

Reappraising the Roles of Girls' Preparatory Schools

Quynh Dang
Indiana University

Historiography of women's education in the United States has been dramatically enriched both its depth and breadth since the publication of the foundational work *In the Company of Educated Women* by Barbara Solomon (Solomon 1985). Solomon contributed significantly to the exploration of women's struggles for access to higher institutions and furthered the understandings of the contestations between achieving higher education and complying with gender expectations. Since then, historians and education scholars have researched extensively about seminaries, academies, women's organizations, and the implications of the power structures, class, ethnicity, and nationalities on the educational experience of women (Nash 2008 2018; Woynshner, Hao Kuo Tai 1997)

Contemporary scholarship has continued to refine the understandings of female institutions and the impacts of social stratifications on women's education. Andrea Turpin's work underscores the two contrasting educational philosophies of Catherine Beecher and Mary Lyon (Turpin 2010). Catherine Beecher, the founder of the Hartford Female Seminary, believed that education should help women fulfill the role of mothers and wives. Meanwhile, Mary Lyon founded the Mount Holyoke Female Seminary on the basis that knowledge should help to liberate women and serve their own purposes. In recent years, more research has investigated the impacts of social class, ethnicities, and nationalities on women's educational experience. Regarding the relationship between race and education, Linda Perkins (1983) uncovered the educational experience of African American women during the mid-and late nineteenth century and asserted that the primary purpose of their education was to "uplift" their race. Perkins (1983) also points out the social barriers such as racial segregation

and discrimination that impeded women of color from receiving the same quality of education as white women. The research concerning women's social, racial, and ethnic backgrounds has both enriched and complicated the history of women's education in the United States.

In the field of the history of curriculum, scholars have analyzed the curriculum for men and women to understand opportunities and challenges for women better once they had access to schooling. While popular beliefs had that female institutions were more ornamental or less intellectual curriculum than that of male counterparts, Margaret Nash (2016) argues that both men and women in most academies shared similar curricular subjects in the eighteenth-century. As science has become more accessible for women, the history of women in science has drawn attention of scholars. In the groundbreaking book *The Science Education of American Girls*, Kim Tolley (2014) enunciates the structural and cultural obstacles limiting girls' access to science from the antebellum area to the twentieth century. Whether it was the curriculum or the treatment of women in different fields, women nonetheless had to overcome significant impediments and prejudices to earn their education.

A missing piece in the history of female institutions – girls' preparatory schools

Preparatory schools were established during the transitional time between the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. By the end of the nineteenth century, female seminaries and academies were being criticized and gradually replaced by common schools. At the same time, colleges were established mainly for men and women who wanted to attain a higher degree. However, in their early days, public high schools were considered unqualified for preparing students for college administration;

thus, most collegial preparation work was done through private study (Kliebard 2004). This demand offered a great opportunity for establishing a specialized kind of school under the name preparatory schools were rapidly established as an alternative choice for those who wanted to pursue higher education. These preparatory schools played

Woody's book informs that nineteenth-century girls' high schools such as the New York High School for Females (1826), the Girls High and Normal School of Philadelphia (1848), or the Boston Girls' High School (1852) aspired to provide a thorough education for women (Woody 1929). While these high schools offered secondary education for women, they did not perform well in preparing their students for colleges. Students needed to attend college preparatory departments or private study to prepare for college entrance (Krug 1969). As a result, private pre-collegiate institutions played an increasingly prominent role in preparing young men and women for colleges. That said, historical research so far has not been paying adequate attention to preparatory schools (Eisenman 2001).

There are two probable reasons for the scarcity of research on preparatory schools. First, research on female institutions in the nineteenth century has heavily investigated seminaries and academies, the most dominant kinds of female schools. Second, by the end of the nineteenth, co-educational high schools grew noticeably, and more women could make their way to colleges. Female colleges and higher education institutions conveniently became an appealing research site as they were the newest educational frontier for women at that time. The preparatory schools whose names differed from seminaries, academies, and colleges did not fit into any category. While these schools contributed profoundly to the achievement of many women's education, they did not receive enough attention from researchers. Therefore, a study of girls' pre-collegiate schools offers critical insights into the changes in women's

educational experience in the late nineteenth century.

