

"Teaching Must Be Our Demonstration!": Activism in the Prince Edward County Free School Association, 1963-1964

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September 16, 1963, one day after the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing that killed four girls in Birmingham, Alabama, 1,500 children in Prince Edward County, Virginia, anxiously awaited their first day of school. The opening of the Prince Edward County Free School Association (Free School) marked the first time in four years that free schooling was available to both black and white children in this community. Four years prior, on June 2, 1959, Prince Edward's Board of Supervisors voted to withhold funding and close public schools in resistance to the *Brown v. Board* rulings. County-funded public schooling would not resume in this community until September of 1964. While the name Prince Edward may not have the same resonance as Birmingham, Montgomery, Little Rock, or Saint Augustine, this community bore witness to pivotal events in the civil rights movement's fight for equitable education.¹

Free School classrooms existed in a community that deemed it a (white) civic duty to cease public schooling. The school closures gave rise to dynamic classroom and extracurricular-based responses to white supremacist ideology. This article places the Free School as a site where teachers were provided pedagogical guidance to assume roles as classroom activists in their quest to provide black and white students, aged 6 to 23, with literacy instruction inextricably tied to preparation for becoming active citizens. In this article I describe pedagogical practices employed by Free School teachers to support the school's mission of helping students "acquire the knowledge, attitudes, ideas, and skills required for effective citizenship in a democratic society" (Sullivan, "Handbook" 2). To best explain these practices I first provide a brief historical context for the Free School. Archival sources and contemporary interviews with former Free School students are then used to present teaching practices that supported teaching as a demonstration against white supremacist ideology. Finally, I reflect on what this history means for both contemporary classrooms and community organizations dedicated to confronting issues around race, citizenship, and access.

Education and Democracy: Locked out in Prince Edward County

Conversations about democratic education and teaching for liberation have informed pedagogical theory and practice for decades. The Free School placed emphasis on the creation of classroom spaces where teachers could put into practice their commitment to demonstrate to students that they were valued intellectuals who deserved access to democracy, the antithesis of the discourse and action supported by the larger (white) Prince Edward community. The connection between preparation for citizenship through literacy instruction and public education finds its origins in the beliefs of the early proponents of public education: schools should be places to instill traits desirable for citizens of a democracy.² Historically, the American public education system, much like Prince Edward county, has a complicated relationship with traditionally marginalized communities.

In the black community there is perhaps no better marker of this struggle than *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954, 1955). As Catherine Prendergast suggests, the very reasoning behind the *Brown* case articulated the connection between education and citizenship: “the court thought on a grand scale that the rationale in *Brown* for ending legalized segregation rested on defining public education as the precursor to good citizenship” (17). The *Brown* rulings were as much about rethinking what it meant to create opportunities for people to learn the necessary skills for becoming citizens as they were about providing the grounds for physical separation to cease. It is not surprising that resistance to *Brown* spread quickly. The mandate to integrate schools was enough to cause many Southern states to strategize resistance. Directly after the first *Brown* ruling in 1954, Virginia came to set the precedent for Massive Resistance, the movement that gained major traction throughout the South. Both state and local lawmakers developed legal “solutions” to halt integration.³ On paper many of these measures were repealed by 1959; however, Prince Edward’s defiance would persist.

In the fall of 1959 with all public schools closed, the white community opened and enrolled most of the white children of the county in a private segregation academy, The Prince Edward Foundation. The black community responded by developing grassroots plans to assist its children. Church groups helped the community provide “training centers” in black churches and other no-cost spaces. These programs provided students temporary tutorial services in math and reading and socialization through recreational opportunities.⁴ Parents who were able home-schooled their children while other families were forced to relocate. Allies from outside the county, such as the Quaker American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), offered support through student placement programs, lobbying the federal government for attention, and simply being present in the county as supporters. Amidst continuous stalling from judges and court orders, these grassroots efforts continued intermittently until the Free School’s opening in 1963.

