

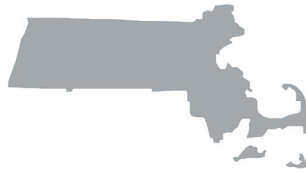
## **A Station of Primary Source Materials**

Courtesy of the Archives Department at Framingham State College

# Teaching Resources:

## Teaching the History of Education Using College and Local Archives

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COLLEEN PREVITE



**Abstract:** *This article provides an overview of a shared teaching project between education department faculty members and the college archivist at Framingham State College. These instructors collaborated to teach the “normal school story” – the history of teacher training colleges – within the context of the history of education to students in the mandatory Foundations of Education courses. Through the program, students were exposed to diaries, letters, photographs, and other primary source materials of early normal school students from Framingham State College, the first state-funded normal school in the United States. The specificities of the college’s history functioned as a window into understanding the more general history of teacher education in the United States.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> The authors would like to thank Dr. Charles Beck, Framingham State College, for his comments regarding this article.

## INTRODUCTION

Chronological thinking, historical comprehension, analysis, interpretation, and research are key components to developing an historical perspective.<sup>2</sup> The use of primary source materials, likewise, is essential to promoting historical understanding and thinking. According to the National Center for History in Schools, true historical understanding requires students to “raise questions and to marshal solid evidence in support of their answers; to consult documents, journals, diaries, artifacts, historic sites . . . and other evidence from the past . . . taking into account the historical context in which these records were created and comparing the multiple points of view of those on the scene at the time.”<sup>3</sup>

The use of primary source materials, in accordance with the development of an historical perspective, is a valuable activity that can be extended to students in a variety of disciplines, including education, mathematics, and science. At first glance, students often view history as a series of unconnected and remote facts, particularly in courses that do not focus solely on the subject. Taking an historical perspective, however, can support understanding of the content, goals, and objectives of various fields. An historical perspective enables students to position a discipline’s knowledge within a continuum of ideas, encourages them to grapple with concepts using a perspective that transcends their immediate situations, and allows them to engage in interpretation and critical thinking. An historical perspective can situate a discipline’s sometimes arcane vocabulary and parlance, provide context to its practices, and introduce key thinkers in the field. It is an important tool to utilize with regard to the ways by which we define our values, culture, and future.

At Framingham State College, two education faculty members and the college archivist drew upon some of these insights in designing the *Foundations of Education* class. We believed that the development of an historical perspective, in connection with the usage of primary source materials and artifacts, was a technique that we could successfully use in our courses. Historians remind us that history tells us as much about our present selves as it tells us about the past. We believed that utilizing primary source materials would move “students from passive listeners to

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<sup>2</sup> See the Standards Contents from The National Center for History in Schools, available from <http://nchs.ucla.edu/standards/>; Internet accessed November 23, 2008.

<sup>3</sup> See *Overview of Standards in Historical Thinking* from The National Center for History in Schools, available from <http://nchs.ucla.edu/standards/thinking5-12.html>; Internet accessed November 23, 2008.

active investigators who analyze the past and connect it to their lives.”<sup>4</sup> Primary sources allow students to form an opinion of the past based on evidence and tools to develop an understanding of the present. We drew on these approaches when teaching the history of U.S. education, specifically the “normal school” story.

A unique feature of this project was the connection with the college archives as we drew upon local materials in the collection. Using the archives engaged the students in constructing an understanding of the concrete historical reality of their institution, Framingham State, the first state-formed normal school in the United States, through exposure to and interaction with primary and secondary sources of notable persons connected with the college. These included graduates, administrators, and those who supported the college’s goals and purposes in its early years. The specificities of the college’s history functioned as a window into understanding a more general narrative of teacher education in the U.S.. It is this example/model that we share in this article. We also suggest ways that our process could be replicated at other colleges and universities with other disciplines.