This article examines the curriculum and practices of the Classical School for Girls in Indianapolis, Indiana. Theodore A. Sewall (1853-1895) and May Wright Sewall (1844-1920) founded the school in 1882. Mr. and Mrs. Sewall were college graduates from Harvard University and Northeastern University, respectively. They shared the same commitment to educational reform and transformed their visions into practice. In 1876, Mr. Sewall founded the Indianapolis Classical School for Boys, where Mrs. Sewall later taught German. The notice of the Classical School for Girls' establishment appeared six years later in an announcement of the boys' school in June 1882. While Theodore A. Sewall's name remained as the school's principal until he died in 1895, Mary Wright Sewall was the person in charge of running the school. As stated in the announcement for school establishment, Classical School for Girls served to "provide a thorough Course of Study preparatory to the Colleges that admit women" (Indianapolis Classical School Scrapbook Vol. 1 n.d). The school curriculum for girls was similar to that of the school for boys, which "modeled on the plan of the leading New England Academies" (Indianapolis Classical School Scrapbook Vol. 1 n.d).

The review of sources – including school catalogs, scrapbooks, personal manuscripts, and newspaper articles – reveals a broader reform agenda that was infused in the school curriculum and practice. The school presented itself as a pioneering institution that confronted popular norms about women's intellectual and physical capacities. Not only did the school provide female students with an equally rigorous curriculum as the males' school but also did it offer innovative courses such as physical training and domestic sciences. The Classical School for Girls furthered women's access to higher education and reimagined gender norms related to women's ability and their place in society. This study contributes to

the understanding of female preparatory schools in the late nineteenth century and calls for a reappraisal of this kind of school in shaping women's educational experience.

Improvements and challenges of female education in the late nineteenth century

The last few decades of the nineteenth century saw significant achievements in secondary education for women in the United States. Vocal proponents supported the establishment of secondary schools for girls and promoted women's education. In 1840, Alexander Dallas Bache submitted a plan for a High School for Girls and a Seminary for Female Teachers to the Controller of the Public School of Philadelphia. He asserted that "Yes, the High School for Girls! - that is what Philadelphia lacks" and "educate the girls properly, and the world will soon be a better and nobler race of men" (Woody 1929, 524). The establishment of high schools and female colleges allowed more women to pursue secondary and higher education. Between 1850 and 1870, there were approximately 160 public high schools, and the number increased to 2,536 in 1890. By 1890, more girls attended and graduated from high schools than boys (Woody 1929, 545-46). Private schools and academies provided a wide range of courses for students and prepared them for colleges. Some academies even extended their course of study and obtained the pretentious name of colleges, and many male colleges started accepting co-education (Dexter 1919, 433).

The growth of women's colleges offered more significant opportunities for those who aspired to pursue higher education. Between 1875 and 1885, the number of female students in non-coeducational increased from 9,572 to 14,049 (Dexter 1919, 440-44). Solomon (1985) suggests several factors that promoted women's attendance at colleges, such as family finance and beliefs. Middle-class families were among those who often supported their children's higher education, intending to maintain economic prosperity. In the Annual Reports of

the Present of the Columbia College presented to the Trustees in 1882, Frederick A.P Barnard affirmed women's positive impacts on improving the standard of scholarship. He also disputed the assumption that women's constitutions did not fit the rigorous course of study in colleges (Barnard, 1882).