In the fall of 1962 a petition signed by 650 black parents from Prince Edward reached President John F. Kennedy’s desk, reminding him of the need for action. The petition, circulated by noted Virginia civil rights leader Reverend L. Francis Griffin, the AFSC, and members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) “called on Kennedy to sponsor a

survey to measure the size of the educational problem in the county and to back a program designed to help the children prepare for the reopening of the schools" (Smith 237). While Kennedy inherited the Prince Edward crisis in 1961, it is debatable why it took him close to two years to respond. Some scholars have suggested that he was motivated to respond out of fear that Prince Edward's solution to close public schools for indefinite periods would spread throughout the South. Kennedy lacked federal precedent and had to be careful crafting an intervention (Lee 20). Whatever the rationale, President Kennedy, his brother Attorney General Robert Kennedy, and members of his administration began to investigate methods outside the judicial to aid in the development of a temporary school program. In coordination with the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and researchers from Michigan State University it was recommended that "the administration assist in the development of a free private school system, available to all wishing to attend—both black and white—for the 1963-1964 school year" (Lee 25). Additionally, the team made several concrete suggestions for what they felt would benefit the community and students: an integrated faculty, small classes, un-graded instruction, emphasis on special education and pupil services, and periodic testing (Lee 25). The Free School was divided into upper and lower units. The upper unit, called Moton High, served ages 16 to 23 with the lower unit serving students ages 6 to 15. Of the 1500 students who enrolled and attended eight were white, making this the first integrated school in Prince Edward.

Neil Sullivan from the Union Free School in Long Island, New York, was tapped to be superintendent. A friend to the Kennedy family, Sullivan was known for his progressive hiring practices: he employed black faculty in his predominately white school and touted innovative pedagogical strategies such as team teaching and non-graded instruction models. In one month Sullivan moved to Virginia and began the tasks of securing buildings, hiring faculty, developing a curriculum, and recruiting students. Sullivan drafted a handbook in which he clearly outlined the mission of the school to: "develop and expand desirable character traits acceptable to a democratic people" (Sullivan, "Handbook" 3). If the very purpose of public education in America has traditionally been to instill citizenship for a responsible democracy, then the Free School had a most unusual set of circumstances to do this within. One of Sullivan's most important duties was the hiring of teachers, not an easy task with less than a month before the school's first day.

Sullivan cast a wide net for administration and faculty: the local Prince Edward teaching community, networking amongst friends, the National Education Association, and Peace Corps. Drawing upon local resources was paramount to the success of the school being accepted in the community. His local search proved the most fruitful as he secured two teacher-administrators from surrounding counties: Willie Mae Watson and John B. Cooley. Both proved integral in providing pedagogical training and support to teachers who would come to the Free School from across the country.

In late August 1963 Sullivan directed the opening faculty convocation for Free School teachers and staff. In his memoir, *Bound for Freedom: An Educator's Adventures in Prince Edward County, Virginia*, Sullivan recounted his testimony to faculty about their teaching: "Finally, I would say that we all have feelings about civil rights, and demonstrations seem to be the order of the day here in Farmville. But our job in the Free Schools is teaching—and teaching must be our way of demonstrating

our convictions” (77-78). This charged statement was a direct reflection of Sullivan’s perspective on the state of race relations in Prince Edward. Prior to the Free School’s establishment, the summer of 1963 saw direct action come to Prince Edward in the form of organized marches and sit-ins at local restaurants and stores. Historians have suggested that throughout his time in Prince Edward, Sullivan was concerned with drawing the ire of segregationists (Titus 156). While we may never know Sullivan’s true intentions, I argue that both Watson and Cooley answered this call to demonstrate conviction through the crafting of pedagogical strategies that encouraged an activist teaching stance in both the classroom and extracurricular activities. Evidence for this type of pedagogy is found in Watson and Cooley’s handbooks, curricular guides, classroom reflections composed by teachers under their charge, and contemporary interviews with former students. These sources reveal that activist teaching in these classrooms was predicated upon a pedagogy that connected Free School students to the world outside of Prince Edward County, valuing students’ home epistemologies as equal to school-based knowledge, and through the provision of extracurricular activities that allowed for student-led activism.

"Facilitating the Maximum Learning Experience of All Children": Willie Mae Watson's Guidelines for Teaching and Development

Willie Mae Watson, Director of Elementary Curriculum, came into her position with a legacy of teaching and leadership connected to social change. Watson, a former Peace Corps volunteer, teacher, and public school administrator for black schools in the nearby Norfolk Public School System, brought a wealth of experience and energy to the Free School. As director, she was charged with developing curriculum and pedagogical support for teachers. Initially there was discussion between Sullivan and the trustees about the Free School following a tutor-service model—catching students up as best they could. Watson wanted to make this experience meaningful for students by giving them a structure akin to traditional schooling (courses in math, science, language arts, along with after-school activities). Despite her mission of providing the traditional, as her pedagogy will demonstrate, she was cognizant that this wasn’t an ordinary school.

