

⁴⁰⁸ Jacobs et al., *Turner, Bolton, and Webb*, 40.

⁴⁰⁹ Jacobs, "Frederick Jackson Turner: Master Teacher," 55.

⁴¹⁰ Kellogg, "The Passing of a Great Teacher."

note cards to make a point he felt was important to a student's investigation. However, he was never overbearing or critical of students and often allowed them to take credit for seeds of ideas that he actually planted.⁴¹¹

Students often commented on Turner's willingness to meet with them on Saturdays or to be approached at athletic events. Turner was also applauded for being totally objective in discussions, making sure not to have a student be influenced by any potential biases he may have had on a topic.⁴¹² Turner willingly put his students before himself. He took a real interest in them, their topics, and their success. One example was that of Arthur H. Buffinton, who worked with Turner from 1911 to 1924 on Buffinton's dissertation. Buffinton credits Turner with getting him through the process and finally achieving his goal of completing his doctoral studies. Buffinton was also impressed with the unpretentious and unassuming way in which Turner would not take credit for Buffinton's work or success in his professional career.⁴¹³

On His Humility

Turner had a reputation for being modest even though he was world-renowned. He would be the first to deny the relevance of accolades. He consistently gave credit to those who worked with him, gave him advice when doing his research, or guided him through his thought process. Because he believed that reflection provided new understanding, Turner did not feel his research, interpretations, or writings were exclusively his, because history was always evolving. He was admired for his ability and willingness to give credit or recognition to those who directed him to texts and vehicles to complete his research and analysis. Turner was admired for his readiness to listen to criticism and did not attribute ill will to critiques since he felt they were an integral part of the academic process.⁴¹⁴

Turner was adored by his students for his unpretentious mannerisms and his lack of conceit about the enormity of the contributions he made to the field of history. His belief in humanity and his philosophy that happiness lay in the environment of life and how we represent ourselves in relationship to our environment were key elements in his teaching practices. This

⁴¹¹ Ibid., 58.

⁴¹² A. C. Krey, "My Reminiscence of Frederick Jackson Turner," *Arizona and the West* 3, no. 4 (1961): 377-81.

⁴¹³ Jacobs, "The Many-Sided Frederick Jackson Turner."

⁴¹⁴ Farrand, *Frederick Jackson Turner: A Memoir*, 432, 438, 440.

was a characteristic that many of his students tried to emulate. Turner believed that human beings needed to appreciate nature, the arts, and each other in order to truly understand the greatness of those who lived before us and will live in the future. He had an intense love of humankind and tried to teach his students to work for the love of learning and the adoration of the interpretation of history to have peace of mind.⁴¹⁵

Carl Becker wrote that as a teacher Turner had the “unusual ability to look on the wide world in a humane friendly way, in a fresh and strictly independent way, with a vision unobscured by academic inhibitions.”⁴¹⁶ For Turner, professorship was a privilege and great responsibility. It was not limited to the training of practitioners. Having the opportunity to assist in providing a quality university education to America’s citizens, who in turn would use information to make better-informed decisions affecting the social order for the better, was his way of meeting his obligations to society.⁴¹⁷

In the Classroom

When investigating Turner, several adult learning themes appear. They include facilitation and learning communities, application of knowledge, individuality and one’s place in society, negotiation of learning and learning goals, and the importance of the perspective of the facilitator and transformation. Turner embraced all of these adult learning principles and challenged himself to continually hone his skills and learn from his students.

Turner was a guide and conductor of learning who unobtrusively gave suggestions and encouraged his students to stretch their thought processes yet never overwhelmed his students. He would encourage debate and discussion among students while evoking a sense of respect for all viewpoints. One of Turner’s most respected characteristics was that he had no outward favorites and considered the merit of each student’s work—often praising students publicly for their sense of academic competence.⁴¹⁸

Turner was praised for his authenticity and sincere love of the craft and his students. He became lifelong friends with many, and others frequently wrote him for advice or suggestions on

⁴¹⁵ Nute, “Frederick Jackson Turner.”

⁴¹⁶ Carl Becker in Howard Washington Odum, ed., *American Masters of Social Science: An Approach to the Study of the Social Sciences through a Neglected Field of Biography* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1965), 295.

⁴¹⁷ Jacobs, *Historical World of Frederick Jackson Turner*, 68.

⁴¹⁸ Kellogg, “The Passing of a Great Teacher,” 270–72.

topics of investigation, repeatedly thanking Turner for teaching them to approach history from an analytical point of view.⁴¹⁹ He was admired for a teaching style that was quite unlike that of other professors. Other scholars would inform the student body that their time outside the classroom was specifically spent for researching and writing; therefore, they would have limited time to meet with students outside of scheduled class meetings. He put his students over his writing, even if it cost him additional fame and status.⁴²⁰

Although Turner did not have a long list of published works, he had a plethora of extensive notes and essays he had jotted down over the years with the hope of one day organizing them and writing a volume of published work. However, “The Book,” as he constantly referred to it, was only published posthumously. Turner did not regret the time he spent with his students or the use of his extensive notes to aid students in their scholarship; he even bequeathed his entire collection of documents, notes, maps, and letters to the Huntington Library to continue assisting historical scholars even after his death.⁴²¹

Turner expected his students to be scholars and often talked of the importance of using and evaluating different kinds of evidence when researching. Evidence included “the reputation of witness for intelligence, veracity, opportunity to know, bias, and self-interest.”⁴²² He gave his students multiple opportunities to practice his methodology during courses and seminars including time to research multiple aspects of an event (e.g., economic, geographical, sociological, etc.) in order to understand that people and problems are not one-dimensional and that the components of history are intertwined. He used much of the course time for class discussions as opposed to the lecture format. In comparison to many faculty members, Turner’s informal instructional practices were quite unconventional.

Although convinced that his methodology was best, Turner often had to explain his format and the rationale for his design to others. In a letter to Carl Becker, a former student of Turner’s who emulated his methods but often did not agree with Turner’s interpretation of past events, Turner iterated justification for his practice:

⁴¹⁹ Jacobs, “Frederick Jackson Turner: Master Teacher,” 49–58.

⁴²⁰ Edward Perkins Channing in Dale, “Memories of Frederick Jackson Turner,” 339–58.

⁴²¹ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

⁴²² Letter from Herbert Eugene Bolton to Wilbur R. Jacobs, in Wilbur R. Jacobs, “‘Turner, as I Remember Him’ by Herbert Eugene Bolton,” *Mid-America* 36 (1954): 59.

Our method is to take the student into the workshop where the chips are flying and where he can see the workmen cut his finger and jam his thumb, as often as occasion arises. It is a little damaging to the dignity and poise, but it has two decided advantages for advanced work. In the first place, you don't have to write your lectures, which takes time from more engaging occupations, and which is apt to commit you to a settled body of doctrine ... and in the second place ... It gives an impetus to the students own construction, and develops his critical faculty!⁴²³

In these words, the adult educator within Turner appears. Although not a constructivist, Turner knew the importance of experiential learning and the value of allowing students to use their critical thinking skills to navigate their learning. He understood that by confining instruction too narrowly, the learning needs of his students might not be met. As long as the research and scholarship of the students was sound, it was more important for Turner the students had the freedom to move from thought to thought, as well as the freedom to make mistakes. Through these experiences students would obtain self-efficacy, knowing when to come to him for guidance and when to go back to their research to find the answer. For Turner it was more important that the students gain knowledge naturally instead of expecting them to blindly accept his interpretations of the research.

For many students Turner's courses opened up a field of study they had never considered investigating. Turner knew his first-year students often lacked awareness in the study of history, yet this awareness never impacted his belief in their ability or intellectual acuity. All he expected was for students to respect the subject matter and make a determination for themselves whether history would be a field in which they would choose their profession. He was more than willing to meet with students either one-on-one or in groups outside of the scheduled course time so students could eventually master the material. He did so knowing not all of the students in his seminars would continue the study of history. This was of no consequence to Turner. As long as they read the information required, were actively involved in discussions, and were diligent in their studies, they would earn Turner's respect regardless of their ultimate career paths.⁴²⁴

Carl Becker described the environment in Turner's classroom as that of being safe for students. Students were respected and encouraged to take risks in their thought processes. Although students walked into class as a valued member of the learning community, this did not

⁴²³ Turner to Carl Becker, November 7, 1898, HEHT box 1.