Despite the increasing support, women continued facing some intense opposition. In 1872, Edward Clarke, a Harvard Medical School professor, proposed one of the most profound critiques of women's intellectual capacity. Clarke (1874) claims that the study at schools and colleges was strenuous for women's brains and potentially caused nerve disease or mental power loss. In other words, women's physical and intellectual capacity could not meet the intensity of higher schooling. Another objection came from the fear that education would adversely affect women's marriage. Men perceived educated women as those who might engage in public discussions and neglect housework (Burstyn 2016). Opponents to women's education in the late nineteenth century fiercely denounced co-education. They perceived co-education as a cause of the masculinization of women and the feminization of men. Opposing people also believed that women's participation in the same environment could impede men's success (Nash 2016). Multisided attacks on women's capacity and dignity indeed impeded most women to access higher education, yet did not necessarily affect middle-class families who could afford private schooling for their children.

Education in Indiana in the nineteenth century.

It took several decades for the State of Indiana to constitutionalize common schools. In 1816, Indian's first Constitution included education provision, which called for "a general system of education" (Carmony and Peckham 1950, 22). However, it was only until 1852 that Indiana passed a School Law for establishing a common school fund. The "County Seminary Law of 1818" was the first

State's attempt to encourage the establishment of a trustee to fund public seminary. That said, the law was not meant to secure public funds for education. Seminaries were ultimately dependent on tuitions, which were afforded by only a few (Boone 1892). In the 1840s, Indiana faced the challenge of illiteracy that happened one-seventh of the entire population (Moore 1905). Caleb Mills, a professor at the Wabash College, acknowledged the State of emergency in Indiana's education system and actively advocated public education through his publications. In his infamous writing, the series of *One of the People* submitted to the Legislature members; Mill presented suggested plans for free public schools for Indiana children. His proposal influenced the Governor and the legislature makers to pass an act that collected public opinions on free education between 1847 and 1848 (Moore 1905). In 1851, the new Constitution acknowledged the formation of a Common Schools system, "where tuition shall be without charge, and equally open to all" (Indiana Constitution 1851). In the following year, the School Law of 1852 mandated the use of state taxation to support public education, including building schools and hiring teachers. The proliferation of public schools resulted in the decline of private schools. Over four decades, Indiana transformed an education system from a mostly private and chartered to a state-funded one.

Education for Indian women underwent some similar experiences with women in other parts of the country. In the early nineteenth century, female seminaries emphasized the teaching of etiquette rather than academic rigor. The two first female schools in Indianapolis were the Indianapolis Female School and Miss Hooker's Female School. The former school was founded in 1830 and offered courses in English grammar, geography, astronomy, and needlework. The latter was opened in 1834 and extended its courses of study to history, natural philosophy, and painting (Urbriel 1994). These seminaries were often short-lived and offered limited opportunities only for those who could

afford their tuition. By the 1840s, female education achieved growing recognition and momentum for improvement. The number of female seminaries and colleges increased noticeably across the State. The Rockville Female Seminary was founded in 1840; then, the De Pauw Female College at New Albany opened five years later (Boone 1892). Many of the girls' schools remained private and under churches' influences. The curriculum emphasized less on subjects like needlework, astronomy but more on English and history. The development of private schools ceased in the 1850s by the time public education and co-education became viable (Boone 1892).

By the 1860s, co-education became a favorable option in Indiana. Boone (1892) claims that the county seminaries were nominally open to both sexes, although, in some exceptions, female students were not as welcomed as males. As early as 1819, Rev. William Martin founded the Martin's Academy in Livonia, Washington County, which opened the door to both male and female students. The Monroe County Seminary admitted both sexes in 1833. When Caleb Mills advocated for free public education, he also acknowledged his support for girls' education. In his speech, "Knowledge is Power," Mills disputed the notion of intellectual inferiority and expressed his belief in the impacts of education for women and public goods (Natali 2007). After the School Law in 1852, public schools steadily developed across the States and offered free education for all children (Boone 1892). Not only girls attended the same schools as boys at all levels, but also high school female graduates outnumbered males (Littell 1916).