## **OUR COLLABORATION: TEACHING THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION USING THE COLLEGE ARCHIVES**

When we joined Framingham State College as new faculty members and as archivist, we learned of the notable history of the institution in the field of teacher education. The college was the first publicly supported institution for training teachers in the U.S.. The Framingham Normal School, as it was then known, was founded in 1839 with the critical support of educational leaders and supporters such as Horace Mann, first Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education; James G. Carter, Chairman of the Committee on Education of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, and Edmund Dwight, a wealthy citizen who donated \$10,000 toward the effort. The School was modeled after the Prussian state-supported system of teacher training that was established in 1819, as well as after the French *école normale*, from which the normal school name was derived. Its purpose was to establish teaching standards or *norms*, hence its name. The institution provided standardized and regulated teacher preparation to help

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<sup>4</sup> Ronald Vaughan Morris, “Teaching Social Studies with Artifacts,” *The Social Studies* (January/February 2000), p. 32.

produce a cohort of trained educators to meet the needs of the growing Common School Movement.

Two of the authors of this article teach a class titled *Education in American Society*, the first course in the college's undergraduate sequence of teacher preparation. *Education in American Society* surveys the history of U.S. education, including the history of teacher education. As such, we saw that there was a tremendous opportunity for exploring the connection between the history of the college and the contemporary teacher education program of current students by working with the archives collections. We believed this approach would provide an opportunity for students to work with primary source materials and to analyze, interpret, and think critically about nineteenth-century education, particularly the normal school movement, while drawing on local history. It was equally important for the students to develop an engaged and genuine interest in their education studies. The college archivist was also eager to explore how she could more fully share the college's rich resources with students by encouraging them to use the archives' collection in their undergraduate careers. From these objectives, a teaching collaboration was born.

In planning for an effective teaching experience, we first thought about the students with whom we work. Students who take *Education in American Society* are primarily women, though a couple of men typically enroll in each section. They often come from the Framingham area, and many are of the first generation in their families to pursue a college degree. Approximately half live on campus during the school year, while the other half commute. Although most students are in their twenties, each semester a few older students, often women with grown children, pursue education studies. *Education in American Society* is a required course for all undergraduate education students; thus those pursuing majors in Elementary and Early Childhood Education, as well as those pursuing minors in Secondary Education, enroll in the course. As the first course students pursue in the education major sequence, it is essential that it engage them in the program.

As we worked to develop a session to peak student curiosity in their studies, we explored the materials in the college archives. We learned that the collection contained the journals and diaries of the first classes of students, records of the work that these students pursued upon completing the normal school program, letters, photographs, report cards, certificates of program completion, and copies of books and journal articles that these students wrote after their formal studies.

STATE NORMAL SCHOOL, FRAMINGHAM, MASS.	
Report of <u>Miss Jay</u> <u>May 18</u> , 190 <u>5</u> .	
<u>Senior</u> Class	<u>VB</u> Division
For <u>4/3</u> year ending <u>June 28, 1906</u> .	
Algebra,	Gymnastics, <u>Good+</u>
Arithmetic,	History, <u>Excellent</u>
Astronomy,	History of Education,
Bacteriology,	Household Arts,
Biology,	Laundry,
Botany,	Latin, <u>Fair</u>
Chemistry,	Mineralogy,
Drawing, <u>Good</u>	Music, <u>Good</u>
Dietetics,	Physiology,
English, <u>Good+</u>	Physics,
French,	Psychology, <u>Good</u>
Geometry, <u>Good</u>	Reading, <u>Excellent</u>
Geography, <u>Good</u>	Sloyd,
	Zoology, <u>Good</u>
REMARKS:—"Fair" is a pass rank. See other side for further report.	

Review of these materials shed light on who some of these early normal school graduates were and how their work and activities connected with pressing nineteenth-century social, political, and economic contexts and movements. Though these students, all women, are rarely focused on in most histories and the historiography of the normal school, we believe that their stories add to this narrative, supporting a multi-dimensional understanding of this context and time. We wanted to share this information with our students. Through our initial review of the materials and with the guidance of the archivist, we learned of Mary Swift (1822-1909), an 1840 graduate of the Framingham Normal School. At the request of Samuel Gridley Howe, a noted Boston abolitionist, physician, and advocate for the blind, Swift worked at the Perkins Institution for the Blind (where Howe was Director) with Laura Dewey Bridgman, a deaf, blind, and "mute" woman who was known worldwide for her success in learning to communicate.<sup>5</sup> Swift was also later credited with providing encouragement

<sup>5</sup> Mary Swift Lamson, *Laura Dewey Bridgman: The Deaf, Dumb and Blind Girl* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1881).

to Helen Keller, the first deaf and blind woman to graduate from college, to learn to orally communicate.<sup>6</sup>