⁴²⁴ Dale, "Memories of Frederick Jackson Turner".

mean he was an “easy” professor—his reputation preceded him, and many students were apprehensive about taking a course with Turner for fear their inexperience with the subject matter would be insulting to such a great mind. To those skittish apprentices, Becker revealed his reservation of taking one of Turner’s courses:

Haltingly I asked my foolish question, and was answered. The answer was nothing, the words were nothing, but the voice—the voice was everything: a voice not deep but full, rich, vibrant and musically cadenced; such a voice as you would never grow weary of, so warm and intimate and human. It was. I cannot describe the voice. I know only that it laid on me a kind of magic spell which I could never break, and have never wanted to.⁴²⁵

Active Involvement in Progressive Era Adult Education

Turner did not limit himself to teaching post-secondary students. He resolutely believed all citizens should be provided opportunities to meet their educational goals and undertake learning they desired. He also understood not everyone could afford post-secondary education. He realized that many citizens had the aptitude to be successful at a university, but as a result of circumstances beyond their control, could not take part in the university experience. Therefore, he immersed himself in nontraditional and novel educational experiences. Although not an all-inclusive discussion of the many ways in which Turner aided in educating the citizenry, below are some of the major contributions Turner made in the arena of academics outside of formal collegial studies.

Lectures and Speaking Engagements

Throughout his career Turner was frequently asked to give lectures, addresses, and speeches. Historical societies throughout the country often requested his presence to speak, particularly about the research he had been doing about their part of the country, or, as he called it, “section” of the United States. Lecture requests did not come from only the United States; for example, the University of London asked Turner to give a four-part lecture, and the Montreal Women’s Canadian Club requested his thoughts on the Balkans. He was asked to give a twelve-

⁴²⁵ Becker, *Frederick Jackson Turner*, 276.

part lecture at the New School for Social Research. While he frequently granted these types of requests, the following discussion only looks at a few.⁴²⁶

In December 1907, Turner was put on the program for a meeting of the American Sociological Society to read his paper “Is Sectionalism in America Dying Away?” Understanding the topic may be confusing for some, he made sure he had detailed illustrations that would accompany the lecture. He defined terms for better understanding of the material so jargon would not get in the way. However, his listeners were unable to follow his stream of thought and seemed confused by the amount of information Turner was trying to impart to them. The discussion of politics in the varying sections referenced the influence of industry, labor, and professional associations. The conversation that followed made Turner realize that although he had found evidence suggesting confirmation of his ideas; he would need to understand the nature of his audience prior to developing how to share his ideas.⁴²⁷

Turner had an opportunity in 1908 to redeem himself from the disastrous American Sociological Society experience. He was to give a lecture at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. This time his topic, “The Old West,” was presented in the form of a case study. His purpose was to have the audience address the topic as if responding to the natural conditions and hardships of pioneer days. In this way, he was able to explain the concept of self-governing and individualism while engaging the audience in a discussion on the importance of these two identifying features. His approach seemed to be effective. Not only did the audience remark to him they thoroughly enjoyed the lecture, but fellow historians also shared they were able to see a new viewpoint they had never considered. The lecture was so well received the Macmillan Company approached Turner wishing to publish “The Old West” for its textbook division.⁴²⁸

In January 1910, Turner was invited to give the June 22 commencement speech at Indiana University. He was also asked to speak at an open forum for the community. Turner did not accept immediately, reminiscing about a poorly received lecture he had given to the faculty in 1906. However, he finally decided it would be advantageous to deliver the speech to provide the community an opportunity to hear his views. He decided his commencement speech and the lecture for the community would be one and the same: “Pioneer Ideals and the State University.”

⁴²⁶ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁸ Bogue, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Strange Roads Going Down*.

The speech did not begin with the predictable trite remarks about the hard work the students had done or their rosy future. Turner instead discussed the ideology of the pioneers—the ancestors of those sitting in the commencement hall that day. He emphasized the importance of the graduating class to honor the pioneers’ individualism, love of democracy, and willingness to do hard work for it was from such citizens that the graduates were bred.⁴²⁹

Turner attempted to prepare the students to recognize the responsibility before them. He talked about the juxtaposition between them and their pioneer ancestors. He remarked that a key legacy of the pioneers provided the graduates the opportunity to become educated. With their degree intact, the graduates now had an obligation to set a foundation for future generations to build upon, just as the pioneers had set a foundation for them. Turner continued his speech to explain that an educated society would be the most successful route to U.S. prosperity. Therefore, it was incumbent upon the graduates to set a course to ensure that society would be educated. This would be their legacy. He contended that just as the pioneers had built the foundation that allowed the students to become graduates, their legacy would be to use the skills of scientific inquiry to ensure that democracy and prosperity would continue.⁴³⁰

Turner implored the graduates to use their intellect to make decisions about technology, economics, the environment, and social policies that would benefit the next generation. He also remarked that the aspirations, convictions, hopes, and dreams of the graduates were all possible as long as determination was intact. He ended by assuring the student body they had been given the tools required for the journey on which they were about to embark, stressing that he and the faculty had complete confidence in their ability to do great things.

In 1914 Turner decided to lecture during the summer sessions at two other universities; the University of Washington and the University of Oregon. He had secured a seminar of fifteen lectures on the “Phases of the Western Influence in American History” and would cap the series by giving the commencement address that year.⁴³¹ Turner was also given an opportunity by Professor Henry Morse Stephens and his former student Herbert Eugene Bolton to lecture at the University of California at Berkeley in the summer of 1915.⁴³² Turner once again preferred his

⁴²⁹ Martin Ridge, “Frederick Jackson Turner at Indiana University,” *Indiana Magazine of History* 89, no. 3 (1993): 210–29.

⁴³⁰ Frederick Jackson Turner, “Pioneer Ideals and the State University,” In *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Holt, 1910), 105.

⁴³¹ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

⁴³² Jacobs, *Historical World of Frederick Jackson Turner*.

lecture material fit the needs of the audience, as shown in a letter Turner wrote to Stephens outlining the need for clarification about topics Stephens wanted Turner to lecture on:

I find myself not quite clear as to just what is desired by you and Bolton in the manner of the extent of my lectures on the study and sources of the history of the westward movement in America. My difficulty comes partly from my ignorance of what kind of an audience I shall have. If it is, for the most part, a fairly general audience, it would seem to me questionable whether much attention should be given to the methodology and bibliography, which might seem to be implied in “study and sources”; or, if by sources should demand a general discussion of the original material and of the use of it, as such secondary writers as Parkman, Roosevelt, Windsor, Thwaites.⁴³³

Turner then gave a very specific outline of the lectures he planned to deliver. He included questions in reference to the audience that would help him modify the information depending upon the participants in attendance. His letter was answered, and he developed the material for a mixed audience.

Turner received a letter dated June 26, 1917, from A. Lawrence Lowell, president of Harvard, to deliver a lecture series at the distinguished Lowell Institute during the spring of 1918. The Lowell Institute is an educational foundation located in Boston, Massachusetts, and has provided free public lectures as well as advanced lectures (similar to university extension programs) since 1836.⁴³⁴ Turner was pleasantly surprised by the honor for only those with an excellent reputation receive such a letter. Eager to accept the offer, he was hopeful he could finish preparing the series of six to eight lectures before the start date.⁴³⁵ Lowell requested that Turner consider his lecture series include all of the United States and not just the West. To do so would mean numerous extra hours of extra preparation. Even though the task would be somewhat arduous, Turner agreed. The series was called “The United States and Its Sections, 1830 to 1850.”⁴³⁶

Turner completed his research and gave the lectures while juggling his regular teaching responsibilities and his own personal research projects. The experience was intellectually satisfying yet wreaked havoc to his health. He broke several blood vessels in his eye, and

⁴³³ Turner to Henry Morse Stephens, May 14, 1915, HEHT box 24.

⁴³⁴ Hugh Chisholm, “Lowell Institute,” in *Encyclopedia Britannica* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1911).

⁴³⁵ A. Lawrence Lowell to Turner, June 26, 1917, HEHT box 27.

⁴³⁶ Bogue, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Strange Roads Going Down*.

doctors reported that without deliberate care in maintaining his health, he would continue to suffer from high blood pressure. Turner agreed to modify his frenzied schedule, and his physical condition did improve, yet he was frustrated that he was unable to deliver other speeches as he had hoped.

