

HORACE MANN, "THE NECESSITY OF EDUCATION IN A REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT"  
(Fall 1839)

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Abstract: Horace Mann's third lecture tour as Massachusetts Secretary of Education expressed his perspective on the role of education and its relationship to American government. Echoing many Founders, Mann fretted about the rapid expansion of democracy to populations ill-equipped to exercise proper judgment as citizens. To this end, he employed dialectical strategies to position public education as the only solution to the perils of democracy.

Keywords: Horace Mann, common schools, public education, republicanism, democracy, demophobia, rhetoric

In 1937, the Massachusetts Department of Education published a volume of curricular materials commemorating the centennial anniversary of Horace Mann's appointment as the state's first Secretary of Education. To reinforce the memory of Mann's role in extending the availability of public education, the book featured a collection of pageants for public school students to perform. One, "The Great Crusader," personified the characters of "Democracy" and "Education" to represent the separation Mann perceived between them in his era. Numerous youths, led by Democracy, "knock in vain at [the] gates" of education. Education laments that the doors are locked, because the notion of "equal opportunity" has perished. "[W]ealth holds the keys to the Castle of Learning," Education explains. Pleading to Democracy to find a hero, Education remarks that "only a great crusader can put to rout the foes of education."<sup>1</sup> The Crusader—a symbolic stand-in for Mann—promptly appears, vanquishes the Seven Deadly Sins guarding the Castle of Learning, and reunites Democracy and Education to the betterment of society.

As an elementary school pageant, "The Great Crusader" is an unsubtle exercise in symbolism. Yet, it is telling as an index for the public memories of Mann. His statue before the Massachusetts State House dubs him the "Father of the American Public School System," and innumerable contemporaries and biographers have bestowed that title upon him. Reflecting on Mann's life, his friend and colleague Charles Sumner wrote that "if each person in Massachusetts who has been benefitted by the vast and generous labors of Horace Mann . . . should contribute a mite only, then his statue would be of gold."<sup>2</sup> Mann's contemporary and fellow public education reformer Henry Barnard wrote in remembrance that "few works ever undertaken by man had relations

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so numerous, or touched society at so many points" as Mann's writings as Secretary of Education.<sup>3</sup> Early in the next century, educational historian Ellwood P. Cubberly claimed that "No one did more than he to establish in the minds of the American people the conception that education should be universal, non-sectarian, and free."<sup>4</sup> More recently, Lawrence Cremin remarked that Mann "articulated a characteristic American theory of education that was destined to prevail for more than a century."<sup>5</sup> As an advocate of public education, Mann has been strongly identified with the national system that has arisen in the century and a half since his death—and the meritocratic, democratic ideals it is presumed to uphold.

Yet the story of Mann as "The Great Crusader" for democratic education misses one crucial aspect of his thought: Mann actually feared democracy. Like the Founders before him, Mann was nervous about the prospects of demagoguery and faction that accompanied democratic participation. The first pages of his *Common School Journal*, published in 1838, reflected on the dangers of empowering the masses through elections: "At the great council of the ballot-box, we see men, who but yesterday arrived at majority, who know nothing of the principles and structure of the government under which they live, of the functions of its officers, or the qualifications indispensable for discharging them."<sup>6</sup> For Mann, Democracy was not battering at the gates of Education; rather, he believed a reluctant democratic citizenry was foolishly rejecting the blessings of education, with perilous consequences for the fate of the republic. As biographer Bob Pepperman Taylor argues, Mann's distrust led him to "think of the education of children and young adults as required, first and foremost, by the pathologies, failures, and dangers of democratic society"—a conviction that has reverberated in educational debates down to the present day.<sup>7</sup>

Mann lived in a time when society convulsed with massive change—change which brought the challenges of democracy to the forefront of leaders' thought. As Michael B. Katz remarks, within Mann's lifetime "a new society was born, a society that smashed old expectations with the force of steam, that ripped apart and restitched the web of relationships composing the experience of men."<sup>8</sup> Immigration levels soared, Northern industrialization attracted vast populations to cities, political parties emerged in force, and voting rights expanded—albeit only among white men. A traditionalist in a world of such transformation, Mann responded like many of his other fellow Whig politicians: by seeking, through the promotion of education, to secure the virtuousness of voters and elected leadership.