Other normal school graduates, such as Lydia Stow (1823-1904), an 1841 graduate, became involved with the Abolitionist Movement and the Underground Railroad. Stow lodged prominent African Americans such as Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth at her house in Fall River, Massachusetts. She was also a founder of the Fall River Woman's Union that provided working women in the city with literacy support, technical skill training, housing, day care for children, and recreational activities.<sup>7</sup>

Jennie Howard (1841-1931) a 1866 graduate, at the invitation of Domingo Sarmiento, Minister of Education in Argentina in 1883, traveled to his country and assisted with the Normal School Movement there. She served as regent, principal, and vice directress in three normal schools in Argentina. Upon her retirement, she was pensioned by the government and received a gold medal from the city of San Nicolas.<sup>8</sup>

We also discovered Olivia Davidson (1856-1915), the second wife of Booker T. Washington. Davidson initially taught in Ohio, and during summer vacations taught in Mississippi and Arkansas. In 1878, she enrolled in the Hampton Institute and in 1879 pursued studies at the age of twenty-five at the Framingham Normal School where she became an 1881 graduate (one of six honor students). After studies, Davidson went to the Tuskegee Institute to work with Booker T. Washington whom she later married. She served as assistant principal of the Tuskegee Institute. She used her connections with the Framingham Normal School and established a collaboration through which



**Olivia Davidson, 1854-1889**

Courtesy of the Archives Department at  
Framingham State College

<sup>6</sup> Helen Keller, *The Story of My Life (Restored Edition)*, (NY: The Modern Library, 2004), p. 48.

<sup>7</sup> Mrs. Adams Dead, *Fall River Daily Globe*, August 26, 1904.

<sup>8</sup> Jenny Howard to Mr. Whittemore, May 14, 1914, Jennie Howard Papers, Framingham State College.



Framingham students sewed clothing that was sent to the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama.<sup>9</sup>

Bertha Johnston (1865-1953), a graduate of the class of 1885, was another school success story. She became the editor of the *Kindergarten Magazine* and was an ardent discussant and advocate of Friedrich Froebel's pioneering educational ideas in early childhood education. Recognizing the wealth of material in the college archives to share with students while teaching the history of U.S. education, particularly the normal school movement, we began to develop a program through which we would share the stories of these pioneering women, our current students' predecessors. This historical perspective also afforded the opportunity to further discuss the current demographic composition of teachers and students in contemporary public schools, through a discussion around the well-documented "feminization" of the teaching profession.<sup>10</sup>

As an initial step, we conducted an in-depth review of related archival materials. We selected six key individuals with the criterion that both breadth and depth of available materials would situate these individuals within the history of normal schools and the college's teacher education program. Five of the six individuals were women whose work and stories, if acknowledged, would expand our view of this segment of history. The sixth, Horace Mann, was central to the Normal School and Common School Movements in the U.S.. Historical materials from the archives related to each of these individuals were then identified. We developed a booklet into which a photograph of each individual was scanned, and a summary was written about their lives and activities. To engage the students in discussing both the artifacts and the individuals to whom they related, we provided critical thinking questions to guide their review of the materials. We also included in the booklets space for the students to take notes.

A trip to the college archives was built into the *Education in American Society* course. We reserved a large room in the library where the students assembled during this session. At the start of the lesson, we showed a slide presentation in which key information about the history of the Normal School Movement was reviewed and which situated the movement and

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<sup>9</sup> Bowlby McCartney, *Historical Resume of the Alumnae Association of First State Normal School in America State Teachers College at Framingham State College at Framingham, Massachusetts* (Alumnae Association of State College at Framingham, Massachusetts, 1964).

<sup>10</sup> Jo Anne Preston, "Domestic Ideology, School Reformers and Female Teachers: Schoolteaching Becomes Women's Work in Nineteenth Century New England," *New England Quarterly*, 66 (4) (1993), pp. 531-551; and Richard M. Bernard and Maris A. Vinovskis, "The Female School Teacher in Antebellum Massachusetts," *Journal of Social History*, 10 (1977), pp. 332-345.



the development of teacher education in a chronological context. We set up stations around the room that brought together information about the six selected individuals. The stations contained artifacts and primary source materials, as well as some secondary resources, about each person. Students were divided into groups of three to six members. Each group had approximately ten minutes at each station to examine the materials. The students then rotated to the next station, so that each group was able to explore all of the materials during a single class session. Since the primary source materials were old and fragile in some cases, and in keeping with the recognized standards of archival research, students moved through the stations with only the lesson booklet and a pencil. At the end of the class, we brought the students together for a closing summary during which the lesson was reviewed, questions answered, and comments shared.