However, private institutions such as female seminaries and preparatory schools continued to play a critical role in women's education until the end of the nineteenth century. Students who intended to go to college chose private schools over public high schools for college examination training. The public high schools did not offer the courses that were required by colleges, and teachers were not

qualified to teach those courses either (Boone 1892). A majority of the township high school was finishing schools. Their primary purpose was to "do the best things it can for those who presumably will go no farther" (Cotton 1904, 473). After finishing high school, students needed to take courses at private schools or college preparatory departments to be considered qualified for admission. This new development generated renewed and favorable conditions for the revival of seminaries, academies, and private schools of their kind. Between the 1850s and 1870s, an estimate indicates that more than 70 seminaries were founded across the State. This estimation included co-educational institutions and other institutions, which listed under the names of colleges yet preserved the seminary functions. There are four major groups of seminaries (Boone 1892). The first group consisted of the revived academies built on the ruins of the early nineteenth-century county seminaries. The second group was formed and run by churches. The third kind of seminaries was mostly privately developed and run. The schools of this kind provided good-quality teaching and made a notable reputation. The last category, the least mentioned, was named under "business schools" or "farmer's academies." Among the four groups, the privately-owned schools committed the most to academic works, thus played the most prominent part in furthering education for students.

May Wright Sewall and the Classical School for Girls

May Wright Sewall was a dedicated and eminent educator. She was born in Milwaukee in 1844. She graduated from the Northwestern Female College in 1866 and received her Master of Arts degree at the alma mater in 1871. After earning her Master's degree, Mrs. Sewall taught at schools in Mississippi and Michigan, where she became the first woman principal. In 1882, she served as the Classical School for Girls' principal until the close of the school in 1907. She advocated for higher education for women and asserted its values in developing a better

society. Sewall disputed the public doubts on women's intellectual capacity and encouraged women to use education for the domestic and public good (Sewall 1887). Since the beginning of her career, Sewall had been devoted to education and worked for its betterment.

May Wright Sewall and her husband Theodore L. Sewall established the Classical School for Girls – later named as Girls' Classical School, a leading preparatory school in Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1882. The school opened in September 1882 in the southeast corner of North Pennsylvania and St. Joseph Street (Catalogue of the Classical School for Boys n.d). The school was privately-owned, which aimed "to provide a thorough Course of Study preparatory to the Colleges that admit women" (Classical School Scrapbook Vol.1 n.d). The founders also saw the school's foundation as a timely response to the need for preparing young girls for higher education. The school opening announcement in 1882 wrote: "The present state of higher education for women makes schools of this character as necessary for girls as for boys" (Classical School Scrapbook Vol.1 n.d). More importantly, the school was an ideal place for Sewall to practice her education reformist ideas. Under her leadership, the school became the best female school in Indianapolis with pride in curriculum rigor, advanced physical training program, and a comprehensive course of study (Ubriel 1994).

Within a few years of its foundation, the Classical School for Girls established a widespread and prestigious reputation in Indiana and the nearby areas. In the first year, the school enrolled forty-four students, and the enrollment increased to fifty-nine in the following year. The school was proud of offering a similar Course of Study as in the Classical School for Boys. In 1886, the two graduates from the school became the first Indiana girls to take Harvard examinations and obtained admission certificates (Classical School for Girls 1886). In the first year, the school mostly offered courses in the Advanced Department, which consisted of five years of study. This Department was

designed for girls who finished secondary school from other institutions and only attended Classical School for Girls for college preparation. After a few years, the school provided a whole range of levels from Kindergarten, Primary, Upper Primary, Intermediate to Advanced. By the ninth year, the school admitted 176 students, among which 27 residence students came from other states such as California, Utah, Kansas, Minnesota, and Washington DC. Beyond its emphasis on academic excellence, the Classical School for Girls embraced a bold reform agenda. The analysis of the school curriculum and practices further uncovers the reformist aspects of this school.

