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Publisher: Routledge

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Religious Education: The official journal of the Religious Education Association

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/urea20>

MORAL INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NEW YORK

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Published online: 10 Jul 2006.

To cite this article: Clarence P. Carroll M.A. (1911) MORAL INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NEW YORK, Religious Education: The official journal of the Religious Education Association, 5:6, 640-644, DOI: [10.1080/0034408110050603](https://doi.org/10.1080/0034408110050603)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0034408110050603>

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which is provided in the history and theory of education and possibly also in connection with observation and practice teaching.

4. A majority of those engaged in the training of teachers for the elementary and secondary schools place the greatest emphasis upon school life as a source of moral education, although indirect but systematic instruction through literature, history, and science is also deemed to be of very great importance. A strong minority favors explicit instruction through principle and precept illustrated by concrete cases. The prevailing opinion is that religious instruction in any form has no place in the elementary secondary schools.

5. There is noticeable among many of those engaged in the training of teachers a feeling that the problems of moral education are particularly intangible and elusive, and that a concerted effort to untangle at least some of the strands in this web is essential to the next step in educational progress.

NEW YORK.

MORAL INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NEW YORK

CLARENCE F. CARROLL, M.A.

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In order to obtain data for this study sixty letters were sent to superintendents of the larger and smaller cities of the state of New York asking for information as to the practice in moral training in the public schools. Five questions were asked, which I give below with comments upon the answers:

1. Does the curriculum of your schools provide for formal moral training? To this question six superintendents replied in the affirmative. All the rest replied in the negative.

2. Is this training formal, and if so what are the essential features of your plan? One of these six replies stated that lectures or lessons on morals are given to assembled high school pupils. One reported the use of a system of moral training by Miss Brownlee, and another a system of which Ella Lyman Cabot is the author. In another case five minutes is given daily by each teacher to the discussion with the pupils of one moral precept, selected from a list prescribed by the Board of Education. One superintendent has or-

ganized junior civic clubs which meet after school weekly. In the next, talks are given at regular intervals on personal and civic duty, cleanliness, morals and manners. Two cities prescribe formal talks on morals and manners.

In reply to this question four superintendents answer "no," and ten others affirm that the teacher is the main dependence in securing moral training in the schools. A few add that the reading of the Bible and the singing of songs act as a moral force.

3. Are there any other practices in the schools which tend to promote moral training? Under replies to this question were included Bible reading, singing, discipline, presentation of ideals and half holidays as rewards for perfect attendance.

4. Are any subjects taught or any activities encouraged, or is any oversight or inspection instituted in your schools which might fairly be classed under the head of moral training? Among the replies under this head were found: biology, history and literature; the exercise of sympathy and charity; the kindergarten, industrial training, physical training and athletics; medical inspection and the school nurse.

5. Kindly offer any suggestion in the direction of providing or prescribing any form of moral training for the public schools. One reply urged that we treat this question sympathetically, and with open minds. Another expressed the hope that some sane and generally approved system of moral training might be devised; some advised great caution; some urged the danger of artificial and hollow form in any prescribed method of moral training, but the great majority confidently declared that incidentally, informally and daily, the good teacher is ever and always building character and unceasingly giving the very best lessons in morals.

A SUMMARY OF RESULTS.

(1) The representative superintendents of larger and smaller school systems of the State of New York, apparently in the ratio of about five to one, express themselves as not favoring formal training in morals in the public schools.

(2) Many miscellaneous practices in the schools are mentioned as promoting moral training such as the reading of the Scriptures, singing, the teaching of biography, history and literature, the reading of good books, the telling of stories and rewards for perfect attendance. These superintendents, however, with practical unanimity, agree that the personality of the best teachers is the strongest possible moral force.

(3) A small but very thoughtful company comprising the minority express themselves as in favor of giving a small amount of time and a definite place on the program to some systematic form of moral training, and a very small minority recommend either a system or a text-book in morals.

(4) It is only fair to infer that the testimony of these superintendents would imply that the modern public school, at its best, is a powerful moral instrumentality. Pupils are required by laws of the state and by rules of school boards to be regular in attendance, to be prompt, industrious and obedient, and to attend school for at least seven years, while a large percentage actually does attend public schools for a considerably longer period. The most striking features of the positive evidence in favor of formal moral training seem to be its paucity and the timidity of those who speak in its favor.

INCREASED MORAL FORCES.

