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Patterns of workers' education: The story of the Bryn Mawr Summer School

Florence Hemley Schneider

Bryn Mawr College

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PATTERNS OF WORKERS' EDUCATION

The Story of the Bryn Mawr Summer School

FLORENCE HEMLEY SCHNEIDER, Ph.D.

INTRODUCTION

HILDA W. SMITH

Presented as a Dissertation to the Faculty of Bryn Mawr College in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

American Council on Public Affairs

WASHINGTON, D. C.
PATTERNS OF WORKERS' EDUCATION

The Story of the Bryn Mawr Summer School
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my thanks to the Board of Directors of the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry for the opportunity to carry on this study. I am deeply indebted to Dr. Mildred Fairchild, Director of the Carola Woerishoffer Department of Social Economy at Bryn Mawr College, for her unflagging interest and for her constructive criticism in the preparation of the manuscript. I also wish to express my appreciation to Dr. Susan M. Kingsbury for her sincere interest and her assistance in the survey. Her experience in assisting M. Carey Thomas, late president of Bryn Mawr College, in formulating the plans for the School, in directing the institution in its first year and serving as a member of the Board of Directors for seven years has made her an invaluable critic of the subject. I am indebted to Miss Hilda W. Smith, Director of the Workers' Service Program, Work Projects Administration; to Miss Jean Carter, Director of the Bryn Mawr Summer School; and to Miss Eleanor G. Coit, Director of the American Labor Education Service, for their assistance and suggestions. Miss Marguerite Gilmore, co-director of the School for 1938, was most helpful. I could not have conducted my research without the cooperation of the many friends of workers' education who sent me information from all over the country. Finally, I am deeply indebted to my husband for his untiring assistance and valuable suggestions.

FLORENCE HEMLEY SCHNEIDER
TO MY FATHER
Introduction

This scholarly study will be useful far beyond academic circles. For although it covers a specialized topic, the development of a pioneer school for women workers in relationship to workers' education in general, the scope and quality of its analysis make it basic source material for any person interested in workers' education. It is especially timely just now, when all types of education are being made to relate teaching more closely to every day living.

Mrs. Schneider has told the story well, having regard for the minute accuracies of scholarship, but at the same time describing in broad general terms the development of workers' education and of the Bryn Mawr School as one outstanding experiment. Her style is clear and readable, a fact which will make this study of far greater usefulness than many scholarly studies. It is anticipated that many workers' groups, building up their own libraries, and many teachers and leaders in workers' education will welcome this material; a familiar story, but never, perhaps, so completely and carefully told in terms that all may read.

To those unfamiliar with the rapid development of workers' education in the United States in the past twenty years, the significance of the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers may not be apparent. Others, who have watched recent turns of events in this young and vigorous educational movement, look back to the establishment of this particular school in 1921 as a milestone on a new road.

For the first time in the history of the United States, a woman's college opened its doors for a new and very different group of students, women factory workers—many of them deprived through economic circumstances of any schooling beyond the most elementary grades. For the first time, a group of women leaders in the labor movement, themselves industrial workers, sat
down for long sessions on educational policies with representatives of college trustees, faculty, and alumnae. The actual results in the unique school bore the stamp of this joint planning, for the school followed no rigid academic pattern. To the experience of college teachers, expert in their own fields, was added the practical knowledge of women workers and their consciousness of what they needed in education if they were to understand the complicated economic forces which controlled their industries, their jobs, and their leisure. In proposing the plans for a workers' school to a startled but sympathetic college community, President M. Carey Thomas went far beyond educational events of the past and gave impetus to a dynamic experiment which has had far-reaching results.

No one would dispute the fact that the students and faculty of the Bryn Mawr School did much to stimulate new workers' education activities throughout the United States, contributing directly or indirectly to the establishment of other resident summer schools, new workers' education committees, a network of local classes, and the organization of a new coordinating agency, now known as the American Labor Education Service. Industrial workers from all parts of the United States, stirred by what seemed to many of them a unique and exhilarating experience on the Bryn Mawr campus, were very effective in persuading other groups that more workers' summer schools were desirable. With the impetus given by these workers—together with that given by independent committees, trade unions and community agencies—schools for workers were established in Wisconsin, in North Carolina, in New York City, on the Pacific Coast, and on the Hudson River. A resident summer school for office workers, taking root in the Middle West, offered, in addition, evidence that a new group of workers had begun to realize what a school of their own might mean to their lives.

The most recent development, opening new possibilities to workers' education, may also be traced directly back to the Bryn Mawr Summer School. As a result of the national organization of local workers' education committees and of the facilities offered by workers' schools and coordinating agencies in the most acute period of the depression, the Federal Government decided, through the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, to use funds for the employment of unemployed teachers in workers' education classes. This decision was unexpected and novel in all its implications. It has meant that since 1933 a program of workers' education has been operating in a majority
of states on Federal funds, supplemented by resources from state and local
governments. This government program, still not on any permanent basis,
is closely integrated with the activities of existing workers' schools and classes
under private auspices. The body of teaching experience built up at Bryn
Mawr and in other workers' schools has been used over and over again as a
pattern for new state projects, in training centers for government teachers,
and in many local classes where teachers are meeting intricate problems.

On the educational road opened by the Bryn Mawr Summer School in 1921,
many milestones have been set, many guide posts planted. The women
workers who each year come to the school, speak feelingly of their experiences
and of what they hope to do among their fellow workers in factories,
trade unions, industrial clubs. The other half of the story is not so easily told;
the story of a demonstration center where faculty and students, working in a
self-governing community, have hammered out curriculum and teaching meth­
ods, and have tested educational theories on the forge of practical experience.

Mrs. Schneider has shown unusual discrimination in choosing from the
mass of source material she has studied those facts which best illustrate the
inner growth of the School. Her analysis of students' activities in three dif­
ferent types of communities also shows discernment and understanding. The
value of the training of a typical student cannot be gauged without knowing
just what factors in her own community have made her way easy or hard,
have opened the door to real achievement, or have kept her permanently
discouraged from doing anything after her return from the School. Mrs.
Schneider's analysis of the relation of the student's desire to be of use to the
conditions in the community itself is an important and revealing contribution
to the study of workers' education. The stories in the chapters on "Upton,
Downton and Fluxton" point to the fact that one individual's efforts must be
necessarily limited, unless the community itself fosters group responsibility.

So it is with a feeling of appreciation of Mrs. Schneider's contribution that
those in workers' education welcome this study. It should point the way to
a series of similar studies of other workers' schools, of state workers' education
programs, and of educational ventures in trade unions. Too little material is
available at present about the many phases of workers' education. This partic­
ular study sets a high standard for others to follow.

HILDA W. SMITH

Director, Workers' Service Program
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CHAPTER I

The Development of Workers' Education

The history of the United States affords no more dramatic and significant spectacle than the growth of its educational system. It is a story of the determined struggle of a free people to advance their standards through the improved education of succeeding generations. American education is a phenomenon of American democracy; and the present strengths and weaknesses of American democracy are in large part the result of the strengths and weaknesses of the educational system.¹

Because they believe that education furthers democracy, the American people have encouraged public instruction throughout the United States. Government funds have financed the building of elementary schools and to a lesser but increasing extent that of secondary institutions and colleges. As a result, adults as well as children may study a variety of subjects in free classes. Educational opportunities, however, have not expanded uniformly across the country. Some communities expend little or no money, although they know that available resources are inadequate. Curricula, pedagogical methods, and teaching personnel vary from one community to another. Some school boards favor instruction in controversial subjects and endorse training and educational research to equip teachers for the process. Other boards restrict subject matter and use teachers' oaths to exclude certain individuals from the schools.² In addition, economic necessity prevents numerous people from taking advantage of facilities at hand.

Such conditions have led many groups, among them the friends and representatives of workers, to attempt to expand and perfect educational resources.

Since public instruction began, labor organizations have urged that equal opportunities be afforded the children of different occupational groups. That the desired results may be obtained, organized labor has demanded representation on school boards, liberal teachers having the right to speak without restriction, and textbooks presenting objectively and reporting freely the facts about workers and their problems. Workers hope that under their watchfulness boards of education may respond to the needs of their children, but they maintain the belief that the public school system, as now in operation, has not provided adequately for their adults. Consequently, specific labor organizations have developed special programs of adult education, convinced that the independent efforts will comprise a demonstration for a future public program.

A variety of reasons has promoted the separate education of adult workers. Psychologists have shown that workers are unlike other groups of adults in reading and speaking ability, comprehension of simple facts, and power of concentration. Their uncompleted elementary schooling, their physical and mental fatigue, have been listed among the responsible factors. Educators and sociologists have shown that workers have distinct interests: they wish to know what their wages will buy or why they are unemployed; whether or not they should join a trade union; what their political affiliations should be. They wish to read and think critically about their situation and the world in which they live.

Therefore workers' education has encouraged workers to study contemporary economic and social problems continuously and intelligently, to plan their sound solution, and to carry out their design together and with others. The background education of the workers, their work-history, community life, and group experiences influence curriculum. Accordingly, a particular class or unit may have a political, socio-economic, or cultural focus. The basic method is freedom of discussion and of teaching within a group primarily designed for workers, either in their own communities or in resident centers elsewhere.


The development of workers' education has not developed without opposition. Certain individuals believe that standard educational facilities enable all, including workers, to study effectively. They maintain that psychological reasons for separate instruction are being weakened, as more people than formerly are receiving similar rudimentary education. Others claim that workers' education is propaganda based upon a class philosophy which threatens our democracy. A third group of opponents fears that even an objective, critical survey of social events will lead to revolutionary activities.

Proponents of workers' education have many counter-arguments. They are convinced that current public instruction cannot give adult workers necessary social perspective. They state that objective education for workers is not propaganda; solidarity among workers should not be feared since modern society has many interest and pressure groups which at times cooperate with each other. In addition, advocates show at what specific points instruction aids the laboring class. They claim that through instruction, workers may know the experience of their group, in the past and in the present. Through history they may understand the mistakes of their predecessors; psychology teaches them how to cooperate with fellow workers and employers; economics promotes an understanding of the employers' business upon which rests their livelihood; through politics they glimpse their place as citizens and workers. Public speaking and written composition tend to make them articulate and community organization to encourage effective activity. Finally, sociology and social ethics may show workers how to integrate both theory and practice in living with their fellow men.

The role of the resident school

Several techniques have been devised to fulfill the purpose of workers' education. Local facilities have been developed so that individuals may study in their own communities by attending classes or study groups after work, or by serving on functional committees. Other programs including resident schools and institutes have been established to afford workers the opportunity of more continuous instruction.

Protagonists of workers' education are divided as to the relative value of resident and community programs. Many believe that the former are limited in what they are able to accomplish since they can accommodate adequately
only a small student body, and consequently must make careful selection among the applicants. The wrong type of worker may wish to attend merely because he is able to pay, or has few responsibilities to keep him near his home. These opponents of resident programs believe that irrespective of the calibre of the students, the course is limited in its scope. By necessarily absenting himself from his home community for a limited period, the student, withdrawn from his everyday activities, loses valuable contacts, and eventually must expend special effort to readjust himself to his own community.

Community programs, on the other hand, are said to provide for all who wish to study. Participation does not depend upon the ability of an individual to leave his job, absent himself from his responsibilities, or meet traveling expenses. Local projects are said to enable workers to join organizations and study while continuing at work. Education therefore may be continuous and coordinated with daily living, instead of being an isolated experience.

Many people believe that both extra-local and local workers' education have value. However, they state that when economy necessitates a choice, the latter for the most part must be selected. They point out that resident schools must maintain buildings, pay traveling expenses for some students, salaries to teachers, and provide facilities as well as room and board for an entire school. Since students rarely are able to contribute financially, scholarships must be raised. In comparison, groups which develop local workers' education have few expenses aside from the cost of instruction and materials. Classes may be held in offices or in public buildings and students do not have extensive traveling costs.

Analysts of the situation claim that when expenses are low, labor support and control are more likely, and that the major contributors to resident schools have been liberal sympathizers and certain community groups, as well as, perhaps to a lesser degree, foundations and national labor organizations. For these reasons, it is feared that the program will be weighted by the non-labor contributors. Accordingly, trade unions fear that their needs will not be met, and at the same time settlement houses and other organizations concerned with unorganized workers wonder about the advantages for their groups.

Because of these criticisms, resident schools are surveying their activities and instituting some changes. They desire that organized labor be represented upon Boards of Directors and Advisory Committees; they have sought
THE DEVELOPMENT OF WORKERS' EDUCATION

to widen their financial backing and at the same time to curtail expenses. They have changed curriculum in order to reach more groups and to relate study to community activity, and they have retained and strengthened those parts of their programs which they believe are more vital than workers' education in the community.

THE BRYN MAWR SUMMER SCHOOL FOR WOMEN WORKERS IN INDUSTRY

The Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry was founded at Bryn Mawr in 1921 as an experiment in workers' education. Since the institution was the first resident summer school, its development has been by a trial and error method. The Wisconsin School for Workers, the Pacific Coast School for Workers, the Southern Summer School for Workers, and the Summer School for Office Workers were started later and naturally have been guided to a great degree by the findings of the pioneer.

Since the Bryn Mawr Summer School has been in the field so long, a description of its development may help to illustrate the forces which have affected the other institutions. Moreover, an analysis of the School's program may reveal whether particular criticisms of resident programs are justified. Two studies in 1929 described how the Bryn Mawr Summer School had developed from its beginning in 1921 through the year 1927. In 1938 the Board of Directors of the School asked the Carola Woerishoffer Graduate Department of Social Economy and Social Research of Bryn Mawr College to bring the former research up to date. The analysis of the Bryn Mawr Summer School in this volume is the result of the writer's participation in the survey.

In the winter of 1938, plans were made to move the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry from the college campus to a new home. A location on the Hudson River was chosen and the name of the School changed to the Hudson Shore Labor School. The present study is designed to describe the development of the Bryn Mawr program up to this point and to indicate whether its original aims have been fulfilled in relationship to the movement of which it has been a part.


PATTERNS OF WORKERS' EDUCATION

SCOPE AND METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

The aim of the writer is threefold: to describe how workers’ education has developed in the United States and what are its patterns within various organizations; to relate the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry to the broader movement; and to study what the alumnae of the School are accomplishing in their communities, with special attention to their background, opportunities, and problems. Emphasis is focused upon the past decade but for the sake of continuity earlier developments are sometimes indicated.

Data relevant to the purpose of the research were gathered from primary as well as secondary sources. Sociological and economic books furnished general background data. Specific literature dealing with workers’ education provided, of course, a mine of information. Reports and staff bulletins of various organizations were analyzed. Finally, in order to ascertain recent trends, 119 letters were sent to 11 types of agencies conducting educational programs for workers. Eighty-five answers were received.

The detailed picture of the Bryn Mawr Summer School was attained not only from descriptive literature, but also from minutes, reports, correspondence, publicity, and scrapbooks filed in the office of the School. In order to ascertain how money has been raised for the institution, the writer sent letters to summer school district committees. Information pertaining to the students and the communities in which they live was gathered from books and articles, reports and correspondence in the summer school office and inquiries sent to community organizations, requesting information about summer school alumnae. Special effort was expended to encourage reports about inactive as well as active individuals. To discover whether returns were accurate and representative, a selected few communities were visited and personal interviews conducted with alumnae, committee members and individuals in varied programs. Finally, still another check was provided by questionnaires sent to a group of alumnae about whom little information was at hand and who lived in cities which could not be visited easily; inactive members as well as those who were active were again urged to respond. As a result of all inquiries, information is on hand for almost one-half of the women who attended the

*Detailed charts, copies of letters and questionnaires are in the original manuscript at Bryn Mawr College.
School from 1928 through 1937, that is for 417 out of 975 women, and reveals the success of some and the problems of others who could attain little.

For purposes of analysis, the communities in which alumnae live are classified into those conducive to activity; those discouraging to activity; and those in which social change is the primary characteristic. The terms here used "conducive" and "discouraging" are relative so that lines of demarcation between categories are not always necessarily distinct. Also individuals do react differently to like stimuli. Within each type, a particular community may be large or small, urban or rural, or in any section of the country. Under the word "activity," functions apparently motivated by social in addition to individual interests are emphasized and classified in terms of leadership and membership. The former refers to what reports indicate as "outstanding" participation. Three selected cities, that have been visited, are analyzed in detail. Their identity has been concealed by designating them as Upton, Downton, and Fluxton, indicating that they illustrate respectively a community which encourages activity, one which discourages activity, and one which is changing.
CHAPTER II.

Historical Trends

Present trends in workers' education become more clear when the early history of the movement is viewed. The backward glance is simplified by the excellent record of developments to be found in the proceedings of conferences initiated at Brookwood Labor College in 1924 and held annually since that time. The brief historical summary which follows has been culled from the conference notes as well as from literature in the field.¹

The labor movement has conditioned the development of workers' education. Events impinging upon American workers at different times have determined whether their friends and representatives encouraged them to build organizational, legislative, or educational programs. Consequently, workers themselves have not always believed in workers' education.

Groups outside of the labor movement became convinced in the nineteenth century that adult workers needed more than elementary public instruction. Middle-class organizations, attempting to advance American democracy or to regenerate the laboring class socially, sponsored adult education for workers. Lyceums, mechanics' institutes, and reading rooms were instituted to prepare workers for effective use of the franchise, for heightening vocational proficiency or for solution of a variety of personal problems.

Primary attention to economic action, with only sporadic interest in independent politics, kept trade unions occupied with matter-of-fact business principles. Since, from this point of view, understanding of larger national issues

seemed unnecessary, organized labor on the whole did not press for other than rudimentary education. A few local groups, however, including the New York and Philadelphia trade unions, became interested in workers' education in the early 1800's. They wanted to develop independently the resources which educators, philanthropists and business men were offering. Further, the unions felt that they might use to advantage an educational process which could acquaint the public with their problems and simultaneously train their own members and leaders. Finally, influenced by an increasing number of local resolutions, the American Federation of Labor in the early twentieth century encouraged local classes for workers.

Women workers were a potent force for workers' education within the young labor movement. Grudgingly admitted into organizations by the men members, they had to prove they could be good trade unionists. To accomplish their goal they needed political and educational as well as economic opportunities. And as industry expanded and employment of women increased, trade unionism became of more vital importance to them. Assisted by middle-class women interested in the general advancement of their sex, they first sponsored a cultural program of education. In 1903, however, they formed the National Women's Trade Union League and began to emphasize industrial information and instruction in methods of labor organization.

The influx of immigrants into the economy of the United States and their absorption by trade unions also influenced the official labor movement to support workers' education. As the newcomers with Socialistic inclinations and certain cultural traditions demanded instruction, workers' schools were established and political programs of education endorsed. For example, the Workers' School, which became the Workers' Educational League, was founded in 1899; two years later the non-partisan Jewish Workers' School began operation; and in 1906 the Socialist Rand School for Social Science was started. Although trade unions did not direct the programs, they recognized that the schools could help assimilate foreign workers and develop a truly American labor movement.

Rapid social change, mobilization of economic resources, and progress made by organized labor during and after the World War broadened the support of workers' education. Through a variety of projects, workers themselves offered general adult instruction, supplemented by specific training for union activities. By the close of the war, a number of large trade unions, including
the International Ladies' Garment Workers, the American Federation of Hosiery Workers, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers had established educational programs. At its convention in 1916, the National Women's Trade Union League passed a resolution asking women's colleges to make some provision for women industrial workers. The American Federation of Labor gave increased attention to adult education in the national conventions of 1918 and 1919.

Interest developed rapidly and in 1921 several significant experiments were initiated. Brookwood Labor College, a full-term residential school for workers, and the Workers' Education Bureau, a national agency designed to promote and coordinate activities, were organized "by representatives of organized labor and by students of American economy interested in the forms and methods of organized labor." In addition, trade unions, cooperating among themselves and with educators, founded trade union colleges in different parts of the country. Also in 1921 academic colleges began to be active in the field. Amherst College had continued an experiment begun in 1920, by which teachers went to the central labor unions of Springfield and Holyoke, Massachusetts, to instruct union members in economics, practical English, and mathematics. In 1921 the University of California organized workers' education classes as part of its regular extension work. And in the same year Bryn Mawr College welcomed to the campus a summer school for women workers in industry.

Shortly thereafter several experiments—Commonwealth College and the Communist Workers School—were undertaken, but the field ceased for a time to expand. The contraction, like the previous development, reflected changes within the labor movement. Business principles again dominated the trade unions. An open-shop drive had followed upon the acceptance of unionization during the war; organized labor as well as the general public feared radicalism. Neither wished to sponsor educational programs which might foster discussion of controversial issues. The few organizations which did not fear frank analysis and were willing to offer their membership a more advanced curriculum needed most of their money for more urgent activities.

As trade unions became stronger, interest in education was renewed. Established academic institutions continued to cooperate with organized labor in

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educational programs throughout the country. New labor colleges and schools, conferences or institutes, and independent classes were started. In 1926, the Affiliated Schools for Workers developed from the original Bryn Mawr experiment as a coordinating agency and aided expansion and consolidation in the field. One year later, the agency could point to three residential summer schools as member institutions in addition to the Bryn Mawr Summer School, namely the Summer School for Workers of the University of Wisconsin, the Southern Summer School, and the Barnard School. A winter residential school, the Vineyard Shore School, was started in 1929 as an independent venture for the purpose of offering more advanced study to industrial workers who had attended one of the summer schools.

Cultural opportunities began to be offered to workers through the Art Workshop founded in 1929. In the same year, after the American Federation of Labor labelled Brookwood Labor College as Communistic and the Workers' Education Bureau had nullified the membership of the institution, education began to develop under the control of the large A. F. of L. unions.

Highlander Folk School, entering the field in 1932, began to train labor leaders, union organizers, and teachers, as Commonwealth and Brookwood Labor Colleges already were doing. Other enterprises instituted classes for the children of workers and a large number of trade unions, collegiate institutions, and other organizations vitally interested in workers were sponsoring workers' education.

As may be seen, in the period 1926-1932 groups other than organized labor initiated most of the new ventures; partly responsible was the emasculation of the Workers' Education Bureau after the 1929 controversy. Yet the many experiments were a sign of growth and development, even if workers' education had not become part of a unified labor movement.

*Hereafter to be referred to as the American Labor Education Service, the name adopted in 1939.

*Both the personnel and the organizations reporting to the Workers' Education Conference at Brookwood Labor College in 1931 reveal the growth of the movement in ten years. The personnel of the conference represented the following organizations: Affiliated Schools for Workers, American Association for Old Age Security, Barnard Summer School for Workers, Brookwood Labor College, Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry, Commonwealth College, Denver Labor College, Manumit School for Children, Philadelphia Labor College, Pioneer Youth, Southern Summer School for Workers, Vineyard Shore School and Young Women's Christian Association. Representatives from these organizations came from different cities and countries. Reports
HISTORICAL TRENDS

A confused world, in the last few years, again has called upon organization, legislation and education to help solve the problems of workers. Workers' education in particular has answered the challenge vigorously and enthusiastically, as in the comparable experimental period occurring immediately after the war. New trade union groups, both national and local, have entered the field; other organizations, including independent resident schools, Young Women's Christian Associations, settlements, workers' housing enterprises, political parties, and consumers' organizations have added support. The American Labor Education Service offers assistance not only to resident member schools but to many other interested groups. The outstanding victory of the period has been the recognition by the federal government, since 1933, of the need for adult education for workers. This has been evidenced by the allocation of relief funds for the employment of unemployed teachers in workers' classes, first under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and later under the Work Projects Administration. The closing of Brookwood Labor College in 1937, primarily because of lack of funds, has been the most significant defeat.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF WORKERS' EDUCATION

Workers' education has developed singleness of purpose slowly. The statement was made at the 1924 Brookwood conference that "workers' education in the United States has not a definite philosophy; it is not unified in its aims, nor has it agreed upon its ultimate purpose." At that time, cultural, welfare, political and trade union organizations sponsored workers' education for different reasons. Cultural groups emphasized that workers mainly needed to learn how to use language proficiently and to develop leisure-time activities. Welfare organizations desired primarily to give workers diverse means of social renaissance. The equipment of the laboring class with socialistic or

were sent to the conference from the following organizations: Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union, American Federation of Teachers, Columbia Conserve Company, Cooperative League, Duluth Works Peoples College, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, New Workers' School, Rand School of Social Science, Southern Industrial League, Wisconsin School for Workers, Workers' School, and from state federations and women's auxiliaries of trade unions and labor colleges from different sections of the country.


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COMMUNISTIC TOOLS was the chief objective of political groups. Trade unionists supported educational preparation for service in their own organizations.

Conferences have revealed that as workers' education has developed, the different objectives have been levelled by a common focus upon the labor movement; in other words, by the belief that workers must be educated because of and not in spite of their position in society. At present, there is general consensus of opinion that, as expressed at a meeting in 1937, "the purpose of workers' education is to make workers more aware of their common problems, to make them intelligent about them, and active in solving them." It is still true, however, that diverse sponsors emphasize different problems and their solution in programs of disparate activity. But the sphere of workers' education in all instances has come to be the labor movement within the encompassing community.

Pioneers in the field discussed earnestly whether they should try to reach only a few workers or the masses. The needs of the labor movement have decided the issue; both leaders and rank and file members must be educated. Recent conferences have considered every worker a potential student or participant in workers' education. Men and women, workers in industry, business, commerce, domestic service, and agriculture, organized or unorganized, are to be stimulated to study their problems and to find ways of meeting them. Experts must be developed within the labor movement to equal specialists in business and government and to bridge the gap between workers and their representatives.

A variety of recruiting devices has developed. Workers are brought together through social rallies, musicales, games and sports. Thus individuals may discover that others have similar interests and every worker may be able to find satisfaction in either large or small units.

The environment in which workers live and labor has determined that their education should be extensive, centering principally around the social sciences. As early as 1924 the belief was expressed that although "the social sciences constitute the basis of workers' education" attention should be given to a "com-

Francis J. Gorman, President of the United Textile Workers' Union, Address to Conference in Workers' Education, New Bedford, Massachusetts, May 8-9, 1937 (mimeographed and issued by a committee of the Conference, 1937).

HISTORICAL TRENDS

prehensive culture covering the whole range of human interests." Seven years later the conviction was restated that "Whatever teachers and administrators may decide, the workers themselves are not willing to be confined to any program less broad than life itself, their responsibility as workers interpreted in the widest sense of the word." Accordingly, current economic and social problems have come to be emphasized. The background for their analysis is provided through economics, history, sociology, social psychology, and physical science. English and public speaking aid the workers to examine source material and to articulate their thoughts. Study of the arts has enriched the life of the working class, as has the development of new health and recreation standards.

METHODS AND INSTRUCTION

Techniques of presentation have differentiated workers' education from adult education and the principle that study must be factual and not dogmatic or biased has been used to distinguish workers' education from propaganda. Workers must be able to think and express themselves logically and to view their experiences rationally. Intelligent action is the goal.

