

Paul Hanna's Involvement in Professional Education Organizations

Paul Hanna was a joiner. The list of organizations to which he belonged fills a significant portion of a single-spaced page of his final curriculum vitae. More important, he was a founding member of some of the most influential American education organizations of this century. Curiously, his role in these groups has been neglected by historians of education, quite likely because of the uneven pattern of his involvement in their programs through the years. Hanna's entrepreneurial personality prompted him to participate in the creation of an organization or a project, then to fade away as he pursued new challenges elsewhere. His restless energy and sense of ambition led him constantly to seek new forums for his ideas, both at home and abroad.

Hanna's arrival at Teachers College, Columbia University in 1924 placed him among an elite group of American educators. In the decades before midcentury, many of those who would dominate the curriculum field and its professional organizations for the next few decades passed through Teachers College as faculty members and as graduate students. Among these luminaries were Hilda

Taba, Florence Stratemeyer, Alice Miel, Hollis Caswell, William Van Til, Kenneth Benne, Frederick Redefer, and Paul Hanna. All of these individuals were more or less “progressive” in their outlook, and the networks that they formed provided momentum for the formation and reformation of several of the most important education organizations of this century.

Hanna’s childhood provided the framework within which his conception of a liberal education developed. Much of the adult content of that conception, however, came from his work alongside figures such as Harold Rugg, Jesse Newlon, and others at Teachers College’s Lincoln School and from his participation in teaching the 200F Foundations of Education course. Hanna also was impacted deeply by his involvement in what became known as the Kilpatrick Discussion Group. He continued to acknowledge his ideological kinship with members of the group throughout his life. For example, years afterward, he included himself with them as “very leftist in our thinking about what reforms had to be made in society. Then Roosevelt came along and we found in Roosevelt much that we could endorse . . .” (Hanna 1973a, 37).

The Kilpatrick Discussion Group profoundly affected Hanna’s thought, as it did the development of education thought generally in the 1930s (Cremin, Shannon, and Townsend 1954, 144). In fact, lively debate has ensued as to which professional organizations and publications can trace their lineage to the Discussion Group (Tanner 1991, 15–20). The claims and counterclaims tend to be futile, because the organizational rosters and editorial boards of many professional organizations and publications seem to list the same social and educational reconstructionists again and again. The various organizations formed one great network for the reconstructionists.

Hanna’s experience at Teachers College illustrates, in microcosm, how this network operated. The discussion group met on Sunday nights, and its members came together at other times again

to plan and teach the innovative Education 200F course. Hanna, Rugg, and Newlon worked together at the Lincoln School and in other capacities. Others certainly met in similar collaborations. Hanna recalled that all of these venues of discussion were rich with intellectual ferment (Hanna 1974, 70). Similarly, the meetings of the Progressive Education Association, the National Education Association, the Society for Curriculum Study, the John Dewey Society, the Spring Conference on Education, and others crackled with ideas as the same individuals debated and refined their views on the school's role in society.

HANNA AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

The Progressive Education Association (PEA) was founded in 1918 by administrators and teachers in experimental schools, most of them private institutions not affiliated with religious organizations. In her excellent history of the PEA, *Progressive Education from Arcady to Academe*, Patricia Graham characterized the association's first decade and a half as a time in which child-centered pedagogy dominated interest and discussion (Graham 1967). This emphasis reflected the concerns of the leaders of the private experimental schools who populated the organization's leadership. In 1924 the association launched its journal, *Progressive Education*, which quickly became one of the leading education publications of its day and helped the PEA attract national attention to its program and policies. By 1930, many popular publications had reported on the *new education* advocated by the Progressive Education Association (Graham 1967, 60).

Growing interest in progressive education was not an unmixed blessing for the association, however. University professors and public school administrators had long participated in the organization, but the PEA's growing popularity drew more prominent

scholars to its ranks. Perhaps nothing better symbolized the association's rise in the esteem of academics than the acceptance of its honorary presidency by John Dewey in 1928, after declining the honor earlier in the decade (*ibid.*, 41). The university professors, many from Teachers College, gradually assumed positions of leadership in the organization. After 1932, no school headmaster or headmistress ever again served as president of the Progressive Education Association.

The university professors brought a broader range of curriculum concerns to the association than had the private school leaders. Many, like Hanna and Rugg, were dismayed at what they considered the excesses of child-centered progressivism. As early as 1928, for example, John Dewey urged the PEA membership to pay more attention to the intellectual content of the school curriculum:

An experimental school is under the temptation to improvise its subject-matter. It must take advantage of unexpected events and turn to account unexpected questions and interests. Yet if it permits improvisations to dictate its course, the result is a jerky, discontinuous movement which works against the possibility of making any important contribution to educational subject-matter. Incidents are momentary, but the use made of them should not be momentary or short-lived. They are to be brought within the scope of a developing whole of content and purpose, which is a whole because it has continuity and consecutiveness in its parts" (Dewey 1928, 201).

Dewey's statement was a repudiation of the fuzzy notion, widely held by members of the Association, that children's interests alone should shape the curriculum. His thinking about children's interests and the curriculum had undergone some change over the years. In 1897 he had written, "The true center of correlation on the school subjects is not science, nor literature, nor history nor geography, but the child's own social activities" (Dewey 1897, 78). However, he later opposed the schools' granting unlimited freedom for chil-

dren to pursue their interests (Dewey 1930). Paul Hanna's thoughts on child interest and the curriculum followed a similar pattern of change.

Concern over the proper basis for curriculum making grew as the dimensions of the economic and social devastation wrought by the Great Depression became clear in the early 1930s. The social reconstructionists thought that neither a school curriculum based solely on child interest nor one based on the traditional subject areas alone was adequate to prepare American children and youth to understand and address the mounting problems facing the nation. Then, in 1932, George Counts electrified the annual PEA meeting in Baltimore with his speech, "Dare Progressive Education Be Progressive?" In this address and the book that followed, Counts called for progressive education to throw off its identification with the middle class. This alliance, he thought, had led to the progressive schools' educational philosophy of extreme individualism (Counts 1932, 9). After all, the American middle class was the great repository for the virtues of individual achievement and competitiveness. As the industrial middle class grew, so did the influence of its ideology. Schools that served this group had little choice but to transmit its values faithfully to the next generation. However, Counts saw that the social and economic challenges facing American society called for a different approach entirely—a collective, even socialistic, approach in which the school would expand its role as a community center and social welfare agency.