Most of Watson’s pedagogical guidance is found in her curriculum guides, bulletins she referred to as “Curriculum Notes,” and supplemental teaching materials. Watson’s pedagogy, as stated in her own words, was driven by helping teachers “help pupils solve problems that are meaningful to them” (Curriculum Notes #6). Watson’s teachers were given instructions for how best to provide classroom spaces where students were respected and celebrated members of the community.

Watson encouraged teachers to connect students with the world outside of Prince Edward County. Her memos offer records of some of the events organized to facilitate these connections. She describes films shown during assemblies about Africa, Europe, and other parts of the world, guest lecturers from across Virginia and the United States, and field trips. Watson urged teachers to make ample opportunities for students to listen to radio, television, and other media recordings (“Curriculum Guide”). A robust audiovisual program made it possible for students to have access to news and educational programs. These opportunities for listening sessions spoke to a desire for

students to connect with the world around them, not just to mimic what was being spoken. In spite of the ways some white residents sought to determine what access blacks could have to the public sphere, incorporating television and radio news provided students an outlet for seeing themselves as part of local and national conversations.

In addition to media, field trips, and visitors, Watson compiled a four-page pamphlet called "About Prince Edward," in which she turned the focus to home. This pamphlet chronicled black Prince Edwardians and their contributions to government, education, and the church on local and national levels. The alternative history Watson's pamphlet creates both disrupted the grand historical narrative of Prince Edward that focused on the county's wealthy white slave owners and demonstrated that the black community had a long legacy of being agents for social justice. The introduction of outside news sources and Watson's revisionist history lesson gave teachers guiding materials to support the classroom as a space where positive dialogue about black contributions could be at the center and demonstrate to students that black lives mattered.

Watson's regularly circulated "Curriculum Notes" offered pedagogical guidance on everything from the physical set-up of classroom space to annotated bibliographies intended as professional development. One suggestion found across several of her bulletins was a consistent reminder of the importance of providing students time and space to talk and share their experiences about what they were learning, a practice she referred to as "talk-time:" "children need to do more talking and more listening to one another rather than to the teacher only" (Watson "Curriculum Note #11"). Teachers saw this technique of sharing student knowledge as central to the positive progression of students. One language arts instructor described its significance and practice this way: "The technique or method of beginning each day with 'talk-time' has gradually caused each pupil to make a contribution as they talk about: weather reports, news events, etc. This sets the stage for effective learning throughout the day" (Shipp 1). The practice allowed teachers to understand what topics were important to their students and also demonstrated the first step in activist teaching: listening. Another instructor acknowledged the significance of this practice because it encouraged the participation of all: "Using examples based on experience [enables] everyone [to] contribute" (Pener 1). Starting with student experiences began the day with an expression of the importance of student voices and knowledge. Further, because many students in the lower unit began their Free School year unable to read and with a justified distrust of teachers, Watson encouraged her teachers to allow students to do all kinds of speaking—from stories, jokes, and riddles to more formal speaking activities such as giving directions, relaying messages, and giving oral reports in class ("Curriculum Notes #11"). These activities allowed the classroom to be a welcoming space for a wide range of student expression. Affording students opportunities to practice speaking that would have been beneficial both inside and outside of the classroom signaled to students that both their home and school learning were valuable.

Talk-time and the encouragement of creative expression were not practiced without difficulty. Many teachers spoke of the quandary talk-time presented them with as some struggled to follow the stories of children who often blended real events with the imaginary or relied heavily on folk wisdom and knowledge: "In observing a group of children, I realized that they had learned to

substitute the unreal for the real” (Griffin 1). To respond to this concern, Watson reminded teachers of the importance of listening with respect and not allowing traditional notions about teaching and learning constrain Free School classrooms so that they could: “free [themselves], and the children to talk, write, and dramatize spontaneously” (Watson, “Memo,” 1964). She asserts that teachers had obstacles to overcome in developing good relationships with their students noting that they had: “barriers to overcome in ourselves as adults and teachers, in order to listen and look with sensitivity” (Watson, “Memo,” 1964). Watson’s recognition that the teachers themselves could be barriers was crucial in the Free School. Many teachers came from outside of Prince Edward and struggled to understand their students and the community.

In this same memo, Watson continued to ask teachers to explore ways that all student voices could be welcomed, echoing the importance of practices such as talk-time: “Oral expression may be developed through well planned lessons that provide for active participation from the least able to the most able student” (“Memo,” January 1964). Her encouragement for teachers not to be bound by their expectations reinforced the necessity of having a pedagogy driven by acknowledging and respecting the agency of students. These teachers were activists in the classroom not just because they provided students with literacy skills but because of the way they shared this space with their students and appreciated them. This was an antithesis to the treatment most blacks received by the larger white Prince Edward community, and for the white students enrolled it offered a different perspective of cross-racial relationships.