Methods of workers' education have developed consistently. Current fundamental techniques devised years ago are now described by different names. For example, the "synthetic view" of yesterday is now called "the situation approach." Through both methods, various aspects of a subject are studied. Thus, if economic, historical, and psychological factors explain a particular situation, a class must look to economics, history, and psychology for aid in analysis. "Functional education" has always existed. In 1924 a class was described as being "composed of executive board members who study the problems of the industry and on the basis of the study put in wage demands upon the employer." Yet 13 years later many leaders hailed a new discovery

*A. J. Muste, op. cit., p. 16.
when they told of groups established to formulate trade union constitutions, to write a trade agreement, or to plan a program of workers' education for an organization. Present meetings continue to emphasize the belief stated in 1924 that "Practice in the scientific method can often be much better obtained in connection with some actual problem confronting a trade union group than with an academic problem taken up as part of 'school' work." 14

Several devices have been clarified and defined with the passage of time. Any activity in which there is wide participation and which binds workers more closely to their organizations is now called "mass education." In the category are included social rallies, dances, and theatrical performances. By bringing large numbers together, they foster a feeling of unity and a cooperative spirit. "Classroom education" has come to designate a small, serious group, meeting in a classroom atmosphere adapted to the needs of workers, discussing freely and informally a series of topics over a designated span of time. Various techniques insure the vital participation of all the students. Lectures are supplemented by dramatic presentations, and workshop methods and pamphlets and visual material simplify study for the workers. Cultural and technological developments have been described in recent years as rendering the film and radio effective in workers' education. A third approach now is called "Training for Service." A large or small group of workers come together to learn how to lead other workers; business agents, shop chairmen, and organizers, for example, are taught in conferences, committees and classrooms. 15

Some of the early methodological problems still confront conference members. They tell how traveling teachers and libraries and correspondence courses must be utilized to aid communities with few resources. They reveal that some workers may become familiar with advanced techniques only through attendance at institutes and resident schools away from home. Because such projects reach only small numbers, many workers never have experienced contact with the progressive methods of today.

It always has been agreed that workers' education must be brought to its students by individuals who know and understand their life and work. Pioneers in the field felt that such sympathetic knowledge could be expected of

14 Ibid., p. 45.
15 For a discussion of the development of these phases of workers' education in specific organizations, see infra, Chapter III.
only a few intellectuals, and they visualized workers themselves becoming teachers. Training was to be obtained in advanced schools for workers, in special classes, committees, and conferences, and while in service as teachers. Current forces have changed the situation. At this time more than at any other in American history, teachers in academic institutions and college trained men and women are aware of the trade union and labor movement. As they become oriented in the field, they offer their services to workers. On the other hand, few instructors can be obtained from among the masses of new, young members in the various labor organizations throughout the country.

FINANCE AND CONTROL

Three main factors have been recognized in securing financial support. One has been the difficulty of awakening and retaining the interest of organized labor in educational activities. The second has centered about the effect upon control when financial aid has been given by a specific organization. The third has been the actual trend in contributions.

Many leaders have believed that an organization naturally becomes interested in any venture which it supports financially. This idea was expressed at a conference in 1925 as follows:

We have found that to defray all expenses and assume all responsibilities is not a logical idea; it is better if possible to have the local body assume both a moral and a financial responsibility because they will then be more anxious for the success of the affair. Things today given to the worker absolutely free of work or charge are looked upon either with suspicion or as too cheap to be of any value. 19

Today many leaders still feel that if workers do not want workers' education enough to pay for it themselves, they had better not have it. Still others have maintained that interest and ability to pay are not always coordinate. They have urged that support be accepted from persons who are not workers and from agencies that are outside their control. Yet foresight has emphasized the need for at least partial labor support. As expressed by one teacher, it is dangerous to accept money from certain sources if financial aid within the labor movement thereby is neglected. Then workers' education must rely

entirely upon outside support. Therefore, at present organized labor is solicited for contributions despite increasing government expenditures in the field.

At the 1926 Brookwood Conference, a resolution was passed which read as follows:

... the members of the American Federation of Teachers invited to attend the conference on workers' education in session at Brookwood, Feb. 22, 1926, go on record as opposed to the acceptance by agencies for workers' education of money or other assistance from such institutions as the Carnegie Corporation, the General Education Board, or other organizations fundamentally opposed to the interests of the working class.

This decision was motivated by several reasons. Primary was the fear that workers' education would be emasculated by financial backers who could not understand its goals. Thus representatives of workers believed that complete financial endorsement by labor organizations was necessary if workers' education were to be stable and in accord with the labor movement.

Practical experience has compromised the desire for complete labor control. Educational activities for workers have been developed by many organizations, either subordinated to the trade unions, an autonomous, self-determining part of the total labor movement, or wholly independent of organized labor. In the period 1921 to 1938, four groups in addition to trade unions have given money for workers' education. These are the federal government, state governments, liberal sympathizers, and foundations. The Federal Relief Administration and the Work Projects Administration are the agencies through which the federal government has contributed. University extension programs and institutes held cooperatively with organized labor account in large part for the money spent by the state governments. Liberal sympathizers are individuals reached largely through fund-raising programs. The following

Historical Trends

List reveals estimated total donations to workers' education from 1921 to 1938:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Estimated Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trade unions</td>
<td>$1,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal government</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal sympathizers</td>
<td>750,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundations</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State governments</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,950,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures for the federal government are especially significant since this sum has been contributed only since September, 1933. The $1,500,000 expenditures of the trade unions are divided into two parts: $750,000 spent on their own programs and $750,000 given to outside projects. The International Ladies Garment Workers' Union alone spent $350,000 of the $750,000 direct contributions. Many people hope that donations from the trade unions will increase. The feeling persists among some individuals that workers ought to support their own program and that if educational activities cannot be placed upon a paying basis after 17 years, something is fundamentally wrong. Therefore, the movement is gratified that trade unions have spent larger percentages year by year and that in 1937 they made a larger net and gross contribution than in any other year.

Yet many who plan educational programs for workers still believe that some help must be accepted from other sources than trade unions. They continue to seek government support and to back bills calling for increased federal grants, in line with recommendations made by the President's Advisory Committee on Education. They reason that so long as the principles of curriculum, scope, method, and related matters are fulfilled with integrity, it is not important whether organized labor has complete control. In fact unilateral direction is considered to be both impossible and undesirable when the labor movement is not unified. However, most people active in the field believe that federal and state contributions should be supplementary and not in lieu of support by organized labor. Also labor representatives should be

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*Report by Spencer Miller, Jr. at Annual Conference of Teachers in Workers Education, New York, February 1938.

Figures are only estimations based upon analysis of budgets, but are the fullest available in the field.

active in any educational experiment for workers, so that independent projects may have responsible contact with the labor movement.

Although new adherents to workers' education have been found, early pioneers are still interested and active. The presence of experienced individuals and groups has provided the movement with continuity and a frame of reference. In the present experimental period, therefore, principles relating to purpose, scope, curriculum, methodology, and finance and control are evolving to meet the needs of the day while drawing on the stability of the past.
CHAPTER III

Within the Trade Union Movement

The historical summary has revealed that a variety of organizations are interested in workers' education. In accordance with their particular functional philosophies, trade unions, political parties, fraternal organizations, cooperatives, and social and cultural groups have planned different educational activities for workers, thus making the movement complex and amorphous. A study of the patterns within the respective agencies, therefore, is necessary for a complete picture of the subject.¹

Young labor organizations, with stability as their goal, are utilizing educational techniques developed by three trade unions, which were pioneers in the field, namely, the International Ladies' Garment Workers, the American Federation of Hosiery Workers, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.²

The three groups were atypical of labor organizations of their time in that they initiated instruction for workers soon after they were founded in 1900, 1913, and 1914, respectively.³ Their educational patterns, therefore, have helped shape workers' education throughout the entire trade union movement. The following pages describe the techniques as developed by them.

¹Two students, Sophie Cambria and Edythe Norwick, of the Carola Woerishoffer Graduate Department of Social Economy and Social Research of Bryn Mawr College, aided in collecting material for this section in 1937-38.
²Hereafter when these three organizations are referred to together, they will be designated the I.L.G.W.U., the A.F.H.W., and the A.C.W.A.
³The Cleveland Convention of the I.L.G.W.U. in 1914 laid the foundation of the present educational work. In that year trade union courses were arranged in the Rand School of Social Science. After experimentation by the Waist and Dressmakers' Local in New York City in 1915, education was expanded on a national scale in the following year. The A.F.H.W. made its first educational effort in its Paterson and Milwaukee locals in 1917 and 1918 respectively. The A.C.W.A. began its program of education in 1917. The expansion of this program has been more halting, however, than that of the I.L.G.W.U.
The educational ideologies of the I.L.G.W.U., the A.C.W.A. and the A.F.H.W. have not changed greatly throughout the years. From the beginning, social reconstruction as well as effective collective bargaining has been the goal. The groups do not want merely to turn out "... educated men and women in the ordinary sense, but to touch the hearts and minds of our members and mould them into intelligent conscious union men and women." Also they aim to train intelligent and conscious union men and women to strive for the reconstruction of society. Workers' education, therefore, has had to prepare workers to act in economic, political, and social spheres.

The trade unions under consideration have developed instruction for workers along three lines: "mass education," "classroom education," and "training for trade union service." "Mass education" has been designed to overcome the apathy and inertia of the majority of workers. Individuals otherwise uninterested in "education" are taught subtly and indirectly to be loyal to organized labor and its ideals. Many activities are included in the category: the opera Aida performed before an audience of 20,000 union members; a radio talk by a union leader; or labor movies shown at a local meeting. Specific local units may appeal to the rank and file membership through picnics, dances, conducted tours of museums, excursions, theater parties, libraries, and active social rooms. It is believed that these gatherings and facilities make workers more ready to pay their dues and back their organizations. Active support of leisure activities possibly may be transformed into understanding and positive aid when labor representatives meet with employers and government.

"Classroom education" reaches a smaller but more serious group than does "mass education." The technique is to bring individuals together for informal discussion of allied topics. Meetings are held consecutively for about six weeks in a place designated by the union—perhaps at its own hall, a public school, or a settlement. The program usually influences from five to eight percent of a specific organization's total membership. Instruction may be in "tool" subjects, including English, public speaking, and parliamentary law. The aim is to extend rudimentary education to trade union members or to teach them fundamental organizational techniques. They may thereby learn their A B C's or how to conduct a trade union meeting, to draw up demands,

or to initiate bargaining with employers. On the other hand, study may be more advanced. Content of courses may be similar to civics, economics, and history as taught in the public schools. However, special methods are utilized to make the worker more watchful and searching of the current social scene than is the ordinary secondary school student.

The three trade unions under discussion have promoted "training for trade union service" in varying degrees. Special classes are held for experienced and inexperienced officers, shop chairmen, and business agents. The leaders thereby learn "how to organize a new area" and "how to negotiate an agreement." They are trained by other organizers, or, on occasion, even the president of the union himself. This sponsorship of service courses shows that the groups realize how necessary well-trained leaders are to attain an effective labor movement. As a result, they are anxious, as are the fields of medicine, social work, government, and business, that their experts have both experience on the job and theoretical study. The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union accordingly on May 15, 1937 decided to establish a labor college wherein officers may obtain required educational qualifications.

The I.L.G.W.U., the A.F.H.W., and the A.C.W.A. have realized that rigid lines do not divide the three educational programs; one type leads into another. A large rally for newly organized members of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, sponsored by Highlander Folk School, illustrates the process. During a slack period of five weeks, shirt workers in La Follette, Tennessee, enjoyed many facilities. A library was arranged; classes were conducted; and an inter-union conference was held. Recreational activities included folk-dancing, picnics, athletics, movies, and a union-label fair. A shop paper continued to give the workers news about their union. Some members lived at project headquarters, while others commuted from their homes. An evaluation conference ended the rally. Participants agreed that such programs were valuable for their morale and for strengthening their organization. They planned a continuous follow-up program.

Organizational and educational activities also may be interchangeable. Even labor conflicts may yield lessons for workers. During a strike which

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*International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, The Twentieth Year Annual Report of the Educational Department, June 1, 1936–May 31, 1937 (a reprint from Justice, the organization's newspaper, July 15, 1937).

*Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union, Carpetbaggers of the South, passim.
lasted 16 weeks in Norfolk, Virginia, organizers for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers started classes. Although their chief concern was immediate economic success, they wanted the experience to be educational. Workers, meeting in free hours between picket duty and other strike activities, discussed questions related to their current situation. By studying the history of picketing, injunctions and mediation, they joined education and organization.*

Learning and other functions of trade unions are correlated. In some locals, an English and journalism class publishes a mimeographed news sheet for members of the local. In other trade union groups, legislative committees have studied and then promulgated wages and hour legislation. Press committees have tackled publicity problems in order to build sympathetic and informed public opinion. Thus the informal committee process has overcome several limitations that ordinarily have characterized workers' education. Among them have been marked turnover in attendance, the many educational levels among students, and shortage of teachers.

Because they believe in social reconstruction, the I.L.G.W.U., the A.C.W.A., and the A.F.H.W. have endorsed, in addition, educational programs which lead their members into community organizations. During unionization drives, the Amalgamated bears community attitude in mind and endeavors to interpret policies to different citizens. Literature, mass meetings, and other devices serve the purpose. The organization firmly believes that "A union that has community sentiment to fall back upon in time of need is doubly strong." The American Federation of Hosiery Workers encourages educational committees to cooperate in civic enterprises, as illustrated by the anti-syphilis campaign in Reading, Pennsylvania.** Thereby the trade union becomes more than an agency for collective bargaining; social improvement becomes the goal of positive, constructive activity.

Centralized direction and local planning have brought educational programs to young locals in small towns. Financial aid usually accompanies any materials that are sent from the central office and traveling teachers help the

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**Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union, "Just How This Was Done," *Bread and Roses, the Story of the Rise of the Shirtworkers*, 1933-1934, p. 43.

less experienced local departments. In addition, conferences and institutes at convenient points have brought together rank and file members and leaders from various localities.

A Department of Cultural Activities aids scattered groups in the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union. For example, a correspondence course carried on through The Advance, the official journal of the organization, reaches isolated students. The paper contains mimeographed material and related questions dealing with four courses: Problems of Collective Bargaining, Labor in American History, Economics of the Garment Industry, and the C.I.O. Enrollment has been free for a certain number of applicants. Beyond the quota, an entrance fee of 50 cents has been charged. The Department has encouraged individuals to form study groups for the course and to choose discussion leaders among themselves. Central headquarters, nevertheless, gives weekly, midterm, and final quizzes. Failure to answer the weekly questions within two weeks results in expulsion from the course. Papers are marked by the national office, confused papers being answered individually, and model answers and additional information are published. A specific course may take from six to 23 weeks.\(^\text{11}\)

In summary, three types of program, "mass education," "classroom education," and "training for trade union service," constitute the educational pattern of the I.L.G.W.U., the A.C.W.A., and the A.F.H.W. In practice, the distinct forms merge into a cohesive whole. The primary purpose of the educational work is to achieve a strong and effective labor movement. The goal is to perfect collective bargaining by giving leaders and rank and file a broad outlook. Workers' education encourages impersonal and detached discussion and handling of problems within trade unions; cautious action so as not to endanger the livelihood of thousands of workers; and realization that no decision is infallible or irrevocable.

Class consciousness is inherent in the educational pattern, although not apparent in all techniques. Yet the workers are taught to study all sides of a question. They are urged to guard against "social animism" through which "persons" are held to blame for this or that, "simplism" in which the "cause of" anything and everything is "economic," and an "antagonism complex" through

\(^{11}\) "Our Union University," The Advance, Vol. XXIV, No. 4 (April, 1938), pp. 24-25.
which all the other class does is under suspicion. Great stress is laid on the principle that "The greatest strength of organized labor lies in the fact that its social objective can be shown to be coordinate with the ideal social objective for all men." 

THE EFFORTS OF NEW INDUSTRIAL UNIONS

To some extent industrial unions in the last decade have adopted the educational pattern of the organizations discussed above. If they had not, the labor movement would have collapsed. Without rapid instruction, large numbers of new members would have been unable to use collective bargaining wisely or effectively.

The goal of assimilating raw recruits has made education in the new groups almost entirely pragmatic. The central educational department of the United Automobile Workers' Union has emphasized "training for trade union service," as a means of obtaining "a sufficient portion of the membership to man the organization, take care of the interests of the men in the shops, and protect contractual relations with the employers." The need for other instruction has been stated as follows:

Local chairmen had to be taught to conduct meetings, officers how to conduct the union's business efficiently and economically, stewards and committeemen how to handle grievances under the existing contracts, organizers how to negotiate agreements and apprehend the meaning of various types of recognition formulas and grievance machinery, rank and file to understand the very meaning of trade unionism itself.

Since the central department could not train enough teachers to meet the demand, sometimes only study outlines could be sent to locals. In fact, local

20 In the following pages only special emphases will be discussed since the general pattern is similar to that discussed in the preceding pages.
21 The constitution of the organization provides for an educational fund in both locals and central unit. The union accordingly has spent a full five percent of its annual budget on education.
22 William Munger, "Educational Program Built on 'Know Union' Slogan," Automobile Worker, November 13, 1937.
23 Ibid.
WITHIN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

units often have had to initiate and carry through educational programs almost alone. Coordination of instruction with practical issues, however, has encouraged use of union members as teachers, whether trained by the international or by the smaller groups.

The new textile organizations also have utilized “training for trade union service.” The functional method of the American Federation of Hosiery Workers has been the primary technique. Educational committees as well as sub-committees have been formed to deal with legislation, publicity, or such problems as work leads and occupational diseases. Thus members come to participate in both trade union and community activities.

Concentration upon materials has been a major emphasis in the United Rubber Workers’ Organization. As in the older unions, the central department prepares bulletins for the locals. Support of specific labor and social legislation is advised, book lists have been compiled, and local labor libraries have been initiated.

Although practical demands have caused the new organizations to emphasize only certain phases of established educational patterns, other techniques have been utilized as in the older groups. Since many individuals have had to be reached, “mass education” has been important. Recreation and sports have drawn members into educational activities and built loyalty to and habitual relations with a specific labor organization. “Classroom education” has been developed in some places, but, on the whole, new members have not been interested in formal education nor have teachers been available in the required numbers. The immediate aim of enlarging and retaining trade union membership has precluded as much emphasis upon social reconstruction as in the older organizations. Signs of the broader point of view, however, are seen when leaders recommend specific legislative activity.

Development from the pure and simple collective bargaining to social purpose will come in time as shown in the activities of the women’s auxiliaries of the United Automobile Workers’ Union. Their educational program is as broad as is that of the I.L.G.W.U., the A.C.W.A., and the A.F.H.W., since the women have not had to concentrate upon the same practical, immediate issues as have the men. In all of the new industrial unions, the workers' func-

In August 1937, a central auxiliary organization was established. Nine months after, the agency reported that 67 chartered auxiliaries were members and 40 units were in the process of organization.
tions and responsibilities as citizens in a democratic society is a concept increasingly apparent in educational programs.

OTHER NEWLY ORGANIZED GROUPS

Workers' education is helping the trade union movement to assimilate workers in several other categories. The respective organizations of these groups have devised educational techniques as contained in the patterns of the I.L.G.W.U., the A.C.W.A., and the A.F.H.W. Similar goals are to be achieved: namely, advancement of trade union ideas and techniques and social and political participation. White-collar workers, agricultural workers, unemployed, and Negroes, therefore, are closer to the educational efforts of the seasoned trade unions than to that of the new industrial organizations.

The newly organized workers are unlike the members of the older trade unions, and, therefore, need different specific content and methods, within the similar broad framework. White-collar workers do not need "tool" courses, because standard facilities have given them rudimentary education, but they must be taught the concepts of trade unionism, which they have rarely understood. On the other hand, rural instruction has not adequately equipped tenant farmers, share croppers, and other agricultural workers; they must learn both educational and trade union fundamentals. And among the unemployed and the Negroes, diverse education and experience have to be met.

The educational program of the United Office and Professional Workers of America illustrates the use of workers' education by white-collar workers. Trade unionism has been listed as the first interest of instruction and independent political activity as second. Forums, discussion groups, and bulletins accordingly emphasize effective organization and promotion of social and labor legislation. Formal classes are the exception rather than the rule, educational topics generally being introduced in regular business meetings.

The Federal Workers of America include vocational aims in their program. Their school in Washington, D. C. affords government employees the opportunity to gain technical competence and thereby qualify for a better position. A broad curriculum includes statistics, foreign languages, methods of trade union organization, history, and current events.

34 The organization has a national educational department and director.
WITHIN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Two trade unions in particular—the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union and the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America—have realized the importance of promoting educational activities for farmers and farm laborers. The latter organization has adopted educational resolutions at its conventions, and the former has established a concrete program similar to that of the older trade unions heretofore discussed.

The national educational director and local educational committees of the S.T.F.U. first attempt to stimulate interest in organization; they provide information about the Union to their own members and to the communities in which they function. Secondly, they encourage study of current legislation and social events. An integral part of the program is instruction in "the three R's," since the inadequacies of rural education must be corrected. Recreational activities naturally are included. The organization has had the cooperation of both Highlander Folk School and Commonwealth College, which provide a resident program and year-round extension work. Farm workers have an opportunity to live among mill workers and local townspeople and to discover their common problems. Through field classes individuals, formerly geographically isolated, may meet and converse with other people.⁶⁴

Commonwealth College felt that "The deplorable conditions among Southern agricultural and timber workers cannot be corrected until Negro and white workers are organized together."⁶⁵ It therefore used every opportunity to bring racial groups together and to discuss with them the significance of their mutual efforts, and has helped many Negro farm workers in separate units to acquire an elementary education and to find their place in trade unionism.

Three nation-wide organizations, the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People, the National Urban League, and the National Negro Congress also aid Negroes to become effective workers and citizens. Although none of the three arose primarily to defend their race as workers, all within recent years have emphasized considerably the problems of Negro industrial and farm workers. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has set up councils of workers and farmers. In classes they

⁶⁴ For a more detailed account of the programs of these Schools, see infra, Chapter V, pp. 57-8, 62.
⁶⁵ Folder, Educational Program of Commonwealth College, Phases for Which Funds Must Be Raised, 1937-1938, p. 1.
are taught the history and the role of the Negro in industry and how organized labor may promote his interests. An attempt is made to form interracial groups so that they may serve "as an opposition force to every manifestation and form of racial chauvinism in the labor movement." 22. The National Urban League has organized similar councils. 23 In some areas the groups prepare Negroes for some particular vocation or trade, thus combining vocational education with workers' education.

The Workers' Alliance of America, representative of the unemployed, has actively promoted Negro interests since the race constitutes a large part of membership in some localities. Results vary from community to community, since educational work for the entire constituency, Negro and white, is developed on a local basis. Through workers' education, those unemployed or on work relief learn how organized action may improve their social and economic status. Instruction is pragmatic, showing members how to exert pressure upon local, state, and federal legislatures and thereby secure more adequate social legislation.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In 1930 John Kennedy stated that specific forces stimulated the beginning of workers' education. He described the process as follows:

Workers' education in America was born at a time when the progressive forces of the labor movement were in the ascendancy. This, of course, was not accidental. Those who were interested in the organization of basic industries, the amalgamation of craft unions, the building of a labor party, and the waging of an aggressive struggle for a better life for Labor all along the line realized the role that workers' education could play in gathering data, developing understanding, building the morale and creating a technique to carry on this struggle.

These influences seem to have shaped education in the trade unions today. Three organizations atypical of the trade unionism of their time, the Inter-

23 "Pools and Cowards Cut Their Own Throats" (leaflet distributed by the Negro Workers' Councils of the National Urban League).
national Ladies’ Garment Workers, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and
the American Federation of Hosiery Workers, set the example for current
newly formed groups. They formulated three programs, “mass education,”
“classroom education,” and “training for trade union service,” which might
lead workers to new economic, political, and social horizons.

Young groups, including automobile, rubber, steel and textile workers, are
adapting old devices to their needs. Struggling to strengthen their economic,
business structure, they necessarily are emphasizing pragmatic instruction.
Interest in political and consumers’ problems, however, is dawning and por-
tends an educational movement which may expand as their trade unionism
broadens.

Still other categories of workers are borrowing educational ideas from the
older groups. Hitherto ostracized by the official trade union movement, white-
collar, agricultural and Negro workers and the unemployed are learning their
part in labor organization. Because of their youth, they are developing
workers’ education slowly, from community to community. Local needs,
therefore, determine the emphasis of specific programs, sometimes mainly
economic, and sometimes socially and politically motivated. They can well
utilize the means of the older immigrant trade unionists, who had to fight
for acceptance within the working class as well as within the life of the
nation.

Despite slight differences, the trade unions which endorse workers’ educa-
tion conform to one main pattern. Instruction is related functionally to col-
lective bargaining; the core is the experience of the workers. Many groups
outside of the labor movement have recognized this relationship and con-
sequently have raised opposition. Naturally, opposition stems from antag-
onism to organized labor as a whole. Hilda W. Smith, Director of the
Workers’ Service Program of the Work Projects Administration, has analyzed
the hostility as follows:

The major part of the criticism, however, is probably inevitable, given the
nature of this program, its emphasis on current economic questions of a con-
troversial nature, and its close relationship to the needs of the labor move-
ment. In spite of their legal status, the unions still have much to do before
their very right to exist is recognized by the American public. And the
struggle of workers’ education to establish itself as a sound teaching program
is bound up with the struggle of labor unions for recognition, and for the
right of collective bargaining. Once these rights are taken for granted by
public opinion, as well as by the courts, it is safe to predict that the opposition to these classes will gradually disappear.  

Recognition of trade unions doubtless will affect their educational programs. As they become more unified among themselves and as governmental aid and social legislation help to level their differences, a more distinct pattern of education may evolve. Present differences, namely structure of educational departments and degree of focus upon political and social issues, may become modified. A coordinated trade unionism may develop an integrated educational program.

\*\* \(A\) Summary of Workers' Education Under the W. P. A., a special report on workers' education, March 10, 1938, p. 14.\/*
CHAPTER IV

Outside the Trade Union Movement

Since colonial times American labor has been struggling to be recognized as a group but the labor movement in the United States still is immature. The crux of the situation has been the failure of trade unions to draw and hold as active members more than a small percentage of the workers. For example, occupational and industrial penetration by organized labor has been limited and Negroes and many women have been excluded from workers' groups. Moreover, many in the laboring class have not had a working-class philosophy and therefore have not found organization attractive. Thus, educational opportunities which other organizations have offered workers are important. Schools, churches, Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, community centers, settlements, organizations for the foreign born, and political parties have initiated programs, or have cooperated with trade unions and others who advocate schooling for workers. A survey of their activities is necessary for a complete picture.

A number of the organizations to be considered sponsored workers' education before the interest of the trade unions was aroused. They have continued to do so, concerning themselves primarily with the unorganized workers, often unemployed and on relief. The main effort has been to help them find their place in society. In recent years, courses have been offered them in which they may study their present situation and problems. Recreational facilities, ranging from tap-dancing to creative writing and from amateur theatricals to open forums, have also been provided.

THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Specific political groups, particularly the Socialists and Communists, have attempted instruction for workers. Socialists started the Rand School of
PATTERNS OF WORKERS' EDUCATION

Social Science in 1906, long before any trade union colleges or educational departments within labor organizations were founded. Seventeen years later, the Communists founded their Workers' School in New York City. Since that time, other instructional agencies have been formed by various opposition units within the two groups. The purpose of instruction has been to further social change. The final goal depends upon the specific philosophy of the sponsor. Students are not necessarily party members who wish to be taught definite techniques of action. Many are individuals who desire merely to study different theories in order to determine for themselves an everyday mode of thought and conduct. Therefore, the courses which make up the major part of the curriculum contain a heterogeneous group of educated liberals and radicals as well as uneducated workers. All meet to discuss common problems.