Counts's challenge exposed the ideological disunity of the PEA. After 1932, the association increasingly became a battleground between those who believed that education was most progressive when the curriculum was determined by children's interests alone and those who thought that schools had a responsibility to teach children objective truths that would help them improve society.

A special meeting of the PEA advisory board held at Vassar College later that spring of 1932 devoted an evening to discussing

a topic entitled The Responsibility of Education for Social Reconstruction. The result was a stinging indictment of the type of school that had been a model for the PEA. The Board claimed that “The progressive school in emphasizing the development of the individual has often failed to develop an adequate social outlook. It has cultivated openmindedness, but students are not moved to social action or fired by great beliefs or causes. Students are critical but undecisive, interesting and well-poised as individuals, but self-centered” (Progressive Education Association Advisory Board 1932).

This critique reflected the concerns that Rugg and Hanna had voiced earlier about the Lincoln School curriculum (Hanna 1973a). It signaled an attempt by the social reconstructionists to shift the emphasis of the association (Graham 1967, 67).

However, even social reconstructionists disagreed on the proper role of schools in social change. George Counts pleaded that “Progressive Education . . . become less frightened than it is today at the bogies of *imposition* and *indoctrination*” (Counts 1932, 9). He argued that “all education contains a large element of imposition,” and that, in light of the crisis of the Great Depression, the schools must use any means to help build a new order (*ibid.*). Not all social reconstructionists agreed with Counts. William Heard Kilpatrick responded, for example, “If, then, we believe in democracy, we shall avoid indoctrination . . . There is no other safe rule. Democracy, to be itself, cannot indoctrinate even itself” (Kilpatrick 1939, 57). An editorial in *The Nation* argued that indoctrination applies only if final truth has been discovered. It stated, “So long as one believes that knowledge grows and changes, one must believe that the younger generation has a right to compare and question, and that free inquiry, not indoctrination, is the ideal of education” (1935, 293).

By the late 1930s, the PEA had proven itself unable to resolve the differences between its members who advocated child-centered education and the social reconstructionists. The association peri-

odically adopted statements of philosophy, but none was more than a temporary accommodation of the differing views. When the fragile consensus that produced an official statement evaporated, another statement was developed. From its membership peak in 1938, the PEA steadily lost members until its dissolution in 1955, as progressive educators created new organizations to address their concerns.

Paul Hanna played a key role in the PEA's attempt to reach a philosophical consensus and, in the creation of new organizations, to more directly address members' concerns. In 1938, PEA president Carson Ryan appointed Hanna chairman of the Resolutions committee for the upcoming annual convention. Hanna was fully aware of the philosophical conflict at work in the association. He recalled, "We had two groups: one that wanted nothing to do with school responsibility to society, and the other that felt the school must not only be interested in the child but in society as well. This was a very profound bone of contention" (Hanna 1973a, 64). In Hanna's recollection, those who opposed a social role for the schools still had considerable influence in the association.

The resulting Resolutions committee report was delivered to the 1938 national conference in New York City. The document revealed Hanna's clear hand throughout. It began with a gentle acknowledgment of conflicts within the PEA, declaring that, ". . . the use of education as an instrument for the improvement of the culture has been debated vigorously by the membership" (Progressive Education Association 1938, 4). The report then spun its argument. It stated that, "In a culture where dynamic democratic values are accepted, educational method and content should contribute to the maintenance and improvement of these values" (ibid., 4-5). In other words, the schools had a duty to society as well as to the individual. The document then developed two themes common to those who saw education as a means for remaking American society. First, it announced the dawn of a new era: "Whether we like it or not, we are moving out of the age of economic individualism

into an age of collective effort” (ibid., 6). The implication was that schools focusing solely on the needs of the individual were educating for the past. Second, it raised the specter of American democracy’s erosion by an unreflective traditional curriculum on the one hand, and by an indulgent child-centered curriculum on the other:

We, in our century, are witnessing the rapid spread of dictatorships and the defeat of democratic institutions so widely adopted during the previous century. . . It is too much to hope that the United States will escape this struggle . . . The outcome will depend upon the . . . wisdom of educational leadership in sharply contrasting the opposed value systems and critically evaluating the alternative roads to security, freedom, and peace (ibid., 6–7).

The document then sought to harmonize the earlier thrust of the PEA with that of the social reconstructionists:

Where once we gave our attention almost exclusively to child needs and better learning techniques, now we broaden our educational goals to include the relation of education to the culture. Education is considered an instrument to be used by the culture for the perpetuation and improvement of the value system of the culture. In our culture this means that education becomes the chief instrument for the maintenance and improvement of democratic values . . . (Progressive Education Association 1938, 11).

This statement revealed Hanna’s innate social conservatism and distanced him from concepts of democracy such as Kilpatrick’s. The document went on to add that the new emphasis did not mean abandoning principles associated with progressive education. It stated that the PEA’s emphasis on education as a tool of cultural transmission, “. . . cannot be construed to mean that we place less stress on purposive learning of the child, creative experience, freedom, and the many other educational advances of the recent past; rather these advances are now seen as facilitating educational goals more vital in our culture” (ibid.).

Six specific resolutions followed the committee's argument. They included calls for the membership to support the newly formed Committee on Teacher Education of the American Council on Education, to take political action regarding adequate public support of the schools and social issues, and to oppose militarism. Certainly, these resolutions addressed broader issues than just child-centered education, but the first one was reserved for the conflict over social reconstructionism. Resolution number one called on the PEA to

... give increased attention, through its conferences, publications, and particularly through the existing Commissions and Committees, to the problem of projecting and experimenting with curriculums on elementary, secondary, and higher education levels which will develop the insights, attitudes, and skills demanded to conserve and expand democratic values in an age of science and technological invention (*ibid.*, 12–13).