By using examples from the history of Framingham State College, particularly those that related to the development of normal schools and teacher education, we provided students with opportunities to explore their local history within a larger narrative. The session allowed students to bridge the college's local events to the wider movement of teacher education in the United States in the past two centuries, as well as to observe instances of continuity and change. For example, concerns of nineteenth-century normal school graduates, such as classroom discipline, wages, working conditions, teacher shortages, high turnover, and the professionalization of teaching were issues that both contemporary and early teacher education students had in common.<sup>11</sup>

During the lesson, students found spaces and places where their stories fit – and where they could chart their own path through their teacher education program. The immediacy of the primary sources, particularly the photographs, the descriptions of buildings and other campus locations, and the perspective of the secondary sources in framing certain events and persons conveyed to students a “sense of their kinship with a wider self.”<sup>12</sup>

Essentially a constructivist activity, students brought questions to the material and moved among the artifacts, enlivening their contemporary experience in the college with selected historical antecedents. The session became a dialogue between teacher education students of past and present as students tried to understand some of the meaning and complexity of the

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<sup>11</sup> Yukako Hisada, “Between Factory and School: Women School Teachers in Early Nineteenth-Century New England,” *Japanese Journal of American Studies*, 17 (2006), pp. 113-128.

<sup>12</sup> Lewis Lapham, *Advancing History Education in American Schools: A Symposium at the Library of Congress*, Panel 2. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED422236). (1996).

normal school story through interacting with the multiplicity of voices and perspectives that the sources provided. It was our intention that the students develop a sense of a meaningful and personal past to their contemporary teacher education program. This personal and historical story served as a backdrop to their teacher preparation as well as a perspective on the themes in teacher education that have endured since the inception of the college – the academic, personal, and pedagogical training of teachers for the nation’s public schools. Students discussed the struggles and issues that united them with the early normal school graduates, such as increasing diversity, the goals of public schooling, and the role of the teacher.

Since the program explored an historic era in which women moved into a public sphere of work, students also discussed the roles of women in the Early National and Victorian periods. They saw firsthand how teaching provided women of those eras with both liberation and restriction – a theme the students found applicable in the contemporary world of teaching. For example, in the station devoted to Bertha Johnston, the students examined a photograph of a group of women (and two or three men) who appeared to be walking through a park. The archivist’s research suggested that this scene is a depiction of an early suffrage march. This photograph indicates to the students that although women were moving into a public and professional role through teaching, the privilege of the franchise did not follow without much struggle. Catherine Beecher (1800-1878), a contemporary of Horace Mann and an ardent supporter of normal schools, was a prolific and vocal opponent of suffrage. Paradoxically, her arguments both against suffrage and in support of women’s economic and social autonomy through teaching, rested on women’s particular suitability for teaching.

## **EVALUATION OF COLLABORATIVE TEACHING PROGRAM**

Through this archival exercise, students interrogated the past to make sense of present circumstances. They discovered for themselves both the historicity and the immediacy of their questions of schooling and education – questions that the past could help illuminate.

Lesson reflection and evaluation are embedded in successful teaching. In order for a teacher to justify a particular practice, he or she “must think about what is taking place, what the options are, and so on, in a critical and analytical way.”<sup>13</sup> To build upon the promising practices employed during this course, as well as to broadly assess the outcomes of this collaborative teaching project, a brief five-question survey was taken by

student participants following the program. Over a period of three years, 265 surveys were completed. The survey questions included: 1) What do you feel that you have learned today? 2) Do you feel like you have a better understanding of Framingham State College's role in the history of education? 3) Do you feel that working with the local primary sources has helped to add another dimension to your classroom learning? If so, how? 4) Is there anything that you would like to see added to this session? 5) General comments.

Overall, the students' responses to the questions were positive. For example, 91% commented that this classroom session was not only an enjoyable experience but successful. Most students suggested that they appreciated the hands-on history lesson in the college archives. They enjoyed this type of alternative classroom teaching away from the traditional lectures and textbooks because it allowed them to examine, read, and study primary sources and artifacts. It helped history "come alive" for them.

