

ONE ROOM FACILITIES
HISTORY OF EDUCATION SOCIETY
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Discussion

It is necessary to open the discussion with definition of “Invisible Asset”. The term arrives in the study out of a context and subjectivity that is personal, unique (but a balanced) perspective of the American tableaux. Henceforth, it is a sustaining and enduring initiative, that systematically supports (not obstructs) a project from its inception to legacy without being obvious.

1. One-Room School architecture is (An invisible Asset) because it is the original structure designed to house “formalized learning for millions of rural African Americans, transitioning from enslavement through segregated society¹”. Emerging from this unfortunate condition, the ex-enslaved, imparted an almost religious commitment towards educational attainment. As a collective their strong learning desire; manifested in the first great mass movement from no-schooling to One-Room school facilities. This is especially the case for unwilling immigrants who arrived in Delaware, with African roots in the late 1600s.

2. Horace Mann and Henry Barnard on the other hand, each helped in understanding how One-Room schools came to look the way they did. Together they brought school architects (1838, 1842) to design the Country Schoolhouse that was generally: one-room and wood frame buildings. Then, expedience governed the **facilities**. But, to Barnard, this architecture seemed slipshod and demonstrated the low priority given to schooling and especially in rural communities. He set out to improve the status of school by advancing: **school buildings**, teaching education, curriculum. “A well-designed architectural shell, according to Barnard, also demonstrated a community’s commitment to education. He further believed the school was breeding ground of democracy.
3. Prior to the influence of Barnard, there was the national influence of Horace Mann (1796-1859). Mann is called “the Father of American Education”. Originally published in 1838, and titled “Report ... on the Subject of Schoolhouses, Mann, described his intention as showing his concern with the physical health of the student, giving suggestions on how to “design the school structure; with details about its size, its windows, heating system, desk, and its ventilation. As a model, One-Room school from Horace Mann’s point of view, order prevailed where chaos had reigned. Teachers place and where students sat allowed clear view of the entire space. Upon walking in the door, one knew where to go and how to act.

4. The early 20th century in America - was a period characterized by nationwide social reform. It was referred to as the Progressive Era. A popular belief of the Progressive Era, and one shared by Pierre Samuel du Pont, was that a “well- designed school building, improved the overall quality of education received by students. DuPont further be believed that "a school is a highly specialized type of building; and that experimenting with an architect who is not familiar with the latest ideas on school administration that is (design and construction) is likely to prove very costly. To accomplish his goals, DuPont hired “James Oscar Betelle, a nationally-known architect of schools, paid handsomely, and schools in Delaware were designed and built.
5. Additionally, while, **One-Room school facilities** were predominantly located in Southern United States Regions, geographic scholarship situates Delaware, in this region.
6. Also, as these facilities initially housed knowledge attainment for rural African Americans, and simultaneously served as learning sanctuaries and centers that provided advocacy and cultivated activism for rural citizens. But, a thorough review of this data shows these structures disproportionally more spoken of, and written about when the reference relates to the academic (Teaching and Curriculum) side of schooling than when discussing school building construction, such as roofs, windows or floors.

7. These observations suggestively aligns the process of schooling with “how” and “what” was taught, rather than places “where” actual learning transpired. This research addresses the latter venue because it meaningfully challenge learning with types of conditions that early African Americans had to endure and triumph.
8. Since this research emphasize the facilities aspects of schools, it must be established at the outset; that ideas presented relates to elements of building construction and erecting and various funding types. Therefore, overlooking accounts relevant to this circumstance is a serious misstep. It is also a lost opportunity to study original construction that was designed to shelter learning for many rural African Americans. This knowledge avoidance disallows examining crucial resources tied to an industry and a purse (money) whose authority scientifically exists to build schools.
9. Consequently, collected data shows that it is not only foolish to not know One-Room **School facilities** and by extension funding history, but it is dangerous to ignore a critical authority engineering an integral procedural step that is fundamentally in existence and financed One-Room schools
10. To this end, **School Facilities** and Funding distribution research has become a highly visualized systems approach (too) complicated in abstractions. But, in seeking clarity beyond this ideological prism perhaps – contextualizing the scope of One-**Room school facilities**

with funding capabilities as a vital construct of the learning process will focus the analysis concretely.