That resolution was hardly revolutionary. In fact, it simply reiterated activities in which the association was already engaged. Nevertheless, the presentation of the Hanna committee report created a firestorm of controversy. Hanna recalled that “the Progressive Education members who were present at this annual meeting were so turned on or off by the Resolutions Committee that we departed from the agenda and hardly touched most of the items on the agenda because all people wanted to talk about was this resolution, which we didn't think was startling” (Hanna 1973a, 85).

Hanna described the ensuing debate as “a very profound discussion, very searching, very philosophical” (*ibid.*). Nevertheless, the resolutions polarized the meeting. Opposed to the Committee's report were Frederick Redefer, Roma Gans, Laura Zirbes, and some of Hanna's former colleagues from Teachers College. Supporters included George Counts, John Childs, and Jesse Newlon, also from Teachers College. Later in life, Hanna even invoked John Dewey in

support of his position, claiming that Dewey “was very much upset at the tendency of [the] Progressive Education Association to forget the second and equally important role of education, which was to preserve and improve society as well as to bring out the very best in each and every individual. To him they were the two sides of the same coin” (Hanna 1974, 128). Hanna understood the debate over the Resolutions committee report as the watershed division between those educational progressives in the PEA who believed that the association’s focus should be the child and those who thought that it should be the schools’ responsibility to change society.

The polarization of the PEA meeting following presentation of the Hanna committee’s resolutions revealed a decade of subtle conflict between university members of the PEA and those associated with private schools. The tension between these two political camps prompted their adherents to interpret the results of the 1938 meeting differently. Hanna recalled that the social reconstructionists interpreted opposition from the child-centered progressive educators as an indication that they should begin to “put our energy someplace else” (Hanna 1973a, 86). PEA founder Stanwood Cobb, however, saw the debate as just one more indication that the professors from Teachers College “took it [the Association] away from us” (Graham 1967, 57). One critic even accused the members of the Resolutions committee of having “joined the Association because they . . . wished to profit by its research and exchange of ideas, rather than to commit themselves to specific movements or methods” (*Progressive Education* 1938, 418).

None need have doubted the motives behind Hanna’s work on the Resolutions committee. The front matter in the committee’s report is a clear, heartfelt statement of Hanna’s view that schools should employ the pedagogical techniques of the child-centered progressives in the service of social reconstruction. Indeed, the report was called “One of the most carefully prepared presentations on a relationship that might exist between education and culture”

(ibid., 422). Hanna's subsequent career displayed his concern that education for democratic citizenship should employ learning by doing, critical analysis, and creative teaching. Nevertheless, criticism of the document and its authors was particularly vicious. One critic intentionally misrepresented the report when he asked, "Is it consistent with such basic ideals of democracy as freedom of thought, freedom of speech, and freedom of continuance or change of institutions as the people themselves shall at any time decide, for a democratic form of government to teach its children to perpetuate our present-day society as other systems teach their children to perpetuate theirs? I think not" (ibid., 418).

In the end, the PEA convention reached no decision on the Hanna committee resolutions, and hope for harmony between the warring factions within the PEA evaporated. The delegates refused to endorse even the most innocuous of the Hanna committee's resolutions as merely representing the "general sense and mood of the members assembled this afternoon" (Cremin 1961, 266). Patricia Graham credited this "inability to achieve a philosophical synthesis of the warring elements" as indicative of the ideological disunity of the PEA at that time (Graham 1967, 158). As a result of that disunity, some members sought other vehicles for the expression of their views.

His experience at the 1938 PEA Convention convinced Paul Hanna that the conflict within the PEA was beyond resolution. He and other social reconstructionists "decided to drop our active participation in the PEA and some of us got together and decided that we would support several other organizations" (Hanna 1973a, 66). Hanna allowed his membership to lapse soon afterward.

PARTICIPATION IN THE SPRING CONFERENCE

A growing number of professional organizations offered their meetings as venues for discussion of the relationship between the school

and society. These organizations included the Spring Conference in Education, the John Dewey Society, the Society for Curriculum Study, and the Department of Supervisors and Instruction of the National Education Association. Paul Hanna used each of these organizations as a vehicle to express his views about the role of the school in social education.

The Spring Conference was organized to promote informal conversation among a select group of education leaders on issues surrounding the role of education in society. It first met in St. Louis in 1935, but the membership eventually settled on Chicago as the location for its annual weekend meetings. William Van Til recalled that the conference's unique meetings included no set agenda and no paper presentations by members. Instead, they typically opened on a Saturday morning with a free-ranging discussion of whatever education topics members cared to put forward. At lunch, an ad hoc committee identified four major topics from the morning's discussions and appointed panels to frame each issue. In the afternoon, topics one and two were presented with abundant discussion from the membership. The following morning, the Conference discussed topics three and four. Van Til later tried, with limited success, to institute the same types of free discussion sessions at meetings of the John Dewey Society and the Professors of Curriculum conference that preceded the annual Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development meetings (Van Til 1983, 191–192).

Henry Harap recalled that Paul Hanna was a founding member of the Spring Conference (Harap n.d.). Hanna participated in the meetings from 1936 to 1942, along with Harap, Harold Hand, Hollis Caswell, Harold Rugg, Frederick Redefer, and others. The leader of the meeting was designated "factotum," and although many of his colleagues served in that capacity, Hanna never did. His growing involvement with textbook production and other activities precluded his taking active leadership in the Spring Conference or other professional organizations.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE JOHN DEWEY SOCIETY

A January 1934 letter from Henry Harap to Paul Hanna launched the John Dewey Society (Harap 1970, 157). Harap asked Hanna to persuade his colleague and mentor Jesse Newlon to call a conference of selected *educational liberals* in conjunction with the regular February meeting of the NEA Department of Supervisors and Instruction. Harap believed that Newlon's prominence would draw leaders in education to a meeting for the purpose of giving "those who are interested in social and economic reconstruction a chance to become acquainted and possibly to serve as the nucleus of a permanent organization" (ibid.). Hanna's recollection of the new organization's purpose mirrored Harap's:

It became clear that we could never bring the two groups, that is School-and-Society and School-and-the-Child, together . . . Now this did not mean that we were giving up the other side of John Dewey's philosophy. It was an effort for the child but we knew if we were to talk about school and society, we would have to do it through another organization, another set of journals . . . Most of us continued membership in the Progressive Education Association until we saw that it was a dying organization . . . and we created this new organ [the John Dewey Society] not to kill the Progressive Education Association, but to balance the record (Hanna 1974, 129–310).