The students' survey responses suggested that the lesson was motivational and connected the participants' lives to the lesson in a unique way that made this period of history more vivid to them. They developed a new, deeper historical perspective. One student responded, "It brought the earlier era to life in a way that simply reading the history could not." The students' inquisitiveness was apparent throughout their survey responses. One wrote, "I appreciated the lecture and the aid to further understanding the artifacts was also very beneficiary and interesting...making me desirous to learn more."

Another 28% of students suggested that they were visual learners, and this lesson made an impact on material retention and comprehension. We concur with Martinello and Mammen's conclusion: "A natural relationship exists between visual thinking and material culture research in curriculum design which seeks to systematically and simultaneously develop young people's perceptual and inquiry skills."<sup>14</sup> In this setting, the students were the detectives making their own inquiries and their own perceptions of and reflections on how the materials before them relate both historically and personally and in comparison to their contemporary education. This, along with the group discussions, allowed them to make their own conclusions about the context of the Normal School Movement.

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<sup>13</sup> Kay A. Norlander-Case, Timothy G. Reagan, and Charles W. Case, *The Professional Teacher: The Preparation and Nurturance of the Reflective Practitioner* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999).

<sup>14</sup> Marian L. Martinello and Loretta Mammen, *Developing and Assessing Visual Thinking* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED246871). (1982).



### **Suffrage March, circa 1912**

Courtesy of the Archives Department at Framingham State College

Though most student responses suggested that this type of teaching activity was valued, it was not so in all cases. For example, about 8% found this classroom lesson was not helpful in fully adding to their knowledge of the subject. One student commented about the booklet that was developed for the lesson: “The questions were helpful. I think it may have been more effective if we were asked more and held accountable for the information.” Another student commented, “Documents like the photos, and the one page documents were helpful, but I couldn’t sit and read an entire book.” This suggests that it may be important to reflect on the time constraints of the lesson when selecting the primary source materials that the students view.

Over the three years during which this session was included, the course instructors and archivist attempted to improve and fine-tune the archival lesson. This was done by adding additional artifacts and stations to the lesson. As a result of student surveys, changes were also incorporated into the lesson. For example, approximately 15% of the students requested additional time at each of the archival stations. In response, the course instructors and archivist gave a much-abbreviated introduction to the session and primary source resources so more time would be available

for the students at each of the stations. The instructors also spent time conversing with each group of students at the six stations of materials.

Future modifications and additions to the program also have been identified. We plan to introduce a follow-up discussion session with the college archivist after the program. This will occur through the online course management system. The survey results suggest that there were still some unanswered student questions about the primary source materials, as well as a newly ignited interest in the history of Framingham State College. We plan to build upon these questions and provide the archivist as a recurrent voice through further interaction and participation with the classes. The hope is to have the archivist available at the actual class session to answer questions that arise about the primary source materials in the college archives. In addition, digitized historic photos, or other related materials that connect with the normal school story, may be shared through the online course management system.

In the future, we also plan to edit and/or add to some of the existing survey questions. Possible additional questions include: 1) How do you feel your knowledge of women in nineteenth-century education has expanded? 2) What was your favorite station of primary source materials that you reviewed during the program? Why? 3) Has the study of the local primary sources shaped your understanding of the development of teacher education in the U.S.? How?

As a result of this session, we believe that the students leave the class with a better understanding of the Normal School experience and its significance in United States' educational history. The program allows students to pursue meaningful questions about their common past. The interplay between the vibrancy of the original sources and the complexity of the contemporary context of their teacher education program became "a dynamic space where knowledge [was] constructed", and where both students and the college can continuously mine and invigorate their identities in the telling and the construction of the present and the past.<sup>15</sup>

## **USING A COLLABORATIVE TEACHING PROGRAM WITH THE COLLEGE ARCHIVES IN OTHER COURSES**

When sharing information about successful teaching practices, it is ideal if these experiences can be used in other subjects and in other

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<sup>15</sup> Mimi Coughlin, *Teaching History: Personal and Public Narratives*. Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association (Chicago, IL). (2003), p. 1.

courses. Teaching history and promoting an historical perspective through exploration of the primary source materials of a college or local archives is a model that may be replicated.