If Watson sought to make this school experience the same as any other, then reflections from one student suggest that this was a success. During an interview with Mrs. Bernetta Watkins, who was nine when she began her Free School year, she recounts that there was very little that stood out in terms of the work she did in the classroom:

We did a lot of reading aloud and we had like worksheets. I know I remember lots of worksheets and tests. You know standardized tests? We had a lot of those. But other than that, I don’t remember anything unusual. You went to the board, worked problems on the board. And like I said, in reading, everybody took turns reading aloud and did worksheets afterwards. Those are the things I remember and I don’t remember anything we did any different that stood out from that next year.

Mrs. Watkins’s testimony demonstrates that Watson’s goal of providing students with a traditional school year was quite successful. Both Watson and her teachers challenged the notion that black students weren’t worthy or able to become full citizens by providing them with a space to practice the very thing they had been denied. Watson knew that central to this work was to put in place a pedagogy that would allow students to feel welcome and that they belonged in this space and could do the work.

Robert Russa Moton High School: Vicars of the Democratic Tradition

James B. Cooley, from neighboring Brunswick County, was highly sought after by Sullivan for the position as principal of the upper school, which students affectionately called Moton High after the local all-black high school. Sullivan recruited Cooley from his job in Brunswick County where he worked as Assistant Principal. Cooley's work was especially challenging because the high school student body was comprised of teenagers and young adults. Students who were sixteen or seventeen when schools first closed were now in their early twenties. As one teacher recounted in an anonymous reflection evaluation, on the first day a student remarked in amazement, "I'm as old as some of my teachers!"

Cooley's approach to designing and implementing pedagogies geared toward student success and retention was similar to Watson. First, he advocated for students to be given a traditional high school experience through the school's course offerings and extracurricular activities. Second, Cooley encouraged his faculty to extend student learning outside of the classroom as a means of welcoming the wealth of knowledge and experiences students brought with them. Finally, extracurricular activities, like a voter registration drive and student newspaper, offered opportunities for both students and teachers to be activists.

Cooley spent the first portion of the Free School year getting the school accredited, a move that would allow the graduating class to obtain state-recognizable diplomas. Following Virginia's high school accreditation procedures meant that the school provided the same types of courses found in any other high school: English, Government, Math, and Science. Cooley wanted to allow students an opportunity to earn a college preparatory diploma and to not be confined to a remedial curriculum. To offer students an opportunity to have a college preparatory diploma in a county that for four years took that opportunity away from its students was quite an achievement.⁵

Courses were taught in small groups to offer students the maximum chance to succeed. In these small group settings teachers were described as "consultants": "Some of the students should be placed in a highly individualized teacher-pupil relationship, especially for advanced courses, with the teacher acting primarily as a consultant to the student, who in turn, would use independent study materials and procedures to the fullest extent" (Sullivan, "Bulletin #10"). Teachers operating as consultants allowed students to progress through the materials at their own pace. This arrangement enabled the implicit hierarchy of the teacher-student relationship to be subverted. Many of the teachers were not much older than some of their students and came from outside of the south. Having young, white, teachers for the first time was an adjustment for both students and teachers alike. Structuring classes into sessions where teachers became consultants may have allowed students to feel less marginalized in the classroom. This type of relationship also provided teachers additional opportunities to learn about their students and what mattered in their lives. One teacher had this to say about the opportunity to offer individualized pedagogies: "[The] individual approach to each [student] seems to give him a sense of the personal interest of the teacher in him as a person" (Teacher Evaluation, 2). Another teacher commented on how this

structure allowed for individualization of curricular choices for her students because she was able to “assign each pupil with individual books,” according to their level and also interest (Teacher Evaluation, 14). These instruction practices made the classrooms safer spaces for students to learn and value their voices. While what happened in the classroom was important, for the upper unit, perhaps more important were the extracurricular opportunities students were afforded outside of the classroom.