11. Distinguishing between school facilities and the learning curriculum for African Americans is an essential information detail that must to be reckoned. This insight is invaluable because it dictates the route to survival and shines light on paths taken by many early African American's into segregated society. Further, it delineates the capacities of their maneuvering strengths. The strength being the beauty that goes unseen.
12. Next, where facilities are concerned there are substantial legislative and historic decision-making impacting the learning journey for citizenry participation among rural African Americans. We commence the discussion with the 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson. It was pronounced constitutionally by the Supreme Court, and it subsequently popularized the Jim Crow Laws. First of all the language, and spirit of intent in Plessey's and the "Court's rules that as long as facilities are equal ... that separate does not constitute infringement of civil rights. It is no wonder that the courts later changed the ruling.
13. Next, the 1954 Supreme Court's landmark and unambiguously ruling in the Brown v. Brown of Education of Topeka. Here the Court's decided that separate but equal Educational facilities were inherently unequal and therefore, unconstitutional. But, virtually

absent from the literature is the central assertion of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's (NAACP) brief in Brown – "...which accepted by the Supreme Court and central to its judgment ... that segregated school generated feelings of inferiority in the children who attended them. Consistent with this assessment of Brown, and with this research's thoughts on **facilities**, the scholarship of Anne C. Rose, in her 2009 publication "Psychology and Selfhood in the Segregated South, asserts that it was "emotionally easier and socially safer for Southern professional to theorize about racial psychology ... than to analyze local conditions and environmental ills nurtured in **faulty deficit ridden facilities**.

14. How ironic is it that the above critical decisions, and the upheaval generated in the verdicts that **School Facilities** framed the debate. While the question might not raise immediate questions: undeniably, **School Facilities** was an apex concept and language rooted in Brown. It served as a pivotal determinant and therefore, bolstered the Court's decision. Next, the state of Delaware, being one of four (Kansas, South Carolina, and Virginia) plaintiffs supplied critical evidence that won the Courts' ruling. At the same time, this narration acknowledged a void in scholarship and underscore acute, yet missing information about the weight of **school facilities** as a learning determinant. These observations, simultaneously informs that the course of facilities must be contextualized and elevated to a capacity

where building construction fundamentals are connected to means of finances that systematically divides – permanent features of architectural administration and building construction to go unnoticed. For example, allowing land surveys to be conducted, accessing adequate building space by bidding procedural, code requirements for ventilation and lighting - also influence learning.

15. In this regard, the research honour's intersectionality amid rural frequencies including construction, race and marginalized social theories connected to facilities and funding procurements. Further, it explains invisible as an inescapable action when analyzing One-Room school facility research.
16. Significant data supporting this One-Room facilities history is documented with research observations and reported below.
 - a. 1701 - The earliest Missionaries who came to the Delaware Colonies, from the Society for the Propaganda of the Gospel in Foreign Parts – gave special instructions for the “slaves” and other ignorant persons to learn to read.
 - b. 1776 – The Delaware Constitution made provisions for schooling African Americans. In particular Article 26; is instructive on their journey in Delaware. Unambiguously, it states that “no person here after imported ... from Africa ... to be held in slavery under any pretense whatsoever.

- c. 1865 – Delaware is one of two final states continuing enslavement until the Thirteenth Amendment was passed in 1865.
 - d. Evidence of provisions of a One-Room School in Delaware appeared early in the 1778 Will of Benjamin Ferris, left a sum of money for “Schooling poor Children either White or Black.
 - e. The Delaware Gazette, March 29, 1792 advertised that John Thelwell was opening a Free School for People and children of Color – Easter Sunday, beginning at half after five and close at eight. All were welcome(exceptions that they behave, comply to instructions)
17. Moreover, there are four identified funding resources responsible for building One-Room schools in Delaware.

PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT, Community Concerned and Affiliated, State and Federal and Religious Groups.

Due to time constraints, I will present four letters, found in the Hagley Museum Library that is related to each type.

Private/Public collaborative partnership personify the interactions between the DuPont Family Philanthropy and Delaware School Construction, Rural and African American Communities.

18. Mr. Pierre Samuel DuPont was a member of the family that established the DuPont Company in early 19th century Wilmington, Delaware. It was a power mill Gun Manufacturing company- and

became a world leader in the explosive industry. In 1919, du Pont resigned as President of the family business, and began devoting much of his time to the cause of education, including serving on the State Board of Education. Subsequently, two decades after the formation of the Service Citizens, July 28, 1919, after a gift of “\$5,000,000 to construct over 120 schools in the state²” arrived. Then he incorporated the Delaware School Auxiliary Association (DSAA) specifically to oversee the statewide school-building program. He allocated “\$2,000,000 worth of stock ... to the original trust fund ... five supplemental donations raised the total ... school construction to \$3,819,000... DuPont set aside \$9,000,000 for constructing black schools and \$2,919,000 for constructing white schools.

Before the philanthropic support from Mr. DuPont, there was no school authority vested with power to fix standards, much less enforce them. In this regard, without DuPont funds there was no way to complete the construction of new school buildings where they were needed, and no way to ”complete buildings conforming to the rules of safety, comfort and sanitation in their construction³”.

19. By 1938, after many of the schools for whites and all the schools for Blacks had been rebuilt. True to his words Mr. DuPont made sure

that “the colored children had schools of their own but ... no difference in design or construction”.