All colleges and universities contain unique histories. Likewise, most colleges and universities contain archives that house the historical materials of these institutions. Often, these archives are under-utilized. Erika Lindemann suggests that “your campus may not have precisely the same kinds of resources, but every place boasts similar sandboxes to play in – a museum, an archives, a local historical association’s exhibit.”<sup>16</sup> These sandboxes “contain important, intrinsically interesting materials for college students at all levels to work with.”<sup>17</sup> Drawing upon these local materials in connection with specific historical topics can support the content of a variety of academic disciplines.

Though our model of teaching history focused on utilizing the special collections at our institution, we believe that it is also feasible to develop a similar model that uses resources at a nearby collection that is outside of one’s college/university. Lee Weber, for example, wrote an article titled, “Treasures in Waiting: Educational Opportunities at NARA Presidential Libraries and Regional Records Centers.”<sup>18</sup> He provides an overview of some of the materials housed in these institutions and suggests that each NARA (U.S. National Archives and Records Administration) location “has incredible holdings of original documents and artifacts that could be primary sources for outstanding lesson plans and class projects.”<sup>19</sup> In addition to the National Archives, there are fourteen regional archives and ten affiliated archives across the country.<sup>20</sup> Elizabeth Dow in her article, “Successful Inter-institutional Resource Sharing in a Niche Educational Market,” discusses an education program in which five universities collaborated in the facilitation of archives courses.<sup>21</sup> Although the courses were not focused solely on the usage of primary source materials and the

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<sup>16</sup> Erika Lindemann, *Playing in the Archives: Pleasures, Perils and Possibilities for Teaching* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED442 110). (2000), p. 3.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Lee Weber, “*Treasures in Waiting: Educational Opportunities at NARA Presidential Libraries and Regional Records Centers*” (January/February 2001).

<sup>19</sup> Weber, p. 45.

<sup>20</sup> The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is an independent agency of the U.S. government charged with preserving and documenting government and historical records and with increasing public access to those documents. The chief administrator of NARA is the official Archivist of the United States. In addition to the regional and affiliated archives, NARA maintains the Presidential Library system.

<sup>21</sup> Elizabeth Dow, “Successful Inter-institutional Resource Sharing in a Niche Educational Market: Formal Collaboration without a Contract,” *Innovative Higher Education* (2008).



development of an historical perspective, they presented a collaborative model that Dow suggested could enhance any niche curriculum program.<sup>22</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Historical perspectives may be developed in a variety of disciplines and used to support the content, goals, and objectives of diverse fields. The development of historical thinking and understanding is enhanced when students access primary source materials that make complex subject matter more concrete and relevant.<sup>23</sup> The diverse materials that are housed in a college or university archives may be the resources needed to support this endeavor. We believe that our collaboration with the college archives helped our students gain an enhanced understanding and appreciation of the normal school story, particularly as it relates to educational history in the United States.



## Teaching Resources

### Sample Student Handouts: Investigating a Local Archive

In their article, “Teaching the History of Education in Collaboration with a College Archive,” authors Kelly Kolodny, Julia Zoino-Jeannetti, and Colleen Previte describe a lesson that introduces students to primary source materials located in their local college archives. Here we have reproduced two samples of the handouts they provide students for use at a “primary source” station.

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<sup>22</sup> The historical materials that are held in special collections are accessed through finding aids. Individual colleges and universities typically hold hard copies of these findings aids as well as on-line versions. If utilizing larger special collections, one may find pathfinders that have been written for the acquired materials. For example, Faulkner compiled and published “Pathfinder for Women’s History Research in the National Archives and Records Administration Library.” This resource listed the primary document collections, journals, monographs, and anthologies that related to the broad subject of women’s history, as well as broke these acquired materials into specific categories such as revolutionary women, temperance, and other. Carol Faulkner, “Pathfinder for Women’s History Research in the National Archives and Records Administration,” *Pathfinders: Guides to Research in NARA Library Resources, Number 1 Pathfinder Series* (August 1994).

<sup>23</sup> Morris, p. 32.