After retirement from Harvard in 1924, Turner gave a series of lectures at the University of Wisconsin and the State Agricultural College at Logan, Utah. Although excited to be back in Madison, he enjoyed the opportunity to travel to Utah. Unfortunately, Turner was disappointed by the reception of the participants and their lack of interest in the League of Nations, his primary topic. In an April 22, 1925 letter to Eugene Robinson, Turner shared his disappointment in the audience's inability to understand the gravity of the topic,

My reference to the League of Nations had a two-fold object. In the first place, to point out the differences which exist between the League as constituted and our own sectional conditions, and, second, as a suggestion of what might be possible (but improbable, I admit) ... However, my purpose was to produce a way of looking at our own problems and own solution of them rather than to rearrange Europe.⁴³⁷

University Extension Programs and Chautauqua

University extension programs were academic programs offered to those who were interested in developing their intellect but for one reason or another could not formally attend a university program. Turner was familiar with Chautauqua and saw the potential of educating society with university extension programs. As early as 1888, Turner had been aware that Johns Hopkins University was considering collaboration with Chautauqua. At that time Turner wrote of Chautauqua,

[They are] assemblies held in the state of New York, a uniquely American attempt at combining mass education and entertainment...an annex of Chautauqua, "embraces the University Extension idea... to be the intellectual clearing-house for supplying speakers to the Chautauqua circles that may desire historical instruction by lectures..."⁴³⁸

⁴³⁷ Turner to Eugene Robinson, April 22, 1925, HEHT box 34.

⁴³⁸ Turner to William F. Allen, Oct 8, 1888, HEHT box 1.

Herbert Baxter Adams, history professor at Johns Hopkins, was an advocate of university extension programs in the United States.⁴³⁹ As discussed more fully in the preceding chapters, Adams had not only taught Turner but also chaired his dissertation and asked Turner if he would like to be involved in working on the endeavor with him. Turner eagerly collaborated with Adams to organize and deliver the first official university extension program at the University of Wisconsin (Madison) in 1907.

Turner also enjoyed actively conducting lectures, offering mini-course workshops, and developing interactive seminars. Part of Turner's enthusiasm was his belief that all men should have the opportunity to take part in higher learning to become more productive citizens. As early as 1891 Turner wrote,

It is typical of that social impulse which has led university men to bring the fruits of their study home to the people. In English the social impulse has led to what is known as the university extension movement. University men have left their traditional cloister and gone to live among the working classes, in order to bring to them intellectual life. Chautauqua, in our own country, has begun to pass beyond the period of superficial work to a real union of the scientific and the popular.⁴⁴⁰

The UW program was so successful, well liked, and admired that other universities began their own extension programs. Notable programs were formed at the New School for Social Research, the University of Chicago, and Tuskegee University.⁴⁴¹ The popularity and need for such programs still exists today. Universities such as the University of Missouri have the distinguished honor of celebrating over 100 years of university extension. Some systems have branched out into more encompassing programs that include activities such as 4-H and Future Farmers of America, whereas others, like University of California, Los Angeles, include certificate programs as varied as CPR, foreign language, and art as well as professional programs such as accounting, child care, and fundraising. Still others focus on trade skills such as electrician studies, plumbing, and medical record keeping.

⁴³⁹ Adams, *Historical Scholarship in the United States, 1876–1901*.

⁴⁴⁰ Turner, "The Significance of History," 29.

⁴⁴¹ James W. Gooch, *Transplanting Extension: A New Look at the "Wisconsin Idea"* (Madison, WI: Office of Outreach Development and Extension Liaison, 1995); Also see Clay Schoenfeld, "The Outreach University: A Case History in the Public Relationships of Higher Education, University of Wisconsin Extension, 1885–1975." *Higher Education* 9, no. 1 (1980), 116-117.

Turner did not find it difficult to be heavily involved in creating the extension program at UW. His prior involvement in projects of such nature guided the way. One example was in 1898 when Turner was asked to teach a short course at the University of Chicago during the summer. Turner's love of new experiences and his dedication to the education of others swayed him to agree to the invitation. The University of Chicago students gave such glowing feedback to President Harper (the university president at the time) that Turner was asked back to teach weekend courses throughout the next fall and ended up continuing through the winter and spring terms. Such interuniversity collaborations were quite novel at that time in higher education—yet one more example of how Turner embraced adult learning principles regardless of whether or not such activities were in vogue for prominent university professors.⁴⁴²

In time, university summer courses also became a part of Chautauqua. Turner and Richard Ely were very active in the pursuit of incorporating Chautauqua as part of their academic responsibilities.⁴⁴³ Turner, writing to William F. Allen in 1888, showed that he embraced involvement in the Chautauqua Movement and looked forward to contributing to the nation's education of America's history:

I think I may explain to you, however, that the plan [Chautauqua] embraces the University Extension idea ... to be the "intellectual clearing-house" for supplying speakers to the Chautauqua circles that may desire historical instruction. ... The Chautauqua school an evolution from the camp-meeting, which in turn came from the hunters outdoor life.⁴⁴⁴

Turner thrived in both university extension programs and Chautauqua, involving himself in no less than fifty of these opportunities. "During his lifetime, he was invited to speak to sociological societies, psychological organizations, and, of course, the Association of American Geographers and the American Geographic Society."⁴⁴⁵ More than half of his time with Chautauqua included working with high schools teachers, fostering their scholarship in historical accuracy and study as well as supporting the development of curricula and lesson planning.

⁴⁴² Bogue, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Strange Roads Going Down*.

⁴⁴³ Andrew C. Rieser, *The Chautauqua Moment: Protestants, Progressives, and the Culture of Modern Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).

⁴⁴⁴ Turner to William F. Allen, October 8, 1888, HEHT box 1.

⁴⁴⁵ Donald G. Holtgrieve, "Frederick Jackson Turner as a Regionalist," *Professional Geographer* 26, no. 2 (1974): 159–60.

Carnegie Institute

Turner became involved, albeit unofficially at first, with the Carnegie Institute as early as 1905 when Turner's friend and colleague from the University of Chicago, J. Franklin Jameson, became director of the historical division of the Carnegie Institute in Washington, D.C. The two had frequent discussions of how to bring historical study to the forefront of adult learning and the nation. The brainchild of the pair included governmental publications of records from the migration of the Midwest. Another goal they hope to achieve was the formation of a central university that would bring the best and the brightest teachers and post-doctoral students together. They were successful in their endeavor to publish historical documents, gaining support from President Theodore Roosevelt, who promoted the development of the Committee on Documentary Historical Publications, of which Turner was a member.⁴⁴⁶

In 1915 Turner was offered a paid position to work at the Carnegie Institute for six months. He was pleased to accept and became a research associate in history at the Carnegie Institution of Washington, D.C.⁴⁴⁷ Turner began drafting a plan to develop a history institute in Washington, D.C. It was his hope that the institute would be a place where graduate students could become affiliated with each other while experiencing the history of the nation's capital. In time, he presented the idea to the Carnegie Institution. It was communicated to Turner that another scholar, Robert M. McElroy from Princeton, was also interested in such an idea and Turner was encouraged to attend a meeting at Columbia University to discuss the idea with McElroy.

Turner agreed to attend but in the end was not able to be as actively involved in the project as he had hoped. The reason was partly because he deeply believed it imperative for the project to include a residential facility, whereas the commission decided that such a resource would be too costly. Turner was disillusioned after the decision was made. If housing was not available, scholars would be reluctant to travel to the nation's capital because it would not be economically feasible. Therefore, only those of great economic means would benefit from the center, thus defeating the purpose of providing an opportunity for the common man who wished to educate himself. The project continued on with little additional input from Turner.

⁴⁴⁶ Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

Eventually, the University for Research in Washington opened in 1921.⁴⁴⁸

Although continuing to respect the work of the Carnegie Institution, Turner never felt that the organization did all that it could to help enlighten America's citizenry. He applauded the research that was being conducted, but also questioned the establishment's shortsightedness in its inability to see that a citizenry educated in its own history would have the knowledge it needed to move the country forward while avoiding the mistakes of the past. To him, the only logical way to learn from historical missteps was to make teaching American History a priority, as evidenced in a letter Turner wrote to his friend and colleague Max Farrand:

Helping to keep a knowledge of the America of the past clear while we adjust it to new conditions ... Business men, even of college training, tell me that among themselves there is little real knowledge of American History as we understand it. ... Any safe construction should be built upon a consciousness of what historically is meant by the Promise of America.

... Do we really understand as a people what we have to give to the world,—what we have to build on for the future? The Carnegie Institutions, except for scientific history, has been of late almost entirely a scientific laboratory—useful and highly important. But a laboratory on American civilization, its process, and tendencies, the things of the spirit could also find a place.⁴⁴⁹

Research Libraries

Prominent research libraries had been well established in the East by the 1850s. Several western research libraries began to emerge in the late nineteenth century, forming a partnership between wealthy benefactors who amassed large collections of manuscripts and well-known historians. According to Hurtado, “The creation of these libraries fundamentally altered the history of scholarship in the American West.”⁴⁵⁰ In California, for example, libraries such as the Henry E. Huntington Library were modeled after the University of Wisconsin's research facility and, in particular, the Wisconsin Historical Society, which housed and archived the documents at the university. The University of Wisconsin's library was considered “a model for library

⁴⁴⁸ Bogue, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Strange Roads Going Down*.