Throughout his twelve-year tenure as Secretary of Education, Mann embarked on speaking tours throughout Massachusetts to make his case for a system of common schools. Of the lectures, his third, delivered in 1839, most directly addressed the theme of government's relationship to public education. Entitled "The Necessity of Education in a Republican Government," the address helped elucidate the shifting conceptions of public education and republicanism during a time of rapid national expansion and democratization. I argue that Mann's address identified education as an institution uniquely positioned to confront the excesses of American democracy. Through a strategy of ironic transcendence, he encouraged his listeners to regard education as a process that—for good or ill—inevitably shaped the relationship of the mind to the

world. Stressing the dangers unique to the American system of democratic governance, Mann employed a method of residues that ultimately left education alone as the most powerful—indeed, as the only—solution to the excesses of democracy. To make this case, I first examine the anxieties regarding democratic culture in the antebellum era. I next provide a brief biography of Horace Mann, concentrating particularly on the formation of his attitudes toward democracy and education. I then contextualize and analyze Mann's lecture before finally exploring the implications of Mann's rhetoric of educational reform for ongoing debates over education and democratic citizenship.

### *Anxieties of Antebellum Democratic Culture*

In despairing over the challenges of democratic governance, Mann echoed the concerns of many of the nation's Founders. At the nation's founding, Jennifer Mercieca argues, the term "democracy" was deliberately eschewed for a conception of "republican" government predicated on representation within a clear hierarchy of virtuous leadership.<sup>9</sup> Apprehensions about democratic participation abounded throughout *The Federalist Papers*. Alexander Hamilton fretted over the inevitable threats of "ambition, avarice, personal animosity, [and] party opposition." James Madison similarly worried about "the violence of faction," which made citizens "more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to co-operate for their common good."<sup>10</sup> As these remarks suggest, a fear of the republic's decay loomed large in the Founders' institutional formulations. Observing the fate of former European republics, Michael William Pfau explains, Americans viewed the nascent system of government as "fundamentally fragile and finite—its mortality . . . ensured by the uncertainties of contingency and the corruption of human nature."<sup>11</sup> These beliefs demanded constant vigilance against human foibles, and the Founders hoped the unique formulation of America's political institutions might temper these tendencies toward undemocratic government.

Despite their skill in designing governmental balances, many Founders still fretted that the guarantees of the Constitution would be insufficient safeguards of social stability. For this reason, they turned to public education for what Robert B. Westbrook calls "extra insurance against the threat of democracy."<sup>12</sup> These forms of education were not, however, intended to promote the enlightenment of the masses as much as the preservation of hierarchy. As Michael Schudson writes, to the extent that the Founders did promote public education, they generally did so to *stifle* democracy. They felt that "when the diffusion of knowledge contributes to public order, it is praiseworthy; when it adds to contention and strife, it is dangerous."<sup>13</sup> Thomas Jefferson's famed education proposals are demonstrative. In a letter to John Adams, he explained that society tends to elevate a "pseudo-aristocracy" that arrives at its social station by wealth and family heritage. In its place, he hoped that a more "natural aristoi" might emerge in America, one based not on birth or family wealth but on personal merit and virtue. Jefferson hoped that these natural leaders would emerge through a system of public education that would raise "the mass of people to the high ground of moral respectability necessary to their own safety," with an appreciation for the need of

"orderly government." The purpose of education, in this view, was to qualify the public to "select the veritable aristoi" that would govern in the new republic.<sup>14</sup> While Jefferson sought to expand education, he mostly did so to identify a class of worthy leaders rather than to empower the masses to govern themselves.<sup>15</sup>

In advancing their proposals, early advocates of public education confronted another obstacle in post-Revolutionary thought: a common belief in the need for local control of social institutions. Anti-Federalists, for instance, shared their contemporaries' worries about the perils of democracy, but thought more localized systems of governance might preserve "the patterns of deference" innate to communal ties between aristocrats and their constituents.<sup>16</sup> As Michael B. Katz writes, this belief in "democratic localism" translated into a strong commitment to community control of education against top-down state or federal influence.<sup>17</sup> Owing in part to the strong influence of John Locke on early American educational theory, many also believed that education was best managed at the smallest scale possible: the home. Any number beyond "two or three pupils in the same house," Locke argued, would be utterly unproductive: "How anyone's being put into a mixed herd of unruly boys, and there learning to wrangle at trap, or rook at span-farthing, fits him for civil conversation or business, I do not see."<sup>18</sup>