If Hanna's recollection of the reasons for founding the organization are accurate, the choice to name it in honor of John Dewey, the philosophical father of American progressive education, was indeed an affront to the PEA.

Newlon responded favorably to Harap's request, and the two exchanged letters with lists of prospective invitees. Newlon was especially concerned that they include no "stuffed shirts . . . who give lip service to liberal or progressive ideas but follow the line of least resistance" (Newlon 1934). Paul Hanna was not included on

either man's list, but George Counts, Harold Rugg, William Heard Kilpatrick, Newlon, and Harap all recall that Hanna attended the founding meetings, so it simply may have been understood that he was to be a part of the group (Johnson 1977, 70).

A group of 35 or 40 people attended a luncheon meeting at the Hollenden Hotel in Cleveland Ohio, on Sunday, February 25, 1934. In describing the group, Henry C. Johnson wrote, "All in all, the 'liberal' educational leadership of the mid-thirties was fairly tightly definable, and the Dewey Society's original rolls represented perhaps its most select cadre." In fact, the organizational meeting was labeled informally as The Newlon-Harap Luncheon of Liberals in Education (*ibid.*).

Henry Harap recalled the interchange of ideas at the meeting as "vigorous and exciting" (Harap 1970, 158). The meeting was such a success that a second session was held the following Tuesday so that all present could voice their opinions. Although Harap claimed that the membership was more national in scope than that of some competing organizations, his list of founding members shows that the majority of them came from the East and more than one-fourth from Teachers College alone (*ibid.*, 162–163).

After a second meeting in New York City the following fall, Counts, Rugg, and Newlon issued another call for a conference in conjunction with the superintendents' annual February meeting. It was to include "the left wing in education—Rugg, Newlon, Counts, etc." for the purpose of launching the new organization (Kilpatrick 1935). Hanna, Newlon, and Kilpatrick planned the meeting, which was held in Atlantic City on February 24, 1935, to "launch a strong national society for the scientific study of school and society" (Harap 1970, 161). At a luncheon session, the members took steps to establish an organizational structure for the group. After lunch, the attendees discussed the prospects for publishing society members' research. Harap held publication as a primary purpose of the society from its inception, and the John Dewey Society yearbooks were the realization of his vision. That same afternoon, Hanna described to

the members the *Building America* project that he had launched under the sponsorship of the Society for Curriculum Study.

Paul Hanna took no part in the society's yearbooks until its third one, published in 1939. Harold Rugg edited that volume, entitled *Democracy and the Curriculum: The Life and Program of the American School*. In a wonderful sequence of logic, Rugg's introduction to the volume stated the social view of education shared by many educational liberals. He wrote, "This book has been written in the conviction that government can be democratic only when it is based on the consent of the people—and consent is given only when the people understand. This conception makes government in a democratic society synonymous with education" (Rugg 1939, x).

Hanna's contribution was a chapter entitled, "The School: Looking Forward," and it placed him firmly in the liberal camp. His piece reflected the vision he held at the time of the school as a multipurpose social service agency supported by and supportive of government. Drawing on his earlier advocacy of the community school concept, he described the school of the future as "tax-supported and its services free to all citizens . . . the School serves as the community's instrument through which the conditions essential for a more adequate life are progressively achieved (emphasis his)" (ibid., 382). He had a broad range of services in mind: "Better community health, improved recreation facilities, adequate housing, more beautiful physical environment, more efficient industrial and agricultural practices to provide a higher economic standard of living—in fact, any and all problems of concern to the community as a whole are brought to the School for study and proposals are made for solutions" (ibid., 382–383).

In later years, Hanna's involvement with the John Dewey Society, as with many domestic education organizations of which he was a member, waned as he became more deeply involved in international education. For example, his only subsequent involvement with a John Dewey Society yearbook was his service on the editorial

board of the society's 1953 publication, *The American Elementary School*. Still, in 1957 he was nominated for election to the executive board of the society. In response to society president Gordon Hullfish's inquiry as to his interest in serving on the board if elected, Hanna replied, "My answer is 'yes.' I'm turning down almost everything that comes of this nature because of other commitments, but the John Dewey Society is an organization to which I believe one owes whatever talents he may possess" (Hanna 1957b). He was not elected, nor was he elected when nominated again in 1960.

THE SOCIETY FOR CURRICULUM STUDY

The Society for Curriculum Study (SCS) was another forum in which social reconstructionists promoted their views. Scientific curriculum development was a fairly new field, and two distinct groups saw a need to create professional organizations as forums for discussion of curriculum issues. Again, Henry Harap was instrumental in the founding of this group. He proposed to W. W. Charters that a select group of college instructors meet to form an organization. Originally named The National Society of Curriculum Workers, it began in 1929 as an "intimate group of forty-eight college instructors in the field of curriculum" (Noonan 1984, 16). At the same time, a group of curriculum directors in the public schools were meeting informally during the conventions of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association (Saylor 1986, 7). The two groups first met jointly at the 1930 Department of Superintendence gathering in Atlantic City, and they continued to meet until they formally merged to form The Society for Curriculum Study (SCS) in 1932. By 1939, the Society's membership had reached its peak of 807.

With the onset and deepening of the Great Depression, SCS meetings were increasingly focused on the school's role in developing solutions to the crisis. The theme of an early meeting was The Relation of the Curriculum to the Present Economic Crisis

(Society for Curriculum Study 1932, 1). Henry Harap recalled that the leaders of SCS were “liberal in outlook . . . committed to finding ways to improve the social order through education” (Noonan 1984, 17). They were serious about scientific approaches to curriculum making and saw curriculum reform “as a way of contributing to social and economic reconstruction” (ibid.). That emphasis appealed to Paul Hanna and, uncharacteristically, he took leadership roles in both the society’s publications and its annual meetings.