Cooley developed a work-study program that allowed students the opportunity to work and be paid for their services as bus drivers, library aides, or in secretarial positions while also attending school. Sullivan described the positive outcomes related to this program: “Jim Cooley made them responsible for their own actions; he also gave them an opportunity to earn spending money (and self-respect) as cafeteria workers, library assistants or playground supervisors. They became first-class citizens almost overnight because they were treated as the adults they were” (Sullivan, *Bound* 121). Sullivan implying that these students may have lacked self-respect or status as citizens came both from being an outsider to the community and his position of privilege. Cooley, however, designed a creative work-study program that understood the unique position of his students as being predominately young, black people in the rural South. The work-study program was part of the larger trajectory of Cooley and Watson’s pedagogy, a pedagogy that understood that the Free School could reflect the importance of students as members of the community even if the larger (white) community did not embrace them. Reverend Robert Berryman, a former Moton school student employed as one of the bus drivers for the Free School, believed that this gave him an opportunity to gain self-respect: “The first thing I can remember is they were looking for bus drivers. Being a student school bus driver that was a tremendous responsibility in and of itself. I also got to play basketball. Coach Jones was hard on us. There was a confidence I built in myself.” Berryman’s responsibility for younger students, tempered with the typical fun of joining a high school athletic team, provides a snapshot of the complex situation many upper school students faced: navigating between the responsibilities of adulthood, while still yearning to enjoy the activities of their school years that had been lost. Cooley’s ability to provide students with extracurricular activities that both gave them the everyday high school activities of students and opportunities to demonstrate their responsibility, speaks to his understanding of this most unique class of students.

In addition to the work-study program, students in the upper school were eager to participate in what could be seen as a pinnacle of citizenship: voter registration. Sullivan’s memoir is the only place where the voting drive is thoroughly described:

Then there was the matter of voting rights. A group of our high school students asked if they could assist in a voter registration drive. For a period of six weeks, with the help of an interested staff, some twenty-four young people from the Free Schools spent all their spare time traveling to a remote section of the county and preparing prospective voters for registration. As a result, over two hundred persons were added to the voter rolls of Prince Edward County. (Sullivan, *Bound* 204)

Interestingly, in Sullivan’s own reflection of students’ success in this endeavor, he mentions two principles that also made the voter drive a success: first, the students knew the community they were

working with; and second, they were committed to the work (Sullivan, *Bound* 204). I cannot ascertain whether students modeled their voter registration program after their own teacher's pedagogical approaches. I do believe however, that the students' desire to participate in the voter registration drive *and* their request for permission and assistance of staff demonstrated the students' awareness of the school's desire to make training and preparation for citizenship a lived practice. Sullivan reflected on the level of student participation in the upper unit with regard to activities outside the classroom such as the voter registration drive:

First, they had the help of a competent adult who was certain that his employment would not be jeopardized by his involvement. Second, they were well prepared. Third, they had some connection, even though sometimes a distant one, with the people they were working among; they were not considered outsiders and they were welcomed into the homes they visited. (Sullivan, *Bound* 204)

Cooley and others knew that to foster and encourage inclusive pedagogies would embrace expressions of activism. Teachers weren't afraid of segregationist reprisal for their work and felt safe in this space, which allowed them to support their students.

The upper unit also emphasized the importance of student-directed self-expression when they sanctioned the establishment of a student newspaper. Students requested a newspaper as a means to share both news and opinions. The *Moton Eagle* became a space that covered serious topics like the school closures as well as lighthearted concerns about entertainment and social happenings. The one issue present in the archives was dated Monday, February 17, 1964 and covered a wide range of news stories and opinion pieces.

In a section called "The Students Speak" students were asked to respond to what *The Eagle* staff described as a "controversial subject." This month's question asked: "Should girls be allowed to wear slacks to basketball games?" A range of responses ensued, from those who thought it was "not lady like" to others who suggested it was "a disgrace" for the school. While these statements may seem trivial, they provide an excellent example of how the school's commitment to supporting student voices surfaced in activities where students were given autonomy and not controlled by teachers.

An editorial in this issue, "What About Schools In 64-65" narrated the school closures and provides important points on that history. The author, an unnamed student, prompts readers to think of Prince Edward's original role in the Brown case, recounts the court's role and asks the simple yet puzzling question: "How can this be constitutional since the Supreme Court outlawed compulsory segregation in 1954?" The student reminds readers that while the outcome in the 1964-65 school years was "important to all Prince Edward County citizens," it was of particular importance for the junior class because "it could mean the difference between finishing school or becoming dropouts by necessity." The author maintains hope that citizens of the county would allow the schools to reopen: "Let us all hope that the people concerned will make their responsibility the best possible education for us all." This editorial showcases one student's astute analysis of the crisis and the direct request for Prince Edwardians to recognize the connection between education and democracy as an issue for all the county's citizens, not just the black community. This newspaper provided students much needed public space to respond to the world around them. Students were supported by a pedagogy

that encouraged teachers to listen to their students and provide support, rather than implementing a liberatory agenda from the top-down.