⁴⁴⁹ Turner to Max Farrand, February 13, 1919, HEHT box 29.

⁴⁵⁰ Albert L. Hurtado, “Professors and Tycoons: The Creation of Great Research Libraries in the American West,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 41 (2010): 149.

development that worked to the advantage of western institutions.”⁴⁵¹ Turner had organized and developed the university’s library infrastructure and was considered the eminent reason for the praise and reputation of both the University of Wisconsin and the Huntington libraries.

The creation of the University of Wisconsin’s library gave credence to the importance of Turner’s meticulous cataloging and organization of library materials. He is credited as one of the salient forces that made UW a center for graduate training because of his dedication to the infrastructure and also for “the summer school teaching program that attracted scholars from around the country to Madison to teach in the mornings and conduct research in the afternoons” (somewhat like today’s fellowships).⁴⁵² Turner became known for his proficient skill in reviewing and purchasing scholarly works for UW’s library and had been requested by other institutions such as Stanford University to appraise the value of its collections, critique gaps in scholarly holdings, and provide advice on acquiring future collections at a fair price.

In the early 1900s, the highly regarded Huntington Library in San Marino, California, was in its infancy. Henry E. Huntington, a railroad magnate who had a penchant for buying collections of rare books, historical manuscripts, and other scholarly texts, decided one of his legacies would be to build and supply one of the best research libraries in the country, in part because of his concern over the destruction and closing of several libraries in California after the earthquake of 1906. In 1926 Huntington recruited Max Farrand, a distinguished retired scholar from Stanford University, to assist him in designing protocols, developing research fellowships, and making sure the library continued to acquire quality texts.⁴⁵³

Farrand quickly accepted, but once the project commenced, he discovered the need to add a second research associate. Huntington agreed to hire someone as long as the associate was of the same high quality and reputation as Farrand, who agreed and immediately suggested his friend, Frederick Jackson Turner, who had recently retired from Harvard. Farrand knew Turner had experience with assembling bibliographies and extensive library practice skills through his work with the Wisconsin Historical Society. Therefore, Huntington would never have reason to question Turner’s scholarly work.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵¹ Ibid., 151.

⁴⁵² Ibid.

⁴⁵³ James Ernest Thorpe, *Henry Edwards Huntington: A Biography* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994).

⁴⁵⁴ Bogue, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Strange Roads Going Down*.

Huntington was eager to bring Turner to California. Turner, in turn, was attracted to the prospect of living in the Golden State. He had previously vacationed there and enjoyed the idea of living in good weather year-round. Further, his wife, Mae, had family in the Los Angeles area. He was also enticed by the offer of \$5,000 per year, an annual salary of about \$66,000 in 2014 dollars. He agreed and moved to California in October of 1927.⁴⁵⁵

Turner greatly enjoyed his time at the library. It was as close to paradise as he could get. He had returned to what he loved—contributing to historical scholarly work, surrounded by texts he treasured, and working with researchers who were eager to absorb as much as they could from the short time they had at the library. One of the first responsibilities given to Turner was to make an assessment of the current collection and give recommendations for future purchases. Noting deficiencies in the holdings and providing advice as to which works to purchase to bridge the gap in the deficiency Turner said,

All of this implies no failure on my part to recognize, appreciate, and be grateful for myself and for the profession, of the wonderful riches now in the library. The Nuggets are mined; what is needed is the machinery and the material for treating this gold, for minting it, and for acquisitions in the ore fields essential to our work, but where the initial cost is low.⁴⁵⁶

Turner was not the only one who took pleasure in his tenure at Huntington. He was also respected and admired by the researchers and students who came to the library to do their scholarly work and acknowledged the experience were successful because of Turner and his assistance with their efforts. He treated each associate as though each person were his only client, painstakingly reviewing the resources available at the library or procuring what was needed if the facility could not already supply what was desired. Although he took a true interest in their research, he only provided insight when asked. He was courteous and charming, never asking for special treatment even though he was a well-respected scholar in his own right.⁴⁵⁷

Turner not only loved to learn but thrived on guiding others to understand the joy of the learning process. He was intrigued by the power and freedom people possessed when they took control of their learning goals. To him, there was great power in understanding who one was and

⁴⁵⁵ Max Farrand to Turner, March 8, 1927, HEHT box 36. Also see Thorpe, *Henry Edwards Huntington: A Biography*.

⁴⁵⁶ Turner to Max Farrand, October 25, 1927. Also see Billington, *Frederick Jackson Turner: Historian, Scholar, Teacher*.

⁴⁵⁷ Farrand, "Frederick Jackson Turner at the Huntington Library," 162.

where one came from. He wholeheartedly believed that with knowledge one could achieve any goal and communicated that with success, one was obligated to pass that success on to another. He emulated no pretention or airs. He was not driven by fame or fortune in monetary terms. He thrived on the essence of taking control of one's own destiny through the power of education.

Throughout his life, Turner took every opportunity to aid individuals in their educational endeavors and dared to tell the citizenry they had an active role in the prosperity of the nation. As a final testament to his devotion and dedication to the scholarship of history and adult learning principles, Frederick Jackson Turner gave his last breath to helping others in their endeavors. On the afternoon of March 14, 1932, Turner left his office at the Huntington Library but succumbed to his ailing health later that evening.

CHAPTER SIX: FINDINGS AND FURTHER RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the study and list relevant findings based on the analysis of the efforts made to understand Turner as an adult educator. The chapter will later provide extended remarks regarding Turner's relevance to the field of adult education by answering each of the research questions and discussing ways in which future investigation could be conducted to maintain an understanding of him as an adult education practitioner. As such, it is written in alignment with Turner's belief and mantra that any study is merely a foundation or a snapshot of understanding and therefore not the complete story. As thoughtful consideration of Turner as an adult educator continues, the need for renewed investigation into his work will also continue, as will the evolution of historians' and educators' appreciation for him. Thus, continued exploration of Turner through an adult learning lens will add new chapters to this story. As Kramp stated,

Each story has a point of view that will differ, depending on who is telling the story, who is being told, as well as when and where the story is told. Consequently, verisimilitude—the appearance or likelihood that something is or could be true or real—is a more appropriate criterion for narrative knowing than verification or proof of truth.⁴⁵⁸

Encapsulation of the Study and Reporting of Findings

The purpose of this case study was to explore Frederick Jackson Turner's life and career as a practitioner of andragogy within the field of history. The objective was to find whether or not plausible correlations between Frederick Jackson Turner's practice as a professor of history, his personal scholarship, and the principles and practices of adult learning theory intersected in some way. The investigation was done through a process of triangulation of collected scholarly data. Data included document reviews of Turner's published works, personal letters and journals, biographies, newspapers, and archived documents.

⁴⁵⁸ Mary Kay Kramp, "Exploring Life and Experience through Narrative Inquiry," in *Foundations for Research: Methods of Inquiry in Education and the Social Sciences*, ed. Kathleen B. Demarrais and Stephen D. Lapan (New York, Routledge, 2004), 108.

The study was derived from broad curiosity as to whether or not facilitators of adults in learning settings outside the field of adult education organize educational activities that emulate adult learning practices within their specific field of expertise. Turner was chosen as the subject of this study for the following reasons: (a) his field of expertise outside of adult education; (b) his role as one of the United States' most honored, respected and influential American historians; (c) his shaping of protocols for the study, documentation, and writing of history (which continue to be used in the field today); (d) the era in which he lived (the Progressive Era), a time when scientific reasoning was applied to all fields of study and effected the way society made decisions about life (including education); and (e) the understanding and appreciation that adult learning theory was in its infancy in the United States during this time period.

During Turner's life America was shifting away from a commonly held belief that American culture was an extension of European traditions. It was at this time an interest in the differences and similarities of regional cultures within United States increased. The make-up of the United States and the well-being of its citizenry were also changing. A debate as to the importance of urban-industrial enterprises and the influence of a few affluent individuals who controlled the economy included national discussions on education, equality, citizen rights, unionization, and the role of Federal and State governments. Non-traditional routes to education gained popularity and began to be tailored to meet the needs of specific audiences, generally based on local issues and skill requirements. This was also a period when a national discussion to define the American character and what American democracy should look like took place.

The study's questions were examined in four overarching areas: (a) determination as to whether or not Turner reflected andragogical philosophy and practices in his teaching and learning experiences; (b) investigation of previous instruction and/or formal training Turner had in andragogical studies and adult education as a field and area of practice; (c) whether or not Turner would have described himself as an adult educator; and (d) if modern-day adult educators would consider Turner a practitioner of andragogy and adherent to adult learning principles.