A commitment to academic excellence

Since its establishment, the Classical School for Girls had made a strong statement on its dedication to academic excellence. The school arranged the courses at the Advanced Department following the latest requirements for the Harvard Examinations for Women. It explained that Harvard's requirements were "the highest, and therefore including all others" (Classical School for Girls 1889). Other female education advocates shared the same vision that admission to Harvard was both a significant academic achievement and a success in the fight for equal access to higher education. However, together with other elite male-dominant private institutions such as Princeton and Yale, Harvard remained a close door for women in the nineteenth century. The push by the Women's Education Association of Boston only led to the Harvard Examinations for Women set up in 1874. In 1894, Harvard Cooperation agreed to have Harvard president countersign on the degree granted by Radcliffe College. That said, co-education was still not accepted on the Harvard campus (Solomon 1985). The Classical School for Girls aspired to send girls to colleges and prepared them for the most distinguished one. By 1889, the school's catalog named dozens of students who successfully passed the Harvard Examinations. Due to Harvard's

restriction, these highly-achieved female graduates could only attend female colleges or co-ed institutions such as Smith College, Bryn Mawr College, or the University of Michigan (Classical School for Girls 1891). That said, their achievements demonstrated females' determination and competence to meet the demands of the highest-ranking college.

The school viewed education as "a paramount business" and raised female education standards (Classical School for Girls 1889). The program in the Advanced Department consisted of five years of study with intensive training in such subjects as Mathematics, Latin, Greek, History, French, Natural Sciences, and English. The catalog emphasized that these courses were "more extended than the courses in these subjects usually given in preparatory and high schools" (Classical School for Girls 1889). An article on the Indianapolis News assessed the Classical School for Girls' range of study as "higher than many famous female colleges and female seminaries" (Dean 1888). Reading culture played a significant role both at school and at home. At school, students were expected to read English words correctly with taste and expression. The school sent home a reading list in response to mothers' questions, "What do you advise me to have my daughter read?" (Classical School for Girls 1891) The recommendations for a reading list underscored an ultimate principle: Read books of permanent value. In other words, the school encouraged students to read books not just for short-term amusement but, more importantly, for long-term intellectual development. The business of study required an investment of a measurable amount of time. Apart from the study time at school, Sewall, in an Announcement, advised students in the Upper Department (or Advanced Department) to spend two to three hours daily to study at home. The rigor and comprehensiveness of the school curriculum and practice dispute the most common critiques of female institutions in the nineteenth century for having either an ornamental or lax curriculum.

The school took great pride in employing college-bred teachers who were "familiar with college methods and college requirements" (Classical School for Girls 1903). This statement was best reflected in the list of the teachers on the annual catalogs. For example, the catalog of the school year 1886-1887 enumerates the names of teachers graduating from the University of Michigan, Indiana University, and Wesley College. Sewall herself obtained a Master's degree at Northwestern University. She insisted on the implications of higher education for women, especially for those who served as teachers. In her words, higher education was the essential instrument for women who entered "the lists of competitive intellectual service as paid workers" (Sewall 1887). Therefore, having college-trained teachers reinforced the school's commitment to providing excellent academic education for students. Employing female college-bred teachers also demonstrated an appreciation for women's higher education achievement. These teachers were the best role models for girls who aspired to obtain a college education. In short, the team of college-graduated teachers exemplified the school's quality and orientation.

Physical Education and Women's Images

In the nineteenth century, physicians and doctors believed that the magnitude of schoolwork and a lack of health provisions at school were the causes of female health deterioration (Clarke 1874). They called for establishing a system of calisthenics or gymnastics training at school and domestic training at home. Catherin Beecher was among proponents for physiology and calisthenics for young women. She published the book *Physiology and Calisthenics: For schools and families simple* to propose a system of physiology and a short and comprehensive course for physical training and hygiene (Beecher 1867). However, physical activity truly gained public attention in the 1860s thanks to the Boston educator's work, Dio Lewis. He suggested different calisthenics exercises such

as the dumbbell exercises, gymnastics crowns, exercises with rings, and wands in the articles *The New Gymnastics* published on *The Atlantic* (Lewis 1862). He lectured on gymnastics at various schools and put his ideas into practice at the short-lived *Dr. Dio Lewis's School for Young Ladies* school (1864-1867) (Woody 1929). His writings, lectures, and training contributed to popularizing calisthenics at female institutions. By the end of the nineteenth century, physical training or gymnastics was a part of high schools and academies' curriculum.