While the Founders largely set aside the question of public education, concerns for a more enlightened population grew in proportion with the expansion of democratic participation. As Jeremy Engels writes, Jeffersonian politics brought a discourse of "demophilia"—a love of democracy—designed to counter the "demophobia" of the nation's Founders.<sup>19</sup> By the time Mann became Massachusetts's Secretary of the Board of Education in 1837, this embrace of democratic ideals had become more widespread and institutionalized throughout the United States. In the 1820s, most states eliminated laws limiting voting rights to those with property.<sup>20</sup> The rise of the Jacksonian Democrats during the 1830s further advanced this movement toward democracy and resulted in the formation of two large political parties—a factional development that the Founders had feared, but one that reflected the spread of this democratic spirit. It is not coincidental, Julie M. Walsh writes, that robust, institutionalized political parties emerged at roughly the same time as calls for more expansive public education. Reacting to what they feared was an out-of-control democratization of American education, the Whig Party in particular "advocated a role for the central, or state, government in the administration and supervision of schools."<sup>21</sup> As a dominant figure in the Whig bastion of Boston, Mann would become the chief advocate of this brand of educational reform: one which expressly asserted the need to restrain and control this trend toward democratizing American politics and education.

### *The Development of Mann's Educational Convictions*

Mann established his roots as an education reformer during his early classroom experience in Franklin, Massachusetts. "My teachers were very good people but they were very poor teachers," he reflected. They left a mark on him with their strictness and linear pedagogy: "All ideas outside of the book were contraband articles, which the

teacher confiscated, or rather flung overboard."<sup>22</sup> Instead guided by his own "love of knowledge," he dedicated himself to his studies. He attended Brown University in 1816; there, he cultivated his oratorical skills as a member of the "United Brothers," a campus organization dedicated to advocating republican virtue.<sup>23</sup> After Brown, Mann began a career in law that he initially found off-putting. As biographer Jonathan Messerli writes, Mann "thought himself as a future leader of men" and resented the tedium that awaited him in his first legal apprenticeship.<sup>24</sup> At the age of 30, the restless Mann became licensed to practice law, moved to the town of Dedham, and built a reputation by delivering several important orations in the town—including a eulogy commemorating the lives of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson after their concurrent death on July 4, 1826.<sup>25</sup> Drawing from his cultivated *ethos*, he was elected by the town to a position in the Massachusetts House that he held from 1827 to 1833. After moving to Boston, he became a member of the State Senate in 1834, eventually rising to be its President.<sup>26</sup> In 1837, after a decade in politics, he was appointed the state's first Secretary of Education.

At this point in his career, Mann seemed an unlikely champion of public education. As a state legislator, it was only one among several issues he pursued, and there is little evidence it was his top priority. Mann's other political commitments, however, do help to explain his motivations to become an education reformer. First, Mann was passionate about the temperance cause. From 1830 to 1832, he advocated policies designed to combat gambling and to reduce the consumption of alcohol across the state.<sup>27</sup> As Messerli recounts, Mann advocated such measures on grounds that the government had a responsibility to maintain social order.<sup>28</sup> In this sense, he was a typical Whig. As Susan Zaeske writes, many Whigs embraced temperance as part of a broader social philosophy of self-control and restraint during an era of perceived Jacksonian excess.<sup>29</sup> Secondly, Mann successfully advocated for the creation of the State Lunatic Asylum of Worcester, one of the first institutions of its kind. As Mann argued to his colleagues, the previous system of imprisoning the insane placed "an impassable barrier . . . between them and hope."<sup>30</sup> A believer in the perfectibility of the individual, Mann argued for the institution as a benevolent way to reacquaint hundreds of citizens, in due time, with their society. Both of these projects during Mann's political career demonstrated a belief in government intervention on behalf of preserving order within society, either by repressing the excessive or rehabilitating the divergent.