The findings of this study are organized by the order of the research questions presented in Chapter 1. An attempt was made to show how Turner wove the essence of andragogy and its principles and practices within the timeframe of the Progressive Era by establishing how he modeled the behaviors of a practitioner of adult learning theory as defined by Eduard Lindeman, Malcolm Knowles, Allen Tough, Jack Mezirow, and John Henschke. The characteristics Turner

displayed as a life-long learner are also discussed. Each research question is answered in broad terms here, with specific examples provided as evidence written under section headings denoted by each specific research question.

The answer to the first question, “Did Frederick Jackson Turner knowingly or unknowingly reflect andragogical philosophy and practices in his teaching and learning experiences?” emerged as a resounding *yes* even though little evidence was uncovered to determine whether Turner knowingly knew he was practicing adult learning philosophies and practices. However he did demonstrate viewpoints and approaches consistent with adult learning principles, and uniformly incorporated them into his practices.

As to the second question, “What previous instruction and/or formal training, if any, did Frederick Jackson Turner have in adult education as a field and as an area of practice?” my research concluded the answer to this question lies in understanding the context of university teaching during Progressive Era. The only requirement to instruct at a post-secondary level was an advanced degree; however, a full professorship would not be offered without a doctorate degree. There were few, if any, established programs or coursework provided to prepare one to teach at the university level. Turner did use instructors from his personal experience as a university student as role models, bolstered with adaptations he made through his reflection of these experiences. While there is no clear evidence that Turner specifically participated in formal preparation to become an adult educator, his general preparation as a university professor intersected strongly with modern views of adult education theory and practice, and can easily be interpreted as consistent with much of the preparation for an adult educator today.

The third and final question, “Would Frederick Jackson Turner have described himself as an adult educator and would modern-day adult educators have considered him a colleague?” is also answered with a resounding *yes*. Evidence based on a consideration of writings from the five adult learning theorists listed in this study and Turner’s educational practices, shows that if Turner had worked directly under or with Lindeman, he would have been considered a colleague in the field of adult education. There are numerous examples of how Turner thought about the craft of educating; the way in which he considered the audience of each course, lecture and university extension experience; and the ways in which he conducted the activities of these learning settings. Most of these examples align with adult education theory and practice.

This chapter closes with a conversation of proposed future research. Ideas are grouped into five categories of study. Areas of relevance include: (a) continued study of Turner as a practitioner of American adult education; (b) Turner's influence on the professionalization process in the field of history; (c) Turner's influence on American and world-wide practices of historiography, scholarship and the writing of history; (d) Turner's commitment to non-traditional programs; and (e) Turner's influence on, and the professional development of, high school history teachers.

Responses to Study Questions

Question 1

“Did Frederick Jackson Turner knowingly or unknowingly reflect andragogical philosophy and practices in his teaching and learning experiences?”

Andragogy is more than a concept of individual learning; it is a soulful experience that enables learners to freely understand the concept that gaining knowledge itself is not the significant goal—the ability to apply knowledge in a comprehensible way is what yields wisdom. Turner was aware of this concept and actively applied this principle toward his students whose human dignity he honored guiding them in a way that would help them determine what it meant to be self-fulfilled, take action, and understand that an individual's actions shape society. Turner did not simply espouse the importance of this concept, but modeled the philosophy throughout his life. Examples are seen in his dedication to his own personal education beginning in grade school and his communion with nature and respect for natural resources. This sense of interconnectedness with a broader community and his responsibility and accountability to society was solidified in his early teens as demonstrated in his high school oration, “The Power of the Press.”

As an educator of adults, Turner demonstrated andragogical practice at the university level when he acted more as a facilitator of learning than a vessel of knowledge. He was flexible when organizing learning constructs with the primary goal to help learners gain essential knowledge to meet negotiated, yet specified goals. Turner believed in empowering learners to take action and commit to continually learn. Another andragogical quality he possessed was

patience; particularly with those who had not yet developed the maturity to think for themselves or actively reflect upon ideas instead of taking information at face value.

As seen in letters Turner wrote inquiring about the background knowledge and needs of the audiences he would address in lectures and university extension programs, he understood his role as an adult educator was one of a civil servant who was not in charge of determining what the learners needed, but instead had an obligation to provide what learners wanted. He also understood that to prepare successful experiences an educator could not use the linear process of first determining curriculum, but had to ascertain the prior knowledge of students as a springboard for amplifying and presenting new material.

Knowles and Henschke both discussed the importance of establishing trust with learners. To do so, a facilitator must be able to create an environment in which risk-taking is rewarded and a fear of “looking dumb” is nullified. Turner successfully encouraged students to ask questions, ponder ideas and collaborate with other participants in the classroom to gain understanding, encourage self-directedness, and celebrate new meaning. Additionally, Turner rarely refused an opportunity to assist learners in reaching personal goals and felt it his duty to assess their self-concept to improve efficacy. He guided his students to become adept at analyzing what they knew and gave them the confidence to determine what they had yet to learn. He also applauded students’ attempts at openly disagreeing with statements and engaging in scholarly debate—the only caveat being that focus of the discussion was on data and not *ad hominem*.

Turner had the option of actively embracing new educational thoughts being discussed openly during the American Progressive Movement. While he could have opted to hold tight to practices and protocols of the past when educating the public, Turner boldly chose to see the promise of deductive inquiry, looked to the future, and embraced the idea that Americans were in charge of their own destiny. This openness to new ways of thought allowed Turner to seek techniques to improve his own learning and teaching methods. This included understanding the importance of individuals making their own meaning from learning experiences and later applying that knowledge to real world situations. He was convinced that if people were able to become independent thinkers then society would benefit from the decisions and interpretations made by the collective.

Turner also understood it was the facilitator’s responsibility to pique interest in learners so they became eager for future study and actively participated in goal setting. He agreed with

his colleague and friend, John Dewey, that the quality of an experience is tantamount to successful learning outcomes. Turner was able to balance the need for rote memorization with experiential activities to heighten participants' ability to positively impact themselves, their families, and society. This is evidenced by his willingness to allow courses to navigate off into an area of study he had not planned to explore, allowing such divergence if accuracy in data and rationale was employed.

Turner believed with knowledge came power and with power one can ensure democracy, prosperity and equality. However, like Lindeman, he believed it was each person's obligation to find the powerless and aid them in becoming independent. This could only be accomplished by providing educational opportunities to all, both in formal and informal settings. Turner also believed learning should continue throughout one's life and not be limited to formal schooling, thus an impetus for involving himself in Chautauqua, lecturing and university extension programs.

Turner believed a facilitator had the responsibility to provide an atmosphere in which each participant's knowledge or questions were considered a benefit to everyone in the discussion. By doing so, he gained the trust of his students and created an environment that placed the *learner* at the center of the educational process, not the *facilitator*. Turner also supported Knowles' tenet that the role of an educator is that of helper, guide, encourager, consultant and resource, not that of transmitter, disciplinarian, judge and authority.

An aim of andragogy is to form mature, responsible beings throughout all stages of adult life. One premise of andragogy is that adults are mature, logical thinkers who may or may not have had formal schooling yet have previous knowledge that, coupled with other life experiences, brings intellect to new learning. Turner eagerly collaborated with others to create learning goals and identify techniques that aided in achieving these goals. This implied Turner understood students were partners with each educator in respect to the learning that was about to commence in order to enrich knowledge, improve technical skills, and change attitudes or behaviors to create personal learning and participation in balanced and independent development.

Question 2

“What previous instruction and/or formal training, if any, did Frederick Jackson Turner have in adult education as a field and area of practice?”

Although the study did not reveal that Turner had formal instruction in adult education practices, he intuitively knew knowledge of both individuals and the collective were of high importance. He understood the concept that lifelong learning encouraged harmony, evolution, and increased awareness of one’s surroundings which gravitated toward ways to improve his understanding of the world around him. He also understood the need to respect differing personalities, belief systems, and values of communities and individuals. He used techniques that were modeled for him by those he felt were invested in his success as a student and tried to emulate those practices. He had the courage to stray from the norm, developing his own style of course study, management, and routines that allowed interactions he wished had been available to him while on his journey of obtaining collegial degrees. He appreciated, and did not take for granted, role models such as Herbert Baxter Adams who gave him the freedom to go down a different path than that of the accepted and conventional paradigm.

Question 3

“Would Frederick Jackson Turner have described himself as an adult educator, and would modern-day adult educators have considered him a colleague?”