Because they recognize trade unionism as an effective medium for social change, however, political groups have furthered specific instruction in this connection. For example, the Rand School has always had training courses and classes for organized workers but in 1936 they were transformed into a definite Trade Union Institute. The labor organizations which recruit for the Institute and contribute financially have a political philosophy. They view the labor movement as a broad process and accordingly recognize workers' education in political schools as a necessary supplement to their own courses. First, they wish their members to learn the concepts of trade unionism; secondly, they value political training for social action. They know that some workers will proceed from the trade union institute classes to the more general political courses.

The political groups, with similar expectations, first work within the primary interest of organized workers, that of collective bargaining. "How a trade union works" and "what trade union officials need to know" are introductory topics. Students advance into classes "designed to show how a trade union functions in our economic and political society." The educational directors of the specific institutions have stated that the political parties which sponsor the work do not exercise close control. Although teaching is frankly

predicated upon the class struggle, they maintain that complete and democratic expression of opposing views is allowed.

The classroom technique is used primarily, whether for the heterogeneous groups or for the specific workers' units. The Trade Union Institute plans courses for members of a particular organization or from several groups. Classes may be held at either the school or trade union headquarters. Courses are varied. There are training units for organizers, classes teaching the application of parliamentary law, and conferences which aim to promote social and labor legislation.

A few functional and "mass education" techniques are utilized. Workers are taken to meetings and conferences, held prior to state legislative sessions. Student councils encourage extra-curricular activities, although with little direction. And specifically, when a scholarship is granted the Rand School states that "It is taken for granted that students who receive the benefit of this arrangement will feel bound to reimburse the school by putting their training to good use in the labor movement."

The political schools operate mainly in large cities. However, workers from smaller urban and rural districts receive correspondence courses, study outlines, and literature prepared for their group. They also may come to city summer schools, organized on a short time basis.

**YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION**

The Young Women's Christian Association, a pioneer in workers' education, has steadfastly maintained its faith in the movement.

Two Y.W.C.A. units, the Industrial Department and the Business and Professional Girls' Division, have been especially interested and active. The former has had extensive experience in the past and in 1937 reported workers' classes in all but two of 22 groups studied. Many local departments are cooperating with the W.P.A. Even more extensive and more carefully planned educational programs are advised for the future. A recent "Industrial Study" states that "an industrial program which leaves out workers' education

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Rand School of Social Science, *Special Bulletin*.

is 'only a shell,' and even though it may be rich in cultural content lacks reality for the industrial worker."

On the whole, unorganized working women have come to the Y.W.C.A. The agency plans an educational program which may make meaningful their varied community experiences. The emphasis evolves naturally from a general program, stated by the Industrial Department to be as follows:

The Industrial Department offers to girls employed in factories, homes, restaurants, and mercantile establishments, opportunities to make friends, to have fun, to pursue special interests and skills, to develop leadership, and to become more effective citizens. It offers them interest groups, discussions, and forums on social and economic problems, and leadership experience. It also offers social affairs, recreation and sports."

At the same time an attempt is made to develop reciprocal understanding and feeling between people who have had different social experiences. Accordingly, employers and workers are drawn into a program which encourages cooperation within their communities.

Informal education has been said to be the crux of the Y.W.C.A. industrial program. As working women come together from many different groups, they tend to discover and discuss common problems and to do something about them. One club member cites examples of the process. In one community, an orchestra had to be hired for a dance. Controversy arose as to whether the musicians should be union or non-union workers. Involuntarily, discussion evolved into a temporary but vitally interested class in labor problems. In Rochester, New York, a trade party presented opportunities for a varied educational process. A labor mural which was painted involved study of workers' history, puppets were made to depict well-known characters, and a dance group interpreted industrial speed-up. In Boston, Rochester, and Cleveland, club members illustrate their interests in social studies workshops.

Many clubs have promoted more formal instructional programs. Women are trained to be responsible leaders and active citizens, workers' schools have been established, or special classes have been arranged. It may be significant that a definite framework has been given activities where the Y.W.C.A. cooperates with trade unions, among them clothing and textile groups.

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OUTSIDE THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

On the whole, local finances and direction determine a particular educational set-up. At the same time, however, nation-wide Y.W.C.A. activities have an encouraging influence. Research and laboratory divisions provide materials for local clubs. National Industrial and Business Councils and summer conferences and institutes offer short-time resident opportunities. The National Industrial Council, in addition, sponsors projects which induce study on a variety of topics: interracial problems, Fascism, household employment, volunteer leadership, trade unionism, the American Youth Congress. Educational groups utilize the findings. Finally, the Y.W.C.A. has cooperated with many W.P.A. community programs, by providing classrooms and library facilities, sponsoring classes, and having staff members serve on advisory committees.

SETTLEMENT HOUSES

The National Federation of Settlements recently appointed a special committee to study social and workers' education promoted by local community houses. The investigating agency found diverse programs carried on by the settlements themselves or with the Work Projects Administration. In some instances settlements were using W.P.A. teachers to carry on projects so that established programs would not be discontinued because of lack of funds. In 1937 one New York City unit had 19 W.P.A. projects and another had 11. Each of five other settlements housed one program.

Since trade unions increasingly provide social and recreational activities for their members, community houses attract mainly unorganized workers. Troubled by problems which they must face alone and desiring social relaxation, they find the settlements responsive to their needs. The agencies have centered their social and workers' educational program about the position of workers in their communities. Classes and activities must discover spokesmen who are products of local situations; instruction must be directed to control of the operative forces. In other words, the settlement must help people to find their particular place in the social scheme; it must aid them to acquire status in their own social group and to discover interests and tastes in common

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\textsuperscript{5} Committee on Social and Workers' Education, National Federation of Settlements, \textit{Workers' Education in the Settlements}, Chicago, June, 1938, \textit{passim}.

with people not exactly like themselves; it must assist them to learn how to work with others towards some common objective."

In their educational work, settlements have had to meet adult indifference, language difficulties, and neighborhood mobility. After studying their own situation, particular centers have endorsed informal, functional workers' education; others a more formal, intellectual process. Some institutions have sponsored both types. The Henry Street Settlement in New York City illustrates how complete workers' education can be within a community agency, cooperating with the government. A center is operated in spring, summer, and fall sessions. Prior to the midsummer of 1935 the center was a city-wide W.P.A. project, known as the New York City School for Workers, and was open mainly to trade unionists. The realization that organized workers have their own classes turned the school into a neighborhood unit, attracting mothers, fathers, and children of the section. A school bulletin defines the purpose of study as follows:

Like the public night schools, the courses draw in many who have had little or no formal schooling; like them they cover cultural subjects, but in these and in the courses on current events, in economics and social problems, the distinction lies in relating classwork closely to their daily lives as workers and citizens. It is a training center in clear thinking for young people who without acquaintance with history or economics face the responsibilities and issues of life and labor in a great industrial community. The school is not committed to any dogma or theory, is modern in its emphasis on self-expression, and conducts its teaching in the spirit of impartial inquiry and freedom for discussion."

Interests awakened through courses lead to informal educational activities, centered around community reconstruction. For example, an East Side Forum Unit has been formed. The group cooperates with the Federation of East Side Clubs, the East Side Tenants' Union, and the Civic Education Association, in sponsoring rallies of social clubs, housing meetings, and political forums. W.P.A. teachers, residents of the settlement, and volunteers guide the program.

Other settlements throughout the country prefer informal, functional education to the formal type. Local consumer, labor, tenant, parent and political groups thereby may define their problems and then proceed to cooperative, legislative and other practical activity to remedy them. For example, Mothers'...
OUTSIDE THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Clubs in Cleveland's Playhouse Settlement and New York's University Settlement have studied local food prices. As a result, the former drew up a "preferred" list of food dealers and the latter formed a Milk Consumers' Protective Committee. Senior Club boys at Detroit's Franklin Settlement discuss their problems as stewards in automobile factories and weigh the merits and disadvantages of trade unionism. In Cleveland a group of women have called upon city authorities to ask that lights be placed in playgrounds and that duties and qualifications of doctors paid by the city be clarified. A class on unemployment and a job-finders club are carried on together in Greenwich House, New York. Voters in Neighborhood House, Louisville, have formed a Public Action Committee. The Art Workshop developing from the former College Settlement has recognized recreational needs of industrial workers and is fostering leisure-time skills. All of the functional techniques in these neighborhood houses are designed to help individuals and groups to work and live more effectively within their communities.

Settlement programs are mainly local in scope. Specific functions, therefore, are determined by different controlling units. Where finances come from liberal backers, where neighborhood committees direct, and where a flexible tradition exists, educational and other activities are broad and extensive.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Various religious denominations have undertaken education for workers. Since they have no clear-cut relationship with the official labor movement, the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, the Council for Social Action of the National Council of Congregational Churches, and the interdenominational National Religion and Labor Foundation have no clearly defined workers' education program as such. Their activities, however, deserve mention because of certain contributions. Two ideas seem to be embodied in the religious educational programs. The first is to use instruction to translate labor activity into comprehensive social terms; in other words, to bring workers into the church. The second is to help all church members to understand the labor movement, thereby aiding the workers. The two goals are united in the common purpose to promote a new order guided by Christian ideals.

_The Catholic Worker_, organ of the Catholic group, has expressed the hope that workers will strive for the common good and by gaining the confidence
and respect of their non-Catholic fellows raise the level of trade unionism to a Christian plane. The Council of Social Action and the National Religion and Labor Foundation, on the other hand, emphasize the belief that the Church is socially obligated to study the problems of workers.

Members of the A.F. of L., the C.I.O., and independent labor organizations comprise the constituency of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists. They are brought together to study labor problems in parish schools, as at Fordham University. Registrants must be trade unionists if they wish to join the classes offered in Labor History and Relations, Current Problems, Parliamentary Law, and Public Speaking. Students are encouraged to proceed to field work, distributing pamphlets and leaflets and sponsoring round table discussions. The Council for Social Action and the National Religion and Labor Foundation have a more informal approach. The former sponsors conferences which bring together workers, ministers, and church members. The three groups together visit slums and housing exhibits and promote legislative activity. The Foundation sponsors labor colleges in some districts and cooperates with Commonwealth Labor College and similar schools. Maintenance of traveling seminars, however, has attracted most attention. The director has described the groups as follows:

One might say that these seminars afford an indirect type of experience for workers. Actual workers and labor leaders constitute too small a minority, it is true, but the contact comes when well-chosen and socially-motivated clergymen, teachers, and students on these trips meet with scores of workers in local centers for the sharing of experience.\(^1\)

Perhaps the most tangible contribution of the groups under consideration is their literature. A bulletin of the Congregational Churches reveals the importance of materials in the statement below:

The Council believes in the power of facts. Its leadership will express itself not in phrases or labels but in careful research, in a Christian interpretation of facts, in the stimulating of church groups to action, and in distinct projects of research and action carried on by members of the staff in the four great fields of the Council's interest—international, racial, industrial and rural-urban relations.\(^2\)

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\(^1\) Willard Uphaus, Executive Secretary of the National Religion and Labor Foundation, in a letter to the writer, March 11, 1938.

OUTSIDE THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The Congregational Council has crystallized its belief in research. It has written and illustrated a magazine, *Social Action*, reprints of social science materials, worship services, study outlines, and pamphlets so that they may be understood by workers who are deeply religious and wary of social movements outside of the Church. The National Religion and Labor Foundation has an official publication, *Economic Justice*, which carries on a year-round interpretation of labor problems. The Catholic trade union association publishes a periodical, *The Catholic Worker*, as well as pamphlets and leaflets.

All three religious groups may circulate their material nationally. *The Catholic Worker* has branches throughout the country, which sponsor roundtable discussions; the Council's literature is partly distributed through its community program; and the Foundation has executive committee members in many branches of the workers' education movement.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THOSE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE TRADE UNIONS

Workers' education in trade unions is available only to organized workers. Concentration upon collective bargaining, therefore, is natural. Unionized and non-unionized adults form only one part of broad community organizations, including political parties, community centers, and churches. Although as a "labor" educational unit they may draw apart from the general constituency, they are influenced, nevertheless, by the philosophy of their parent body. Collective bargaining, therefore, is not their main goal.

More specifically, in the majority of trade unions, education and organization are related functionally. Emphasis upon intensive community participation and broad social change is only incidental. On the other hand, political, community and religious groups utilize education for workers to induce transformation of a political, religious or social nature. Trade unionism, however, may be shown to be one agency significant as a tool.

Labor organizations which have economic, political and social aims—namely, the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union, and the American Federation of Hosiery Workers—therefore may well consider other educational programs supplementary to their own. Consequently, they have used the trade union institutes of political schools; they have met in settlements, with whom they have merged educational programs; they have held joint classes with Y.W.C.A.s.
Even trade unions which primarily emphasize "business" principles may approve of supplementary community educational programs. They know, for instance, that settlements always have been in close touch with labor problems and that they have advocated the right to organize. Therefore they are confident that educational activities in settlements will be in accord with their own. Most labor groups today recognize that they must teach members to meet other citizens and their experts. They value the Y.W.C.A. because the agency encourages training, bringing workers and employers together to discuss work relationships, vocational problems, and social legislation. The majority of trade unionists, however, do not have as much confidence in workers' education offered by political and religious groups. Even in labor organizations with a political philosophy, the large mass of workers have little understanding of the terms "class struggle" and "new social order." They feel that political parties are using rather than aiding them.

The trade unions do not hesitate to use the facilities of church groups which they trust. For instance, the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee ordered 3,000 copies of Steel and Men, published by the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Churches. The Educational Committee of Branch Number Ten, the American Federation of Hosiery Workers, utilizes Social Action. Labor organizations therefore do not oppose honest efforts to promote good feelings among all people, and appreciate church cooperation in collective bargaining, social security, and education.Suspicion is directed towards the Catholic groups which have stated that parish schools must equip workers "to sift the good from the bad in labor proposals, and to be the defenders of sound, constructive union activity against the inroads of communistic agitation." A great deal depends upon whether the church and trade unions agree as to what are bad and good labor proposals.

Trade unions, settlements, and community organizations use similar methods, since their problems of obtaining and retaining students are alike. All have had to face lack of interest, varied educational levels, and industrial or neighborhood mobility. Large rallies, many classes, and committee participation have been used as solutions for different people. It is true that the trade

Gaynell Hawkins, op. cit., p. 76.
Letter from the Council, March 12, 1938.

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unions have defined their tools more clearly. They feel that they must draw as many workers as possible into educational work, in order to strengthen their organization. The community groups are not as strongly motivated. Settlements and group work associations differ from trade unions in emphasizing mixed employer-employee units. They are more like church groups in this respect. They differ from the religious institutions, however, in that their programs are more clearly defined. The political schools have usually emphasized classroom work. They realize that by working with a minority they necessarily are attracting individuals who come prepared for more serious study. Only as they have expanded their trade union facilities have they employed more diversified means.

Thus, workers' education is seen to be a complex movement. Specific functional philosophies have molded different patterns in trade unions, political parties, and social and cultural groups. The aims and methods are most clearly defined in the collective bargaining agencies; less so in the other organizations. In specific places and at certain times, the respective educational programs merge or supplement each other. In a few instances they may conflict. All, however, hope for social reform which will come wholly or partially through an educated working-class.
A PICTURE of workers' education is incomplete without a description of coordinating agencies. Cooperation has seemed to be necessary in order to prevent duplication of educational services. Certain groups have attempted to meet the need. Some have been active since the beginning of the movement; others recently have arisen to cope with new and increased demands. A few have served trade unions primarily, whereas a number have aided any organization which has asked for assistance.

In 1921 a group of trade unionists and teachers established the Workers' Education Bureau to promote inter-union cooperation in education.\(^1\) Eight years later, membership in the Bureau was restricted through the following statement:

All trade unions and labor organizations, not dual or seceding in character, shall be eligible to membership. All workers' education enterprises under trade union control, approved by city central bodies and state federations of labor and not antagonistic to the bona fide organized labor movement and devoted to the general education of workers, shall be eligible for membership.\(^2\)

As a result the Bureau has been limited in its scope. No workers' education program has been able to receive active aid, if criticism of the American Federation of Labor is allowed. In recent years, therefore, mainly craft unions have been assisted. Very seldom has the Bureau conferred with representatives of industrial unions, and then only if discussion has not centered about the craft-industrial issue.

Within its limitations, the Workers' Education Bureau has helped many A.F. of L. unions develop varied programs. Because effective teachers have

\(^1\) Consult Chapter III for instances of independent cooperation of various unions.

\(^2\) Workers' Education Bureau, *Constitution of Bureau, 1929.*
PATTERNS OF WORKERS’ EDUCATION

been few, rank and file participation has been encouraged by informal means. Dramatic skits, portraying current events, have been prepared for labor meet­
ings and conventions. Workers have heard their problems discussed over radio broadcasts sponsored by the Bureau. They have received reading guides which lead them to material within their comprehension. Local trade union newspapers have been sent prepared articles on significant topics. From sev­eral other services, leaders rather than rank and file have benefited. For instance, institutes for organizers have helped solve organizational problems. Finally, community interest and understanding have been promoted by joint trade union and university conferences or institutes.

The National Women’s Trade Union League, another auxiliary of the American Federation of Labor, has tended to integrate workers’ education within trade unionism. Although it has no voting power in the A.F. of L., several of the local units of the League may vote in their respective state fed­erations of labor. Consequently the organization may influence the educa­tional pattern of trade unions.

Local leagues recruit students from trade unions and their women’s auxili­aries, as well as from community groups. As a result, needs and difficulties of labor organizations have been studied carefully. Classes for rank and file and for leaders, conferences and bulletins deal with the problems. The na­tional unit has recognized that community facilities vary. Through an advisory service, an attempt has been made, therefore, to help local units build educational and activity programs best suited for their specific situation. Cooperation with consumers and other groups has been advised and often has made available resources heretofore beyond the reach of workers. Research is conducted on wages, hours, and working conditions in many industries; education of the public and of legislatures follows. Workers acting together, therefore, learn the techniques of community organizations other than their own.

The American Federation of Labor indirectly has contributed a unifying device to workers’ education. In 1919, a recommendation was made that city and state federations form educational committees for the purpose of demand-

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*See National Women’s Trade Union League, Educational Committee. To Chairmen of Educational Committees of Local Leagues, State Leagues, and National Committees, 1936; Suggested Educational Program for Local Leagues With No Paid Staff, Dec. 9, 1937.

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ing that organized labor be represented in the public educational system. Thus a precedent was established for current labor advisory committees. Where workers' education is not under the control of official labor organizations, several trade unions may be represented upon a board which demands that the interests of workers be duly recognized. While interpreting the significance of workers' education to others, the agents have an opportunity to clarify the subject among themselves.

One of the first signs that trade unions were interested in their own educational programs was the appearance of labor colleges. Several organizations together offered a combination of classes to their members. Duplication thereby was minimized; fees could be small and teachers and materials utilized to the full. In recent years the "colleges" have suffered a severe mortality. Some still in the field have been split by the craft-industrial controversy. A few have continued to be effective.

The Congress of Industrial Organizations also has recognized that the labor movement needs workers' education, that instruction is essential to strong trade unionism. The agency accordingly has recommended that labor organizations themselves sponsor educational programs or at least cooperate actively with others so engaged. As yet, however, it has instituted no centralized procedure. However, like spirit and principles seem to motivate the educational programs of affiliates, even though financed by individual unions themselves. Industrial unionism seems to imply workers' education.  

THE AMERICAN LABOR EDUCATION SERVICE

One must look beyond the trade unions for any extensive coordination service. Two factors are responsible: lack of harmony among labor organizations often causes failure to cooperate even in education; many programs are sponsored by non-trade unionists, making integration by autonomous agencies logical.

In the field since 1926, the American Labor Education Service may be designated as the oldest independent national agency. The organization evolved from the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry, when more schools and wider assistance for their alumnae were needed. It has fulfilled the designated purpose and is now aiding the community and

*Interview with John Edelman, Chairman of Education Committee of Pennsylvania State Industrial Council, 1938.*
residential work of four additional institutions: the Southern Summer School for Workers in Industry, the School for Workers in Industry of the University of Wisconsin, the Summer School for Office Workers, and the Pacific Coast School for Workers. Local committees formed of representatives of the autonomous affiliates have aided all the schools to recruit students and raise funds. They also have sponsored community projects which make workers' education a year-round process for their teachers and alumnae.

As workers' education developed, the Service gradually assumed added responsibilities, and in 1939, in order to describe its new functions, the name Affiliated Schools for Workers was abandoned. As stated by the agency, "new emphasis has been given to the national character of the work during the past year, because of the need today for such a unifying force for the various groups engaged in workers' education in this country." Membership, therefore, has been broadened to admit not only resident schools, but also local unions, local labor colleges, and Workers' Education Committees.

By letter and through efforts in the field many organizations have been aided. Among them are national and local trade unions and their auxiliaries from the Congress of Industrial Organizations and the American Federation of Labor; government agencies including departments of education, housing authorities, and employment departments, as well as workers' education projects; and local labor colleges, resident schools, youth groups, and other adult education and community organizations. During 1939 contacts were maintained in 47 states and correspondence was carried on with workers' education leaders in 10 foreign countries. Services are varied. Groups are helped to initiate educational programs; to find source material suitable for their use; to train their teachers; and to arrange sectional conferences. Since 1938, the Labor Education Service has carried on the Annual Conference of Leaders and Teachers in the field, started at Brookwood in 1924. A Teachers' Registry was inaugurated in 1940 and workshop methods are now being demonstrated in New York headquarters. Valuable publications on many subjects continue to meet the need for material especially designed for workers. The administration of the American Labor Education Service alone is a unifying force. Many branches of the labor movement are represented on the Board of Directors and auxiliary committees. Local committees include

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COORDINATING AGENCIES AND RESIDENT SCHOOLS

individuals interested in workers and recruited from many different community agencies.

GOVERNMENTAL PROJECTS

In September 1933 the Work Projects Administration entered the field of workers' education. The primary purpose has been to aid state educational authorities in reduction of unemployment among teachers. Federal funds provide work-relief for teachers; but administrative appropriations are sufficient to allow supervisors and the Washington staff to be experts who do not have to qualify on a relief basis. States have had to finance maintenance, classroom equipment, and materials for study, and public institutions or departments must request the program. Their interest has been aroused through local committees, representing various community organizations.

By 1936, The Workers' Service Program, as it is now designated, conducted 1863 government classes for workers, in which approximately 45,000 men and women were enrolled. They were taught by 580 instructors in 570 communities and 28 states. Seventeen state supervisors guided the programs. The project has been most effective in large centers where labor is well organized. Here, trade unions, political parties, settlements, and community centers have asked for classes. Consequently, New York City, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Detroit, and Chicago have extensive programs. In April, 1938 several cities in Indiana reported 2391 students, white and Negro. Rural communities in Kansas and Minnesota likewise have been interested.

The federal and state governments have done more than stimulate and contribute teachers to classes in various labor organizations. Much effort has gone into training of instructors who receive their jobs primarily because they are on relief. Guidance, therefore, has been given in training centers, in conferences, and "in-service." Suitable material has been developed in the public programs; the federal agency has formulated bibliographical and source suggestions; the state organizations have written pamphlets and outlines.

7 The American Labor Education Service surveyed the potentialities of a government program and then helped to initiate the work by recruiting students, training teachers, and interpreting the movement. Experimentation took place primarily in small communities, with new trade unions, and in areas where a permanent program seemed feasible.


Government-aided instruction has been strongly opposed by many groups of employers. In states where such instruction has been initiated, attitudes and support depend upon the status of the local labor movement and the general acceptance of collective bargaining. Some groups have questioned the right of the government to promote workers' education, insisting that public agencies are created only in response to a public need, and therefore should not stimulate interest. Hilda W. Smith, the director of the federal program, has replied by pointing out that the worker is inarticulate about his needs rather than unaware of them. She describes the situation as follows:

The applicant for a class in a public school or other community center may not ask specifically for this information. He may ask for work in English, for recreation, for literature, art, or music. With many applicants, however, in many places, the suggestion that classes may be formed for discussion of economic and social questions meets with an instant response...

The close connection between government funds and workers' activity fundamentally is disapproved by many. However, both organized labor and government state that public assistance is justified, since industry and agriculture have been given governmental grants. In addition, educators have endorsed workers' education as a democratic means of meeting the needs of many people. According to George F. Zook, former United States Commissioner of Education and present head of the American Council on Education, the value of the special program is as follows:

The regular educational system should welcome movements of this kind. They serve as a means of helping the schools and colleges to keep abreast of those things which the people want. The educational organization should indeed be quick to respond to popular desires in education. . . . At the same time all types of group organizations should work with the regular school organization toward the attainment of our common goals.

Another educator has said:

My interest in workers' education arises from the fact that I see and feel the great importance of making the public schools fit the needs of all our people. In order to make the school suited to the needs of various groups, it is necessary to make a study of the needs of these groups. Then when we

have our schools ready to receive them, they should be sincerely welcomed into our public schools. 16

If special instruction for workers is recognized more generally as a tool of democracy, a continuous, non-relief government-financed program may be demanded. Public support on other than relief terms is not inconceivable when one sees how government has advanced in the field of education. Quoting from Prof. H. F. Clark, writing on educational finance in 1934:

Expenditures for education show evidence of a tendency toward rapid expansion. This expansion has proceeded until about 3 percent of the total income in the United States in 1928 was spent on education in contrast with the 1.5 percent in 1913, and about the same percentage of the gainfully employed population was working in formal schools. In the future much more attention is likely to be given to education by means of other institutions with a corresponding expansion of expenditures for education through these organizations. 17

The recent recommendations of the President's Advisory Committee on Education that teacher-training and civic, general, and vocational part-time education for adults be encouraged have indicated that some of this expansion may be for and by workers. 18

RESIDENT SCHOOLS AS COORDINATING AGENCIES

Although most adults study in their own communities, during their leisure time, many have taken advantage of intensive, short-term courses, away from home. Resident centers therefore may help equalize workers' education throughout the country. In the process of experimenting with curricula, methods of teaching and materials, ideas are exchanged among students representing many geographical sections and diverse organizations. Alumni of the resident centers carry end-products of experiments into their own localities, adjusting them to their particular instructional pattern with the help of field agents from the schools.

Brookwood Labor College and Commonwealth College in the past and Highlander Folk School in the present have been forces for integration. First of all, their Boards of Directors and Advisory Committees have been comprised of representatives of organized labor, faculty, alumni, and "undergraduates."

Secondly, the schools have recruited students from all branches of unionism and from all over the country. Men and women with different views, desiring to become labor leaders, union organizers, and teachers of workers have come together. Exchange of ideas has been stimulated. The schools have offered winter and summer courses to those workers who have vacations at different times during the year. Institutes and conferences also have been sponsored.

Brookwood Labor College sent students into communities at the close of a session as teachers and as members of Chautauquas. Commonwealth and Highlander Schools have become social and educational centers for their environs. Through extension work, more distant groups have been aided in the development of local classes, and for these groups pamphlets and study outlines have been prepared.

Curricula and methods of the schools are similar to content and approach emphasized by the older trade unions. Subjects studied during the resident period are designed to further the labor movement along all fronts, economic, political, cooperative, and educational. "Classroom education" and "training for service" have been emphasized at the resident center; "mass education" and "functional activity" in the community programs and extension service.