In 1932, the society launched *The Curriculum Journal* as its official publication. This journal is a particularly useful resource for the historian of education because its early volumes include an annual summary of activities of the society’s members. Throughout its eleven-year run, it also included an annual bibliography of members’ curriculum-oriented publications. Paul Hanna contributed an article on new curriculum courses being offered at Teachers College to the December 1932 issue. In the following years of that decade, he contributed at least five articles to *The Curriculum Journal*, but his involvement dropped off in the early 1940s. The annual index showed no articles by Hanna from 1940 through the end of publication in 1943. This period coincided with Hanna’s increasing involvement with Stanford University Services to secure wartime contracts from the federal government. His work with all professional organizations declined during these years.

The journal’s reports of the society’s annual meetings reveal a similar pattern of involvement by Hanna. At the February, 1933 meeting in Minneapolis, Hanna participated with Hollis Caswell and others in a roundtable discussion of the topic, The Curriculum and the Changing Economic Life. The next year, the society’s annual meeting was held in Cleveland and Hanna served as the program chairman. He also reprised a presentation of curriculum materials for dealing with current social and economic problems that he originally made to the 1932 meeting of the National Education Association. On Saturday, February 24 of 1934, he proposed the development of a magazine format curriculum aid for teachers’ use

in presenting current events using *social problems* instructional techniques. The entire membership voted in favor of his proposal the next day, and on the following Tuesday Hanna was named chairman of a committee to pursue the project. This action launched the influential and controversial *Building America* series, and for the next decade much of Hanna's work with the society centered on this publication.

The following year, 1935, was a full one for Hanna and his work in the SCS. The annual meeting that year was held in Atlantic City, in conjunction with the John Dewey Society and the Department of Supervisors and Instruction of the NEA. The SCS membership elected Hanna to the SCS executive committee for a three-year term and he also became chair of a committee on statewide programs of curriculum revision. In addition, he was appointed to two committees that were important for the future of the SCS. One was the Constitution committee, charged with revising the society's founding charter, and the other was a committee to study the feasibility of affiliation with the NEA. At the 1935 meeting also, Hanna reported a successful beginning of the *Building America* series. He noted that nearly 18,000 sample copies of its inaugural issue on housing had been distributed, including the Educational Department of the Civilian Conservation Corps' (CCC) purchase of 7500 copies. At the meeting, Hanna also chaired the Saturday morning session and participated in a panel discussion at the Monday morning session.

In the following years, Hanna regularly appeared on the society's program to report on *Building America's* progress. He often had other duties as well. In 1937, he presided over a session devoted to state curriculum programs at the annual meeting in New Orleans. At the 1938 meeting in Atlantic City, he was a discussant for a session on Problems of Scope and Sequence of the Curriculum in Relation to Psychology, Philosophy, and Social Life. Unfortunately, the subsequent issue of the *Curriculum Journal* contained no report of this session. He was also named, along with C. L. Cushman, Doak

Campbell, and others, to an exploratory committee on the Experimental Study of Basic Hypotheses in Curriculum Development. The program for the society's 1939 meeting, held in Cleveland, lists Hanna only as a reporter on programs of *Building America* at the Saturday luncheon. His limited appearance at this meeting remains surprising because the meeting that year was held jointly with the National Council on Childhood Education and the Department of Elementary School Principals of the NEA. Obligations to these organizations may have limited the time he could devote to SCS. In 1940, at St. Louis, Hanna served as a discussant for presentations about the issue, What Are the Essential Qualities of a Curriculum Workshop or Laboratory?

Hanna's wartime activities on behalf of Stanford University limited his involvement in the last meetings of the Society. For the years 1941 and 1942, Hanna was not listed on the programs of the annual meetings in any capacity, even though the 1942 meeting was held in San Francisco, close to Stanford. The final meeting of the Society for Curriculum Study as an independent entity was to be held in St. Louis in February, 1943. For this meeting, Hanna was scheduled to lead a discussion of presentations on the question, How to Meet Wartime Demands and Maintain Long-Term Values. Unfortunately, that meeting was never held due to wartime travel restrictions and the pending merger of SCS with the Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction to create the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Paul Hanna participated in the Society for Curriculum Study as extensively as he did in any other professional organization, but eventually his interest in it waned. Richard Noonan characterized the society as a fairly closed group of curriculum "technicians" who reduced the complex political problems facing Depression-era America and its schools to technical problems of curriculum. He claimed that this reduction was inherently undemocratic because it removed educational problems from the political sphere and placed them in the hands of *experts*. He argued that "The de-politicizing

of educational decision-making can be understood as a manifestation of the modern societal attack on democracy in the name of *efficiency, manageability, and competence*" (Noonan 1984, 119). For evidence, he pointed to the connections between the SCS and the American Council on Education. He cast the two in a single mold of promoting a scientifically developed curriculum designed to prepare children for industrial work (ibid., 83).

Possibly some members of the SCS saw such a social utilitarian approach to the curriculum as desirable, and elements of it must have appealed to Hanna's interest in orderly planning amidst the chaos of the Great Depression. However, that vision surely would have been too narrow to sustain his interest over a long period. Instead, for Hanna and others of like mind, the society provided a forum for their pursuit of deeper questions about the relation of the schools to society. Hanna's declining interest in the society more likely was due to his career moving in new directions than to any philosophical disagreements with other members. The Society for Curriculum Study was to be the last professional organization in which Hanna became intimately involved for even as long as a decade.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR SUPERVISION AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The Society for Curriculum Study announced its merger with the National Education Association's Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction in 1942, although planning for the merger had been in the works for several years. The new association was named the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development and continued operations under the nominal umbrella of the National Education Association (Saylor 1986, 10). Later, it became the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), and almost thirty years later it severed its only fragile ties

to the National Education Association. According to William Van Til, the organization's early dedication to both discussion and action toward school improvement from the widest array of viewpoints and backgrounds appealed to university curriculum professors. He claimed that by the 1940s, existing professional organizations such as the NEA were too limited to address the broad range of concerns confronting American education. He wrote, "To us, the National Education Association seemed too much dominated by conservative school superintendents; the program of the separate subject matter organizations too specialized; the membership of the NEA department enrolling supervisors and directors of instruction too limited" (Van Til 1986, 1).