Whether or not Turner was aware that he actively possessed characteristics of an adult educator remains unclear—mostly since people of his time and in his profession would not have self-identified using a term such as adult educator. Thus, the first part of this question is not valid. Adult learning theory was just developing as a field of practice in the United States during Turner’s time. Although adult learning theory and terminology was commonly used in Europe, Turner only vacationed there and did not study extensively in Europe like his mentors, Allen or Adams, who may have been exposed and/or influenced by andragogical ideals. Therefore, in retrospect, the question should have begun, “What exposure did Turner have to adult education and adult learning theory?”

However in answer to the essence of the question, I believe Turner would have described himself as an adult educator and contemporaries of adult learning theory would have considered him a colleague. An explanation of these findings discussed below compare Turner's belief system and practices with those of each theorist discussed in the Literature Review. To completely answer this research question, following the theorist comparison, another subsection was added to discuss the many adult learning opportunities available during his lifetime and Turner's participation in them.

Turner and Present-Day Adult Learning Theorists and Practices

Although andragogy was long practiced in Europe during this time period, it was simply beginning to take root as a concept in the United States. Continuing to frame the context of the times, it should be remembered that the Progressive Era ushered in the study of social psychology and the attributes of human growth and development which, included Dewey's developmental continuum and quality experiences for designing developmentally appropriate educational curriculum and teaching styles. Although in time a distinction between the learning of adults and teaching of children evolved, in general the teaching and learning of adults at that time was considered merely an extension of pedagogical methodologies.

Turner used common-day practices of the time period as a base for his instruction, but he did not mimic other professors of the time and created his own unique style of teaching and facilitation protocols. As such, the following section is an endeavor to show a comparison of Turner's habits and routines of developing and providing adult education experiences with five adult learning theorists and practitioners who helped shape American adult learning as a discipline and field of practice.

Comparison of Frederick Jackson Turner to Eduard C. Lindeman: Social Responsibility and Freedom to Continuously Learn

As an educator, Lindeman took an interest in social justice and how the education of adults should be classified and taught. Turner, too, was dedicated to the educational needs of his students and had a commitment to devising coursework that was life-centered and problem oriented. Turner conveyed this belief when he discussed the importance of understanding an event in the context of all facets that influenced an event. The influences to be investigated

should include the social, economic, and political issues of the culture in which the event took place. He also encouraged his students to take the reins of an investigation and research paths not often explored.

Turner was the epitome of humility, a quality that Lindeman believed essential to be an effective and successful adult educator. Lindeman discussed the missteps that could be made by arrogance, thinking within one's own bubble of understanding, neither aware nor cognizant of the intellect brought into the learning environment by the students. Turner was eager to bounce ideas off his students to gain their insight, reflecting where he might have been too narrow-minded toward a concept because of personal bias. He also took pleasure in the lively discussions that occurred as a result of student presentations and research projects; thus creating an atmosphere where teacher and learner respected one another for their intellectual acuity.

Additionally, Turner enforced the ideology that one's study is never complete. He argued that to honor those who lived in the past and the events that transpired in history it was imperative to continually read, connect, reflect and seek out new learning. By doing so, one could determine whether or not a previous historical interpretation that was made (either by oneself or that of another) needed to be reinvestigated. If investigation was warranted, then it was the obligation of the researcher to either add an addendum to the story or decide to write a rebuttal using evidence to pointing in the direction of new thought.

Comparison of Frederick Jackson Turner to Malcolm Knowles: Self-Direction and Homonomy

Knowles was of the position that adults had the capacity to create academic goals for themselves. Turner too believed that as human beings we have the capacity to set goals and map out a course to achieve these goals. Like Knowles, Turner believed adults had the ability to actively find learning experiences they needed to gain an understanding of concepts in which they wanted to gain proficiency. Also like Knowles, Turner believed that adults accumulate a reservoir of experiences that can be used as a foundation to build learning. The way in which one mastered goals was of no consequence to Turner. This position is seen in his master's thesis on the American Indian Trade. Turner saw the connection between the invaluable information the Indians had about nature and animal behavior that needed to be passed onto the "white" traders. The traders, in turn, had useful tools, such as metal traps, that could be used to better guarantee

success in bagging pelts. The sharing of information, which was necessary for both parties to succeed, was not done in a classroom, but through communication between the two parties; thus emulating his understanding of finding the balance between autonomy and homonomy.

Turner's decision to extend his study on trade in the West for his doctoral dissertation continued his focus on the importance of the human interaction of sharing knowledge with one another. By doing so, Turner was able to show characteristics of Knowles' assumptions of andragogy. In his doctoral thesis, Turner discussed the way the two parties of the fur trade communicated with one another—similar to the way an adult's self-concept moves from dependency to independence or self-directedness. Turner also considered that adults accumulate a reservoir of experiences that can be used as a foundation to build learning, which both the Indians and the traders used to prosper in their respective cultures and as two distinct groups that lived in a homonomous society.

As Turner formulated his ideas and concept of his Frontier Thesis to explain how American culture was not a direct extension of European tradition, he intuited that learners are more readily accessible to learning when a skill or task is associated with life and social roles, just as Knowles conveyed in his list of basic assumptions about adults and learning. Turner took great effort to write in detail how those who settled the West were confronted with issues they had could not have anticipated. However, through their persistence, individualism, and intellect, Turner showed that adults were able to immediately apply information garnered from their environment and by those with whom they associated to successfully prosper in uncharted territories.

Turner expanded his beliefs to place more importance on the experience of learning than of the learning environment into his method of teaching at the university level. He designed learning experiences differently from his colleagues to make sure he, the facilitator of the learning, not only understood what his students wanted to know but to weave into the coursework skills and information they particularly needed know in order to solve problems they would encounter in their study of history. In turn, his students were able to learn techniques that would be of immediate value in their quest to achieve their goal of understanding and interpreting historical events; thus displaying Knowles's assumption that adults have a need to immediately apply information.

Finally, Knowles placed great importance on a facilitator's ability to foster an environment in which adult learners had an opportunity for their self-concepts to mature from a dependency on someone else to generate goals and develop a prescribed curriculum to one in which the learners become astute at independently being able to develop their own goals for personal benefit or to impact the greater good of society.

Turner, too, embraced this philosophy. One way in which he fostered independence was the way he conducted class meetings. Not only did he show his willingness to use a Socratic-like method to discuss topics, thus compelling students to "think on their feet," Turner was not afraid to share insights he would gain from student comments or knowledge they brought into the classroom from their personal studies.

By presenting real-world application projects students were encouraged to develop their own processes to guide them while researching. Although they had to adhere to a basic framework of expectations, he reminded students that they should know themselves and develop their own protocols that would allow them to be successful in each task, all the while providing confidence in each student's ability and eagerly willing to discuss topics and points of view brought to the classroom by students. In this sense, Turner, like Knowles, fostered an environment where all students developed a self-concept that allowed them to become masters of their own destiny as well as acquire the ability to think outside themselves.

Comparison of Frederick Jackson Turner to Allen Tough: Self-Directed Learning Projects and Personal Change

Tough believed in the importance of helping adults comprehend that they were indeed learners, regardless of where and how learning was achieved. Turner also subscribed to this belief system. It did not matter to Turner whether the learning took place in a university classroom, a library hall, or on the edge of a lake, like at New York's Chautauqua. Both Tough and Turner expected presenters of adult learning experiences to mirror feelings of autonomy and self-worth, acknowledging students' life experiences, beget immeasurable and useful knowledge.

Tough respected that most adults learned new concepts through the guidance of colleagues, friends, and others—thus allowing seminal information to be applied personally. Like Lindeman and Knowles, Tough supported the premise that adults had a large foundation of knowledge and skill to draw upon; and students' should use this information as a baseline for

new learning. Turner, too, welcomed each student as a vessel of intellect and looked forward to helping each one find within them the understanding that they possessed the skills and power to make meaning through deductive reasoning and comparison to what was already known.

Turner, like Tough, believed adults are active, self-directed learners who wanted to learn and would seek out knowledge without being forced to do so. This is why Turner embraced each offer to lecture, develop mini-courses for Chautauqua, and summer institutes for university extension programs. Turner was compelled to assist all students who, motivated by life situations, developed personal leaning goals and wanted to immediately apply new knowledge to their lives.

Comparison of Frederick Jackson Turner to Jack Mezirow: Perspective Transformative Learning

Mezirow believed that adults are capable of determining how their cultural and personal beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes distort understanding once new knowledge is obtained. Turner recognized as a scholar researches, one's own personal biases could affect the interpretation of history. It was because of fear of bias and the narrow study employed by historians of the day Turner insisted his students look at all avenues and disciplines to obtain information that would better inform their interpretation of historical events.