Another group of schools, the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry, the Wisconsin School for Workers, the Southern Summer School for Workers, the Summer School for Office Workers, and the Pacific Coast School for Workers, were inaugurated primarily to provide summer periods of study. Since their initiation, they have extended their scope and now help coordinate their work not only through a resident program but also through an extension service, set up principally for alumni. Committees which recruit for the institutions are comprised of representatives of organized labor, alumni, educators, representatives of diverse community organizations, and individuals generally interested in workers. Uniform requirements for admission to the schools include a minimum of sixth to eighth grade education and two years' experience in industry. Applicants must prove that they are concerned with workers' problems, by being active in local organizations and affiliated with the labor movement.

[Note: In this chapter, the Bryn Mawr Summer School (now the Hudson Shore Labor School) will not be discussed, since Part II is devoted to it entirely. Therefore reference will be made hereafter to four institutions.]

The four institutions have primarily the same purpose. They wish to stim­ulate an active and continuing interest in current problems and to encourage their students to assume an increasing degree of social and economic responsibility. They recognize the function of collective bargaining but do not train their students in its techniques to the same extent as does the Highlander School. Neither do they emphasize as strongly the concept of a new social order. Rather they teach general requisites of leadership and membership for all types of community organizations. While not stressing summer community and extension work to the same degree, the field work which they do after the summer session is somewhat similar.

The four schools vary somewhat among themselves, the differences depending upon their funds, control, the type of applicants whom they accept. Particular emphases reflect, of course, social forces influencing workers in the geographical region where the schools are located. It is natural that the East have problems different from those of the West, Middlewest, and the South.

The Wisconsin and Pacific Coast Schools for Workers differ from the School for Office Workers and the Southern Summer School for Workers in their control and the source of their money. The latter institutions solicit support from private individuals and groups. Representatives of a variety of organizations sit upon their Boards of Directors and their Advisory Committees. The Wisconsin School, as a regular department of the University of Wisconsin, is financed by the State. Funds are also obtained through the W.P.A. since the State's W.P.A. program of workers' education is supervised by the School. In the same way, the State of California contributes to the Pacific Coast School because the institution supervises the State educational program for workers. The two institutions respectively supported wholly or partially by public authorities are accordingly under State jurisdiction. The Director and Assistant Director of the Wisconsin organization are responsible to a University committee of three faculty members and three leaders of organized labor. The University of California, the California State Department of Education, the California State Federation of Labor, and other units of


The School, founded in 1925, became a regular unit of the University in 1937.
organized labor are represented on the Joint Administrative Board of the Pacific Coast School.

Public finances have helped the Midwestern and the Western institutions extend their programs widely beyond their school grounds. The Summer School for Office Workers and the Southern Summer School, on the other hand, have concentrated on summer study, with some field work for the winter. The Wisconsin School has held summer and winter classes in many communities and has brought local groups to the summer session for institutes and conferences. The Pacific Coast School has maintained contact with nearby localities through W.P.A. teachers who must attend the summer program for training, but as nonresidents. Winter classes also have been held in places within the vicinity of the School. Those interested in the effects of government money and direction might well study the Wisconsin and Pacific Coast programs. Already the former has experienced a setback, since an unfavorable State administration in 1939 temporarily discontinued its work. While new plans again have been made, the interests of the School will have to be carefully watched.

The Pacific Coast School for Workers has a more inclusive student body than have the Wisconsin School for Workers, the Summer School for Office Workers, and the Southern Summer School for Workers. College students, teachers, educational administrators, and the general public may attend the School. However, as in the other institutions, workers constitute a majority in the resident group although not in the entire school. In 1935 they formed only 45 percent of the entire student body; only 44 percent in 1936. The next year they formed 89 percent of the residents but only 52 percent of the entire school.

The four schools now recruit most of their students from trade unions, but this was not always so. For example, the Southern Summer School has been influenced in proportion to the degree of Southern organization. In 1927, the first session of the School, only seven out of 25 students were members of trade unions and all seven were from the United Garment Workers' Union. Nine years later 22 of 30 women were trade unionists and many labor organ-

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^{E. E. Schwarttrauber, *The School for Workers, the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, 1938*, passim.}

^{Report of the Director of the Pacific Coast School for Workers, 1937 (mimeographed by the School).}
The four institutions now are coeducational, although all originally were started for women.

The type of student, whether organized or not, has differed from one school to another. Migratory labor is represented in the Pacific Coast School; and the majority in the Southern Summer School have had the backgrounds of farming people, even though they have come from factories and mills. Many were born on farms and are the first or second generation of workers in industry. One hundred percent Americans, in the best sense of that phrase, many live in the same State where their fathers were born. The absence of Negro students indicates one way in which the Southern School is limited by the region in which it operates. The Office Workers School has urban, native-born students for the most part.

The members of the Wisconsin and Pacific Coast Schools have attained various educational levels, representing a cross-section of the American population. The students of the Southern Summer School and of the School for Office Workers, however, differ. Small Southern rural schools have given many Southern workers limited preparation. In the Office Workers' institution, on the other hand, individuals have had extensive education but they have less understanding of economic processes.

The School for Office Workers and the Southern School are held on no specific campus as are the others. The latter started as a transient organization so that it might recruit from different Southern States. The former at present likes to maintain a Middle-west situation since it recruits nationally, being the only institution for the white-collar group in the country. By 1934, however, the Southern School decided that mobility did not favor uniform facilities from session to session, and two years later, when facing a second decade of existence, the School announced that a permanent location would be sought and a committee has been striving towards this end.

The four programs have shown a realization that workers cannot stay away from jobs for too long a time and that their funds are limited. The School for

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"Reports of the Director of the Southern Summer School for Workers, 1927 and 1936 (mimeographed by the School).

Office Workers, therefore, has had a two-weeks and a four-weeks session. All have sponsored short-time institutes and conferences.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Workers' education has been seen to include more than one type of educational activity. The first, not in origin but in extent, is the program carried on by trade unions themselves. Therein interest tends to be focused upon the fact that trade unions need intelligent membership and effective leadership. A second kind is sponsored by political parties, settlements, community centers and churches. They have recognized that social institutions, including trade unions, must always function within a given environment. They know that trade unions and other labor organizations are not young in this country but that because of their recent expansion they are new to many geographical sections and to many people. The community groups, therefore, desire that education help workers to find their place in this situation and assist labor groups to be oriented within their surroundings. In other words, workers' education outside the trade union movement encourages community interest and activity as related to the labor movement. No clear line of demarcation may be observed between the two different emphases. The patterns are interrelated. Trade unionists are participating increasingly in community life. At the same time, social action of all kinds undertaken by labor has tended to relate itself more or less directly to the trade union movement. Accordingly, as trade union activity and community efforts have been seen as necessary to changing social structure, so the two types of educational activity have been recognized as essential.

The programs of the coordinating agencies have depended upon the groups with whom they have cooperated. The Workers' Education Bureau, W.P.A., and the American Labor Education Service have adapted their activities to the needs of particular groups within different localities. These agencies have contributed money, facilities, and techniques. In addition they have established contacts with local community institutions and have helped to reunite rapidly growing class divergencies.

The resident programs also have incorporated parts of the two major types of workers' education. Commonwealth College and Highlander Folk School have directly taught techniques of collective bargaining and of social change and community participation. The other schools have been more
indirect in their teaching. Both groups have experimented with new ma-
terials and methods. They have aided coordination by recruiting from all
types of labor organizations and from many geographical regions, and there
can be no doubt that their administrative boards and advisory committees
have helped to make workers' education a progressive force throughout the
nation.
The Bryn Mawr Summer School
for Women Workers in Industry
CHAPTER VI

From Bryn Mawr to the Hudson Shore

Resident schools are more than a valuable coordinating device; they are significant in and of themselves. A description of the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry may serve to illustrate how one extra-community program has contributed to workers' education. Also it may help evaluate the importance of resident institutions as a whole.

THE PURPOSE OF THE SCHOOL

The founders of the Bryn Mawr Summer School believed that social change was imminent; that workers of the future were to see international and industrial peace and the reign of reason in the economic world. They maintained that through workers' schools, women workers might be prepared to contribute to these forces in democratic ways. The first statement of the School's purpose reveals the goal to be as follows:

... to offer young women of character and ability a fuller education in order that they may widen their influence in the industrial world, help in the coming social reconstruction, and increase the happiness and usefulness of their own lives. The Summer School shall not be committed to any dogma or theory, but shall conduct its teaching in a broad spirit of impartial inquiry with absolute freedom of discussion and academic freedom of teaching.1

As this dream shaped itself into a functioning organization, certain fundamentals were resolved. "Fuller" education was planned as a study of liberal subjects, designed to train industrial women to think clearly; to stimulate an active and continued interest in economic problems; and to develop a desire for study as a means of understanding and enjoying life. Through teachers

1 As quoted from original statement of purpose, 1921, in Hilda W. Smith, Women Workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School, p. 7.
who appreciated the students' industrial experience and who had knowledge of the labor movement, the workers were to be given insight into industrial problems and encouraged to feel a more vital responsibility for their solution. This obligation soon was defined as that of citizens as well as that of wage-earners.

Recently, the purpose of the School has been difficult to fulfill because of world conditions. Social change has not brought peace and order but international and industrial unrest and social disorganization. Workers have had to face new experiences in industry and in the labor movement. Thus the problems to be studied and the answers offered for their solutions have had to be altered. In addition, clear thinking has been difficult in a world of many dogmas and theories.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND THE COLLEGE

In 1921 Bryn Mawr College wholeheartedly endorsed the idea of a workers' school. The College plant, not in use during the summer, was made available to the new organization. M. Carey Thomas, president of the College, and Professor Susan Kingsbury believed that other educational institutions might follow their lead. They hoped, therefore, that the Bryn Mawr experiment would answer to the satisfaction of workers and educators the question "Can a workers' school exist on a college campus and still be of greatest use to workers in the type of education that means the most to them in their lives?"

Since the very beginning, the combined efforts of college women and women workers have built the School's program. A joint conference of trustees, faculty, and alumnae of Bryn Mawr College, together with a group of representative industrial workers, made the original plans. In 1928 the joint Administrative Committee was reorganized to include representatives from the Wisconsin and Barnard Summer Schools for Workers, which had developed in the meantime. Four years later, the more inclusive venture became incorporated as the Affiliated Schools for Workers. The Bryn Mawr Summer School became an affiliate, as a separate organization with its own board of directors on which industrial women were allowed six representatives, including an alumna of the School. Another alumna and a current
FROM BRYN MAWR TO THE HUDSON SHORE

student were present for the student body. The faculty had both a former and a present member on the board; a third instructor was a non-labor representative. Other members of the administrative body were drawn from among the alumnae of Bryn Mawr and other colleges.

Outside organizations looked upon this "rather anomalous joint control" with reservations and warned that "Any number of circumstances might at any moment produce a crisis." In 1934, a controversy over extra-curricular activities of students and faculty produced the turning point. The College asked that the situation be studied and that a few administrative changes be considered, since it believed that equal representation of the College and of labor virtually had ceased to exist and that the College was at a disadvantage numerically and also because its representatives were elected by the Summer School Board. The Board answered that it had attempted to select representatives who would not be torn apart by a double allegiance to the School and to the College or the labor movement. Up to that time the plan had seemed to work, since there had never been any conflict in connection with the School's Board. All members had been in harmony and had cooperated readily among themselves.

A conference was arranged between the Board of Directors of the College and that of the School, so that they might discuss their relationship and analyze the responsibility of the School to workers' education and to the labor movement. The School was temporarily withdrawn from the campus during the summer of 1935 pending a decision.

An agreement was reached that the School should be continued since the two Boards of Directors believed in its value. In 1936 the College again made the campus available. The original purpose of the School was to be followed and extra-curricular activities allowed as formerly. The traditional pattern of joint control which both boards agreed had worked was maintained. For a two-year experimental period, later extended to three, the School's Board of Directors consisted of 13 members. One student and one School instructor, with four industrial women, represented labor. An equal number

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8 For further discussion of the situation, see infra, p. 99.

7 Statement from Report of Conference Committee Representing Bryn Mawr Summer School and Bryn Mawr College, October 5, 1935.
of Bryn Mawr College alumnae, officers, or friends represented the College. Dr. Marion Edwards Park, the president of the College, continued to serve as chairman of the Board and was empowered to vote if this were necessary for a decision. With the approval of the College, the School's Board selected the institution's director, who became an ex-officio member.

It was made clear that members of labor organizations were present in their individual capacities. In the same way, the College did not consider its representatives instructed members but individuals whose first duty was to the School. However, they were to inform the College of events and consult with it on important matters.

THE FORMULATION OF POLICIES

The Director of the School has assumed responsibility for publicity and also for field work. Various committees have continued to recruit and prepare students, raise funds, plan curricula, govern the School, and help alumnae in their communities. For instance, the chairman of the School Board has continued to appoint standing committees to plan the institution's program. Members of the Board, School alumnae, former instructors and representatives of community organizations and of the labor movement have functioned upon an admissions committee, a curriculum advisory group, and similar bodies. A finance chairman has been active, but has had no effectively cooperating unit.

In the School's first years, the central organization had recommended that aid in the foregoing activities be obtained from communities. Local Bryn Mawr Committees thus could interpret local conditions on an informal basis but without any decisive power. The suggestion had been made that district assistance be rendered by different groups, dealing respectively with recruiting, workers' classes, finance, and publicity. However, the committees which have developed have not divided the functions. The basic pattern of joint responsibility between workers and others has governed the constituency of the committees. Aside from that fundamental principle, they have varied from one community to another. In some districts the Bryn Mawr groups have merged with larger Committees of the American Labor Education Service in order to lessen competition possibly harmful both to the Bryn Mawr School and to the other schools which have developed. The cooperation is
natural because two Bryn Mawr people are active on the central board of the American Labor Education Service.

Decisions made during the Bryn Mawr School's session also have aided the Board of Directors to determine policies. The students and instructors sitting on the Board have brought to it recommendations, made during the summer by separate student and staff groups which have held closed meetings at which many problems have been discussed and voted upon. A School governing council also has transmitted to the Board certain guiding principles. On this administrative body, which meets once a week during the summer, the faculty has two representatives and each of three units or student class groups has elected two representatives. The president and secretary of the student body and the Director of the School are members of the Council without vote. The Director, however, has the power of veto.

Towards the close of the three-year experimental period, the Board of Directors of the School authorized that a study be made of trends in workers' education. The purpose was to analyze to what extent the School had fulfilled its aims in relationship to the movement of which it was a part. The survey revealed that College representation on the controlling board had not caused the needs of women workers to be neglected. However, participation by students, faculty, and labor did not seem as dynamic as on comparable school boards. In addition, the Bryn Mawr School, unlike many other workers' schools, did not have an advisory committee, which might yield more contacts and a wider range of opinion.

In 1938 the investigators made several recommendations in line with their findings. They suggested that student representatives on the Board have more maturity and self-confidence so that they might be more articulate in helping to formulate policies. To gain the necessary experience, it was suggested that School alumnae be encouraged to serve upon local committees, and such community functioning be made a prerequisite to being elected as a Board representative. To gain wide community support for the School, it was proposed that an Advisory Council be formed and that it should include both men and women representatives of trade unions as well as community organizations. Others in workers' education also made suggestions at this time. Some emphasized that since the values of specific community and other organiza-

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*Mildred Fairchild and Florence Hemley, op. cit.*

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tions had become more clear-cut than ever before, a workers' school would find it increasingly difficult to be loyal to two such different institutions as an academic college and the labor movement.

The Directors of the School considered all the facts and opinions submitted. Realizing that the purpose of the School must be fulfilled with no ambiguities or confusion of issues, they decided "to plan a program on a broader basis and with greater opportunities than those afforded by a women's college available only for the summer months." Therefore, in 1939, after 18 years of development on the College campus, the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry became the Hudson Shore Labor School and moved to a new home on the shores of the Hudson River.

On the whole, former faculty, students, and supporters of the Bryn Mawr School favor the new plans. They believe that complex alliances are best dissolved when the atmosphere is friendly. In the words of certain of these friends, "The plan sounds very healthy; it is time for an independent workers' school that has real academic freedom to emerge on its own independent grounds." Mingled with hope for the future is a feeling of sorrow that the beauties of the Bryn Mawr campus would be denied future students and the regret that Bryn Mawr College was losing an institution which many feel has added distinction to its reputation. All join in the conviction that the School's activities must be further promoted even though they are no longer part of the Bryn Mawr campus, and in the hope that "... a continued relationship of good will and understanding..." in the furthering of similar aims will be maintained between the new institution and Bryn Mawr College.

FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

A sound financial condition has been necessary as the Bryn Mawr School has developed. Budget-raising activities have been continuous and extensive, so that both a summer session and local community work could be carried on. However, the amounts needed have changed as administrative policies have

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* Letter from President Marion Edwards Park, Chairman of the Board, and Jean Carter, Director of the Summer School, dated January 7, 1939.

* Statements by faculty members, former students and contributors to the Summer School in Typical Reactions to Announcement of New Summer School Plan: Received During First Two Weeks Following the Announcement (mimeographed by the Bryn Mawr Office), 1939, pp. 1-4.

* Statement presented by the Summer School Board to the College Trustees, January 6, 1939.
been altered. In the first five years when duties were very extensive, an entire yearly budget was about $30,000. Costs were reduced as more agencies have extended cooperation. For instance, beginning in 1926 the newly formed Affiliated Schools for Workers carried much of the work formerly performed by the School alone. Budgetary reductions accordingly followed. Changes in operating policies also have caused expenses to vary. Among these changes, decreased numbers of students and shorter sessions have been primary. In 1935 the School was not on the campus and thus had different financial arrangements. When a “Cooperative Living Plan” was introduced in 1937, household expenses were much less than the year before; as a result of the plan and a shorter term a saving of $1,000 over 1936 was made. The per capita cost of each student has of course changed with the different alterations. During the first two years of the School, a scholarship which would cover all expenses except incidentals was estimated at $250, while in 1936, the per capita cost was figured to be approximately $191. By 1937 and 1938 total expenses amounted to approximately $16,000 a year. A list for disbursements in 1938 follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(including year-round director, office, field work, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings and grounds</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household (food, supplies, wages, etc.)</td>
<td>4,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and recreation</td>
<td>850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$16,050</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Local committees and the School's central office have cooperated in raising money for the combined summer and winter budget. The following table shows an approximate picture of the total sources tapped in 1937 and 1938.

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13 Because of the differing needs from one year to another, no attempt is made here to compare yearly budgets.

13 Information secured from an interview with Miss Jean Carter, Director, Summer School, March 22, 1939.
SOURCES OF FUNDS DURING 1937 AND 1938 *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>1937</th>
<th>1938</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From School committees located in Rochester, New York; Buffalo, New York; New Haven, Conn.; Pittsburgh, Pa.; Chicago, Ill.; Denver, Colo.; Baltimore, Md.; Washington, D. C.; Boston, Mass.; Cincinnati, O.; Providence, R. I.; Philadelphia, Pa.; New York City, N. Y.; Akron, O.; New London, Conn.; Hartford, Conn.; Cleveland, O.</td>
<td>$8,300.00</td>
<td>$8,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From School faculty members</td>
<td>300.00</td>
<td>350.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From former students</td>
<td>95.00</td>
<td>150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From undergraduates in women's colleges</td>
<td>2,100.00</td>
<td>2,200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From funds and foundations</td>
<td>1,200.00</td>
<td>1,020.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From unions (exclusive of those contributing to local committees referred to above)</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 75 personal contributions sent direct to School office</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City areas</td>
<td>2,400.00</td>
<td>2,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside New York City (Chicago, Washington, Detroit, New England, Pennsylvania, Portland, Ore., Richmond, and upstate New York)</td>
<td>1,500.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous (cooperative store, faculty board, etc.)</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$16,945.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$16,920.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Information secured from an interview with Miss Jean Carter, Director of the School, March 22, 1939.

Local committees usually have given approximately one-half the total contributions. In order to analyze the sources they tapped and their problems in doing so, a questionnaire was sent to 15 of the committees. Out of nine returns, certain points of interest have been drawn, and coordinated with information from the central office. Fourteen committees, from communities representing various sections of the country, have contributed annually but in varying sums. In 1933 the range among the committees was from $5 to $7,300; two years later from $45 to $2,200; in 1937 from $50 to $4,100; and in 1938 from $35 to $3,400. For all of the 14 committees, the total given was as high as $15,500 in 1933 and as low as $6,600 in 1935.

In addition to the regular contributors, many communities have given irregularly to the School. Southern, Midwestern, and Western communities with

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*Some of these are joint committees for several schools.*
FROM BRYN MAWR TO THE HUDSON SHORE

their own sectional resident schools, have reduced their contributions as they have shifted interest to their own institutions. Believing that "a more united effort in finance work might result in wider publicity and increased funds for all these schools, considered not as separate enterprises but as meeting different needs of industrial workers, in one general movement," the Bryn Mawr group has been urged to avoid separate drives when the other schools have attempted to raise money in the same locality. Some of the reporting committees, therefore, are American Labor Education Service Committees.

Generally there is no sub-committee on finance; treasurers, with or without the help of other individuals, have been responsible for the major part of the work. On the whole, few groups have worked according to a definite plan, the method of raising money depending upon the particular committees. All use solicitation of individuals and groups; some give benefits and parties and some supplement written requests with interpretative bulletins and letters. Former students have written poems and stories for bulletins and have addressed community organizations. Interpretation of the School to the public has been emphasized in recent years, in order that well-to-do contributors may give with new understanding and that those less able to help may justify their choice of workers' education in preference to another cause. Emphasis has been placed upon concrete leadership and trade union responsibility.

While all committees have kept some records, varying in detail and form, few have paid attention to specific details about disbursements or contributions. Reported expenses have seemed to be of a minor nature, being devoted to printing, postage, teas and other incidentals, and transportation of some students to the School. Records have not always indicated what proportion of funds are spent for or given to the School.

The nature of the records and the methods of reporting also make it impossible to discover precise contributions, whether from individuals or from organizations. Total sums from all sources have seemed to vary within a specific area from as low as $200 in one year to as much as $1200 in another, but specific amounts cannot be given tabular outline since communities do

18 Statement by Hilda W. Smith, at meeting of Joint Committee of Affiliated Summer Schools, November 22, 1930.
19 See the Worker Student, issued by the Buffalo Affiliated Schools Committee, February, 1938.

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not use comparable forms. They merely have indicated sources which committees may rely upon from year to year. Donations towards scholarships usually have been made by trade unions, Young Women's Christian Associations, Summer School alumnae, benefits, individuals, and a few miscellaneous groups. A great interchange among categories has been indicated. Bryn Mawr College alumnae may have given as individual contributors, Summer School alumnae as members of a Young Women's Christian Association group, or both may have been included in the figures of other organizations and their contributions to the School thereby concealed. Committees on the whole, however, feel that if College and School alumnae give through different organizations, they increase contacts for both the Summer School and the College.

Money that has come from trade unions, from industrial groups of the Young Women's Christian Association, and from School alumnae has been regarded as gifts from labor sources. The reporting committees have presented some specific instances of trade union help in their communities, consisting of partial or full payment of wages, the payment of travel and incidental expenses, and the contribution of complete scholarships. Students thereby have been helped to compensate for their loss of wages. Funds from college groups, clubs, benefits other than those given by the alumnae group, and from individuals have been listed under non-labor sources. Questionnaire returns have indicated that recently, except for the years 1927-1928, depressed economic conditions have made money-raising difficult within the non-labor groups. All of the committees have emphasized that increased personal obligations, growing taxes, and more demanding community ventures have competed with the School for funds. In addition, mounting conservatism may have caused distrust of the School's program, many people being afraid that workers' education will aid radicalism. The committees therefore often have believed it helpful to have a Bryn Mawr College almonna as chairman. Bryn Mawr alumnae may then be more or less satisfied that the project is in the right hands and alumnae from other schools that one of their own members is not giving too much attention to an outside project.

All of the resident institutions have experienced increasing competition from community projects in workers' education. Contributors to the Bryn Mawr School have compared expenditures for resident and for community
ventures in the field, and one committee member described the situation in 1938 as follows:

It has been increasingly difficult to raise money due to several factors. One is the growing belief, even among the committee members, that the Summer School fee is large and that local classes in the Y.W.C.A. and in local unions have somewhat invalidated the need for the Summer School . . . Everywhere there is an increasing belief that the Summer School has served its chief purpose, that $190 for one girl who may or may not prove herself worthy is too much and that the money applied locally could accomplish a great deal more . . .\textsuperscript{17}

When, as early as 1933, the central office began to notice this problem, it encouraged the committees to emphasize the relation between the central work and local classes. In 1934 a statement was made to the effect that the most promising students of the local classes should be sent to the Summer Schools, in order that they might do the more intensified and specialized work necessary for intelligent leadership.\textsuperscript{18} That year the local work did not seem to interfere with the central recruiting as there were even more applicants than ever before.

The central office has also received money directly from many community organizations; in addition, records have indicated a few sources not listed by the committees. Bryn Mawr College alumnae have made donations as individuals or in groups. Also increasing support from undergraduates of six well-known women's colleges and one junior college has been indicated in some recent years, ranging since 1935 from $25 to $700 in one year. The undergraduates have participated in the functioning of the School, as well, acting as assistants in the sessions, and also their alumnae have helped on committees in the communities.

Bryn Mawr College undergraduates have contributed rather more than have those from other colleges, as might be expected. Excluding the years 1930, 1934, and 1935 for which no information is available, from 1927 through 1938, they gave $9,215.82 to the School. For this period the highest contribution, $1,510, was made in 1927 and the lowest, $735.93, in 1928. Con-

\textsuperscript{17} Letter from Mrs. M. C., Chairman of a local Summer School Committee, dated July 21, 1938.

\textsuperscript{18} Katharine Kautz, Executive Secretary of the School, in a letter to Finance Chairmen of District Committees, January 23, 1934.
tributions in 1931 and 1932 were higher than the average, being $1,250 and $1,180 respectively.

Money from six trust funds has been helpful, two providing a rather constant source of income and four others contributing from time to time. Of the two regular funds one has yielded annually from $175 to $250 and the other from $271 to $679. One committee organized to assist the School has given every year except 1935 in amounts varying from $126 to $300. Groups in Young Women's Christian Associations and Summer School instructors and students have aided the School. Proceeds from parties at the Summer School, and from the cooperative store, have been given, and in addition, contributions from the Summer School alumnae as individuals or in groups. Students of certain years pledged money toward scholarships and funds. However, records on all of these were found to be too inadequate to warrant any listing of figures.

The records of the central office indicate trade union contributions other than those mentioned by the local committees, the sums, coming from seven local and central organizations in several sections of the country, ranging from $15 to $200 in any one year. A few other trade unions promised money should some of their members attend the School, indicating in letters that they saw the value of the Summer School course. Others withdrew their promise of support, stating that any money they could spare for scholarships should go toward their own institutes.

The central office, therefore, has experienced competition similar to that reported by the local committees. It has recognized that the depression has increased the burdens of trade union treasuries and that those organizations are not able to aid the School despite their recognition of responsibility. Consequently a suggestion made in 1934 has been reiterated; namely, that present lists of contributors be extended by the use of club lists, local social registers, and perhaps by cooperation with other organizations.18

No matter what the source of funds, the Summer School has continued to stress the principle that financial support should not determine the choice of applicants. An effort has been made to keep both the School and the students free from obligation to any particular group providing a scholarship. The right of selecting applicants has seemed better reserved to the School it-

18 See Handbook of Information for Chairman of District Committees of the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry, 1934, p. 3.
self, contributors being asked to help build a general scholarship fund, or else aid a specific student after she has been selected. Individuals and organizations, however, have been consulted as to whether an applicant is fit for the work of the School.