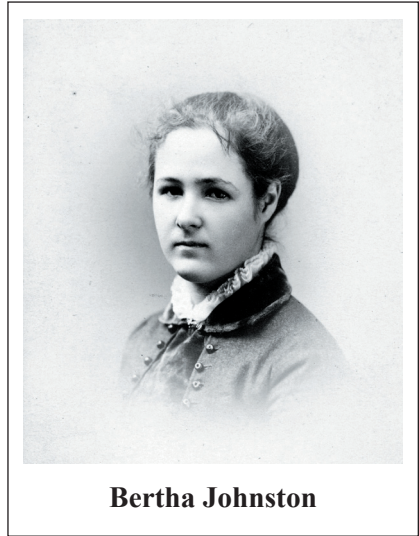


## Student Handout #1

### Bertha Johnston (1864-1953)

#### HISTORICAL NOTE

Bertha Johnston, daughter of John Henry and Amelia (Mary) Johnston, was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1864. Her mother was the founder of the Little Mothers Aid Society. Her father owned a large jewelry store in Manhattan. After attending public schools in Brooklyn and Rye Seminary, Johnston continued her education at Framingham Normal School, graduating in 1885. She returned home to Brooklyn and thereafter relocated to Chicago where she attended the Chicago Kindergarten Institute. While in the Midwest, she became editor of *Kindergarten Magazine* in 1897.



**Bertha Johnston**

In addition to her editorial duties, Johnston worked at the Helen Heath Settlement House, one of the Federated Chicago Settlements, working in association with Hull House. She relocated *Kindergarten Magazine* to Brooklyn in 1904 and published from that city until 1909 when it merged into *The Kindergarten-Primary Magazine*. She wrote for this publication for five years, and wrote a column in the monthly magazine, *Everywhere*.

Johnston became interested in the suffrage movement in 1887 and promoted votes for women until equal franchise was won. She was a member of the New York City Women's Suffrage League and the Women's Political Union which were instrumental in placing women patrons in city police stations as well as in securing admission of women to civil service. Members addressed Congress and State Legislatures on behalf of suffrage.

Johnston inherited her father's taste for the literary life. He had had a wide circle of prominent friends. These included Walt Whitman, Charles A. Dana, Theodore Roosevelt, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Horace Greely, and Henry Ward Beecher. Johnston often recalled events from childhood filled

with visits from such notables. Inspired and encouraged by family and friends, she began writing and publishing while a child. She was equally at home with fiction or non-fiction, poetry or prose, biography or fairy tale. Johnston's vast bibliography covers over seventy years of articles, books, poems, pamphlets, and short stories. Several of her journal articles focused on the work of Froebel, his philosophy, and the incorporation of specific toys and games in the kindergarten classroom. Her books included *Home Occupations for Boys and Girls*, *Lyrical Lines for Lassie and Lad*, and *The Friendly Cow*.

Johnston's spiritual journey led to the Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture to which she belonged from the founding in 1907. In 1952, Johnston suffered an attack of pneumonia which left her weakened. Bedridden for the last year of her life, Bertha Johnston died on February 21, 1953.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT OF COLLECTION

The papers of Bertha Johnston primarily are culled from the years when she edited *Kindergarten Magazine* and *The Kindergarten-Primary Magazine* and thus include many of these journals. Also included are copies of Johnston's two books, photographs, and other materials. (Information culled from Framingham State College Archives.)

**Notes About Artifacts** [Provide space for students to write notes about the primary source materials relating to this person.]

## Discussion Questions

1. Bertha Johnston was a prolific writer. Review samples of her publications. What types of educational issues did Johnston address in the *Kindergarten Magazine*?
2. What educational issues did Johnston address in the *Kindergarten Magazine* that are explored and reviewed in the contemporary context? How and why are these educational issues still pertinent to the contemporary context?
3. How do you feel the *Kindergarten Magazine* shaped the work of teachers and the practice of teaching? For what reasons?

## Student Handout #2

### Jennie E. Howard (1841-1931)

#### HISTORICAL NOTE

Jennie E. Howard was born in July 1841 near Boston. She was raised in North Prescott, Massachusetts, and attended Worcester Academy before entering Framingham Normal School in 1864. She graduated from Framingham Normal School in 1866. Howard then began a teaching career in the grade schools of Worcester, Massachusetts, and thereafter moved into school administration.

In 1883, Howard and twenty-two other American teachers went to Argentina at the request of Domingo Sarmiento, Minister of Education. Sarmiento was a friend of Horace Mann and was interested in the preparation of women for educational work. Once in Argentina, Howard and the other women with whom she traveled rested for two weeks. They then were divided into small groups and sent to different parts of the country to study Spanish. Howard and a fellow Framingham graduate, Edith Howe, Class of July 1867, proceeded to Parana. After four months of study, the two women helped organize the Girls' Normal School of Corrientes. They remained there for two years.