Mezirow's theory of transformative learning included the understanding of three defined types of knowledge; instrumental knowledge, communicative knowledge, and emancipatory knowledge. Reflecting upon, asking questions, and pursuing new knowledge was instrumental to keep one free from manipulation and guided one to become more evolved and to determine accurate truth. In order for learners to become astute at processing knowledge, Mezirow declared adult educators should be aware of trying to create a value-free education though the awareness of, and avoidance of, the idea that educators and their students are never neutral in their thinking.

Turner also endorsed the belief that scholars bring their own personal experiences, knowledge, and biases into their research and classroom. To combat potential errors in interpretation of history that could result from one's value system, he urged his students to question their way of thinking and encouraged dialogue with others for clarification of understanding and to achieve intellectual checks and balances. Turner constantly inquired of his

students and colleagues their input in whatever he was researching, writing or developing. It was this integrity to the process that gained Turner respect in his field.

As Mezirow stated, “We transform our frames of reference through critical reflection on the assumptions upon which our interpretations, beliefs, and habits of mind or points of view are based.”⁴⁵⁹ Turner lived the spirit of this statement. An example of how Turner especially followed this frame of thinking occurred when his *Frontier Thesis* began to wane in popularity. Turner readily read his critics statements on the flaws they encountered with the *Frontier Thesis*. Instead of discrediting the work of those scholars and historians who disagreed with his interpretations, Turner would reflect upon the arguments and respond in one of two ways (a) he would address the missteps in the reasoning used by his critics, or (b) he willingly revised his previous written statements, emulating the sentiment that history is ever evolving and with new information comes new knowledge of the past.

Comparison of Frederick Jackson Turner to John Henschke: Living Lecture and Beliefs/Feelings/Behaviors of Adult Educators

Among Henschke’s contributions to the field of adult education was the promotion of what he called the “living lecture.” Living lectures actively engage participants in the learning process through collective dialogue with a facilitator. Turner often used the same approach. He was known for his seminars where he would pose questions to the group and ask them to participate in a project related to the question. Questions he would ask might be limited to a two hour class period, while others could take weeks for the students to research in order to develop a satisfactory conclusion. Students would later remark that Turner forced them to stretch their thinking in a way that was difficult because students were more acclimated to listening to lectures, taking copious notes and simply regurgitating the information presented to them.

The way in which Turner managed his coursework was unconventional and stressful, but I have found no indication that students later wrote any negative effects from this type of study. In fact most accounts of a Turner course are written in terms of the invaluable experience and preparation for work as a professional historian. Students found more gratification and satisfaction in the amount of learning that transpired doing such activities than simply listening to a professor lecture. Not only did they learn facts and figures, but they also became skilled at

⁴⁵⁹ Mezirow, *Transformative Learning: Theory to Practice*, 6.

knowing which questions to ask to yield the most understanding and what tools to use to aid in their inquiry.

Turner's insistence that students see the value of presenting their findings to their classmates could have come straight from Henschke's approach. Turner framed the format of his courses to teach his students how to respectfully request clarification of concepts, share rebuttals with concrete examples, and have the patience and expectation that a reply to a rebuttal was part of the learning process. They also valued Turner's real-world perspective in guiding them to broaden their search for information outside the immediate "go to" places such as libraries and historical documents, and to gather information to increase their learning from areas such as the social sciences and economics.

Finally, Henschke could have used Turner as an example of a role model who was cognizant of Henschke's opinion and applied it to educator perspectives. Of the five andragogical characteristics of Henschke's perspective model, Turner demonstrated all; he: (a) meticulously focused on his audience when determining his plan and delivery of instruction, (b) created learner-centered experiences and allowed for individuals to use their own learning styles to acquire knowledge, (c) had empathy for learners and tried to frame who they were by the places they lived and the life experiences they had, (d) accommodated for learner uniqueness taking his personal time to aid a student who wanted to delve more into a topic or needed help in comprehending the subject matter, and (e) not only trusted that learners were intelligent beings who wanted to learn, but also merited trust when students exposed their weaknesses to him or felt proud of their work when sharing successes.

Frederick Jackson Turner's Involvement in Non-Traditional Adult Education Opportunities of the Progressive Era

During Turner's tenure as a professor, the standard tradition of university study was to listen to lectures given by the authority on a topic, take notes and pass exams created by the professor from lectures that had been given. This is not to say students did not engage in experimentation in science labs or have open-ended questions on exams, but to point out that techniques used in today's practices of collegial study were not mainstream when Turner began his tenure. In addition, most non-traditional education forums began as local grassroots efforts and were not widely accepted as scholarly, nor were these platforms as highly regarded or openly

advocated as they are today.

Under this construct, Frederick Jackson Turner demonstrated his unknowing conformance with adult learning theory and thereby showed himself as an adult educator through his association with Progressive Era Community Education programs. The following section is by no means a complete review of the non-traditional activities in which Turner collaborated; however, it does provide justification for the finding that modern-day adult educators would have considered him a colleague.

Mechanics' Institutes, Chautauqua, and Library Clubs

Turner believed in continually improving oneself. This is manifested by his belief that life is a story with unread chapters and sequels. Because man was ever evolving, it was a man's obligation to investigate the world and reflect how the ever changing world fit into one's environment. Therefore it is not surprising that he would participate in programs that aided in self-improvement. Although it was his expertise in history that led to speaking invitations, Turner agreed to work with Mechanics' Institutes, Chautauqua and Library Clubs for a secondary purpose. He was eager to become a participant in other lectures and mini-courses that were being held at the site—also revealing him as a lifelong learner. This was particularly true once these venues began to broaden their definition of "knowledge" to include entertainment and the arts, chess clubs, reading rooms, and poetry writing.

Lyceums and Chautauqua allowed Turner to develop his cognitive abilities outside the field of history. Although not a particularly religious man, Turner did find spirituality a necessary attribute to develop and understand his sense of self within an ever changing society and to gain inner peace and happiness. The environments of Lyceums and Chautauqua, with the philosophy that spirituality originated and grew through knowledge and serenity, spoke to Turner. Both he and his wife would vacation in areas with nearby Lyceum and Chautauqua activities to better enrich their sense of peace, tranquility and intellectual renewal.

Lecture Circuits

Popular thirst for lectures fell into categories that differed depending upon the geographic area, class status, and topics of community interest. University professors who participated as lecture circuit experts often did so not for their love of sharing knowledge, but for monetary or status purposes. Although Turner did have to consider his costs versus the small lecture stipend he would receive, he was motivated more by his sense of obligation to society, his love of history and teaching, and his sense of adventure. He enjoyed the interaction he had with other speakers and cherished the opportunity to discuss issues with women, minorities and social activists who were also speaking. Turner particularly looked forward to insights from audience members to help broaden his perspectives and resist personal biases. He also consistently found ways to fold the geographic area into his scholarly studies and the lectures themselves.

University Extension Programs

Turner was not only interested in the idea of university extension programs, but was actively involved in creating and participating in them. He was passionate about offering intellectual and scholarly opportunities to those who did not have the means to attend post-secondary education full-time or wanted to continue their intellectual journey once they had graduated. He saw the positive effects that could be gained by providing educational opportunities in areas where universities did not exist. He was also concerned about the lack of the presence of women at the university level and felt extension programs could provide paths for women to be intellectually stimulated.

Turner's concern about the waste of natural resources and worry that future generations would not have the privilege of communing with nature was also a motivation to engage in university extension programs. He saw university extension programs as a way for environmental issues to be openly discussed as a nation in areas which attendees were farmers, trappers, railroad workers and environmental scientists. He also saw such programs as a way to share his belief that by understanding history through the context of one's geographic area, the public would begin to understand how their actions and reactions to their environment would affect the resources, decisions and prosperity of the future.

Considerations for Further Research

Since this is the first study to research Turner thorough the lens of adult education, I consider this a foundation to be built upon. There is much more work that can be done to explore Turner as an adult educator or to investigate the relevance other notable citizens, from the United States and abroad, whose work outside the field of adult learning demonstrate the philosophies and principles of adult learning.

My intellectual learning style exercises a global and multi-faceted perspective. As such, I have developed five distinct categories in which to further investigate Turner as an adult educator. Areas of relevance include: (a) continued study of Turner as a practitioner of American adult education; (b) his influence on the professionalization process in the field of history; (c) his influence on American and world-wide practices of historiography, scholarship and the writing of history; (d) his commitment to non-traditional programs; and (e) a biographical and bibliographical study of his work, writings and influence on the Scholarship of Adults.