The Directors of the Hudson Shore Labor School have taken stock of the financial assets and liabilities of the Bryn Mawr School, hoping they may learn how to meet the financial needs of the new venture. Under depressed economic conditions, financial problems become more weighty. The Hudson Shore Labor School still will have to face the challenge of local programs and justify to contributors the wisdom of their choice. If many groups are allowed to participate in planning, interest may be stimulated. As workers receive more control they may offer more money to the School. Coeducational institutes may make allies of several hesitant friends. While linking control and finance, the School, however, must still guard its traditional principle that independence from all groups is a necessary corollary to the effective, honest, and objective functioning of a resident school.

Hilda W. Smith, member of the Board of Directors of the School, on the relation of the School to the College, April, 1935.
CHAPTER VII

The Selection of the Student Body

FUNDAMENTALLY, a resident school should plan a program of education and activities to meet the needs of students, and the workers' background and the opportunities awaiting them should guide the schools accordingly. Do chosen individuals represent the general working group? Are they aware that others have the same problems? These are questions which resident institutions should answer. The Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry consequently has determined admission requirements by studying the American population. Through a representative student body it has hoped to help all workers.

In 1921 educational requirements were a common school education or its equivalent and the ability to read and write English. In the early years of the School, however, low educational standards throughout the country made flexibility necessary: 66 per cent of all children left school after the sixth grade. In 1926, therefore, completion of the sixth grade became the standard for entrance. But rules continued to be flexible and even in 1930 a few applicants had completed only a second year class, whereas others were high school graduates. Yearly, candidates tended to have more training, and in 1930 most of the students had finished the eighth grade. Three years later 50 per cent had had some high school training. By 1934 the student body contained 13 high school graduates and only five women had not finished the seventh grade of elementary school. At least one year of high school had been completed by half of the group in 1935 and 14 were high school graduates. In 1938, 70 per cent of the women had attended high school. Eighteen had graduated; 25 had attended two or three years; and only three had completed but one year.

During the last decade, the admissions committee has questioned the trend toward high school education among the applicants. Did it represent all
women in industry or was it due to the particular selection of workers sent to the School? In 1929 a study of the situation revealed that young people were staying in school longer than formerly because of economic and industrial conditions. The raising of the school-leaving age and the extension of educational facilities were contributing factors. The recent report of the National Advisory Committee on Education emphasized the continuation of the trend in the present as follows:

> As late as 1890 in the United States only 3.8 percent of the number of young people 14 to 17 years of age were enrolled in public high schools; at present more than 60 percent of the population of high school age are enrolled in public high schools. In 1937 for the first time the number of graduates from high schools in a single year passed the million mark. There are now some 25,000 public high schools in which over 230,000 teachers instruct almost 6,000,000 boys and girls.

All existing trends indicate that a considerably higher percentage will attend high school in the future, particularly in areas where high school enrollments are still low.

The nationality composition of the student body has changed during the development of the Summer School, the shift being from foreign-born to American-born. As late as 1930, at least half of the women were immigrants and an additional 25 per cent were the children of immigrants. Four years later, one-third were foreign-born and the majority of them had lived in the United States for 10 years. In 1938, only 16 per cent were immigrants. Both parents of approximately one-third of the native-born students had been born in America and an additional 16 per cent had at least one native-born parent.

The increase in native-born candidates has reflected the national trend. In 1922 the country admitted 309,556 immigrants. Ten years later immigration was the lowest in a century and only 35,576 aliens entered the United States; in 1935 the number had dropped to 17,207.

From the outset the School has required that candidates should have had at least three years of industrial wage-earning experience, of which two years should have been with the tools of their trade in other than a supervisory capacity. Naturally many have come from the great industries which employ large numbers of women, foremost among these being the needle trades and the textile industry. In 1926 a special group was admitted to the School from

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1 Report of the Educational Secretary, 1929.
the latter, so that a large number of women workers might be helped to study the problems of their industry. Four years later, the majority of applicants, as in former years, came from the clothing industries, the millinery trades, and the textile field.

By 1934 the School recognized new trends in the employment of women and recommended, therefore, that students be admitted to the School from other industries. Attention was centered upon rubber, automotive, and flat glass centers, in addition to textile and garment trades. Thus in 1937 recruiting for one-half the student body was concentrated in the Lowell-Lynn-Haverhill textile district of Massachusetts, the Akron-Toledo rubber, flat glass and automobile region of Ohio, and the Pennsylvania garment section. The following year, in the total of 65, four students came from textile industries, 18 from the women's clothing industry, and seven from the men's clothing industry. The School has continued to believe that a large group of workers from a specific industry will feel more encouraged to continue education and activities after the summer than will the isolated worker.

The changing proportion of women employed in different occupations has complicated the choice of students, as have shifts in occupations due to economic exigencies. The following table presents the employment distribution which has influenced the selection of candidates. Since the trend line from 1880 seems to have been relatively unbroken, figures from that date seem necessary for a complete picture.

**WOMEN IN THE ECONOMY OF THE UNITED STATES***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Percent Distribution of Women in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>1910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and allied industries</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Manufacturing and mechanical industries | 23.8 | 22.5 | 17.5*
| Trade, transportation, and communication | 2.1 | 7.3 | 11.6 |
| Clerical occupations                    | .3  | 7.3  | 18.5 |
| Professional service                     | 6.7 | 9.1  | 14.2 |
| Domestic and personal service            | 44.4 | 31.3 | 29.6 |
| Public service (not elsewhere classified) | .2  | .1   | .2  |

*This represents a decline chiefly in the earlier manual skilled work, such as that of tailoresses and dressmakers and seamstresses. If the figure be taken on factory occupations alone, the proportion in 1930 is greater than in these earlier years.

From 1910 to 1930 the number of women in the clerical, professional, and trade groups more than doubled, while it decreased by one-fourth in domestic and personal service and by two-fifths in factory operation. In the chief hand trades the number declined heavily. The changes may be seen in the following list:

**INCREASE IN NUMBER OF WOMEN EMPLOYED 1910 TO 1930**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All occupations</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic and personal service</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical occupations</td>
<td>237.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing and mechanical</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>industries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief hand trades</td>
<td>65.3*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factory operatives</td>
<td>39.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>103.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional service</td>
<td>107.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In this case a decrease, as group comprises dressmakers and seamstresses not in factories, and milliners and millinery dealers.

The admissions committee has had to cope with problems resulting from the national trend. Originally the School was not planned for clerical and office workers. Soon, however, the student body requested the inclusion of different categories of workers, with which the Board of Directors complied. District committees were told to advise applicants to apply even though their eligibility seemed doubtful but to warn them that they might not be accepted. Domestic workers, clerks engaged in a mechanical process, or other groups on the borderline of the industrial category especially were affected. Hence, consideration was to be given to the contact of office and domestic workers with an industrial group and their response to its problems. Some clerks, for example, employed in a trade union office, might have had more experience with industrial than with white-collar groups. On the other hand, some clerical workers might have drifted into the industrial field due to lack of choice, their sympathies not necessarily rooted there. In 1930 the School accepted seven women from domestic and personal service and one adding-machine operator. By 1933 the American Labor Education Service recognized

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*Report to District Committees, 1931-32.*

*Recommendations of Faculty of the Summer School Session of 1936 for 1937.*

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the problem of the clerical worker and founded the Summer School for Office Workers. Bryn Mawr Summer School students, however, still demanded closer contacts with the various categories of workers than could be afforded by separate schools, and in that year the Bryn Mawr School accepted 15 women from the trade, transport and clerical fields as well as four from domestic service. The students have continued to request the admittance of clerical workers and the Board of Directors has stated that a white-collar unit might be planned for some session in the future.9

Partly to meet the request that more domestic workers be at the School and partly to experiment with student participation in housework, seven women with both industrial and domestic experience were accepted in 1937.9 On the campus, the seven workers combined housework and study; as a Committee on Cooperative Living, they planned housekeeping duties for the other women in the student body. A similar committee functioned in the 1938 session.

In addition to these changes the number of categories among the "industrial workers" has tended to expand within the School as within the country, and has included mass production workers, elevator operators, sales clerks and beauty shop operators. For instance, a few workers were accepted from among automobile, glass, electric, and rubber workers in 1938, and a wide variety of other categories were represented, including beauticians and waitresses.

The Bryn Mawr School has considered applicants from many places within the United States and abroad. Nevertheless, especially since 1930, the majority of students have come from the Middle Atlantic, New England, and Middle-Western areas.10 In 1938 the usual proportion for recent years was maintained; New England sent 19 students, the Middle Atlantic area 31, the Middle-West seven, the South three, and the West one; four students came from abroad. Thirteen states and 34 cities in this country were represented, as were England, Denmark, and Canada.

The location of women employed in industry will continue in part to determine recruiting policies. According to the 1930 census, one-fourth of

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8Statement at Meeting of Board of Directors of the Bryn Mawr Summer School, November, 1936.
9Report of the Board of Directors of the Bryn Mawr Summer School, April, 1937.
10Eleanor Snyder, Job Histories of Women Workers at the Summer Schools, 1931-1934 and 1938, Washington, Bulletin of the Women's Bureau, No. 174, 1939, passim.
all working women were in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, and
two-thirds of the women employed in manufacture were located in the 14
states north of Maryland and the Ohio River, and East of the Mississippi.\textsuperscript{11} The situation in 1938 was different. Industries employing women were
moving from the large cities into new regions of the South and toward the
West. This trend is likely to affect the recruiting procedure of the Hudson
Shore School. Not only the changing location of industry but also the rise of
sectional schools for workers certainly may be influential. The School may
realize, as did its predecessor, that national recruiting is affected by the cost
and time of travel. District committees had often sent a majority of candi­
dates to sectional schools rather than to the more distant national one. A
secretary of the San Francisco Y.W.C.A. has expressed the opinion that stu­
dents from the Pacific Coast may well attend their own educational institution
instead of coming as far East as Bryn Mawr. In the Middle-West, Chicago
and other cities have reported that it is easier to secure recruits for Wisconsin
partly because of the distance involved. Southern areas have found their
school more within their reach financially. The development of new schools
for workers throughout the country, therefore, seems to meet in part the
problems raised by the changing location of industries employing women.

The initial policy of the Bryn Mawr School was to admit an equal number
of non-unionized and unionized workers. Representation of different philoso­
phies was desired in the latter category. Also within the organized group of
students, women labor leaders were to be included. As outlined in 1922,
educational opportunity was to be given to women not necessarily employed
with the tools of a trade but integrated closely with the workers’ life. The
balance between unionized and non-unionized workers has been difficult to
attain. In the early days, a minority of students were interested in the labor
movement, but by 1934, two-thirds of the School was comprised of active
union members.\textsuperscript{12} Two years later the percentage was approximately the same
but in 1938 it had advanced to 84 per cent. Certain textile and garment
workers’ organizations were widely represented in the School and since 1934
an increasing number of students have belonged to industrial unions.

\textsuperscript{12} Hilda W. Smith, Member of the Board of Directors of the School, \textit{Policies of the
Bryn Mawr Summer School}, March, 1933.
The type of trade union student has differed from year to year. In 1934 the younger leader in the labor movement was predominant. She had certain specific problems in mind which she wished to study. The student in 1936 was less experienced in labor organization; 17 of the 39 trade unionists in the School had been members for less than two years. However, the faculty found them more difficult to assist and recommended that most of the organized students should be experienced and genuinely interested in the labor movement. In 1937, therefore, 26 of the 41 trade unionists admitted to the School had held office or served on important committees within their organizations. The recommendation was made in 1938 that the School continue to choose applicants who are intelligent trade unionists. Mere membership is not enough, since individuals may be drawn into a union by a closed shop agreement and may not comprehend the function of their organization. A few specialized leaders have continued to come to the School. Numbering only three or four a year and including organizers, business agents, Y.W.C.A. secretaries, or labor college executives, they have not constituted a separate group, but have been taught with the other students. In 1938, two leaders were recruited through the N. Y. Women’s Trade Union League where they were being trained as organizers.

The changing proportion of trade unionists within the School has reflected nation-wide trends. Prior to the present time, the peak of organization in the country had been reached in 1920. In that year the total number of women in trade unions was estimated to be under 400,000, less than eight per cent of all organized labor. According to an estimate made in 1938, women trade unionists numbered almost 800,000, or about 10 per cent of all organized workers, although current official figures are not yet available to substantiate this conjecture. The increasing number of unionized women is revealed in the following list:

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13 Recommendation of Faculty of the Summer School Session of 1936 for 1937.
14 Report of the Director of the Summer School, 1937.
That members of certain trade unions have been well represented in the School has been natural. Since recruiting of students has been focused on the Middle Atlantic, New England and Middle-Western areas, workers from the garment, textile, and boot and shoe industries have applied. For example, by 1929 the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union had organized many women in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Rochester, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Boston, St. Louis and Milwaukee. Since 1934, the textile and garment organizations have greatly augmented the number of women upon their rolls. In that year, for example, the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union had 80,000 female members. Three years later, there were about 200,000 women in the union, comprising three-fourths of the total membership. By 1937, women constituted one-half of the 300,000 members of the A.C.W.A. Specifically, they formed about 85 per cent of unionized shirtemakers and 70 per cent of organized laundry workers.\textsuperscript{17}

Large numbers of the newly unionized women belonged to the Congress of Industrial Organizations. The American Federation of Labor had barred many of them from membership, claiming as a reason that their jobs were unskilled and semi-skilled. Although the Federation had hired special organizers to work among women in 1918 and 1926, by 1934 their proportion was still small.\textsuperscript{18} Because of this, the Bryn Mawr School has found equal recruiting from craft and industrial groups difficult to attain.

Leadership opportunities for women trade unionists also were unbalanced. The A.F. of L. did not heed the plea reiterated in 1935 that women should be given responsible positions, but at present certain trade unions in the C.I.O. report increased leadership among them. Although the clothing branch of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers does not offer much opportunity, women hold positions as business agents, secretaries, and local officials in its cotton

\textsuperscript{17} Pritchard, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 27-28.

\textsuperscript{18} Hutchins, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 260.
THE SELECTION OF THE STUDENT BODY

garment branches. However, leadership cannot be forecast for women in either the A.F. of L. or the C.I.O., since factors other than opportunity influence the situation.

As trade unions have developed, groups have been formed to interest the wives of organized workers. Ladies' auxiliaries have been instituted and their members have been trained to participate effectively in workers' education as well as in other activities. At a 1937 meeting of representatives from Detroit and Flint auto auxiliaries, women seemed eager to attend summer schools. They wanted training in planning educational programs for women and children. Although the Bryn Mawr School has accepted an occasional auxiliary member, no definite precedent has been established. The 1938 investigators, therefore, recommended women's auxiliaries as an important recruiting source.

The average age of students has altered as the Bryn Mawr School has developed. Women between the ages of 18 and 35 originally were admitted although preference was shown to candidates over 20 years old. The age range of 20 to 35 later defined the entrance requirements. In the early years the largest number of students were between 25 and 29. By 1933 a younger group began to enter the School. In 1934, one-half of the students were under 25; in 1935 the median was 25; and in 1936 it was 23. In that year the Director commented on the youthfulness of the women and the faculty recommended that the average age of future students should be 24. In 1937, although the age level was approximately the same as the year before, they seemed more mature and stable and some of the best students were the youngest. However, the desirability of preserving balance between the more and the less experienced members still was mentioned. In 1938 the student body included 36 women between the ages of 19 and 24, 17 between 25 and 29, 10 between 30 and 35, and two over 35. On the whole, the influx of younger women into the School has reflected their entrance into the trade union movement. Of women suit, coat, and overall operatives in New York State in 1930, for example, 38.8 per cent were under 25.

Statistics of the Southern Summer School, the Wisconsin School for Workers, the School for Office Workers, and the Pacific Coast School indicate that their recruiting has been influenced by the same forces which have

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11 Report of the Director of the Summer School, 1937.
12 Pritchard, op. cit., p. 38.
reached the Bryn Mawr institution. In some instances, however, they have responded differently, the primary distinction centering about the issue of coeducation. Trade unions and other groups have stated that workers' education for women alone is artificial and does not mirror accurately the life situations the workers must face. With the exception of the Bryn Mawr institution, therefore, the resident summer schools became coeducational.

The Bryn Mawr School has utilized male instructors on its faculty and has stimulated workers' education projects in men's colleges. Trade unions, however, have not been satisfied; school alumnae have emphasized the importance of learning how to work with men; and faculty and students have asked that the issue be studied. The Hudson Shore School still wishes to analyze the problem, and in the meantime, men will be invited to institutes and conferences.

Generally, students have come to the Bryn Mawr School for only one year. A few women, however, have been accepted for advanced study if their first year record indicated that they would benefit especially from a longer period of training. District committees have been consulted about the activities of the candidates after their first term, and the School has wished to know whether a particular worker is equipped to interpret its traditions to new students.

Students who have spent their first year at sectional schools for workers also have been accepted at Bryn Mawr for advanced work. This has happened because the value of training in a nationally-based institution has been recognized. To facilitate a student exchange, the Bryn Mawr School was asked to recommend a uniform record card which would indicate the first-year progress of a particular worker. Ordinarily second-year students have been distributed throughout the student body. In 1934, when 20 advanced candidates were accepted, an entire school unit was provided for them. In 1938 and 1939, second-year students on the committee for "cooperative living" partly constituted a separate group. With these exceptions, advanced students have not been a distinct group and their average number has been 10, but acceptance of even this small number of "graduates" has aroused discussion.

Certain supporters of the School have stated that attention should be focused upon first-year applicants; others have suggested that the School become a graduate institution recruiting mainly from the East."

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28 Recommendations of Faculty of the Summer School Session, 1933.
Women workers have found it difficult to attend the summer session for a variety of reasons. Industrial causes, including unemployment and seasonal employment, and personal factors, including family responsibilities, lack of money and illness, have been responsible. The same reasons have been given year after year. For instance, busy seasons in certain industries are relied upon for employment. If the peak period of a trade occurs during the summer months or immediately after the summer session, the School necessarily must lose some applicants for they must remain in their communities to seek jobs. Also trade unions are busy during the same period and experienced union members are needed at home.

Unemployment has not consistently discouraged candidates from attending the School. In 1930, it did not affect recruiting from metropolitan centers as much as from non-metropolitan communities. Two years later, very few women withdrew their applications since many felt that the prospect for employment was so slight that they might as well attend the School. In contrast, the year 1933 influenced many women differently. They felt that since work was so slack they could not risk losing even a little employment during the summer. "Though reluctant to give up the school these girls who had been out of work for the best part of three years snatched at the opportunity of even temporary jobs." In 1935 the situation again was reversed. Fifteen of a total of 51 students were unemployed. They had come to study since there seemed to be no opportunity for work in their communities.

In 1937, a typical year for the School, 99 candidates were accepted. Before the session began, 39 found themselves unable to attend, thereby reducing the size of the student body to 60. Of those not accepting the opportunity, 12 could not obtain a leave of absence from work and union duties kept four at home. Five could not leave family responsibilities and three had no money for travel; four were ill, three could not obtain the permission of the family, one decided to marry, and one merely indicated a family emergency. Five additional applicants had been accepted as alternates too late to complete their plans for attendance.

The School has attempted to solve the problem by having a short session of seven weeks ending when a seasonal rise in industry tends to occur. A smaller
group of students, numbering 50 to 70 instead of 100, also has tended to diminish the proportion relinquishing their study, since selection may be more careful. However, obstacles in recruiting have been only partly overcome.

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The Bryn Mawr Summer School may be commended. Despite the indicated limitations, its students have represented American working women in education, national origin, geographical residence, and experience in industry and labor organization. On the whole, the Hudson Shore School intends to follow the precedents which have been established. The reorganized institution realizes that only through a representative student body can it help all American workers to face their problems with understanding, integrity, and freedom.
CHAPTER VIII
The Summer Program of Studies and Activities

A RESIDENT school should emphasize subjects and methods which community projects are unable to develop. The Bryn Mawr School has attempted to do so as it has helped students "obtain a truer insight into the problems of industry, and feel a more vital responsibility for their solution." Accordingly, sustained study and extensive analysis have been encouraged.

The School has designed the summer session to be significant for each student. Therefore applicants have been asked to indicate challenging community problems which study might help to solve. When the institution was still young, questions on the application blank were general, and candidates merely were asked what subjects they wished to take and what they wanted to do as members of various community groups. But as the School has developed and grown more conscious of workers' problems, questions have become more specific. Applicants have been asked to indicate what topics relating to their industrial life and their locality they wish to study and to list the specific organizations with which they are affiliated. They have been requested to state their responsibilities in the associations, how important they consider their participation, and what they desire to do in the future. Curricula have been planned partly on the basis of these answers. Interests thereby are discovered. Winter activities of alumnae are an additional guide.

Program hints also have been obtained from community classes for applicants and alumnae. The faculty and board of the School have recommended instruction, preliminary to the summer session, so that the educational equipment of candidates may be developed. Through courses in their own communities, prospective students therefore are prepared to use effectively the

3 Constitution as amended in 1923, Article II, Section I.
4 Information obtained from a study of application forms of successive years.
limited opportunity of the short resident program. Local committees have instituted the classes and draw applicants to them. At first, instruction in English necessarily was emphasized; but as the education and Americanization of candidates have increased with time, social and economic topics have been chiefly discussed, though work in English has been continued. Moreover, changing world conditions have influenced the School to focus upon the social sciences.

The shifting emphasis of the application sheet reflects trends within the summer session. The basic range of subjects usually has had to be limited so that the best possible course may be planned for the two months which workers spend on the campus. Whereas the early curriculum offered many fields, in the past 10 years instruction has centered around a principal economic topic, coordinated with work in English. Economics and English accordingly have been required courses. Elementary economics instruction has been supplemented by more advanced elective study.

The choice of the economic theme each year has been influenced by the interests which students express and the immediate problems facing labor in general. In 1931 study focused upon unemployment; in 1932 social control was the major interest; and two years later students analyzed the National Recovery Act and situations within codified industries. Recently, trade unionism has been emphasized. The content of specific courses is related to the central theme of the session.

The integration of subjects has in part conditioned the teaching of English. In earlier years, the tendency was to emphasize considerably the creative and cultural study of literature and composition. By 1936, better understanding and expression of spoken and written English became the goal but in that year, students recommended that classes become more utilitarian. The faculty recognized the need for practical work, but maintained that creative and corrective opportunities should be available if individuals wanted them. Specialized writing and social literature thus were offered as elective courses, supplementing required speaking and composition classes.

Opportunities in subjects other than economics and English have been flexible. General science at times has been required and sometimes has been

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3 Statement of policies of the School, April 16, 1934.
4 Report of the Director of the School for the session June 13 to August 8, 1936, p. 6.

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elective. In 1932, for instance, a science workshop served as a "museum" for women who were interested in the field. Therein visual aids and laboratory demonstrations were used to illustrate theoretical lessons. By 1936, the subject was presented in an elementary required course; it included some discussion of human biology, and used laboratory work wherever possible.

History and psychology on the whole have been subordinated to the basic curriculum, being offered as electives. When, in 1936, the students recommended that history be a fundamental course, the Board of Directors of the School cautioned lest breadth of curriculum introduce overcrowding. With this in mind, the planning committee recommended more emphasis upon history but suggested that the subject be related directly to topics discussed in economics.⁸

Numerous other needs of industrial workers have been recognized. As the industries from which candidates have come have altered their working conditions and hours, intelligent use of leisure time has been taught. Music and dramatics have offered new pleasures and recreation new skills. A health program has been designed to prove the importance of individual and social well-being to workers as well as to society.⁹

When the School first opened, courses were comparatively unrelated and tutors aided students outside of class. A unit system was adopted in 1927 and initiated in 1928 in order to integrate studies and avoid confusion. The system aimed to synthesize subject matter, somewhat according to a plan described a few years earlier at Brookwood Labor College. A. J. Muste, who outlined this scheme, stated that the basic principle was to have several instructors sit in and take part with the class in handling a given situation, each making the contribution for which his specialization fits him.⁷ Students were placed in several groups. Within each, three instructors of different subjects planned coordinate courses and tutored their own pupils. In 1930, participant observers were placed in the units to record discussion and report to students in other groups, as well as to the faculty.

All units fundamentally are interrelated, because they are centered around the main topic developed in the session. Yet within each group, flexibility

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⁸Statement made to the Board of Directors of the School, November, 1936.
⁹Statement of policies, op. cit.
has been the primary characteristic. Each class has focused upon individual needs and not upon subject alone.

The number of units and of women in each have varied. A group usually has included from 17 to 20 individuals. In 1929 and 1930, there were five and six divisions respectively. In recent years, three have encompassed the student body. Throughout, an attempt has been made to make each group a cross-section of the School. Differences among the women in nationality, geographical origin, occupation, and trade union membership always have had to be considered. At first, tests indicating general intelligence and reading ability determined the placing of students in specific units. In 1929 social attitudes of individuals were analyzed and used as a basis. Recently candidates have tended to be more alike and their educational background has improved. The tests in 1936 as a result revealed less variation in the rate and comprehension of reading than had formerly existed. Therefore the faculty in 1937 decided to discard the tests and to group students experimentally, using as guides information on the application sheet and other preliminary data. The English teachers, however, still used tests to determine the need for remedial work.

Second-year students complicated the unit system. Should they have their own group or should they be distributed in several divisions? In 1934, a committee suggested that second-year students be recruited for a separate project but study mainly in the regular groups. In 1937 and 1938, through the Committee on Cooperative Living, second-year women attended the usual classes but also were in a special project on household employment.

In addition to class work, special meetings have been held so that students may discuss problems vital to them all. Yearly the women have been encouraged to consider issues which challenge them. In 1930 a forum weighed the relative value of various community organizations. During the last two weeks of the 1932 session workers from different sections of the country met and analyzed their local problems; they discussed how to form classes where workers had few opportunities, how to participate more effectively in their

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* Report to the faculty of the School on plans following the staff conference held on the campus, May 15-16, 1937.
communities, and what issues to study before voting in the coming election. In 1936 a large meeting considered the variety of organizations and points of view represented in the School. Several smaller gatherings which followed analyzed more specifically the difference between workers' groups throughout the country. A realistic approach to workers' problems also has been encouraged through studies which the School has conducted or for which material to be used by other groups has been gathered. The job-analysis survey undertaken in 1925 had the following aims:

... to assist the teachers of the summer schools in understanding the background experience of the students with whom they are working and thus to adapt their program and teaching methods to the problems at hand, and second to build up a body of information concerning the trade experience of a selected group of women workers from the important women's trades and from all parts of the country.

Another study was initiated three years later by the economics faculty so that both instructors and students might obtain "more systematic knowledge of the experience of industrial women composing the Summer School group." In 1933 a third project was undertaken because the women were "convinced that it was their obligation, both as students and as workers, to arrive at a better understanding of the predicament into which they had been forced by the economic organization in which they live and work."

Informal discussions and research are favored by the students. They have suggested several times that fewer formal class hours be scheduled and that more time be devoted to spontaneous study evolving from individual interests. The faculty has recognized that the idea has merits, like those embodied in "training for leadership" and classes in community organization. Thereby workers may learn persistence and how to be intelligent, active members of varied groups.