Each of these positions stemmed from an underlying concern for the fate of the republic. Given his successful political career and involvement in party politics, it is ironic that, as Taylor writes, Mann was "downright distrustful of democratic institutions such as town meetings and political parties."<sup>31</sup> The fear of faction ran as a common theme throughout his rhetoric. On the Fourth of July in 1842, for instance, Mann delivered a controversial oration predicting that a civil war would break out between the northern and southern regions of the United States due to their incommensurable cultures and passions. "Rich and poor, high and low, radical and conservative, bigot and latitudinarian, are marshaled for the onset," he apocalyptically portended.<sup>32</sup> Echoing the democratic apprehensions of his forebears, Mann attributed the divide to the uninformed democratic population of the South: those who, "in this hour of their

country's peril, have come up to turn the folly of which they are unconscious, into measures which they cannot understand, by votes which they cannot read."<sup>33</sup>

In one important way, however, Mann's fear of faction differed from that of his predecessors. Whereas many Founders sought to control and limit the boundaries of democracy, Mann accepted it as the inexorable trend of American politics—one that society needed to address through a modification of institutions. As he asserted during his first year of lecturing as the Secretary of Education: "the theory of our government is,—not that all men, however unfit, shall be voters,—but that every man, by the power of reason and the sense of duty, shall become fit to be a voter."<sup>34</sup> He feared wide enfranchisement but concentrated on coping with its consequences. The acceptance of democratic inevitability, in turn, contributed to Mann's vision of public education. Unlike some of the Founders, he did not see education as a way of locating and elevating a national aristocracy. Public education, he felt, should unite rich and poor in the same classroom to "counterwork . . . the domination of capital and the servility of labor," producing an "essentially fraternal" and, ultimately, classless society.<sup>35</sup> He believed in neither the necessary separation of rich from poor, nor of aristocracy from constituency; as Cremin argues, "he maintained that... if the people were wise, the problem of leadership would take care of itself."<sup>36</sup>

Mann's conception of "wisdom," however, was absolutely connected to his own moralistic convictions. In his Annual Report for the year 1846, for instance, Mann lamented that too many American territories had not been founded in the same "high, heroic, Puritan mould [sic]" of his Massachusetts predecessors. In his typically hyperbolic style, he exclaimed that "the ejaculation involuntarily bursts forth, 'WHY WERE THEY NOT COLONIZED BY MEN LIKE THE PILGRIM FATHERS!'"<sup>37</sup> His concerns for temperance, appropriate conduct, and wise citizenship permeated into his arguments for education, which he viewed as a way of inculcating these attributes at the roots of childhood. Education would regulate the passions, limiting partisan excesses along the way.

Despite his prominent place in public memory as an education reformer, Mann did not assume the leadership of the Massachusetts Board of Education until the age of 41. At its inception, the Board was to consist of eight members—including a salaried Secretary—with the vague mission of promoting "information of the most approved and successful methods of arranging the studies and conducting the education of the young."<sup>38</sup> The only obligation the board faced was to provide a report on the state of the common schools to the legislature every January. As envisioned, the Board did not have any actual political authority; it would be, as B.A. Hinsdale put it, "an organ of information" regarding Massachusetts public education.<sup>39</sup> Once the Board was established, there began an internal discussion of who would become its Secretary. Of the likely candidates, Mann's House colleague James G. Carter seemed the most sensible; Carter was a former educator himself, and had drafted the legislation calling for the Board's creation.<sup>40</sup> Instead, fellow Board member Edmund Dwight led a campaign to have Mann appointed the first Secretary, much to the surprise of Mann and many of his peers. Mann debated whether to accept the appointment, which

represented a stark departure from his previous political career. In the end, Mann exemplified "the spirit of a martyr" and accepted the position.<sup>41</sup>

To make up for his lack of educational background, Mann spent several months studying the basics of pedagogy and education. Within a year, he was criticizing even the Founders for failing to provide for public education: "Shortlived, indeed, would be the fame of our ancestors, if they had established such a frame of government without providing some extensive guaranty that it should escape the misrule of ignorance and licentiousness. Otherwise, to have put loaded fire-arms into the hands of children would have been wisdom in comparison."<sup>42</sup> Despite all his newfound conviction, however, Mann faced an uphill struggle in persuading his countrymen. He was not an educator, so he had little credibility as the state's top educational authority. He occupied a position with no power to enact policy, yet he aspired to reform education across the state. And he faced a public less persuaded than he that the perils of democracy were real—or that education would be the best way to avoid those perils. To this end, he embarked on a persuasive campaign to elevate both the influence of his post and to bolster the public commitment to education. In this cause, as Cremin put it, "Mann was forced to rely on his wit."<sup>43</sup>