Practitioner of American Adult Education

This study was an attempt to establish Turner as a bona fide adult educator. As such, I viewed a broad array of materials in order to set up a foundation for analysis and interpretation to consider Turner and his educational practices from a multi-variant point of view. A deeper review of literature on one well-defined aspect of adult learning could produce a more clear and concise picture of Turner as an adult educator and thinker within that particular aspect of his practice. An additional review of the primary sources available at the Huntington Library and the Wisconsin Historical Society which house Turner's common place books, teaching and lecturing notes, and his personal correspondence would aid in better understanding specific techniques Turner used to devise and implement course design, course requirements, classroom activities, and homework/projects.

An additional study could investigate not only the rationale and urgency felt by post-secondary institutions to acquire Turner as a faculty member, but also why he turned down several offers. Turner was courted by several universities, most notably by five major institutions, but only accepted one offer. A detailed look at why Turner decided to leave the

University of Wisconsin would also be relevant. The five institutions to include in this study are Harvard, the University of Chicago, Princeton, Stanford, and the California Institute of Technology.

I did not attempt to investigate Turner's connection to every adult education interest which occurred in the Progressive Era. Volumes of books have been dedicated to key topics and events taking place in the late 1800s to early 1900s in the United States. Published information runs the gamut from grass-root local efforts to formalized community and collegial efforts. Therefore, I had to limit the scope of my study. I chose to investigate activities I thought would best highlight his adherence to or divergence from common adult education practices.

There are numerous Progressive Era education activities and practitioners whose relationship with Turner was not explored. Studies could be done to examine Turner's association with non-traditional education programs and explore his relationship with education pioneers not associated with this study. Below is a partial list of Progressive Era education reformers, with their corresponding area of interest, related to adult education where a study could be conducted. This list is in alphabetical order and does not imply hierarchical importance. Topics of research could include:

- a. Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr (Settlement Houses)
- b. John Dewey (Pragmatism and Functional Psychology)
- c. W.E.B. Dubois (Tuskegee University)
- d. Abraham Flexner and the Mayo Brothers (Medical Education and Training)
- e. Samuel Gompers (American Federation of Labor)
- f. Eduard Lindeman (Pioneer of Modern Adult Education Philosophy and Practice)
- g. John R. Mott (Young Men's Christian Association or YMCA)
- h. Richard Henry Pratt (Successful Indian Boarding Schools)
- i. Margaret Sanger (Family Planning and Studies)
- j. Upton Sinclair (Social and Economic Activist, Author and Film Maker)
- k. Booker T. Washington (Tuskegee)
- l. Woodrow Wilson (Princeton)

Influence on the Professionalization Process in the Discipline of History

Beginning in the 1840s, Americans committed themselves to developing a culture of professionalism and expertise. By 1878 the United States had established its first national professional association in the field of law with an established credentialing process. According to Bledstein, during the Progressive Era disciplines were trying to establish specific fields of expertise in order to create a hierarchy of prominence with a defined educational training and credentialing process to determine credibility above that of tradesman.⁴⁶⁰ Vollmer and Mills stated that the characteristics of a bona fide profession include self-regulation (generally via an association with specific guidelines and required education training developed by its members), autonomy, status, and the power to enact change.⁴⁶¹ Discussions on professionalizing higher education coincided with the timeframe Turner was coming of age and beginning his career.

The field of history was, like many other academic disciplines, trying to establish itself as an area of expertise at the time of Turner's tenure. The American Historical Association (AHA) was founded and given a congressional charter in 1884 and played a large role in the professionalizing process. The AHA published and continues to publish the *American Historical Review* and promote historical study, teaching of history and the preservation and archiving of historical material.⁴⁶² Turner was a member of the AHA and worked tirelessly with high school teachers who were members of the AHA to establish protocols for high school teachers to ensure accurate dissemination of historical fact and methodologies to use in guiding student inquiry of historical events.

Turner was also associated with the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was elected to its board in 1911 and a recipient of a paid fellowship as a Visiting Scholar with the association. This organization is a leading center for independent policy research in the United States. Membership is grouped into five categories which include Humanities and Culture, Arts, Public Affairs and Education. The association endorses and promotes projects and programs

⁴⁶⁰ Burton J. Bledstein, *The Culture of Professionalism: The Middle Class and the Development of Higher Education in America* (New York: Norton, 1976).

⁴⁶¹ Howard M. Vollmer and Donald L. Mills, *Professionalization* (Menlo Park, CA: Stanford Research Institute, 1966).

⁴⁶² American Historical Association, About AHA, <http://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership> accessed May 1, 2014.

aligned with adult learning and adult education.⁴⁶³ A study examining Turner's link to both these associations could yield insight and knowledge as to how Turner may have influenced the professionalizing process of historical study and field of history.

Investigation into Turner's Influence on American and World-Wide Practices of Historiography, Scholarly Research and the Writing of History

Turner is not only revered in the United States as perhaps the greatest historian of the late 19th century, but also has been studied and written about worldwide. In most cases Turner's Frontier Thesis as well as his writings on Sectionalism and Regional Culture have been studied and dissected. In other cases Turner's efforts to gain insight on and write accurate histories of indigenous populations have been studied. My research has found that both Canadian and Brazilian historians have taken a particular interest in Turner. However, what I have not been able to find is a comparative study identifying whether or not Turner's way of researching and writing of history has had any influence on specific practices and protocols of historiography with historians in other countries.

Influence and Commitment to Non-Traditional Learning Programs and the Field of Secondary Education

Turner was a proponent, instructor, and advocate of non-traditional learning programs such as Chautauqua and university extension. My study only touched the surface of Turner's involvement with such adult learning settings. There is potential to gain insight of Turner as an adult educator outside of the formal university classroom through investigation and study of Turner's role in three distinct areas, each of which could be an independent study or linked together as a comparative study. The three non-traditional programs with most potential for mining of documentation are (a) Turner's work with public school institutions training Secondary Education History teachers for accurate research techniques and teaching of history; (b) Turner's involvement in the Chautauqua Movement and Lecture Circuit; and (c) Turner's role in the development and implementation of university extension programs.

⁴⁶³ "Book of Members, 1780-2010: Chapter T," American Academy of Arts and Sciences, *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, New Series, Vol. 11, No. 1, Centennial Celebration (1882), pp 87-90.

Biographical Study of Turner's Work, Writings and Influence on the Scholarship of Adults

This study only set the foundation for investigation of Turner as an adult educator and gave an overview of the types of adult learning settings in which he participated. There is potential for further study to drill down and do a more narrow study on his actual teaching practices and his thoughts on program design. Such studies would provide insight into Turner's thought process and present his specific logic for the methods he employed.

There are four distinct areas in which this type of study may be derived, dependent upon Turner's academic environment. The four settings for exploration are: (a) the University of Wisconsin, particularly the program-design process Turner used to develop the Department of History and which elements are still intact and in use today; (b) Harvard University, particularly the program-design process Turner used to develop the Harvard Commission on Western Studies in the Department of History and which elements are still intact and in use today; (c) the Carnegie Institute, now known as the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, as well as the Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching Institute, and (d) the Huntington Library, particularly the program-design process Turner used working with well-established researchers and scholars.

Conclusion

This journey has been nothing less than life changing and transformative. I was always interested in history, but at times found it hard to conceptualize facts, figures and events that did not directly relate to my personal life. As I studied Turner, I began to realize how the values, customs and culture of one's upbringing are truly ingrained in one's psyche.

I realized the way I had been taught history, both formally in school and at home, stunted my ability to make meaning of the events and actions of others if it did not directly apply to my sense of self. As I pondered this realization, I began to more fully appreciate Frederick Jackson Turner and his techniques of teaching history. He took great pains to make sure students developed their own meaning of historical events and challenged them to go beyond their frame of reference, to research until able to view occurrences through the eyes of those who lived through the experience. This is one lesson that will forever change the way I think about and teach history.

When I began this journey, my exposure to Turner had not been neutral. In fact, it was more negative than positive. As I took time to truly understand him in the context of the era in which he lived, coupled with the lens of adult learning principles and practices, I began to internalize and appreciate his urgency and dedication to teach students the “right” way to research and write history. This type of thinking was no less than a visionary.

The more I learned about Turner, the more I lamented situations in the past when, while teaching, I cherry-picked statements or events to fit my own predetermined mindset and paradigm. In the future when teaching my foreign-born students I will consciously incorporate American customs and culture into my teaching of American History. In turn, I will share my insights about these non-English speaking students and families in a manner that connects with the audience’s frame of reference; be they colleagues, administration, or the community. Finally, I hope this work is a piece, if a student of Turner, he would say to me, “Well done!”

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