The School has realized that workers will benefit greatly if while studying they remain interested in events off the campus and maintain contact

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11 Quoted in Amy Hewes, Women Workers in the Third Year of the Depression, Study by Students in the Bryn Mawr Summer School, (U. S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau Publication, No. 103), 1933.
13 Hewes, op. cit.
with the outside world. Therefore, speakers and groups have been invited to visit the summer session. Gradually the number of speakers has decreased while the latter have become more important. The women recommended that student forums replace outside speakers as far as possible. On the other hand, they have desired to meet the members of various organizations. To satisfy the demand, weekend conferences and one-day institutes have been organized. Groups including the Philadelphia Labor College, the Women's Trade Union League, the Central Labor College, and alumnae from academic colleges, have been invited to participate and also to observe classes. In 1937 the Board of Directors stated that some plan might be formulated whereby small groups from several organizations could be accommodated for longer periods. Students could become familiar with their techniques and in turn the agencies could interpret workers' education in their respective communities.

When the School began, arrangements had been made to allow the women to observe group techniques and programs off the campus. In April 1934 a policy relating to extra-curricular activities was defined as follows:

The major educational value of the Summer School lies primarily in the work on the campus. A limited time, however, may successfully be given to field work, for we recognize the principle that students learn by experience. Such field work should be supervised by teachers and undertaken only as part of the regular work of the School or class. Such field work may include trips to museums, factories, union meetings, strikes, and legislative hearings.

Since trips to the community were integrated with study at the School, they could not be planned before the summer session. They had to evolve according to student interests, which differed from one summer to another. At all times two factors were taken into consideration: the educational advantages to be derived and whether or not the School and College would be exposed to unfavorable publicity. The School could not officially participate in industrial conflicts or like activities, since students held so many different opinions and philosophies. Also the short summer session would not permit the careful investigation which would be necessary before any unified action could be taken. However, individual students and faculty members were allowed to

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19 Report to the Board of Directors of the School, April, 1936.
20 Plan of Procedure for Off-Campus Activities, Voted upon by the Board of Directors in April, 1934.
21 Statement of policies, op. cit.
participate in controversial situations occurring off the campus, if they felt they must. They had to identify themselves with their local affiliations and positions and not with the School."

Despite precautions, in 1934 the public connected several events not only with the School but with the College. The latter, therefore, recommended that outside activities by students and faculty be discontinued. The Board of Directors of the School answered by saying that the School was an integral part of the workers’ education movement. Students, therefore, could not be denied contact with important outside events. At the request of the college, the School was temporarily withdrawn from the campus during the summer of 1935 so that the issue could be decided upon objectively. An agreement reached the next year stated that the policy formulated in 1934 be maintained. The opinion was that, on the whole, extra-curricular activities would be few since so many of their functions had been built gradually into the regular program. However, many individuals feared that field work would be restricted too greatly; they believed that the situation strengthened the argument that resident schools represent a withdrawal from the active world.

The School has always emphasized that the learning process be objective, whether inside or outside of the class room or campus; that no particular theory or dogma should be favored; that expression of minority opinion should be encouraged. Yet because students have differed in their acquaintance with economic and social problems, it has not been easy to enforce the principle that all ideas be presented equally. Skill has been needed to help the inexperienced worker match her wits against others more experienced.

Recently, however, an increasing number of women have learned about vital questions. In their communities, elementary and secondary schools have broadened curricula; Y.W.C.A.’s, settlements, and other organizations have been making their programs more responsive to environmental problems. Various organizations are at the present time urging that adult and workers’ education be as varied as are the social and economic needs of adults and their intellectual interests. One group recommends that adult education include the following:

11 Minutes of meeting of the Executive Committee of the Summer School, July 10, 1934, p. 3.
PATTERNS OF WORKERS' EDUCATION

1. Training for vocational readjustments.
2. Opportunities for growth in social and political understanding.
3. Provision for the creative use of leisure time in such manner as to add to the well-being of the individual, physically, intellectually, and emotionally.
4. Guidance in the pursuit of intellectual achievement or artistic performance in some field of interest.

Women are today coming to workers' schools better equipped to take advantage of resident study.

The Director and faculty of the School have been chosen carefully so that the workers may be helped to understand their problems and articulate their thoughts. The School has realized that the relationship between student and staff must be informal if the desired ends are to be accomplished. The Director and instructors, therefore, have been required to have certain qualifications. The former has had to show that she is genuinely interested in the students, that she understands labor movements and workers' groups, and that she knows the principles and methods of workers' education. In addition she has had to be an administrator and able to work with committees.

The School's requirements anteceded the typical prerequisites for teachers in workers' education, as set forth by the W.P.A.:

1. A keen interest in workers' education and its relation to the labor movement.
2. A broad understanding of and sympathy with workers' problems, based wherever possible on practical experience in industry or personal contact with workers.
3. A belief in a democratic procedure among adults.
4. A comprehensive knowledge of the subject matter proposed workers' education courses and familiarity with materials and techniques of workers' education.

Within general requirements like those above, the Bryn Mawr School has chosen faculty members to meet different problems. In the first years of the School a labor representative was present on the campus. The arrangement was discarded when it was felt that direct contact with labor organizations

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was possible, but in 1938 a labor representative was reintroduced for the following purposes:

... to act as an interpreter between students and members of the faculty; to watch and participate in the daily life of the students as a so-called warden; to interpret the School to the public; to help plan institutes; to sit in certain classes as consultant in practical trade union problems.

In one session it was discovered that women of a particular religion could not reconcile their religious and social ideas. The next summer an English teacher of the same faith who had faced the same problems and met them successfully for herself was chosen so that she might help the students. Faculty members have also been recruited from particular sections of the country where alumnae are asking for help. Instructors have been both male and female so that workers may learn to cooperate with both sexes.

Because of the prerequisites the School's instructors have been men and women who have taught in secondary schools and colleges and are interested in workers. They usually have participated in labor groups. For example, in one session, one instructor had experience as a trade union member and workers' education teacher; another had been a labor organizer; several had taught workers in community projects or in government programs; one teacher had done social and industrial research, and one had been a Y.W.C.A. Industrial Secretary.

The task of obtaining the proper instructors has not been an easy one. Few teachers have been interested in labor problems or closely associated with workers. Individual teachers have not believed unionization necessary for themselves. School boards have blacklisted those who joined labor organizations. The situation has, of course, been changing recently. But from the very first the School has maintained that instructors had to be found who could understand the students and their problems. The search was made more difficult because of a desire that at least 20 percent of the faculty be new each year.

The role of all staff members has been analyzed carefully in meetings preliminary to as well as during the summer session. The faculty has always been asked to make suggestions which will aid recruiting, teaching and fol-

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21 Statement obtained from plans for the summer session of 1938.
22 Letter to interested individual by a member of the Board of Directors, 1938.
23 Material obtained from a study of letters of application.
low-up work in the communities. They have been allowed freedom of thought and of speech in all their functions; individual convictions have not been precluded. The School has maintained, however, that instructors must be objective and that controversial issues must be discussed from every point of view.

Since few opportunities for teacher training exist in workers' education, the School initiated an informal program, and aid has been given both individuals and groups. College undergraduates and graduates, as assistants to instructors, gather reference material for the units, and coach students. In 1938 seven trainees at the School helped the English and economics faculty and assisted in recreational work, music, the library, and the cooperative store. One English instructor developed in-service training as follows:

Each of the undergraduates assigned to assist this unit stated that she wanted to take up workers' education after college. Consequently, we planned all of the work of the unit together. This was done not only in a regular weekly conference but in continuous consultation . . . Every phase of English teaching fell to them during the seven weeks period . . . Psychological problems of individual control and group management were taken up with the assistants. They were made to analyze the techniques of teaching in the units they visited, and they were in turn criticized on their own method of projection and organization . . . Since the Bryn Mawr Summer School is a center, and in some respects a model, of workers' education, the instructor feels strongly that every person who assists with the work should be given the fullest possible opportunity to learn to teach workers. This was done in this unit.69

Opportunities also have been provided for development in the communities. Wherever possible, former assistants serve upon local Summer School committees and help to interpret the field to others.

Through the Work Projects Administration, the School taught techniques of workers' education to a large number of individuals. In 1934 the Bryn Mawr institution, as well as other workers' schools, housed a government training center upon the campus. After that year the decision was made not to accommodate an entire unit of this kind because the School was not equipped to shoulder the added responsibility. Since that time conferences and institutes have provided the main medium for training. W.P.A. teachers met with second-year students in 1936 to learn techniques, and in 1938 they attended a week-end meeting for teachers in workers' education.

69 The Use of Undergraduate Assistants, Report of an English Instructor to the Board of Directors of the School, 1937.
At the close of the summer session, the faculty has rated students in order to report to community organizations intending to cooperate with alumnae. The evaluation forms which were devised in the early years emphasized intellectual details. It was noted that the type of work done and the grasp of subject were "very superior," "acceptable," or "definitely inadequate." Note was made of the way a student could be expected to react in an adult education class—whether she was "very dull and slow," whether she was "original, keen, or logical," or somewhere in between the two categories. Capacity for independent thought was indicated. Personality traits were noted in terms of language difficulties, marked prejudices, emotional instability, and marked susceptibility to distraction. Each instructor decided whether or not a student should be recommended for second-year work.

In 1928 community activity by the students became a primary focus. Under a new category of "capabilities," the following questions were asked: "Did this student display qualities which might be further encouraged through the usual community resources to increase her effectiveness in dealing with industrial problems? Did she show any capacity for leadership or social usefulness? (Consider her originality, initiative, perseverance, good capacity of self evaluation, or evaluation of others, etc.)." Adequacy of work and results of mental and educational tests were still noted in detail.

In 1930 possible future activity was emphasized further. Instead of considering intellectual capacity alone, development during the session was emphasized. Specific details which might help the student to become effective in her community were noted. Accordingly, consideration was given to the ability to think impersonally, open mindedness, ability to read, to speak to a group and to write. The instructor was asked whether high school training helped a worker adjust to the group and to this type of educative experience. Suggestions also were made about the "kind of experience the student should have in her district to carry on the development started at the School to further her community usefulness." District committees interested in the students learned such facts through correspondence. In 1931 intellectual rank was emphasized even less and community tie-up even more. Specific recommendations for activity came to include class or study programs, or work in community organizations or the labor movement. Choice of second-year

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Information obtained from a study of rating forms of successive years.
candidates was made after consideration of their ability to undertake advanced work. Because exact classification was difficult, still another rating change was instituted in 1932 and carried on thereafter. Unit leaders, after guidance in faculty meetings, submitted statements about each student, with particular reference to intellectual progress, group participation and effort. Recommendations were made for community activity and work in local classes.

Ratings have been important since they inform community organizations how to help alumnae when they return home. In the evaluation process, the faculty has expressed the belief that the summer session must lead to more than a desire for study. By being active in local groups, the women really must prove that resident schools may help workers to become aware of their problems and active in solving them. Social participation has been the ultimate goal of the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry.
The Participation of Summer School Students Within Their Communities
CHAPTER IX

The Activities of Students in Upton, Downton and Fluxton

THE Bryn Mawr School has realized that the achievement of its purpose—student participation in community life—depends upon varied social and economic backgrounds as well as upon differences among individuals. Women who have attended the School have come from many communities: urban and rural; small and large; Eastern, Western, Northern, and Southern. Modes of life have differed from one place to another. At the same time, however, special nation-wide interests and what the sociologist calls "rurbanization" have tended to eliminate sectional dissimilarities. When alumnae participation is surveyed, both likeness and difference among communities must be remembered and also the diverse personalities of the workers.

Upton, Downton, and Fluxton symbolize the three types of communities in which the School's alumnae live: one a place conducive to activity; one discouraging to activity; and one a changing community. Through visits to these cities, the activities of former students were observed closely.

UPTON: A COMMUNITY CONDUCIVE TO ACTIVITY

The 1930 census placed Upton in the population category 250,000-500,000. Different social and economic classes, nationalities, and races are represented in the community and varied interest groups have been formed and are active. Organizations include a Council of Social Agencies, a university, several industrial associations, a number of trade unions, political parties, and group work associations.

These names are fictitious. They represent, however, three actual cities carefully selected as typical of the community types.
Certain of Upton's organizations plan special programs for workers. One of the political groups has a predominant working-class constituency. A few churches hold classes in which social problems are discussed. Settlements sponsor recreation especially for unorganized working people and arouse their interest as consumers. Citizens' groups conduct lectures on trade unionism. Schools and a few labor organizations are helping to promote W.P.A. workers' education projects. Efforts are made to stimulate and to meet demand for the services of these projects. Forums have been most successful, each attended by approximately 80 to 90 persons. Teachers have conducted classes for a small number of trade unions.

Unionization has progressed in recent years, especially in certain industries, and women are being organized in large numbers and encouraged to participate as members and leaders in union activities. Their educational opportunities are primarily of a recreational type; but through the W.P.A. and the Y.W.C.A. they have been able to obtain formal instruction designed for workers. A liberal and progressive Y.W.C.A. industrial department serves both organized and unorganized women and provides trade parties, labor dramatics, mass recitations, and formal classes. Cooperation is encouraged between union and non-union groups and between different races. Physical facilities are extended to many dissimilar labor organizations.

A local committee promotes the interests of the Bryn Mawr School within the community. This committee is composed of representatives of graduates of several colleges (including Bryn Mawr) and of various community organizations. At one time it included a "labor representative" who was a personnel executive rather than a member of a bona fide labor organization. A Bryn Mawr College alumna is chairman and Summer School alumnae have designated two students to interpret their ideas to the group. The committee, once a formal organization, now functions informally. Funds are raised by personal solicitation; recruiting is centered in the Y.W.C.A., a few trade unions, and the Alumnae Association; and classes and workshops are sponsored primarily for the women who have attended the School.

In the years 1925 to 1938, 31 women went from Upton to the Bryn Mawr School. Eight of these women attended for two years. Complete information could be obtained for only 28 and the organization through which the

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*In this section the word "candidate" or "applicant" refers to the women before they attended the School; "alumna" refers to them after their return.*
workers were recruited was ascertained for only 15. The Y.W.C.A. alone was responsible for eight; the Y.W.C.A. and the Alumnae Association, three; the Y.W.C.A. and a trade union, one; and a trade union, a nationality club, and the Alumnae Association, one each.

Educational preparation and the ages of students from Upton have changed as they have for the entire School; nationality background has not. Every Upton applicant who has gone to the School has completed at least the sixth grade of elementary school; all have been between the ages of 20 and 35. Among the 21 women who attended the Bryn Mawr Summer Session before 1933, 16 had no education beyond the eighth grade of elementary school; ages ranged from 20 to 34, 13 candidates being 25 or over. Among the seven students who attended the Summer Session in 1933 or after, four had attended high school but none of these had graduated; ages ranged from 23 to 29, three being 25 or over. Therefore from 1933 to 1938, students from Upton who were members of the student body of the Bryn Mawr School were better educated and younger than they were in the period before. During the entire 13 years represented, 18 women were American-born but the parents of the majority were immigrants. The percentage of native-born students, therefore, from Upton has been higher than that for the entire School.

Candidates indicated participation in community, labor, political, and civic groups as well as in various miscellaneous organizations. As alumnae they had an added sphere for activity, namely the Alumnae Association. It should be reiterated that their functioning in all the groups has depended upon opportunities afforded them as well as upon their desire to participate.

The women, both as candidates and as alumnae of the School, have participated in the Y.W.C.A. Before they came to Bryn Mawr, 23 of the 28 individuals under consideration belonged to the organization, 14 as leaders and nine as members; as School alumnae, 14 belonged, nine as leaders and five as members. The Y.W.C.A. Secretary reported that, all things considered, participation was much more alert. Outstanding "leadership" positions are as follows: cabinet officer, adviser to an industrial group, member of the Industrial Department Committee, representative at sectional conference, member of Public Affairs Committee, National Industrial Council member, chairman of National Council Project Committee, Dance Group chairman.

*The chart showing the background and activities of each worker is in the original manuscript at Bryn Mawr College.
and member in charge of mass recitation. It has been indicated that the alumnae who ceased to be active have been absent from the city, or ill, or have married. Those who have not been very active have stated that advanced age, changed occupation, or marriage is responsible.

On the whole, the organized workers who have attended the School have maintained their trade union loyalty, most of them belonging to a union of clothing workers. Two women joined labor organizations after their summer away from home. Eighteen candidates of the 28 under consideration belonged to trade unions, six as leaders and 12 as members. When they were School alumnae 15 of these women reported they were organized, 11 serving as leaders and four as members. The women who have discontinued their affiliation have given changed occupation, marriage, and employers' disapproval as the reason. Observers in the community have commended the type of trade union participation of alumnae. They have reported leadership as follows: Joint board member, representative on the Central Trades and Labor Board, organizer, business agent, active striker, representative on the C.I.O. Council, educational leader. Particular attention has been called to the woman who helped convert her company union into a bona fide union.

Other organizations in which the women have been interested include churches, the League of Women Voters, the Democratic, American Labor, and Marxist parties, the American League Against War and Fascism, the Committee to Aid Spain, and a Consumers' Cooperative. As a group, the alumnae have tended to participate in these groups less than they did before they went to the School. However, certain alumnae have greatly increased their activity. One woman now participates in several organizations but exclusively in the political field. Three lead church discussion groups concerned with labor problems. One alumna is a member of a W.P.A. Committee for the Advancement of Workers' Education.

Partly responsible for the declining participation in miscellaneous groups has been intense interest in the Summer School Alumnae Association, a group which has sponsored many activities. Twenty-two of the 28 women under consideration belong to the Association. When several members were unemployed, a loan organization was established; the necessary funds were raised through a cooperative store, set up in the Y.W.C.A. In addition, money has been sent to the Summer School. A broad educational program has been instituted, including preparatory and follow-up classes, Sunday forums, special
STUDENTS IN UPTON, DOWNTON, AND FLUXTON

projects, and a lending library. The group keeps individuals informed of special events in the city and it has been said that when anything of importance takes place, alumnae are invariably present.

When all the activities of the women are considered, only seven alumnae, besides those who have moved from the city, may be designated as definitely inactive. Some individuals have discontinued specific interests, but others have joined certain groups for the first time and still others have progressed from membership to leadership in the organizations with which they remained affiliated. Whereas the 28 candidates indicated only 29 positions of leadership in the Y.W.C.A., religious, political, and labor groups, and miscellaneous organizations, the alumnae reported 43 leadership activities. Eleven had been made possible through the Alumnae Association. The actual performances of the women seem to follow faculty recommendations for community activity. The ratings which the School gave them for "group consciousness" and "effort" seem more relevant than class marks. In the community, activity has increased as compared with interest in public school courses.

Decreased participation in certain organizations does not mean that the women have lost the desire to be active. This must be measured against increased interest in other groups. Although the Y.W.C.A. has declined in popularity in comparison with certain other agencies, the Industrial Secretary believes that the change is normal and should be encouraged. The Y.W.C.A., in her opinion, should be for women with little experience and old members should be very active only long enough to influence new ones. New organizational interests, however, should not clash with the old in terms of philosophy.

The School has influenced the shift partly because the Alumnae Association is strong locally. As stated above, 22 of the 28 women under consideration lack time to do other things as well; they must concentrate their attention here. Also it must be remembered that no one year is being considered and therefore that changing activities merely may indicate that one organization has ceased to exist whereas another has been founded. For instance, alumnae returning to the community a number of years ago could join a Y.W.C.A. student-industrial group which no longer exists. Moreover, because certain trades are not organized, the labor activity of several alumnae has been limited.
In conclusion it should be stated that it is difficult to estimate accurately the influence of the summer experience, whether for bad or good. Several persons have stated that alumnae have not done what they should to aid the WPA workers' education program. They have blamed the School for "spoil­ing" students. However, the alumnae have maintained that the program could afford them no opportunities either as students or teachers, that classes have been too elementary and that they cannot meet the relief requirements for teachers. It has been said that progress in the Y.W.C.A. may be stimulated by its own Industrial Department, the Summer School, or both together. Trade unionists in the community are unwilling to state that the resident study influenced their members greatly—although they are willing to admit membership was not discouraged. They suggest that cooperative recruiting between labor organizations and the School and functional, coeducational courses might increase effectiveness. One alumna who leads a church discussion group asserts that she learned the technique at the School; another says that she now has an increased ability to encourage people with different philosophies to speak. A woman who is exceptionally active politically maintains with others that the School did not give birth to her political ideas but brought them to expression. Another has discontinued radical activities because the summer experience proved to her that "all groups must be democratic and fair."

It should be mentioned that the School has not lifted its students from the working class. Marriage has taken six workers from factory to home; an unemployed person has become a W.P.A. worker, two alumnae are still without work, a former shoe worker has just lost her job, and one person has gone into domestic work. The majority of the others have remained in the trade which they had before they attended the School.

Many individuals have participated in more than one type of organization, in addition to holding their jobs and carrying home responsibilities. The record of activities, 69 in all, in addition to educational interests, seems excellent when one considers that 21 of the women attended the School before 1933 and still are very active in community groups. Many factors do influence participation; personality of the worker and of community leaders, existence of groups, time and money. On the whole, it would seem that Upton alumnae have taken advantage of the opportunities afforded them.

*For analysis of community activities of the general population, see infra, p. 139.
DOWNTON: A COMMUNITY DISCOURAGING TO ACTIVITY

Downton is very different from Upton. Immediately apparent are the reasons. The 1930 census placed the city in the population category 50,000-100,000. Although 71 percent of the total population is foreign born, certain nationality groups are discriminated against. Two percent of the people are Negro. Public opinion is influenced mainly through the papers of a larger, conservative city which is nearby and which stimulates many of Downton’s activities. Since Downton is small, community facilities are not well developed. There is no Council of Social Agencies and no general community center.

The city’s few industries have employed somewhat more than 20,000 people, 7,000 of whom now are not working. The serious unemployment situation has influenced the community to believe that individuals who have jobs should be content and that those who are in comfortable positions must protect themselves. Accordingly, trade unions are resisted and employers have formed “independent” groups designed to discourage bona fide organizations. Added to the community’s distrust of labor has been the conflict between labor organizations themselves. The trade unions belong predominantly to the American Federation of Labor; the building trades supply the majority of the 5,000 paid-up members. In recent years the Congress of Industrial Organizations has been attempting to organize certain of the new industries and now has a membership in good standing of perhaps 1,000 persons, largely men. Neither group has organized women to any great extent, possibly because men predominate in Downton’s industries. However, the A.F. of L. has recently asked members to bring their wives to meetings concerned with social security and similar problems. Women have also been invited to attend public conferences on communal questions sponsored by the C.I.O.

Workers’ education has not progressed very far in the community, which believes that vocational instruction provided in the public schools meets the needs of workers. An adult education program of the W.P.A. was opposed. Personnel men in some of the companies at one time seemed interested in workers’ education but now are definitely against the idea. The A.F. of L. claims to favor a program but states that its members are not ready. Informational meetings have been encouraged. The C.I.O. has had to emphasize organization because of its very small staff in the community and the union’s leaders.
seem to favor functional activities rather than formal study. Conferences are an example.

Few other groups have been interested in workers, although the Y.W.C.A., as in Upton, is the center of a great deal of activity. An International Institute serves the foreign born and programs are available in the general organization for business and industrial women, but since one secretary is responsible for the two groups of women, activity is somewhat limited. The greater part of the program is devoted to the former, who have been interested in educational as well as other activities. The white-collar workers are not friendly to the industrial unit, which has attracted only 20 women, primarily interested in social and recreational activities. Neither trade union nor Negro groups have used the building although the Y.W.C.A. Industrial Secretary feels that should they ask to do so, the Board would meet their request.

There has been no definite Bryn Mawr School committee in Downton. An interested group has worked through the committee of the nearby community. A college club once in favor of the School is now opposed to it.

In the years 1931 through 1934, five women went from Downton to the Bryn Mawr Summer School, all being recruited through the Y.W.C.A. Two of the women were foreign-born; the other three were native-born but of foreign parentage. One student had had only a sixth grade elementary education; another had completed the seventh year class; two had finished the eighth grade; and one had attended high school for one year. The students varied in age from 20 through 27.

Before and after they went to the School, the women did not participate in many activities. As candidates, all five reported they were leaders in the Y.W.C.A.; two indicated membership in church groups; two said they held leadership positions in a nationality organization and one stated that she merely was a member. As alumnae, the women have sensed that the community has distrusted them and they have had to guard their activities accordingly. They indicate a sense of futility when they mention the limited opportunity to function. Only one person has been very effective as an alumna; she has continued to be a leader in the Y.W.C.A. and is now serving on the Industrial Committee and the Board of Directors in both of which she interprets the needs of working women and their point of view. She is the

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The chart showing the background and activities of each worker is in the original manuscript at Bryn Mawr College.
first industrial woman ever to have functioned on the Board. After she returned from Summer School, she joined a trade union affiliated with the A.F. of L. Interested in other community programs, she attended a conference sponsored by the C.I.O. as a Y.W.C.A. representative but was called to account for her action by her labor organization. In addition she has maintained an interest in workers' education and has tried to stimulate the Y.W.C.A. Industrial Club to initiate a program.

The Y.W.C.A. has provided the main outlet for the other Downton alumnae. Only one has ceased to participate in the association. Interest in nationality clubs has been maintained. Labor organization has been discouraged. One alumna is in the food industry, one is a domestic employee, one is unemployed, and one is in an unorganized occupation.

In view of the discouraging environment, why has the one alumna been able to function extensively? When she came to the School she was unemployed; she immediately found work upon her return and soon became a forelady. Other than community interests might have been anticipated for her. She alone of the Downton students however had received an "A" rating at the School, was commended for the special effort which she exerted, and was recommended for a second year. The others received poor ratings, excepting one who was noted to be an effective participant in groups. However, the Y.W.C.A. Secretary stated that the latter has not been very successful in the community for the following reasons:

... being a naturally frank, outspoken girl, she has not always realized that members of an industrial committee are not wholly sympathetic with the organization of labor, because many of them are from the employing class. She has said things that have been misunderstood, and since this town, and especially members of the Industrial Committee last year (following the overwhelming defeat of the Republican Party) has been very much upset about the whole question of labor organization, her lack of sensitiveness with regard to the general situation has been difficult to handle at times.*

In contrast to the situation in Upton, the worker with common sense and an intelligent appreciation of a specific situation seems to be more important than the one with great group spirit but little native intelligence. To be effective in a discouraging atmosphere seems to demand much effort and a great deal of insight, even more so than in a favorable background. The

*Letter to the writer from the Industrial Secretary of the Y.W.C.A., March 24, 1938.
isolated woman in Downton had more people watching her than did the group in Upton. She therefore had to proceed more slowly and cautiously.

All the women have mentioned a factor, other than the general environment, as conditioning their activities. They claim that if the alumnae group had been larger they might have had more incentive to do things. Unfortunately, when the School had recognized the handicaps which workers met in Downton, recruiting from the city had been discontinued. Therefore, the alumnae group, numbering only five, has had neither the numerical strength to initiate any program of its own nor the psychological strength necessary to support certain types of individual activity. The women now have indicated that they would like to return to the School, that the unemployment situation has set them thinking and new opportunities in community organizations are arising. What they could do upon their return, however, is still a matter of conjecture.

FLUXTON: A COMMUNITY WITH CHANGING PATTERNS

The 1930 census placed Fluxton in the population category 500,000-1,000,000. About four-fifths of the population belong to the laboring class; the Negro and the foreign groups are well represented, and in certain sections of the city little English is spoken. Public opinion and social attitudes are extremely conservative. New organizations have been denounced severely when they have offended prevailing custom; other groups have found it difficult to use public buildings; and organized labor has had to overcome suppression by the heavy industries dominating the city. In addition, lack of racial, national or religious homogeneity has made the workers comparatively inert.