ASCD enrolled a significant membership from the West Coast, although individuals from the East and the Midwest clearly dominated the association. Influential members from the West Coast included Hilda Taba, I. James Quillen, J. Paul Leonard, and Helen Heffernan. Other Hanna friends and colleagues who found a home in ASCD included Hollis Caswell, Harold Hand, and Donald Cottrell. The association's attraction for some members was described by Hanna: "... we felt that we might create in the ASCD an organization that dealt with both society and the child" (Hanna 1973a, 87). However, Hanna recalled "a big fight because we wanted curriculum and society and some who were joining us who were members of the old *progressive ed* wanted to hold the old banner [of child-centered progressivism] high" (Hanna 1974, 130). Such a "fight" was not mentioned by either William Van Til or J. Galen Saylor in their recollections of the first meetings of the Association (Van Til 1986). Hanna may have referred to the differences he perceived between the new organization and the small, intimate Society for Curriculum Study, or the ideologically unified John Dewey Society. ASCD was much larger than either of those organizations, and it included many more school administrators who were interested in the everyday details of curriculum and instruction

rather than in the broader social issues with which Hanna had been concerned (*ibid.*, 14; Van Til 1983, 192).

Again, Hanna's involvement with ASCD was spotty, and more frequent in the early years than later. The association's official voice was *Educational Leadership*, a journal formed by the merger of the NEA Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction's *Educational Method* and the Society for Curriculum Study's *Curriculum Journal*. Hanna was a frequent contributor to *Educational Leadership* during the journal's first year of publication. Throughout 1942–1943, for example, he wrote a monthly feature entitled "The Changing World." Hanna used the column to share his views of how world events impacted American education. His articles demonstrated his growing interest in the world beyond America's shores, and even beyond strictly curriculum issues.

Although Hanna stopped writing his column after the first eight issues, other authors revived it later. Hanna also contributed one article, "Education for the Larger Community," to the October 1946 issue and another, "Whose One World?" in April of 1952. Hanna did not write again for *Educational Leadership*, although many of his colleagues, including Taba, Quillen, Caswell, Counts, Kilpatrick, Laura Zirbes, L. Thomas Hopkins, and his sister, Geneva Hanna, continued to contribute to the journal.

The 1940s marked a turning point in Hanna's career as his vision of education turned international. One consequence of this change was his declining involvement in domestic professional organizations. World War II marked an enormous increase in Stanford University's contracted research for the United States government, and it did not end with the conclusion of the war. In fact, Stanford became a center for many types of strategic studies in the ensuing years of the cold war. As Director of University Services during these seminal years, Hanna was consumed with Stanford business. During these years, he shifted his personal focus toward international education. He was often abroad during the ASCD

annual meetings, and his work in Latin America, Europe, and East Asia consumed increasing amounts of his time and energy.

Hanna served on ASCD's Board of Directors from 1944 until 1948, but he held no leadership position after that time. Even his participation in the annual meetings declined after the mid-century point. For example, he attended the 1946 annual conference in St. Louis in connection with *Building America*, but he was not listed as a presenter or discussant on any of the panels, even ones with such Hannaesque topics as The Community's School, and International Understanding at Work in the Classroom. The same pattern prevailed the following year when ASCD met in Chicago. Hanna was listed in connection with *Building America* again, but not, for example, as a participant in sessions on What Should Children Know About our National Social and Economic Problems? and How can Schools Aid in the Development of More Effective International Understanding? He next appeared on the program for the 1950 Meeting in Denver as one of several individuals having special responsibilities in the study groups. Subsequent programs did not list him as a participant.

A deeper philosophical reason also may explain the decline of Hanna's involvement in ASCD. Patricia Graham attributed the demise of the PEA partly to its inability to "play it safe" during the years of most intense reaction to progressivism. She claimed that organizations like ASCD and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education weathered the political storms of the 1940s and 1950s by shifting focus from the controversial issues of the social role of schools to more technical matters of curriculum and supervision. She wrote, "After 1945, . . . many of the leaders of these groups were more concerned with practical curricular problems than with educational theories . . . Criticisms of capitalism had become distinctly less popular" (Graham 1967, 105). Daniel Tanner echoed her:

Those organizations that survived had changed with the times. They admitted into their number people who did not wholly subscribe to their doctrines, and they took on practical service activities. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development is a good example Now a field service organization, it has a huge membership, but its early commitment toward progressive doctrine has disappeared (Tanner 1991, x).

William Van Til disagreed. He thought that social education was very much a concern for ASCD. He wrote, “In the more than 40 years that followed my first experiences in the organization, ASCD has continued to demonstrate social concern and commitment to better education in its activities” (Van Til 1986, 2). However, he held a different view than Hanna on what “social concern and commitment” meant. Hanna called for social critique and activism through his advocacy of community schools and his work with *Building America*. On the other hand, ASCD’s social concern apparently was expressed through such technical elements as “[recognition of] the interdependence of curricular sources derived from social, psychological, and philosophical foundations. ASCD has a long history of support for a balanced curriculum and effective leadership practices” (ibid.).

Hanna’s personal interpretation was that “the ASCD became the replacement for the Progressive Education Association. But the same thing happened to the ASCD that happened to the Progressive Education Association—the child-centered group took over!” (Hanna 1973a, 87). He was concerned that the association came to focus too much on the technical details of curriculum at the expense of larger issues of the school and society. Helen Heffernan thought that the opposite had happened. She believed that the society-centered SCS had taken over the Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction (Noonan 1984, 20).