If our inferences are correct we may add that the enlargement of the curriculum of the elementary schools has greatly tended to increase moral forces in education. It is true that, as was noted above, regular attendance, punctuality, the study of the common school branches and the old-time theories of discipline contributed to character, in spite of the isolation and severity that they seemed to produce. But it is also true that the kindergarten, physical training, industrial training, singing, drawing, nature study and school libraries are wholly ethical in their method and content, that they have tended to banish severity and to socialize and make attractive what was before repulsive and often physically injurious.

Every one of these phases of the so-called new education has found its way into the curriculum because of the demand of public sentiment. This sentiment is based upon a better appreciation of and acquaintance with, the instincts and interests of childhood. All these later phases of school education have for some decades been familiar to the best American homes. Books for children, music, pictures, toys, games, physical training, needlework, home-making, constructive activities including carpentry and gardening, and familiar and educative conversation, have characterized education in the palace and in the cottage. This marvelous increase in the interest of the father and mother in child welfare is attested by the sacrifice they make to purchase toys and books and pictures and to secure musical education for their children, and in general to create a social and cultural and hence a moral atmosphere in the home.

From the best modern home has come, directly, the best modern school. For example, school architecture has been revolutionized to secure perfect lighting, heating and ventilation. Every up-to-date new school building must be provided, if possible, with several acres of land for a school and community play ground; with baths, swimming pool, gymnasium, and a hall also for school and community use; with rooms for kindergarten and manual training, cooking, sewing and lunch rooms for children and teachers. They must also provide special classes for the backward, the sub-normal, the non-English speaking, the delinquent, the incorrigible, the blind, the crippled and the deaf, with factory or industrial schools for boys and vocational schools for girls; evening schools, social or community centers and civic clubs, for continuation education for boys and girls, and for men and women who have passed beyond the school limit.

There is here a remorseless logic that seems to compel us to adapt the educational process to the wider needs of every individual, class and condition. The university and especially the great western university has become also a great intellectual, social and hence moral instrumentality, as a climax to the moral forces existing in the elementary school system. All this means that we are almost unconsciously attempting to reach, to prepare for life, and if necessary to reconstruct and to save to society, every benighted child of the commonwealth, and finally to offer to continue this process in the case of every citizen.

NEW CONDITIONS.

I have sought to show, in the foregoing, that entirely new conditions have come into being that have stimulated a greater interest in public education, and that these new forces are chiefly moral. If I were arguing a case in court I should proceed to describe a kindergarten to show how children's best instincts are reached through means formerly excluded from the school; how the games of childhood are, in many cities, now played in every school-room every day, and how the supervised play ground may make education continuous all the day and all the year.

I should produce a picture of the workshop where boys and girls become self-active and self-governing, because of the pressure of a strong motive and the natural exercise of powerful instincts. I should reproduce a recitation in reading or number or geography where an artist teacher so carefully groups her class and builds upon observation and activity so skilfully, that every child is so on the alert that

he participates in and mentally reacts, to every step in the recitation. These same children are so satisfied with this natural method of learning that they go to and from their homes talking of their work and of their play which appeal to them with about equal force. Nor does all this necessarily interfere with order, with hard work and with ability to persistently concentrate attention. Observation, activity and the conversational spirit have transformed and rendered social the public school, at its best.

If all this is true, it may not, in the least, affect the question as to whether formal moral training is desirable. But, usually, in considering this question the presence of these other and higher influences may be overlooked, and the schools might even be characterized as secular and Godless, while in fact they may have a genuine, ethical and even a spiritual life, due to the fine leadership of the professional teacher supported by environment, a broader curriculum and the best sentiment in modern home life. Moreover, teaching is both a science and an art, and our best art is strongly supported by modern psychology and pedagogy as represented in the great universities of both the old and the new worlds. The question before us calls for careful deliberation, and the chairman has acted wisely in seeking widely for evidence that may furnish a starting point for the mature study of this vexed question. Meanwhile the schools will continue to do this great work of developing intelligence and character through splendid opportunities already at their command.

CALIFORNIA

MORAL INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING IN THE SCHOOLS OF CALIFORNIA

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This summary is based upon a report, founded on data gathered from a questionnaire to county superintendents, from county school manuals, from a questionnaire to grammar and high school principals, special correspondence and personal investigation. The percentages for county superintendents are based upon 23 replies. The percentages from the manuals are based upon 46 manuals. The percentages from elementary city schools are based upon 50 selected schools from a