Yet the size and resources of the city make it more like Upton than Downton. Certain agencies, including the public school system, the libraries, the Y.W.C.A., the Y.M.C.A. and settlements, have carried on programs for workers over a period of years, although forced to curtail their activities from time to time. Recently new groups—including religious and political organizations, civil liberties associations, and other local and national agencies—have become interested in community and civic welfare and in social legislation. Some are organized to promote member interests primarily and some to promote community or civic welfare. Several have sponsored discussion and forums; others have exerted pressure at the polls. Increasing government expenditures in the community have promoted similar interests.
Trade unions have developed during the last few years, thus upsetting some of the old community patterns. Company unions became bonafide labor organizations despite the interfering efforts of employers and even the unemployed formed pressure groups of their own. The New Deal which gave impetus to trade unionism also introduced workers' education to Fluxton on a wide basis. Previous to this time, the Board of Education had sponsored adult education for native and immigrant illiterates; other groups had instituted radio broadcasts, community forums, and public institutes; and a speakers' bureau had furnished lecturers especially for workers' groups, both in the city and in the neighboring industrial communities. A labor college also was formed by several groups. The Work Projects Administration started instruction for the unemployed in Fluxton and then extended courses to employed workers. Although the community has felt that "Lewis should educate his own henchmen," the program has progressed and at its peak sponsored 78 classes, the average being 60. Summer institutes have been planned for the educational directors of various trade unions, although the labor organizations have not always cooperated; women have been reached either as members of trade unions or of their auxiliaries. The work of the project has been aided in outlying districts by a privately supported school, which organized labor has controlled in large part, contributing 60 per cent of the budget.

Changing patterns in Fluxton have in many instances sharpened conflict between opposing philosophies. "Red scares" and "red baiting" and an accentuated conservatism in the press and among employer and business groups have appeared in the transitional stage. Workers' representatives have had to proceed cautiously and new programs have received more than one setback.

In Fluxton, as in Upton, the Bryn Mawr Summer School is represented by a committee and an alumnae unit, the former existing ever since 1921, although during that year money could not be raised because of adverse community feeling. In 1927 the organization of the committee became formal, expanding to include representatives of various community groups into which the ideals of the Bryn Mawr Summer School and of the committee could be carried. Accordingly, members have come from trade unions, the city's university, the Y.W.C.A., settlements, various collegiate alumnae, libraries, the Summer School alumnae. The committee's chairman has been trying to increase the percentage of active members, since a few have not participated
effectively and have understood only in part the Summer School and workers' education. However, the nucleus of the committee has been effective and has repeatedly promoted a local program of workers' education. The goal has been more than that of sending workers to the Summer School; rather members have stated that workers' education within industrial communities themselves must evolve from the work of the School. In the early period, preparatory and follow-up classes were instituted for Summer School candidates and alumnae and cooperation was given the labor college of the city so that the classes in Fluxton and in outlying districts might be established and interpreted to the community. Later the function and method of workers' education was explained to hostile groups during a "red scare," and four committee members of the School now are on the committee of a workers' school. Finally, the School committee petitioned for the W.P.A. program of workers' education and when government activity was finally begun, contributed funds to help overcome limitations. Of nine committee members at present, five are serving upon the workers' education advisory board of the Work Projects Administration, one as chairman.

In the years 1922 to 1938, 22 women went from Fluxton to the Bryn Mawr Summer School. Sources of recruiting candidates are indicated in the following list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Number of Candidates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y.W.C.A.</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>Summer School Alumnae Association</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y.W.C.A. and alumnae</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y.W.C.A. and industrial firm</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumnae and industrial firm</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumnae and trade union</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade union</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial firm</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total ........................................ 22

The educational and nationality backgrounds and the ages of students from Fluxton have changed as they have for the entire School. Among the 11 who went to the School before 1933, the majority had completed only the sixth,

7 Letter to the writer from the Chairman of the Committee, July, 1938.
seventh, or eighth grade of grammar school; seven were American born but only one of these had native born parents; ages ranged from 20 to 31, six candidates being 25 or over. Among the 11 students who attended the School in 1933 or after, the majority had attended high school, five having been graduated; all were native born, six having American born parents; and ages ranged from 21 to 29, only three women being 25 or over. Thus, as in the entire student body from 1933 to 1938, in contrast to the earlier period, more students from Fluxton were better educated, were native born and were younger.

Information about seven alumnae could not be ascertained and therefore the activities before and after attending the School may be discussed for only 15 women. Candidates indicated participation in religious, political, labor, and community groups, as well as in various miscellaneous organizations. As alumnae they had an added sphere for activity, namely the Alumnae Association. Their functioning in all groups has depended upon opportunities afforded them as well as upon their desire to participate.

The Y.W.C.A. on the whole held the interest of the workers both before and after they went to the School. In the former period, 14 of the 15 women under consideration belonged to the organization, five as leaders and nine as members; during the latter time, only 10 belonged, six as leaders and four as members. One of the six leaders is a Negro alumna, who, after studying further, became the secretary of the colored industrial branch of the city.

Thirteen candidates of the 15 under consideration indicated that they belonged to trade unions, four as leaders and nine as members. Eleven reported as School alumnae that they were organized, six serving as leaders and five as members. However, examination of the type of labor organization to which the women have belonged reveals that actually alumnae have increased their trade union activity greatly. Eight of the 13 candidates who said they were trade unionists belonged to company unions. As alumnae, four have shifted to bona fide organizations; one becoming secretary of an industrial union, editor of its paper, and active in organization work; another has become chairman of a department shop committee. The industrial union through which two women were recruited has expressed great satisfaction with the results. After her return from the School, one of the women, acting as secretary of an in-

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The chart showing the background and activities of each worker is in the original manuscript at Bryn Mawr College.

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industrial committee, initiated an educational program. She formed a library for the ladies’ auxiliary and a forum group, and coached a skit to be shown at a conference, proving herself so effective that she was sent to the School for a second year. Finally, in addition to the alumnae who are active in labor groups, two unorganized workers have expressed their interest in the labor movement. One has worked closely with the organized group of which her husband is a member. The other, a Negro domestic worker, serves on a city-wide domestic committee, attempting to raise standards for household help.

A few of the women who have not joined trade unions have emphasized loyalty to the company rather than anti-union feeling as their reason. They criticize unthinking unionism, pointing to the petty ideas brought out by the Congress of Industrial Organization-American Federation of Labor controversy, and are cynical about the absence of labor solidarity. They believe that membership alone is not indicative of union feeling since women may join to be in the crowd. They maintain that they know more about labor organization than do some of the trade union members. The organized women have attempted to interpret trade unionism to them but do not condone intra-union differences. Believing that the Summer School tries to show people of different opinions the way to effecting cooperation, both groups consciously attempt to act in terms of that common background. Their main division is based upon the type of union endeavor rather than upon the principle of organization.

Participation in political, religious and miscellaneous groups has tended to decline among the alumnae, but several new opportunities have absorbed their interest. The 15 women under consideration belong to a Bryn Mawr Summer School Alumnae Association. This group has cooperated with the School’s Committee in many ways, but especially in recruiting and educational work. The alumnae believe that even while trade unions are used increasingly to recruit students, they must still search for candidates. They maintain that they are able to spend more time than impersonal organizations, that they are better able to interpret the forthcoming experience to the applicants and their families and that they are able to help in emergencies through obtaining extra money for the women or aiding the families which must dispense with the necessary salary of the workers who are going away.
The alumnae association has sponsored and supported classes for its own members and for other workers. Preparatory, tutorial and follow-up classes, monthly institutes and discussion groups have been included at various times in the program; there have been units in outlying sections of the city as well as in the center. In earlier years, study of unemployment and industrial problems took the place of discouraging industrial activity. Although the attendance was never very large, the work offered a nucleus for those interested in developing workers' education. At present, the Bryn Mawr group is not conducting classes since it wishes to avoid duplicating the work of the W.P.A. However, the latter does not prepare students for the School or furnish follow-up activities for alumnae. The need for such activities still exists.

Although the women all belong to the alumnae group only three are outstanding in their activities. The issue of unionization has diminished the cooperation among many, causing cliques to be formed. Individual alumnae believe that the group may become more unified if the older leaders are supplanted by younger people. Therefore, elections are to be held and young women encouraged to become officers.

The total picture is not as encouraging as that of the Upton group but it shows more promise than that of Downton. In Fluxton as in Upton, the alumnae have on the whole remained in the industrial sphere of work. Two have moved on to professional work but still have been connected with the labor movement through their positions as Y.W.C.A. Industrial Secretary and employee of a Marxist political party. Many have participated in more than one type of organization, as may be seen since the 15 women have reported 44 total activities. Numerically the comparison with Upton is favorable but not in other ways. Whereas the women have been rather constantly active in Upton, extensive functioning, with the exception of membership in the alumnae group, began only since 1934 in Fluxton. Since that time individual women have felt a new sense of responsibility for spreading what they learned at the School. They now have the vehicle for translating their learning into social action. They have increased their interest in labor organization but not at the expense of the Y.W.C.A., as in Upton. The reason may be that they need the moral support of the Y.W.C.A. if they are to face public disapproval of labor activity, while in Upton this was not necessary. On the whole, persistence rather than imaginative leadership has been characteristic of the Flux-
ton alumnæ to date. In Upton, increase in leadership after attendance at the School was marked; in Fluxton only three more outstanding positions were reported after School attendance than before. Therefore, even though quantity and type of activity are changing, much more has to be done to bring these women up to the level of alumnæ in other communities.
CHAPTER X

Further Activities of Summer School Students

The alumnae of the Bryn Mawr Summer School have returned to localities scattered throughout the United States and abroad. They have met diverse forces encouraging or discouraging to social activity or in process of change. And they have been influenced accordingly. In this chapter, the determinants of activity are indicated for communities additional but similar to Upton, Downton, and Fluxton.

Students in Communities Conducive to Activity and Comparable to Upton

Alumnae were studied in a relatively encouraging environment in four cities approximately alike in size but located in different geographical sections. Before applicants went to the Summer School, programs in community, religious and political groups, as well as in labor organizations, were available to them. Upon their return, they could participate in an alumnae group as well and find enlarged trade union facilities.

Forty-eight of 84 women under consideration indicated that they belonged to the Y.W.C.A. before they went to the School. Half participated as leaders and half as members. Thirteen, mostly in the latter group, discontinued their affiliation after their return. They were reported to have shifted to trade union activity. Several Y.W.C.A. Industrial Secretaries have stated that the change may have been due partly to the elementary level of their programs and partly to new labor organizational opportunities offered after 1934, when the cities were invaded increasingly by trade unions. It is significant that whereas 35 candidates had indicated they were organized (17 as leaders and 18 as members), 48 alumnae reported trade union activity (39 as leaders and nine as members). Not only had former trade union members increased their participation but former Y.W.C.A. members joined more
important activities. The opposition of the communities to an articulate working-class may partly explain the large number of very active trade unionists. Only women willing to oppose the mores are strong enough to join the young labor groups which need leaders and are able to stand up in the face of disapproval. One alumna has had to change her occupation because she has been blacklisted in her original trade. For the same reason another could find employment only on the government workers' education program.

Twenty-five alumnae reported political activities. Fifteen had begun to function in this sphere after their return from the School, about half as leaders and half as members. Total affiliation with miscellaneous organizations hardly changed after attendance at the School but 10 alumnae received positions of responsibility after their return, making 22 leaders and two members in all.

Only 36 women of the 84 under consideration belong to the Summer School Alumnae Association. Weak groups are said to be one cause of this condition. None of the four cities has recruited actively for the School in recent years, the large size of the cities making it difficult to maintain contact with many of the older alumnae. Accordingly, some of the women may have been doing more than was reported to the investigator.

The total picture in the four communities reveals an increase in activities, especially in leadership. Some 122 leadership positions were reported for alumnae in contrast to 71 for candidates. Most of the women participated in more than one organization, 172 activities being reported for the 84 women. Twenty-two have indicated that heavy home responsibilities have caused them either to join few groups or to concentrate their functioning. Three of these are Negroes who have been hindered by race prejudice as well as by other obstacles. Four have complained that the depression has pushed them into household employment and that they, therefore, have had little time or energy for "leisure."

Case studies reveal types of services alumnae render, as well as some of the problems they must face. In the following pages, the diverse activities of three women, who live in the same city, are described. Their experiences before they went to the Bryn Mawr School, as well as their attendance at the School, seem to have influenced their activities as alumnae.

"A," a widowed Negress, is an American born of American parents.
FURTHER ACTIVITIES OF STUDENTS

CASE STUDY OF "A"

Before the School—She had supplemented her tenth grade education by class work in a workers' school and in the Young Women's Christian Association. She was a leader in a student-industrial council, a city inter-racial council, and a Negro industrial council within the Y.W.C.A. She was a member of the Baptist Church. Her trade was that of a finisher of women's dresses.

At the School—She attended the summer session in 1928, when she was 32 years of age. She was a very good student, a thoughtful group member, and a hard worker. Throughout the session, she displayed a willingness to co-operate in all activities, and she progressed consistently in her work. Her teachers recommended her for second year work.

After the School—She found it very difficult to secure employment. Many members of her community attributed her unemployment to the reaction of employers against her participation in labor organizations.

In the Y.W.C.A.—She became a member of the Central Industrial Committee and of the City-Wide Industrial Committee. She visited the homes of Negro women workers and invited them to the Industrial Club, with the hope of starting an inter-racial industrial group. She also stimulated the organization of an economics class at the Y.W.C.A.

In the School's Alumnae Group—In holding the position of secretary, she attended state-wide conferences of alumnae and was a member of a state-wide committee. She endeavored to interest other alumnae in legislative work for the State. She became interested and active in workers' education in her city. In 1934 she served on an educational policy committee which devised plans for workers' education in the city. She helped plan for a conference sponsored by the Affiliated Schools in 1935. At this conference she led the singing for all members and she led the discussion in a unit for industrial workers. As a teacher in the present workers' education program of the Work Projects Administration, she conducts classes for Negro and white men and women workers in various organizations. She has been an instructor in a summer training camp for teachers on the program. Her special subjects are current events and labor dramatics. At times she functions as a leader of forum discussions. In a letter to the investigator, her supervisor wrote, "She has a high value in this program. She has had splendid training and an extensive experience which, coupled with her native intelligence and aptitude, provide a background that is somewhat rare. She is an able leader of discussions, a quick thinker, and possesses essential qualities of good humor and tolerance that make her acceptable in any group."

She is an active trade union member. As a member of the American Federation of Teachers in the Work Projects Administration local, she serves on a social committee, an educational committee, and on the executive board. She contributes articles to the periodical of the organization.

Miscellaneous Activities—She is a member of the State Committee on Social Security and of the Executive Board of the Future Outlook League. She formerly was active in the Consumer's League.

"A," clearly, has not only maintained her leadership in the Y. W.C.A. but has extended her interest to many other groups.
"B," a married woman, is a German-American, born of German parents.

**CASE STUDY OF "B"

*Before the School*—She was a worker in the men's clothing industry. She belonged to the American Federation of Labor and to the Women's Trade Union League and participated in a German organization. She had a seventh grade education.

*At the School*—She attended the summer session in 1932, when she was 40 years old. She was able in interpreting her own experiences to others and indicated great loyalty to her labor organization. She displayed good leadership qualities and made good progress during the session. Her teachers recommended her for second year work.

*After the Summer School*—In a letter to the investigator, she declared:

"After I got back from School, I was active in the American Federation of Labor member's League for Unemployment Insurance and was vice president of the State Association for Social Security until the Bill passed. Then I was vice president of the Farmer-Labor Party Club. In 1936 we dissolved and went out for Roosevelt with Labor's Non-Partisan League, in which I'm still active. I also was vice president of the city's Women's Trade Union League and I'm an Executive Board member of my local of the I.L.G.W.U. and a delegate from my union to the City Industrial Council. I'm active in the International Labor Defense, raising money for a Christmas fund in the winter and a milk fund in the summer for political prisoners' families. I help raise funds for the Abraham Lincoln battalion, am active in Mothers' Day peace parades, and I'm a member of the People's Lobby in Washington, D.C., and of the Consumers Co-operative."

On the whole, "B" has continued to concentrate her activities in trade union groups, but since her labor organization has become interested in civic and political issues, she, also, has broadened her activities.

"C," a married woman, is an American born of Russian parents.

**CASE STUDY OF "C"

*Before the School*—She supplemented her twelfth grade education by attending lectures and going to evening school. Although she was unemployed, she participated in various activities in workers' groups. She was educational director of the Young Peoples' Socialist League, secretary of the General Defense Committee, and chairman of the City Strikers' Relief Committee.

*At the School*—She attended the summer session in 1933 at the age of 20. Her teachers reported that "Her ability and preparation for the work were outstanding. She has worked very hard and has participated in all of the school forums. She gets along well with people. She is recommended for a second year, if there is an advanced project."

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1 In a letter to the writer, July 20, 1938.
FURTHER ACTIVITIES OF STUDENTS

After the School—She became an X-ray technician in a hospital. Of her activities, she has written:

"I won't attempt to make a detailed report of activities in the labor movement since I left school because I have been active in nothing else since. I have been an active member of the Socialist Party and the Young People's Socialist League, there participating actively in several strikes, and was arrested twice for defying a couple of vicious anti-picketing injunctions. I have been active in a couple of civil liberty fights, have participated in fund-raising efforts and labor demonstrations. Recently I worked in National Sharecroppers' Week, have helped organize classes in economics, and attended several. I hope to be able to concentrate most of my energies in the near future in anti-war work which I feel is of utmost importance to the labor movement because all that we have fought for and sacrificed for will be lost unless we can ward off another 'war to save democracy' which will bring with it the blackest reaction."

Like the other two women, "C" has continued her major interest after attendance at the School. The three studied at Bryn Mawr before 1934 but all are more active than they ever have been and are at least seven years older than when they were at the School.

Although cities usually present many opportunities for alumnae, they sometimes aggravate the odds against which the working woman has to struggle in every community. A letter from one alumna illustrates how difficult inarticulate workers find it to function effectively in large groups built chiefly upon secondary contacts. Summing up her problems, she writes, "Being a sort of shy person, I don't attempt any active part in any group, but I do like being a part of the group." Another alumna writes that it is inconvenient to attend meetings when one has a young baby and no one with whom it can be left. Two other alumnae describe their struggles for existence in a large city. One feels that her personal problems are more important than her interests developing from the School. She says, "If I didn't attend Bryn Mawr, I probably would be feeling very sorry for myself and blaming the world in general—badly depressed and humble." Although this woman manages to find some values in her surroundings, the other alumna is more discouraged. She writes that the School is not to blame: "Sorry I could not continue on—that has been my failure." Manifestly, positive and negative forces within the environment and within individual personalities combine to influence former students of the School, even in encouraging communities.

\[1\] In a letter to the writer, July 28, 1938.
STUDENTS IN COMMUNITIES DISCOURAGING TO ACTIVITY AND COMPARABLE TO DOWNTON

The task of the School and of alumnae is even greater in localities which discourage the type of activity which the institution stimulates. A group of New England communities, a Mid-Western city, and an Atlantic Seaboard town were studied in order to analyze what former students are accomplishing in a negative environment. In these localities, the Y.W.C.A. usually has been the most encouraging organization; the Alumnae Association has been an additional outlet for the returning women. Trade unions are weak.

Thirty-two of some 52 women under consideration indicated that they belonged to the Y.W.C.A. before they went to the School. Twelve as alumnae dropped their affiliation; 11 had been leaders and one had been a member. Although the total number of women who belong to miscellaneous groups has remained the same, many have progressed to outstanding positions. Only 25 former students have joined the Alumnae Association. The most marked change has been the increase in trade union affiliation, but the figures of themselves are not very startling, only five more women having joined after their return from the School. However, 13 of 18 organized workers are leaders; before they attended the School only half of 13 trade unionists were outstanding participants. Eighty-five activities in all were reported for the 52 women; 67 were leadership positions.

The significance of certain activities is more psychological than statistical. Reports from one city reveal how difficult mere trade union membership is. In this community, few people, including workers, have faith in trade union leadership or accomplishments; the prevailing philosophy is individualistic. Those who are interested in labor organizations are handicapped by lack of labor solidarity not only within the city as a whole, but also within shops and families and among nationalities. Before 1935, when four women from the town attended the School, trade unionism was non-existent. Before they attended the Summer Session, these women centered their activities in the Y.W.C.A. The narrow range of their activities influenced their education at the School. Only two met with some success; none was recommended for a second year. The community prognosis was that while these persons lacked individual initiative, they might work well with leadership.

Any enthusiasm which these alumnae had was discouraged upon their return from the School. Even the Industrial Club of the Y.W.C.A. was not
FURTHER ACTIVITIES OF STUDENTS

prepared to help them greatly. The women became discouraged and stopped trying to form study groups. One did serve on the Industrial Committee for a year. All married and devoted themselves exclusively to their home responsibilities.

Two workers who went to the School from this same community in 1937 had more opportunity to function, although they still had to face many handicaps. The case studies of these women, "D" and "E," follow:

CASE STUDY OF "D"

Before the School—She had attended an evening school which was under the auspices of the Work Projects Administration. She was a member of both the Y.W.C.A. Industrial Department and of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union.

At the School—Her teachers reported that she was an earnest and conscientious student:

"Although she gained much in her understanding of workers' problems, she is still confused in her thinking about social and economic issues and is consequently easily influenced by people who have strong convictions on one side or another. She needs further participation in discussion groups to clarify her thinking. She has qualities of leadership perhaps able to be utilized in singing and dramatic groups."

After the School—She became a member of the Industrial Club Committee of the Y.W.C.A. and attended student-industrial meetings in that organization. She also joined the study group sponsored by those community members interested in the Summer School. According to the Industrial Secretary of the Y.W.C.A. she is anxious to belong to a trade union but has no opportunity to do so. She lost one job because of her labor interests. The Secretary feels that although she is more responsible than the rest of the group, she has less confidence. She does not dare speak in public, agrees to do so, and then "gets sick." She is easily discouraged and is hindered from activity by fairly acute family criticism: "What is this club doing for you; someone else draws the salary, why should you work"—and Italian family authority. The Industrial Secretary feels that she will improve each year and should return to the School.

CASE STUDY OF "E"

Before the Summer School—She belonged to the Industrial Club of the Young Women's Christian Association and to a church group. She attended W.P.A. classes.

At the Summer School—The faculty stated that she was a hard worker but was hindered by scattering her energy over too many activities. It was felt that she might assume leadership but that several years should elapse before she should return to the School for a second session.

After the School—She remained a member of the Industrial Club of the Y.W.C.A. and became a member of the Industrial Committee. She continues to attend discussions in the student industrial club and the study group of the Bryn Mawr Summer School
Committee. She is reported to be somewhat undependable in the latter, although all right if bolstered. She belongs to the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union and works in an organized shop. Her shop unit, however, is inactive and its leadership discourages activity. She is said to need trade union experience but has no chance to acquire it. The Industrial Secretary feels that she is active when sufficiently encouraged and that she catches enthusiasm from others. She is still slightly immature as to values and responsibilities but it is felt that she will improve and become more serious.

Three former Summer School students in another community have faced similar discouragement. They were recruited through the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union; all belonged to miscellaneous clubs and one to the Y.W.C.A. They were American-born of Polish parentage. The three attended the School's 1936 session, when they were under 23 years of age. They also were young in experience, and thus were handicapped in their school work. The faculty believed that one should study further in her community and that she needed most of all to learn how to sustain her interest and make her energy yield returns. It was recommended that the second also study further, since she did not have the equipment to translate into action her interest in the labor movement. The third, it was felt, needed help to overcome shyness.

When they returned to their community, an I.L.G.W.U. member convinced the Y.W.C.A. Industrial Secretary that they could help promote an industrial club. All attended once or twice. After they had been absent for a few meetings, the Y.W.C.A. Secretary went to see them. The women told her that the club was so undeveloped that they were not interested in it. They also felt extremely discouraged in their union work. One had hoped to form a dramatics group but had not even been allowed the floor in a union meeting. She therefore ceased to participate in union affairs.

The Y.W.C.A. Secretary attempted to show the women how they could stimulate programs even when discouraged. She met with little success and concluded that these workers had no conception of their place in and responsibility to the labor movement, that they were quite definitely assuming an opportunist role, that they had stepped out of and beyond the ranks of workers. Although she recognized that the I.L.G.W.U. and the Y.W.C.A. in the city were far from progressive, she was convinced "that unless workers' schools 'graduate' students with an increased consciousness of the role of and their oneness with all workers, they have no legitimate place in the labor movement." 6

6 Letter to the writer from the Industrial Secretary of a Y.W.C.A., April 17, 1938.
The admissions committee of the School has attempted to choose students who are equipped to achieve their ends even against odds. Naturally, selection has been difficult since personalities react differently within the same environment. The history of two women, "F" and "G," in one city are similar except for certain points which would tend to make one predict that "G" would be more active. Their background and School rating are as follows:

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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>&quot;G&quot;</th>
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<tr>
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In March 1938 the local Y.W.C.A. Industrial Secretary stated the following:

**CASE STUDY OF "F"**
She went to the School in 1937. Because she has not yet been successful in getting a job, she is not active in any union, but she has spoken before one or two, and has influenced the program of the union in which her husband and her closest friend are leaders. She is very active in the Y.W.C.A., is a member of our Industrial Committee, and is being proposed for the Board of Directors this year. She has been the leading spirit in our workers’ education project this past winter, and largely through her enthusiasm and industry, the group has been successful.

**CASE STUDY OF "G"**
"G," who went to the School in 1932, is no longer active in any group so far as is known. She married shortly after her Bryn Mawr experience and has not been active in the Y.W.C.A. or in industry. As she had been the only girl from her city ever to go to Bryn Mawr until this past summer, she probably found it difficult to make her experience real to others. However, to all intents and purposes, "F" is in the same position and her experience is very real and the carry-over to other girls is tremendous. We do have a committee that is interested in "F"'s work and in sending other girls now, and such did not exist when "G" returned several years ago.
The Y.W.C.A.'s Industrial Secretary realizes that perhaps the environment was not as receptive to "G" as it was to "F" but she emphasizes personality as chiefly responsible for their different achievements. She commented further:

From a complete lack of interest in such things as we have been doing this winter to even the small amount that is, it is such a large step for us that we have real hopes for the future, especially if we can keep feeding the girls to Bryn Mawr each summer . . . We need to build up a group of girls who have such experience as Bryn Mawr can give them, and who will transmit some of their enthusiasm to the larger group.

Except for the one case which has been cited, observers of the alumnae in discouraging localities have been sympathetic. They realize that where the pattern of living is narrow and where former students are scattered geographically, more effort and patience is needed to achieve a few goals than is necessary to obtain greater ends in progressive places. Here even membership in some organizations is considered daring.

STUDENTS IN COMMUNITIES WITH CHANGING PATTERNS AND COMPARABLE TO FLUXTON

Fifty-one alumnae in a number of New England towns, a Southern community, a Mid-Western and two Eastern cities wrote about their activities. In these places, not only are new organizations appearing but old ones are changing their philosophies.