Following this experience, Howard became the regent and vice-directress of the Girls' Normal School of Cordoba. After two years she transferred to the Mixed Normal School of San Nicholas as regent and professor of Pedagogic Criticism and Arithmetic. Despite outbreaks of cholera and revolution as well as earthquakes, Howard remained in



*Jennie E. Howard*

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(1841-1931)

Argentina. A book about her experiences, *In Distant Climes and Other Years* was published. She believed the work of the normal schools was deep and lasting in Argentina.

In December 1903, Howard retired due to illness. Known as “Signorite Juan,” she stayed in her adopted country and participated in women’s affairs in the American colony in Buenos Aires. She was pensioned by the government and received a gold medal from the city of San Nicholas. She continued to serve as an emeritus educational advisor and taught English to a few private pupils after her retirement. Howard died in Buenos Aires in 1931.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT OF COLLECTION

The papers of Jennie E. Howard at Framingham State College include a transcript of *In Distant Climes and Other Years*, an article entitled “American Teachers in the Argentine” that was published in the *Journal of Education* (June 4, 1908) photographs, and other items. The papers of Howard describe and present a picture of the professional activities and career of one nineteenth-century Framingham State Normal School graduate, particularly with a focus on her work in Argentina. (Information culled from Framingham State College Archives.)

**Notes About Artifacts** [Provide space for students to write notes about the primary source materials relating to this person.]

## Discussion Questions

1. Howard graduated from Framingham Normal School in 1866. After teaching in Massachusetts for a period of time, she traveled to Argentina to implement the educational ideas of Horace Mann (noted on the dedication page of her manuscript). She assisted in the development and implementation of normal schools in Argentina and spent the remainder of her life training teachers in her adopted country. What life experiences might have compelled Howard to take part in such a venture? Would you like to teach in another country during your career?

2. Review correspondence written from Howard to noted individuals such as Principal Henry Whittemore of Framingham State Normal School. What was the focus of such correspondence? What are your reactions to this correspondence?

**Transcription of a letter written in 1914. Spelling and grammatical errors remain as in the original.**

3127 Juramento Belgrano  
Bueses Aires, Arg. Rep.  
May 14, '14

Dear Mr. Whittemore,

Your note of Mar. 18 arrived last week, and I have sent it's kind message of congratulation to the present Principal of the San Nicolas Normal School. Mrs. Besler, and asked her to answer it in time for your 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I know that they were all much pleased and appreciated very much the attention from the "Mother School", over the years. I am the only Fram. Graduate who has been connected with that School here. & I have assisted at the founding of two other Normal Schools here, besides the one in San Nicolas. I have occupied the post of Vice Directress a part of the time. Most of the time the post of Regent or the Principal of the Training School, as well as teaching branches in the Normal Dept.

My health gave out 11 years ago and I was pensioned by the government, and have received a beautiful gold medal from the city of San Nicolas, besides other manifestations of gratitude from townspeople & pupils. I intended to send a copy of the medal, or rather a photograph of it to my "Alma Mater" but have not yet been able to get it done. Perhaps it may be in time for the celebration, simply as proof that one of the far-away children of the old Normal School of Training days has been trying to uphold its' banner in a far away land, & among a stranger people. I feel a deep love and gratitude for the wise and helpful lessons given to me there, in our preparation for the work in life, that the class of '66 (1866) went out into the world to do and I desire to send on this 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary a message of affectionate salutation. With the desire that our dear "Alma Mater" may continue her beneficent work for many

many years to come in sending out into the world its' young women well equipped for a place among those who are struggling for the uplift of hungrily adopting the old motto, "Live to Truth."

Allow me to congratulate yourself and the Professors and pupils of the present, with the hope that the day may be so rich in memories. So inspiring in its' review of the 75 years of life so full of the spirit of comradeship with the past, that it may be forever remembered, by all who have the rare opportunity of being present.

Most Sincerely,  
Jennie E. Howard (Class of '66)

P.S. The only Framingham graduate; whom I know of as having been in S. America is Miss Edith Howe, whom you must have met ere this, & who after some years of very successful work here, an of who is still so affectionately remembered, went to Porto Rico. She will no doubt be present at your celebration.