With the advantages of a private school, the Classical School for Girls offered a thorough course of physical training. The introduction of calisthenics, physical training, and hygiene courses to girls' schools and academies responded to critiques about the exclusion of health provision in their curriculum. The school dedicated the third floor that was 64 by 41 feet, with a height of 21 feet, to be the gymnasium. The gymnasium was equipped with jumping poles, horizontal ladder parallel bars, weights, and rings. Its spacious area could even afford to march. At the beginning of the school year, students received physical examinations to decide on the types and intensity of the exercises. The availability of resources allowed the school to provide individualized programs for students (Classical School for Girls 1886). From Monday to Friday, students of all departments spent 30 minutes at the gymnastics class. Mrs. Sewall also reinforced the school's standards of excellence in gymnastics. Accordingly, the physical training course concentrated on improving both students' health and vigor, precision, and accuracy. The school catalog consistently highlighted the success of the program over the years. "The gymnasium work, so conducted for eight years, has proven uniformly beneficial. The good effect upon the health and carriage of the girls has been most marked, and many girls have been brought from a state of physical weakness to settle, robust health by means of their gymnasium practice" (Classical School for Girls 1891). The provision of the physical training program reassured a

balance between mental health and physical health.

The gymnastics program contributed to reshaping the images of the feminine both at school and in public. In the school year 1888-1889, the school appointed Pauline Morton, a graduate from Woman's Medical College, New York City, as the gymnasium director. Morton was in charge of the gymnasium instruction and the lectures on health and hygiene throughout the school year. These lectures were open to students and parents to educate them on the role of physical training and hygiene for women's health (Classical School for Girls Catalogue 1889). The Annual Gymnastic Examination was one of the most significant school events that promoted the image of strong and physically skilled young ladies. Local newspapers praised Sewall for introducing physical culture into girls' schools and advertised it as a pleasing experience (Indianapolis Classical School Scrapbook Vol 2. n.d). The school invited parents and friends to attend the annual examination. The Annual Gymnastic Examination program in 1899 consisted of free-standing for stronger movement and general posture improvement, heaving movement for Expansion of chest, club swinging for the shoulder joint and hand development, and vaulting for courage, elasticity, and co-ordination. These exercises' purposes were utterly different from the common beliefs of the images of middle-class women in the nineteenth century. Female students at the Classical Schools for Girls were not feeble creatures with incapable minds for academic work. They were trained to be intellectual, physically capable, and courageous young women who pursued excellence and life balance.

Household Science and Women's Roles in Society

The household science curriculum resonated with the emerging trend of the social efficiency curriculum in the 1890s. The social changes demanded adjustments in the curriculum to fit the demands of a broader

population instead of affording only a few brightest ones. The social efficiency reformers attacked the college-preparatory curriculum for being distant from real-life circumstances, thus called for more practical subjects (Kliebard 2004). The birth of household science responded to that call. The emergence of home economics or domestic science among white middle-class women in the nineteenth century was partly influenced by the notion of separate spheres which dictates women's roles involving around the house. However, Catherine Beecher, a renowned education reformer, pushed this discourse further to promote domestic science as a field of study in women's schools – a public space (Puaca 2020). On the one hand, the introduction of this course could be understood as a reinforcement of normative gender roles that associated housework with women's responsibilities. On the other hand, this course represents a new definition of woman's roles and a reappraisal of their work in the public sphere.

The Girls' Classical School announced the establishment of a Household Science Department in 1899 under the Director of Anna Hedges, a Drexel Institute, Philadelphia graduate (Classical School for Girls 1889). The guiding principle of this Department was that housekeeping was both an art and a science. The pupils who signed up for the class would attend two hours per week. One hour was designated for theory, and the other was for practice. For the first time, a course at the Girls' Classical School was open for the general public who were interested in the scientific knowledge of home subjects and improving their housekeeping skills. This Department offered two separate courses – an Applied Science Course and a Cooking course. The former class embraced four scientific subjects, including Chemistry, Physics, Physiology, and Composition of food and cooking. These subjects promised to provide students with intellectual knowledge about the science of housekeeping. The cooking class, on the other hand, offered practical opportunities to apply

theories. The initiative at the Girls' Classical School resonated with a shifting trend in women's education in which the topics of household science and domestic economy had a position in formal educational settings (Youmans 1856).