Hanna’s belief in the correctness of his own judgment sometimes foreclosed the consideration of alternative views, however. In

the early 1960s he expressed his dismay over ASCD's perceived drift in a letter to his sister. Geneva Hanna had just been elected to the Association's Board of Directors, and he was writing to congratulate her. Hanna wrote, "You know how much we are counting on you to put some life and direction into this organization" (Hanna 1961c). By that time, of course, Paul Hanna had only a distant perspective on the association and its work because he had not been an active participant for a decade.

Hanna's withdrawal from involvement in ASCD set the stage for a minor, yet poignant, event in his later life. In a letter dated December 20, 1977, written in response to Hanna's inquiry about his membership status, ASCD's Membership Coordinator, Clara M. Burleigh, replied, "I am unable to locate a membership for you. Life memberships are only given to those members who joined and were consecutive members for 20 years. I will be glad to enter a membership for you. Please check which membership you want and return the attached card. We will bill you later" (Burleigh 1977).

A note at the bottom, in Hanna's own hand, reads, "I took out life membership when Caswell, Cushman, I and others created ASCD many years ago. The present staff members have no file or recollection of this matter." He added bitterly, "I will not respond." Nevertheless, he later attended at least one ASCD annual conference that met in San Francisco.

THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Although members of the National Education Association's Department of Superintendence merged with the National Society of Curriculum Workers to form the Society for Curriculum Study in the 1930s, the department continued as a separate entity, holding meetings and publishing yearbooks under its own label. The Department had long served as a venue for discussion of the relation-

ship of education to society, with education leaders such as Newlon, Counts, Hopkins, Caswell, and Childs among its membership.

Paul Hanna joined the department when he first went to West Winfield, New York, to become superintendent of schools in 1926. By the early 1930s, the department's statements commonly addressed the school's role in society. A 1932 resolution called for the establishment of a committee to suggest such changes in the social studies curriculum "... in our junior and senior high schools as our present social and economic situation has made necessary and vital" (National Education Association 1932, 671).

The department's yearbooks reveal an inconsistent membership record for Hanna, although he participated in the organization's 1939 meeting at Cleveland. Hanna's record of membership in the Department of Superintendence mirrored his ambivalence toward its parent organization, the National Education Association. With a few exceptions, his involvement with the NEA was through associated organizations. One example was his chairmanship of the important NEA/PEA Joint Commission on Resources and Education in the prewar and early wartime periods. The thrust of the commission's work was to build an "educational program essential to an effective use of our human and physical resources" (Society for Curriculum Study 1940, 3). The commission proposed coordination among resource planning agencies to educate the general public, coordination among teacher education programs, and the publication of classroom materials on resource planning and use. In addition, the commission recommended holding conferences on resources and education. It received funding from the General Education Board to conduct two summer institutes and five regional workshops for teachers and others. The commission also recommended providing assistance to other agencies for educational purposes in the amount of \$150,000 per year for five years. Although not all the commission's ambitious plans came to fruition, its recommendations reflected the Depression-era concern for scientific

planning in the use of resources for education. This remained a deep-seated concern for Paul Hanna throughout his life, and the NEA was the primary forum for his efforts in that regard.

Hanna's name did not appear in the membership rolls of the department for two decades after 1929. His absence seems odd, because so many of his mentors and colleagues were active leaders in the organization and contributors to its yearbooks. Hanna was also strangely absent as a contributor to key department yearbooks such as "Social Change and Education" and "Social Studies Curriculum." Ralph Tyler, Henry Harap, George Counts, Charles Beard, and others contributed pieces to these books, but not Hanna. Other yearbooks on topics of interest to Hanna included "Improvement of Education for Democracy" and "Youth Education Today," but neither book included a Hanna chapter. Admittedly, these books were published during the mid-1930s when the Hannas were adjusting to their new life in California and building their new home. In addition, the influence of progressives in the yearbooks declined after the 1930s. Still, Hanna wrote nearly two dozen articles for other publications between 1929 and 1949.

When Paul Hanna's name reappeared on the department's membership rolls in 1949, he was listed as a life member. From that time on, he was more active in the organization. In fact, one of his Our Changing World articles for *Educational Leadership* enthusiastically promoted the NEA as a unified voice for teachers.

Hanna served on the Commission on Educating for American Citizenship that organized the department's thirty-second yearbook. He was a major contributor to the book, drawing examples of school-community interactions from his *Youth Serves the Community*. He also drew on his expanding communities curriculum design to articulate a scheme of citizenship education in a section of the yearbook entitled "The Seven Circles of Civic Responsibility." In a chapter in the yearbook entitled "Practicing Citizenship,"

Hanna lists “basic human cooperative activities,” much like the basic human activities in his curriculum model.

In 1962, Hanna challenged the NEA membership at its annual convention to consider the establishment of a national commission for curriculum research and development. He called on the membership to expand the nascent Project on Instruction into a full-blown National Curriculum and Instruction Center. In his conception, the center would become a leading force in curriculum research, development, and proliferation. It would exert influence on teacher preparation programs in the colleges, as well as on local and state education administrations, in order to unify and standardize curriculum and instructional practices throughout the United States. The membership was unmoved, however, and little more than discussion came of Hanna’s proposal.

Hanna became disillusioned with the NEA in later years. The association’s support of collective bargaining rights for teachers set it on “a course of action that was to change the character of the Association in respects then unenvisioned” (West 1980, 45). A resolution passed at the 1961 meeting of the NEA’s Representative assembly embroiled the organization’s leadership and membership in discussions of union representation, dispute resolution, and strikes. Curriculum took a back seat. That vote was a radical departure from the past, when the NEA had served as a forum for debate on items of more immediate import to the classroom, and many were alienated by it. Hanna recalled,

Since 1927, as a young member of the NEA, I had been inspired and educated by attending the annual and regional conventions of the organization. I read the journals and brochures, and still recall today the preponderance of excellent addresses and articles on curriculum and instruction. In the 1960s, the content of the publication and conventions changed. NEA swung its focus from curriculum and instruction to a union’s concern about work conditions, tenure, and compensation for its members. While such

union goals are important, there remained little time and energy to pursue the original professional goals of the organization (Hanna 1987, 92).