COMMUNITY CONCERNED CITIZENS

Further research attesting African American’s commitment as concerned citizen is recorded at a meeting of - April 1, 1814 (memorial) “To the people of colour in Wilmington ... urging each child instructed not only in reading ... and that a useful trade or business ... through which he could later support a family in dignity and comfort. At that same meeting it was emphasized that parents “seek the advice of well-informed friends ... so that their children might be suitably placed, kindly and honestly treated, and respectably brought up. Trends established by early African American families was accepting responsibility in guiding their children towards respect in society.

STATE AND FEDERAL SUPPORT

15. The Federal Government has contributed to creating one-room schools in Delaware, through the aid of the Freedmen’s Bureau. It was an important agency of early Reconstruction, assisting freedmen in the South. It played a critical role in shaping how more than “400 million men, women and children defined ... their lives and labor as free people

...⁴” As a promise to the country, the bureau vastness as an agent grew it to become the federal government.

But most importantly, in terms of Bureau schooling and One-Room schools for African American, Bureau research informs that schools throughout were “built through a combination of black initiatives and white philanthropy” Thus is a clear indication symbolizing mutuality dependence. The movement for freedmen’s education “was one of the most curious in American history and for those who will learn, one of the most instructive.

In this regard the bureau was successful because the policies were “designed to guide the former Confederacy in its transformation from a society of slaves and masters to one in which free labor reigned.

General O.O. Howard, who was in charge of the Freedman’s Bureau in Washington spoke in Wilmington, on Thursday, November 5, 1868.

After accepting an invitation to attend a meeting of the Delaware Educational Association in the Institute Hall.

General Howard, spoke of the various features of educational and other work under his charge in the Freedman’s Bureau. Education was considered part of the Records division. He said that a “new school

house was needed in Wilmington”, and asked the “colored people to save a dollar apiece to contribute towards its construction.

It is critical to understand the far-reaching influence that General Howard brought to the structure of education; and what gift his legacy extends to African Americans’ today. He was founder and President of The Howard University from 1867-1873. Howard University, later became the first institution of higher learning to create a division of Civil Rights and connect it with Judiciary Prudence and Law.

Further, it was Howard faculty whose idea initiated by Charles Hamilton among others “conceived the strategy and initiated the attack on Jim Crow segregation that legalized racial inequality... no longer tolerated.” Moreover, it was the magnanimous team of Civil Rights and Howard University lawyer lead by Charles Hamilton that successfully executed the case of School Desegregation that went to the Supreme Court for its decision in the 1954 Brown vs Board of Education.

RELEGIIOUS AFFILIATES

17. The African American Church, played a central role in the construction of their communities throughout the South, but none more visible than in the State of Delaware.

18. Further, the research on religious affiliates presents an abundance of other public services supplied by Missionaries, such as the Presbyterian

Church, the Women's Missionary Society and the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church (CMEC). Each denominations encouraged formal learning in schools. But it was the American Missionary Association (AMA) that made a significant increase in schooling for freed enslaved following the Civil War. The research show them founding more than 500 schools as well as providing legal assistance. The AMA organized in 1839 to “defend a group of Africans who had mutinied against their Spanish owners and brought their slave (the Amistad) to the US⁵”.

Methodology

20. From the standpoint of data analyzing, this research begins by tracking different approaches that primarily studies group dynamics and multiple variable consequences. As any standardized analytical procedure not befitting this expectation was immediately discounted, finding a process responsive to disaggregation principles of data mining archival properties were only strategies consulted. Further, research study criteria insisted that techniques applied, be powerful enough to rummage primary documents - amidst observational studies of the past. Against this backdrop, problem solving creatively emerged as the go to strategy for this study.
21. Since the nature of this research is historical, analyzing infrastructural related features of One-Room School Facilities and

Funding resources specifically - needed to be formatted, documented and contained instrumentally so that information was easily and immediately decipherable. Additionally, an expectation of the above process was that the outcome would advance the analytical process to a level of clarity, and simultaneously change the dynamics of fact interpreting beyond the usual descriptive detailing. So changing the presentation domain that framed references discussed; stimulated the flow of information received and likewise complimented an outside of the box approach. One that is consistent with the spirit and character of this researcher and subsequently assigned to analyze data presented.

22. Moreover, the above standards guided the search to scholarship produced by “Denzin, 2012⁶”, and “Patton, 2002⁷”, whose well-versed strategies informed that “applying qualitative analysis with triangulation theories” produce a highly effective experimentation. Since, no better instrument suited our analytical objectives, Denzin and Patton were employed as leading strategists investigating One-Room School Facilities and Funding frequencies. So with the confluence of conditions informing rural African Americans to improve the trajectory of their lives after enslavement, through segregated society - triangulation became the strategy with scope and breath of data disaggregation.

23. The decision to study this project's research findings with qualitative triangulation emerged because the strategy includes a complex interconnected family of terms, concepts and assumptions such as those presented in the scope of discourse on One-Room school facilities and funding resources. As such this interpretive approach communicates often on assigned task that are group related. Consequently, qualitative and triangulation approach materialized as ideal vehicle - marking milestones, sustained focus and arrived at the envisioned conclusion.