The most fundamental distinction of the Household Science courses at Sewall's school was rooted in her perception of these courses' roles. Most social efficiency reformers believed that schools should teach subjects that prepared students for life. Household science subjects, in particular, should meet the home needs and help the girls be more efficient at home. Women's worth depended on their contribution to the home, for instance, how well they could cook, take care of the children, or do other housework (United States Bureau of Education 1919). In other words, the teaching of household science served the house's needs rather than the desires of individual women. In contrast, Sewall asserted that household science should appreciate the "dignity of labor" and the "intelligence and skill required in the practical service of any family" (Sewall 1900). She referred to the household science as exemplary work that could yield happiness, yet being in a deplorable condition among middle-class families. Sewall criticized the middle class or the leisure class for condemning housework. She affirmed that educating the minds should be of equal importance as educating the body. The household science courses at the Girls' Classical School aimed at developing an appreciation for the women's labor work and not necessarily to meet a home need. More than a course that taught people how to cook properly, the Household Science course was designed to change a social class's perspectives on women's domestic work values.

Conclusion

During twenty-five years in operation (1882-1907), the Girls' Classical School initiated trail-blazing practices that shaped the educational experiences of its students and created changes in the community. First and

foremost, the school provided a pathway for women who aspired to go to college. It successfully sent female students to respected colleges and disputed the belief of women's inferior intelligence. The course in physical training was a bold statement that attested to female physical capability. The course in Household science advocated for a reappraisal of the domestic work and women's roles. The school's initiatives contributed to promoting the new images of women and changing public perspectives.

The story of the Classical School for Girls demonstrates distinctive attributes of nineteenth-century girls' preparatory schools that were often overlooked in the history of women's education. The examination into the growth and changes of preparatory offers critical understandings of women's educational experiences and the female school leaders' reformist ideas. Ultimately, the changes that happened within the four walls of a female school could out to the public and reshaped women's images in society.