Teaching as Activism

The context of the Free School made teaching as an act of activism inevitable. Students were locked out of county-funded public schools for five years solely because of some whites' adherence to inequality. This institution was a counter argument to the rhetoric that kept public schools closed. It should come as no surprise that neither Neil Sullivan nor the federal government was directly responsible for the types of activist teaching I describe. Cooley and Watson's ability to localize Sullivan's goal of preparing students to be citizens was less about pedagogical directives and more about aiding teachers in the cultivation of classrooms where students were already treated as citizens. To do this, teachers had to learn to embrace the knowledge and experience of the students. Watson and Cooley were tasked to lead a group of teachers from across the country to provide pedagogies and curricula that would demonstrate respect for the students and prepare them to assume positions as active citizens in an environment that had denied them basic dignity. These two teacher-administrators embody a principle that is both imperative and easy to forget when assuming roles as activists in communities: respect and listening are paramount in fostering meaningful relationships.

Pedagogical and curricula recovery work is important because of its ability to help us recover voices, sites, and movements that have traditionally been marginalized or shadowed by dominant histories. In this instance, the story of the forced five-year public school closure for children of Prince Edward is a history that is often eclipsed by the celebratory nature of the Brown rulings. The history and context I have presented in this article give us a glimpse of the past, an understanding of histories that shed light on continued persecution and struggle, and provide us with possible tools for battling the same forces that work to disempower and marginalize.

The result of such recovery work is not about finding direct and immediate applications. While we can and should look to the past for a greater understanding of who and where we are, these histories remind us of the importance of context in the development of practice. The Free School is a pedagogical model that asked teachers to be attuned to the needs of their students. Students in the upper division needed diplomas, job training, access to voter registration, and a supportive community. In the lower unit students required a space in which they could continue to practice and learn reading, writing, and speaking without needless judgment and assessment. Students across the Free School needed a place where the racist rhetoric did not determine who they were and what they did. Cooley and Watson, and the teachers under their guidance, provide us with a model, a mantra even, for activist teaching: listen, respect, construct, and reflect. The needs of students were heard. Students' home communities were respected. Educational experiences to meet their needs were constructed. Teachers continuously reflected on just how well they were doing in meeting their goals. These supposedly simple actions aided in the creation of an institution that challenged the white construction of citizenship. The Free School was not without its issues and obstacles, but can be celebrated as a spirit and legacy of social justice and teaching in a way that both empowers and inspires future leaders to continue in the struggle.

NOTES

¹In April of 1951 Barbara Rose Johns, a black sixteen-year-old high school student at the segregated Robert Russa Moton High School in Farmville lead her fellow classmates in a walkout to protest the poor conditions of their schools. This event was also the first strike lead by youth and predates the Woolworth sit-ins in North Carolina. The NAACP's involvement would lead to *Davis v. Prince Edward County*, one of the five cases involved in *Brown v. Board*. For a full history on Prince Edward County and the Civil Rights movement see Jill Olgine Titus's *Brown's Battleground: Students, Segregationists, & the Struggle for Justice in Prince Edward County, Virginia* (2011) and Christopher Bonastia's *Southern Stalemate: Five Years without Public Education in Prince Edward County, Virginia* (2012).

²Nineteenth-century education reformers such as Horace Mann and Henry Bernard fought to disrupt the idea that education was only for the rich. Both believed in universal education for the creation of a unified society; however, women and people of color still faced marginalized admission to this 'unified society'

³The first Massive Resistance package was passed into Virginia law in 1956. The package included tuition grants for segregated academies and pupil placement boards, and allowed the governor authority to close schools that tried to integrate.

⁴The Prince Edward County Christian Association (PECCA) headed these training centers and carefully defined its existence and creation as not intending to "replace any organization in the County. Rather, its chief objective is to coordinate and strengthen those agencies already in operation. It seeks to render a much needed religious emphasis to its acts of coordination" (PECCA 4).

⁵For more on the curriculum of the Free School, see my chapter "Radical, Conservative, Extreme: The Rhetorical Education of the Prince Edward County Free School Association, 1963-1964" in *Alternative Histories: Composition in Normal Colleges and Secondary Schools, 1839-1969* (University of Pittsburgh P, Forthcoming).

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