The move toward union concerns marked a turning point in the balance of power in the organization. Previously, the association had been led chiefly by school administrators, but the decade of the 1960s saw the rise to power of classroom teachers within the NEA (West 1980, 242). The vote also revealed a change in Hanna's thought over time. His 1943 columns for *Educational Leadership* had included one extolling collective bargaining for teachers. By the 1960s, however, Hanna saw collective bargaining as a threat to the intellectual integrity of the organization. NEA records reveal no more involvement by Hanna after passage of the 1961 resolution.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES

Of all the organizations to which Paul Hanna might have devoted his energies, the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) appears to have been the most closely linked with his professional interests. However, his participation in its work and activities was marginal.

The NCSS began in 1921 as a department of the National Education Association, and its first yearbooks were published as part of the journal *Historical Outlook*. At that time, the organization held no independent national meeting (Thornton 1996, 4). Instead, members met in conjunction with the NEA meeting in July, with the American Historical Association in December, and with the Department of Supervisors and Instruction in February. The first independent NCSS yearbook was published in 1931, and its first independent national meeting was held in 1935 (*ibid.*, 5). Hanna's involvement in other organizations sapped the resources he might

have given to NCSS, and he never served in the council's leadership—although many of his associates did. His Stanford colleagues I. James Quillen and Richard Gross, for example, served as NCSS presidents—Quillen in the early 1940s and Gross in the mid-1960s.

Hanna had minimal involvement in NCSS publications as well, contributing to only two NCSS yearbooks. He wrote a chapter entitled "Social Education through Cooperative Community Service" for the 1938 yearbook and (with John R. Lee) a chapter on "Generalizations in the Social Studies" for the 1962 Yearbook. That relative silence seems odd. Hanna colleagues such as Quillen, Harap, Taba, Heffernan, Clyde Kohn, Harold Drummond, Fannie Shaftel, and others were regular contributors to volumes with titles that denoted topics of interest to Hanna such as *The Social Studies in the Elementary School*, *Education for Democratic Citizenship*, *International Dimensions in the Social Studies*, and *Social Studies Curriculum Development: Prospects and Problems*.

Hanna never revealed any reasons for his lack of participation in NCSS. He may have thought that his social studies textbooks were contribution enough to the field. Most likely, however, Hanna agreed with William Van Til that "the programs of the separate subject matter organizations [were] too specialized" (Van Til 1986, 1). Throughout his career, the bulk of Hanna's writing for professional journals focused on larger questions of schools and society rather than on the narrower issues of curriculum and instruction. His professional activity early in his career centered on organizations such as the Progressive Education Association, the John Dewey Society, and the Society for Curriculum Study, in which the members investigated ways that the schools could help mold the social, economic, and political institutions around them. Later in his career, he simply invested his energies in international organizations to address similar issues overseas.

CONCLUSION

Paul Hanna's decision to move to the West Coast in 1936 and to stay there for the remainder of his career impacted his place in the history of education. At Stanford, his career moved in different directions than it might have had he stayed in the East. As new interests dominated his activities his involvement in professional organizations declined. Consequently, some historians of education have overlooked his important role in many of the professional organizations to which social reconstructionists adhered in the 1930s.

Hanna's entrepreneurial personality also played a role in his estrangement from core professional organizations. An entrepreneur is a visionary, investing his energies in the creation of a thing and marshaling the resources to bring it to fruition. Once the enterprise is established, a different set of skills is required to keep it running. Established enterprises require effective managers—people who can attend to the thousand niggling details over a prolonged period of time. Rarely do real entrepreneurial and managerial gifts reside in the same individual, and Paul Hanna was more an entrepreneur than a manager. His development of the extremely successful Hanna textbook series for Scott, Foresman and Company took more and more time as the volumes increased and he became more involved in their promotion. Also, his work with Stanford University Services kept him involved in the administrative and financial aspects of university life, especially during World War II.

If Hanna's involvement in professional organizations fell off after the war, it coincided with the decline of progressive thought in education generally. The 1930s were the high point for the social reconstructionists. The aftermath of the world war reigned in both curricular experimentation and optimism about its social impact. War was followed by reaction, and progressives of all descriptions

came under attack. The fifteen years after V-J Day saw anticommunist hysteria in education and elsewhere, along with a *back to basics* thrust in curriculum development. Social and educational reconstructionists found themselves increasingly on the defensive.

At the same time, the world literally opened up to Paul Hanna. He first became involved in international education issues in the period immediately preceding the war. His work for the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs developed his appetite for international travel and study, and in the years after the war his energies increasingly centered on education as a tool for economic and political development overseas. As a result, Hanna's involvement in domestic education organizations declined. Some historians unfamiliar with his early career misread that phase of his career as an attempt to export Americanism in support of United States cold war-era foreign policy. Actually, he simply extended his efforts to instill democratic habits of mind through education to schools overseas. Through those activities, he became integrally involved with UNESCO and other UN-related organizations, the Asia Society, and the East-West Center looking west from California, and the Atlantic Council and other international organizations looking to the east.

Although those international enterprises affected his participation in conventional professional organizations, they did not deter his interest in educating children for democracy. In fact, they provided new forums for him to test and implement his ideas. In the final analysis, this explanation for Hanna's exclusion from the pantheon of key educational theorists of this century may prove the most compelling. Hanna was more than just a theorist—he was a practical innovator who sought to implement his ideas. Lawrence Cremin explained the failure of the radical reconstructionists significantly to impact policy by claiming that, “The brilliant polemicists of *The Social Frontier* were simply finessed by less imaginative men with more specific pedagogical nostrums to purvey” (Cremin 1961, 231). Whether less imaginative than other social frontiersmen

or not, Hanna put a premium on practical results. He never wrote as much about the theoretical basis of his curriculum models as some of the other educational progressives did about theirs, but he influenced generations here and abroad with his ideas. First through *Building America* and then through the Hanna Social Studies Series and his consulting work with foreign school systems, Hanna spread his ideas far beyond the reaches of the eastern-midwestern alliance of progressive education and progressive educators' small-circulation journals. Chapter Seven describes the expansion of Hanna's interests to include education overseas.