References

- Barnard, Frederick Augustus Porter. 1882. The Higher Education of Women Annual Reports of the President of Columbia College, Presented to the Trustees in June. 1879, June, 1880, and June, 1881. Columbia College.
- Beecher, Catharine Esther. 1867. *Physiology and Calisthenics: For Schools and Families*. Harper.
- Boone, Richard Gause. 1892. *A History of Education in Indiana*. R. Appleton.
- Burstyn, Joan N. 2016. *Victorian Education and the Ideal of Womanhood*. Routledge.
- Carmony, Donald F., and Howard H. Peckham. 1950. *A Brief History of Indiana*. Indiana Historical Bureau.
- Clarke, Edward Hammond. 1874. *Sex in Education, Or, A Fair Chance for Girls*. James R. Osgood and Company.
- Catalogue of the Classical School for Boys. n.d. Indiana State Library.
- Classical School for Girls. 1886. *Classical School for Girls Catalogue 1885-1886*. Indiana State Library.
- Classical School for Girls. 1889. *Classical School for Girls Catalogue 1888-1889*. Indiana State Library.
- Classical School for Girls. 1891. *Classical School for Girls Catalogue 1890-1891*. Indiana State Library.
- Classical School for Girls. 1903. *Classical School for Girls Catalogue 1902-1903*. Indiana State Library.
- Cotton, Fassett Allen. 1904. *Education in Indiana: An Outline of the Growth of the Common School System, Together with Statements Relating to the Condition of Secondary and Higher Education in the State and a Brief History of the Educational Exhibit. Prepared for the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, Held at Saint Louis, May 1 to November 30, 1904*. WB Burford, contractor for state printing.
- Dean, Mary 1888. "The Girls' Classical School." *Indianapolis News*, 1888.
- Dexter, Edwin Grant. 1919. *A History of Education in the United States*. Macmillan.
- Eisenmann, Linda. 2001. "Creating a Framework for Interpreting US Women's Educational History: Lessons from Historical Lexicography." *History of Education* 30 (5): 453-470. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00467600110064735>
- Indiana Constitution. 1851. <https://www.in.gov/history/2473.htm>
- "Indianapolis Classical School Scrapbook Vol.1." Indianapolis, Indiana. Education in Indiana. Indiana State Library. <http://cdm16066.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p16066coll52/id/2757/rec/15>.
- "Indianapolis Classical School Scrapbook Vol 2." Indianapolis, Indiana. Education in Indiana. Indiana State Library. <http://cdm16066.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/compoundobject/collection/p16066coll52/id/3495/rec/17>.
- Kliebard, Herbert M. 2004. *The Struggle for the American Curriculum, 1893-1958*. Psychology Press.
- Krug, Edward August. 1969. *The Shaping of the American High School, 1880-1920*. University of Wisconsin Press Madison.
- Lewis, Dio 1862. "The New Gymnastics." *The Atlantic* 1862. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1862/08/the-new-gymnastics/305408/>.
- Littell, Harold. 1916. "Development of the City School System of Indiana - 1851-1880." *The Indiana Magazine of History*: 193-213. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27785749>
- Moore, Charles Washington, Caleb Mills, and Joseph Farrand Tuttle. 1905. *Caleb Mills and the Indiana School System*. Wood-Weaver Print. Company.
- Nash, Margaret. 2016. *Women's Education in the United States, 1780-1840*. Springer.
- Nash, Margaret A. 2008. "The Historiography of Education for Girls and Women in the United States." In *Rethinking the History of American Education*, 143-159. Springer.
- Nash, Margaret A. 2018. "Thoughts on the History of Women's Education, Theories of Power, and This Volume: An Introduction."

- In *Women's Higher Education in the United States*, 1-21. Springer.
- Natali, Bethany Leigh. 2007. "The Impact of Caleb Mills on the Hoosier Education Debate: An Edition of Two Unpublished Addresses." Thesis. <https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/handle/1805/1001>
- Perkins, Linda M. 1983. "The Impact of the "Cult of True Womanhood" on the Education of Black Women." *Journal of Social Issues* 39 (3): 17-28. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1983.tb00152.x>
- Puaca, Laura M. 2020. "Home Economics, "Handicapped Homemakers," and Postwar America." *History of Education Quarterly* 60 (3): 380-406.
- Sewall, Mary W. 1900. Personal letter of Mary W. Sewall. Indiana Public Library.
- Sewall, Mary W. . 1887. *The Domestic and Social Effects of the Higher Education of Women* Indiana University.
- Solomon, Barbara Miller. 1985. *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women and Higher Education in America*. Yale University Press.
- Tolley, Kim. 2014. *The Science Education of American Girls: A Historical Perspective*. Routledge.
- Turpin, Andrea L. 2010. "The Ideological Origins of the Women's College: Religion, Class, and Curriculum in the Educational Visions of Catharine Beecher and Mary Lyon." *History of Education Quarterly* 50 (2): 133-158. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-5959.2010.00257.x>
- Ubriel, Alexander 1994. "Education, Female." In *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*, edited by David J. Bodenhamer, David Gordon Vanderstel and Rober Graham Barrows, 526-528. Indiana University Press.
- Woody, Thomas. 1929. *A History of Women's Education in the United States*. Vol. 2. Science Press.
- Woyshner, Christine, and Bonnie Hao Kuo Tai. 1997. "Symposium: The History of Women in Education." *Harvard Educational Review* 67 (4): v-xiv. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.67.4.385197673w145773>
- Youmans, Edward Livingston. 1865. *The Handbook of Household Science: A Popular Account of Heat, Light, Air, Aliment, and Cleasing in Their Scientific Principles and Domestic Applications, with Numerous Illustrative Diagrams*. D. Appleton.