The total number of activities in these localities has decreased from 131 to 101 but the number of responsible positions has increased from 68 held by the women as School candidates to 90 as alumnae. What seems to have happened in all types of organizations is that weak members have admitted failure and have dropped out of groups. Strong members, however, have strengthened themselves in the face of adversity and have progressed to leadership. Political affiliation has increased; whereas six candidates had reported they belonged to political groups, 12 as alumnae have indicated this. Only three candidates had been political leaders; 10 as alumnae are outstanding participants. In miscellaneous associations leadership has been attained by 10 alumnae; an additional eight, who were especially effective before they went to the School, have retained their responsible positions. Membership and leadership in the Y.W.C.A. and the trade unions has remained about the
same, 24 women belonging to the former and 28 to the latter. Only 15 women belong to the Alumnae Association.

Reports from these cities indicate that in many respects it is harder for alumnae to be effective in changing communities than in discouraging ones. The general population is confused by certain trends and conflict between the old conservative and the new progressive accordingly is acute. The School's alumnae reflect this confusion. The older women are bewildered by the new patterns around them; they are not familiar with the ideas which the younger workers bring back from the School. The latter, in turn, are blocked by the opposition of the former and by the conflict in the community at large.

Three case studies show the activity of three alumnae, "H," "I," and "J," within one small community. The first two illustrate how differently the passage of years has affected "H" and "I"; the third illustrates the obstacles encountered by "J," inspired by the new forces which she sees about her but struggling within an essentially unfriendly environment.

CASE STUDY OF "H"

Before and at the School—"H" supplemented her seventh grade education with study in the Young Women's Christian Association. She was active in the church and in the Y.W.C.A. before attending the Summer School. Her rating for the summer period was very poor.

After the School—In 1938 the Industrial Secretary of the Y.W.C.A. reported:

"She is still active in the Y.W.C.A. club. She has never taken an active part, however, in industrial or social issues; she plans social programs and that sort of thing. The reason for this, it is believed, is her personality; she was not really interested in Bryn Mawr except as a means of 'social climbing' locally. Since that time she has married, has one child, and her interests are centered around the home alone. Before that time, however, she did not have the inclination to study or take part in active social issues."

The community participation of "I," also an older alumna, is much different.

CASE STUDY OF "I"

Before and at the School—"I" was thirty-four years old when she attended the School in 1923. She had been active in the church, Y.W.C.A., a lodge and a company club. She had a grammar school education which she supplemented with classes in the Y.W.C.A. Her rating at the Bryn Mawr School was good.

After the School—In 1938 it was reported that:
"She has since left the Y.W.C.A. clubs because of other interests and of age. However, she can always be counted upon to take part in active issues; she has done a great deal to promote unionization in her mill, although she is a forelady. She has worked in her country community on the school board and in church work. She acknowledges the debt she owes to Bryn Mawr for its information and general attitudes on issues and broadening of horizons."

"J" attended the Summer School many years later than "I" and encountered different experiences upon her return.

**CASE STUDY OF "J"**

*Before and at the School*—She had been active in the Y.W.C.A., the church, and nationality clubs before she attended the Bryn Mawr School. In addition to her seventh grade education she studied in the Y.W.C.A. The rating at school indicated a "truly remarkable awakening and a quiet kind of leadership which needed encouragement to offset the effects of much discouragement."

*After the School*—She is now with the Amalgamated Clothing Workers as an office person. She has continued her activity and her interest in studying and knowing workers' problems. The first year after her return, she led discussions at the Y.W.C.A. industrial conferences. In 1934 she organized a group for the Young People's Socialist League. Beside attending worker's classes, she took university extension courses and attended business classes. Although she came back imbued with enthusiasm for study and more study, she did not have any knowledge of how to get other girls interested. Therefore, she "harped" so much upon serious work-study, discussions, speakers, and scorned the general social activities of a group, that she antagonized the girls and finally left the club and the Y.W.C.A. She is now in the Amalgamated office and feels that she has found her niche in the labor movement. Her interest in active issues has always been keen; her opinion is likely to be shaded by those with whom she is working, which is natural; and her judgment is rather emotional and superficial at times. Although she had a very difficult time when she first returned from Bryn Mawr—bitterness over a lost position, antagonism among her friends because she felt she must study and make everyone else become interested in serious things, cynicism over the jobs of every one else—she has contributed much to the community and to various groups. She will never be an outstanding leader but by her general interest and enthusiasm she has aided many in her union.

In a nearby community, a group of alumnae have been struggling in a similar way in the transitional period. The inhabitants of the town have, on the whole, been reacting with small town attitudes to the new vigorous forces that have appeared in their midst. The following is the case of the most active alumna in this town:

"K" is an American, born of American parents.
FURTHER ACTIVITIES OF STUDENTS

CASE STUDY OF "K"

Before the School—"K" was household assistant in the Y.W.C.A. and, as such, she was responsible for the clubs of the industrial workers. She had completed the twelfth grade in high school and had attended lectures and classes at the Y.W.C.A., at night school, and at business school. She was a leader in many activities in the Y.W.C.A. and a member of church groups.

At the School—She attended the summer sessions of 1932 and 1933, when she was 22 and 23 years of age respectfully. Although her ratings were good for both years, she made great strides in her second year.

After the School—She continued her leadership activities in the Y.W.C.A. She was effective especially at industrial conferences; she recruited girls for classes; and she obtained membership for Negro girls. She attended lectures given by the League for Industrial Democracy and helped plan for conferences sponsored by the Affiliated Schools. She did some work for a miners' trade union and became an organizer for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Union. She arranged for classes in the latter organization. She worked in a settlement house and on the W.P.A. workers' education program, later attending its state teachers training course. She continues to be active in the State Security League. At present, she is an organizer for the Textile Workers' Organizing Committee and is secretary for its local in her community.

In 1938 she wrote to the investigator as follows:

"The chances are ten to one that if I hadn't gone to Bryn Mawr, I would not have done any of the things I did. At Bryn Mawr I learned to understand some of the problems facing workers and something that could be done about them ... My family did not like the idea of what they called my 'Red' work but over a period of time in which my family met a good number of my 'respectable red' friends and since at intervals I was the only one in the family working, my family although not in full accord are much more sympathetic and understanding. They now call me a 'Progressive Socialist' ... I would like to suggest that before the Bryn Mawr sessions end, the girls should be given some POSITIVE alternative—by that I mean in the first year most of our former ideas and ideals are either scoffed at or torn down ... then when we come back to our communities we must live and work with folks that do not understand the experience that we have gone through and not understanding, the Bryn Mawr girls are at a disadvantage—and in my particular case, I took a reverse position and became more religious and more intolerant than ever before I went to School. It wasn't until many weeks later that I attempted to try to pick up the threads and try to do something with what I learned at Bryn Mawr."

In some of the Southern regions, the transitional period has been especially difficult. Case studies of "L" and "M" show the influx of new ideas and new opportunities in the South and the effect upon the alumnae. "L" is an American, born of American parents. She had a sixth grade education.
CASE STUDY OF "L"

Before the School—When she applied to the School, she was a shoe worker and was on the Executive Board of the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union, of which she had been a member for two months. In the Y.W.C.A., she was on the Board of Directors and was president of the Industrial Club. She belonged to the Baptist Church, in which she taught Sunday School.

At the School—She attended the summer session in 1921 at the age of 25.

After the School—In 1938 it was reported that she was still on the Industrial Committee and was making a contribution to the younger industrial club members. She tried to attend the current events class and was instrumental in forming the new workers' education group. She wants to be active and is as far as her health and home responsibilities permit. Her work in a children's flannel-wear factory does not help her with her health problems. The industrial secretary feels that she has lost touch with the present trends in the labor movement and that her ignorance of recent trends in our industrial life accounts for her attitude regarding the Congress of Industrial Organizations. "She is articulate and thinking, and is trying to understand what is happening but she is way behind the times and really mistaken in her beliefs. She was quite incensed with reading a current novel about the South and is trying to write a novel, when time permits, to show another kind of people in the South." The Secretary tried to plan for her return to the School as she felt that the novel could mean nothing without a new point of view. However, the family health prevented her return.

The difficulties of "M" in the South, are almost as great although she attended the School 15 years later. "M" is an American, born of American parents.

CASE STUDY OF "M"

Before the School—She completed the first year of high school. As a shoe worker, she belonged to the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union and served on several of its committees. She was a member of a student-industrial group at the Y.W.C.A., a representative of workers on the industrial committee of the Y.W.C.A., and in its industrial club. She promoted workers' education within the Y.W.C.A.

At the School—She attended the summer sessions of 1936 and 1937 at the ages of 31 and 32 respectively. The faculty reported that she was earnest in her desire to learn and willingness to participate in activities but that she was hardly leadership material.

After the School—After her first year at the School, she planned for economic discussions at the Y.W.C.A. and tried to further workers' education in her trade union. She formed a workers' education library and set up a bulletin board in the Y.W.C.A. Industrial Club. She was interested in starting a joint meeting of the trade union and of the Y.W.C.A. on social security. During this time she had a great deal of pressure from home since her mother was against the teaching of evolution and other facts at the School and was therefore against her community work. Her trade union work was hampered by the lack of interest within the union—("Our union seems so dead after so much I heard about
unions in the North")—and by the disinterest and fear of workers' education in the community. When a speaker addressed a local union on organized labor, the company had a stenographer copy the speech.

After her second year, she put more effort into labor organization work. The organizer for the American Federation of Labor told her that she had too many ideas like those endorsed by the Congress of Industrial Organizations and he would have to do something about it. She left home and is living at the Y.W.C.A.

The Industrial Secretary of the Y.W.C.A. wrote the following:

"M" is an active member of her union insofar as a woman can be; she is the person in charge of complaints on her floor at the factory; is a member of the Industrial Committee of the Young Women's Christian Association representing the workers' education group and the student-industrial commission. The Bryn Mawr confidential report on her is quite true—she is earnest in her desire to learn and willingness to participate in activities but she is hardly leadership material. Her background has been a very poor one, as I am learning more and more, for she is writing a story of her life and brings it to me to go over. I seem to see some improvement in her efforts to be of service in her union. She feels her responsibility to be of service because she has been given so much opportunity through two summers at Bryn Mawr. The experience has meant much to her personally if not so much to the group in which she works. At any rate she is the only person in her union with any training in workers' education and she does try to spread her knowledge.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In Upton, Downton, Fluxton, and the comparable communities which have been surveyed, 235 alumnae have reported that they belong to 478 groups, either as members or leaders. Little effort has been required to accomplish results in some places; in others, only a few gains could be achieved and only after a hard struggle. Even in places encouraging as a whole, women have been discouraged by their immediate neighborhood. For instance, Fluxton is so large that alumnae often have had to confine their activities to a small section offering as many handicaps as does Downton. Yet most of the women elsewhere have stated that the School has widened their horizon and has given them the perspective necessary for them to work effectively in different groups.

In recent years certain organizations have reached many different communities and have tended to make them more alike. Y.W.C.A. programs have invariably been present, although they have differed from one locality to another. Trade unionism is increasingly apparent throughout the nation.
and people in all places are much more aware than they were formerly of various political philosophies. All this has affected the alumnae. The Y.W.C.A. has provided opportunities for many of the 235 women studied. As trade unions have developed, they have tended to attract many alumnae away from group work organization. Lately political interests also have grown. In specific cities an Alumnae Association has held the strongest attraction, but only 103 of the 235 women under consideration belong to this group. Many observers of the situation have urged the School to try again to form a nation-wide Alumnae Association. They claim that the interests of the women are no longer exclusively local and that an extensive organization, paying attention to local and national problems, would be very popular and most helpful.

In the field of workers' education, alumnae have stimulated the development of miscellaneous workers' schools and of the government program of workers' education. In the establishment of the latter, alumnae helped to gather information about specific communities; they petitioned for the program; they acted as teachers, advisers, and supervisors. In addition, they aided experimental field projects carried on by the American Labor Educational Service, they helped conferences of this and other agencies, and they worked on trade union education committees furthering programs within labor organizations. Student conferences in the South and particularly in New England have reached many groups which could not leave their localities.

In all activities, an increase in leadership has been most marked among those women who have attended the Summer School. Even when participation in the Alumnae Association is not counted, the number of outstanding positions is much greater for the women as alumnae than as candidates. Many have shown initiative on committees and boards, have held offices, and have planned programs. At the same time alumnae have given the support so necessary to leaders if they are to accomplish their objectives. Some have retained their membership in groups to which they have always belonged; others have joined new organizations after their return from the School. In some places, the total number of associations in which the women function has decreased as they have assumed new responsibility in particular clubs. Participation has become more intensive and less extensive than formerly. As certain individuals have become less active, others have increased their
FURTHER ACTIVITIES OF STUDENTS

interests so that the total picture in a specific community may appear much better for the women as alumnae than as candidates.

One significant point should be kept in mind when alumnae and their contributions to society are considered. These women are workers, many of whom carry home and family responsibilities in addition to working. Analysts of community participation have stated that "In general the lower the occupational status the fewer the number of clubs a person joins. Thus community participation has a positive correlation with income and leisure." In addition various studies have shown that, no matter what the income level, few people belong to many groups. A study made by Komarovsky of approximately 6,000 people in each of two communities shows that 60 percent of one and 64 percent of the other had no participation. Here and in other places, the indices of average membership per adult in civic clubs and movements have been shown to be very low. In two rural communities, the index was 0.6 and 0.7, in three suburban communities it was 0.6, 0.5, 0.5, and in two small cities 1.1 and 1.2.

Within all incomes and all places, the ultimate determinant of community participation seems to be the personality of the participating individual. Some people are inert, some active, no matter what the type of community. The Summer School, therefore, has attempted to be careful in the selection of applicants. On the whole its efforts have been justified.

* Quoted in Lloyd Allen Cook, Community Backgrounds of Education, p. 68.
CHAPTER XI

Evaluating the Past in Terms of the Future

WHEN the Bryn Mawr Summer School was founded in 1921, few individuals or groups could visualize the results of the pioneer efforts of President Thomas and Susan M. Kingsbury. Now that the Hudson Shore Labor School is replacing it, the development of the Bryn Mawr School may well be reviewed. Has the institution conformed to the larger pattern of workers' education? Have the hopes and intentions of its founders been realized?

The Bryn Mawr School could not have continued to exist had its directors and supporters not believed in the profound importance of workers' education. They have from the very first visualized instruction for workers as a means of helping to build a constructive labor movement and maintaining our democratic government. Since general education has not achieved these aims, they have contended that supplementary programs must exist. They have not maintained that they will necessarily favor separate education for adult workers if continued expansion of standard educational facilities levels differences among adults and if general adult education more readily reflects the social scene. But workers must in the meanwhile continue to study their environment, even though practical reasons demand that they form separate groups.

Moreover, the Bryn Mawr Summer School has continued its work because it believes that resident schools are as important to workers' education as are community projects. The development of its program has justified its belief and would seem to effectively answer those critics of the resident process who have stated that extra-community projects accommodate too few students, that many of the students do not represent workers in general, that the courses are limited and not coordinated with the everyday life of workers, that expenses are high, and that control is in the wrong hands.
The School can show that 1,610 women workers have studied on its campus in the period from 1921 through 1938. These women have represented American working women in general in respect to national origin, education, geographical residence, and experience in industry and labor organization. Only recently has the School been faced with such problems as whether or not to widen its concept of industrial workers, admit men, and examine the influence upon recruiting policies of increasing unionization and the changing locale of industry.

The small percentage of individuals that workers' education in general has reached indicates that the movement needs the interest and help of many organizations. In 1935, from 70,000 to 80,000 workers were enrolled in classes in W.P.A. workers' education alone. In 1939 it was reported that well over 100,000 workers were enrolled in all classes. Even though it is difficult to estimate the exact number of people reached, one may safely say that it is only a very small proportion of the 7,000,000-8,000,000 organized workers and of the total "organizable" working population of 32,000,000 people. The reasons for this are many. Even in their own communities workers are not able to attend classes because of lack of carfare, overtime work, or participation in trade union and other activities. Some, of course, simply are not interested. Therefore, enrollment in classes may be small and turnover great, even when time and place of meeting have been carefully planned. Functional groups also reach but few persons. It is true that "mass education" accommodates larger numbers but it has not provided adequately for the more serious student. It is interesting to note that the W.P.A. program has never been able to supply enough teachers and leaders to meet more than a minimum number of requests from union groups all over the country. Consideration of all factors may well lead one to believe that both community and extra-community programs have advantages and disadvantages which must be considered when students are recruited.

1 Figure obtained from analysis of the annual reports of the School.
3 Dorothy Rowden, "Workers' Education," Social Work Year Book, Fifth Issue (1939), p. 27.
4 Lois MacDonald, Labor Problems and the American Scene, N. Y., Harpers, 1938, p. 10.

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The Bryn Mawr School has attempted to develop a course not too theoretical or removed from the everyday life of the worker. Its curriculum has been flexible and has avoided academic rigidities so as to respond to a wide range of student interests. The emphasis has been similar to that of community programs, although necessarily more concentrated because of the time element. The social sciences have provided a framework for the teaching. And the classroom work, special studies, leadership groups, and extra-curricular activities, are designed to offer techniques of active citizenship. A community focus has been emphasized in the application sheet, preparatory classes, resident work, and student ratings. The belief has been expressed that the summer session must lead to more than a desire for study. Social participation has been the ultimate goal.

Local groups should, of course, be as careful as resident schools in making sure that classes do not become theoretical or removed from the practical experience of workers. Community courses may also be submerged in armchair philosophies. It is true that local organizations can—and sometimes do—develop functional activities and mass facilities to counteract this tendency but they still do not overcome all the difficulties. Some workers desire only class work and naturally gravitate into theoretical discussions.

The Bryn Mawr School has utilized functional and mass devices even though it has not been able to develop these as widely as have local programs. Special meetings, studies, conferences, institutes and other methods have been used. However, the School has realized that the select student body and the concentrated period of study have offered an ideal laboratory for demonstration of class techniques and accordingly has developed these. Students have been grouped in different ways and subjects synthesized. Teaching devices, curriculum and materials that are significant for all workers' education have resulted. Alumnae have stated that class work at the School has often been superior to that in their communities. They have mentioned the difficulties encountered in local groups in which elementary and advanced students were mixed. Courses were disrupted by slack attendance and constant reviews for the benefit of those who were absent. Concentration after a day of work proved difficult. One student expressed her appreciation of resident work as follows:

"As a worker myself, I realize how very little spare time they [the workers] have and I know of what immense value it is to bring workers to a residential..."
school like yours to study and relieve them of the tiredness from their daily jobs... if they have one... and of the burdens of many details of the average person's daily life and to give them people willing to listen to what the souls of these workers have to say..."*

The School has chosen its faculty very carefully and has trained teachers informally. The qualifications formulated have been used by local programs and assistants from the School have been valuable to many different projects. The alumnae have expressed their appreciation of the instruction which they have received. They have indicated that this often is in contrast to local work since the hustle and bustle of the community touches not only the students but also their teachers who, buried as they are in many activities, cannot always give adequate attention to their tasks. Since some of the ablest instructors are overburdened, the weight of carrying a local program often falls upon the less competent.

It seems reasonable to assert that workers' education as a process has not come to the point where it may accept one project in preference to another. Due to the limitations of specific types, the aim should be intelligent combination of various facilities. In the community, mass education, classroom education and training for leadership should be utilized. In the resident school, mural and extra-mural activities of students and faculty, as well as teacher training and institutes, should approximate the local combination. Finally, the community and extra-community programs should be unified in a year-round workers' education movement.

In the same way, workers' education still needs projects under a variety of auspices. Instruction in trade unions is available only to organized workers and is related functionally to collective bargaining. Non-unionized persons need the programs developed by political, community, and religious groups; these programs may help trade unionists to have a wider social perspective. If collective bargaining and community efforts are necessary to changing social structure, then the two types of educational activity may be recognized as essential. The School has incorporated parts of both and has brought together workers from all kinds of groups. It has had representatives of labor upon its Board of Directors and the fact that these have not been confined to trade union women probably has contributed toward building a comprehensive labor movement. Although individuals have supplied most of the money,

*Letter from a German student, 1934.
moral and financial responsibility has been placed upon the local communities and upon those organizations which have sent students to the School. As a result of decreasing liberal and foundation support, the School has attempted to obtain more aid from organized labor. The administrative board of the institution, however, has continued to maintain that the program is not to be controlled by contributing groups. The practice of independence has been as real as its theory. No specific organization has determined policies.

The Hudson Shore School is following the Bryn Mawr School as closely as possible. This seems to indicate that student, faculty and community groups are satisfied with what the School has accomplished. The few changes that are taking place are logical developments. Increased representation of labor, still on an independent basis, and the solicitation of more support from organized labor are intended to bring the School closer to the needs and interests of the labor movement. The continuation of the Bryn Mawr School in the form of the Hudson Shore School is predicated upon the belief that there is a need for this kind of institution. Organized labor has acknowledged, although hesitantly, that until the labor movement is willing and able to support workers' education as an integral and vital activity, instruction for workers must be entrusted to others equipped and ready to carry it along. Although the unions have recently shown a greater willingness than heretofore to support educational ventures, they still cannot claim that the most effective work and leadership is in their hands. The intellectuals from the colleges and universities, the middle class liberals, and the government officials who have entered the field have contributed much. And, even if it were thought desirable, the means are not at hand for integrating these activities within the trade unions themselves since the unions necessarily are preoccupied today with the problems of organization. Nor is the government ready or equipped to perform the task. Although valuable work has been done with federal funds, government support is unreliable at the present time. The failure of appropriations, the relief standards, and the whims of a public opinion only partially informed about workers' education are responsible. Where techniques and methods are still in process of development, the flexibility of the privately supported venture, independent of government and the trade unions, is desirable.

The test of an educational program for workers should be what it can do for the workers. The scope of community participation of the alumnae is on the whole encouraging and seems to justify the existence of the School. It
would, of course, be far too optimistic to state that none of the students' activities could have occurred had it not been for the School. On the other hand, the institution certainly has made significant contributions; it has drawn workers from a variety of organizations, has given them techniques of thinking and acting, and has attempted to show how these techniques may be adjusted to community patterns. Observers have indicated that more could have been accomplished had the School penetrated the district around it and brought more community groups to the campus. Students might have become more familiar with functional and mass techniques unavailable in the regular course and a greater tie could have been established between the summer session and continuous programs of workers' education. However, it should be remembered that even if all this had been done, economic depression, the daily routine of living, and personal differences still would have impeded the activity of some students. Many supporters of the School have felt heartened because alumnae have shown signs of broadened interest and ability. These supporters do not expect startling results in the expansion of different types of programs. One person crystallizes the feeling in this connection in the following statement:

There is the question in my mind just how much we feel they should accomplish upon returning from Bryn Mawr. We expect them to "set the world on fire" without realizing that a few weeks of summer work cannot change their personality or years of background development. We need to find more outlets for their abilities within our community life after returning to the community from which they went to school. If their personal horizon is broadened, their interest in personal development heightened, that in itself is of great aid in building citizenship. Our hope always is that they will grow beyond their own world to interest in workers' problems; not only interest but devotion and activity.

The alumnae themselves have indicated that this hope has been realized in part. In answer to an inquiry about their activities, they have stated that the School has helped strengthen their personalities by giving them increased understanding, a broader outlook, and closer insight into the problems of the organizations with which they are associated. The resultant outlook has stimulated tolerance in all spheres of life. The comments made by some of the women illustrate this. One alumna says:

EVALUATING THE PAST IN TERMS OF THE FUTURE

Bryn Mawr helped me to think before making decisions or forming opinions. It made me a little more tolerant of people of other races and nationalities. Best of all, it helped me to control my temper. I needed that as much as anything else in studies, in order to get along with people.

Another student writes:

Bryn Mawr taught me that the other fellow’s point of view might be wrong only because he does not understand. When one does a bit of enlightenment and he begins to see what’s back of his hard luck, he’s not so dumb.

Many alumnae state that the understanding stimulated at the School has led them to activity of various kinds. In community, government and labor activities they are showing that they have learned how to ask questions, how to understand problems better, and know how to express themselves more clearly. Several alumnae have said:

If I had never gone to Bryn Mawr, I’d just be a tongue-tied inarticulate worker with no hope of ever taking part in discussions of any kind. Now I do try to protect my job and interest each individual in a convincing manner that it’s up to all of us to do our best and no one person can do very much alone.

As far as politics were concerned, the instruction received at Bryn Mawr taught me to study all party platforms and how to use my vote most effectively for the benefit of all workers. In other words “to point a finger to every item and ask that it be explained.”

It taught me not to follow others’ thoughts and ideas blindly because the other side is not always wrong. Now I listen to all sides of an argument without a biased opinion and then when I think I’m right, I do speak and I’m able to speak my share. In other words, it helped to give me confidence in myself and to broaden my mind.

One woman says that her motto now is to look for logic in any arguments concerning the labor movement or current social problems. Others point to specific instances of being able to conduct meetings, hold office, and address conference groups. Such alumnae say:

It taught me to express my opinion in very few words and yet get what I had to say across. It also helped me in taking minutes when I was secretary. I learned that one group of union workers had to co-operate with the others if they wanted to hold what they had and gain more, for if all groups do not progress at the same time the group which goes too far ahead will have a setback. I learned to meet and speak to people and groups without fear.

Before going to Bryn Mawr, I believed very much in unionism but found difficulty in taking an active part as male members resented it. I found that
few if any women fought that state of affairs and I also dropped out of the executive board in 1930. After going to Bryn Mawr, I found spirit to fight that situation and returned to the executive board in 1936 and also fought my way into the Joint Board. I am the only woman member on the board of our local but since then the executive board number has grown to four. I spoke to our business agent who has been in the office one year about making women more union conscious and he helped me to form our women’s education group. We have sent and helped financially one girl and hope to send one every year to the Summer School.

Some alumnae say that they learned that it is also valuable to work from the bottom, to be a quiet but effective member of a group, and to persist. One woman states:

I have written you all this for I thought you might like to know that if it had not been for my six weeks at Bryn Mawr in 1934 that I would have long fallen out of union ranks just as many of my very close friends have done for lack of knowing what it is all about. I’ve also tried to start workers’ education groups but due to lack of interest from workers it was impossible, but I am not discouraged, for what I learned at Bryn Mawr is still with me.

If the Summer School experience has meant so much to these workers, certainly resident programs like that of the Bryn Mawr Summer School should be encouraged. Such experiments are important if our theoretical acceptance of democracy is to be paralleled by practical achievement. Democracy implies independent thinking, intelligent participation in community organizations, and consciousness of social standards. These qualities are conscientiously encouraged and heightened among those who attend the School. One German student, upon her return home, wrote in her last letter to the School:

There is no opportunity for German working women to talk now. I hope that all the workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School this summer will appreciate the splendid opportunity they are enjoying and will equip themselves to become fighters, not alone for the right of women workers, but for mankind in general.  

More than ever before, we are today aware of certain values which we must promote and preserve in our country. Workers’ education may aid the process since it may help create the informed, active citizens which democracy needs.

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I received my elementary and secondary education in Brooklyn, New York. In 1934 I graduated from Brooklyn College with the degree of Bachelor of Arts. After a year of graduate study in Economics at Columbia University, I received the degree of Master of Arts from that institution in 1935.

From 1935 to 1938 I was a student in the Carola Woerishoffer Graduate Department of Social Economy and Social Research, first as a Scholar, then as a Fellow. In 1937 I received a Two-year Certificate in Social and Industrial Research.

To fulfill the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Bryn Mawr College, in 1938 I took preliminary examinations in the major field of Social Economy and the minor field of Economics. My dissertation was begun in 1938 under the direction of Professor Mildred Fairchild.
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