### *The Lecture Campaign to Promote Common Schools*

As Mann assembled the documentation for his first *Annual Report*, he was shocked by the discrepancy between the esteem and reality of Massachusetts schools. Messerli writes: "instead of documenting conscientious support of education, the reports told a story of neglect, parsimony, apathy, and sometimes even chaos."<sup>44</sup> Mann spent his first years as Secretary challenging the perception that Massachusetts schools were already meeting their obligations to the republic. His rhetorical task was two-fold: to convince the public that democracy, unchecked, posed a deep threat to the republic; and to prove that education could provide the institutional solution to the problem. He made his case on three fronts: through his official *Annual Reports*, published every January; through the *Common School Journal*, launched in late 1838; and finally, through his extensive lecture tours at county educational conventions across the state. To deliver these addresses, Mann crisscrossed the state each fall, riding over 280 miles on horseback during the first year alone.<sup>45</sup> His third address, "The Necessity of Education in a Republican Government," was delivered to at least eleven local educational conventions between late August and early October of 1839.<sup>46</sup>

The theme of the speech reflects a general shift in Mann's lectures from promoting particular policies to attempting to revise republican ideology itself. In his first lecture, "Means and Objects of Common School Education," Mann focused on the function of the new Board of Education and his position. While he exerted the usual commonplaces regarding education's purpose in cultivating moral virtue, the bulk of his address justified the Board's role as a purveyor of information on educational methods, schoolhouse architecture, and pedagogy.<sup>47</sup> His second address, "Special Preparation, a Pre-Requisite to Teaching," more directly advocated for the creation of Normal Schools for teacher education.<sup>48</sup> In his third address in 1839, however, Mann took a turn toward

the philosophical, probing beneath the surface-level appreciation of education he found in many of his audiences. "The common arguments in favor of Education have been so often repeated" (2),<sup>49</sup> he began, that he would not dwell long on its inherent import. Instead, he delivered a graver message linking the fate of the nation to its educational commitment. Even for the notoriously serious Mann, the speech reflected a striking turn toward a more moralistic tone—a tone that he would become famous for in his *Annual Reports* in the mid-1840s.

In part, Mann's more philosophical address can be read as a response to his weak public reception during his early tenure as Secretary. Despite his successes in persuading the public to create Normal Schools in 1838, Mann still perceived his efforts as falling on deaf ears. In an age before the use of widespread public opinion polling, perhaps the best indicator of support for his cause came from the disappointing attendance at educational conventions across the state. Mann's diary entries throughout the 1839 tour captured his exasperation during his early years as Secretary. As he wrote on September 1, "In Berkshire, they explained and excused the thinness of the meeting because the day was fair; in Northampton, because it was stormy. The truth lies in the dearth, or death, of interest in the subject."<sup>50</sup> The apathy at conventions was not his only cause for concern. Writers in the *New York Observer* mounted an editorial campaign against the Board, critiquing Mann's alleged centralizing impulses and his belief in non-denominational Christian education. By early the next year, members of the Massachusetts legislature were actively calling for the Board's abolishment.<sup>51</sup> Reflecting on his struggles, Mann would remark that "the year 1839, from ill health, from opposition to the sacred cause which I have wholly at heart, and from being called upon to do impossible things by the Board of Education, has been the most painful year—save *the* year—that I have ever suffered."<sup>52</sup> Clearly, Mann was disappointed to find that the public had less interest in education than he had imagined. His third lecture was designed to counteract that apathy by warning of a threat to republicanism itself.

Mann faced not only apathy from the public and outright resistance from his opponents, but also pragmatic gradualism among his supporters. Mann's more ideological address can be read, in part, as a response to Governor Edward Everett's address on "The Importance of Education in a Republic," delivered at the Taunton Common School Convention on October 10, 1838.<sup>53</sup> Everett's speech was delivered at Mann's request, and Mann praised—and published—the address in the pages of the *Common School Journal*.<sup>54</sup> While Mann agreed with much of Everett's message, his later speech exerted a far stronger sense of urgency than the governor. Everett, for example, stressed the state's long-standing commitment to education; Mann, conversely, argued that the state had abandoned these commitments. Likewise, Everett focused on skill-based reforms, touting an education system to "confer on every citizen the capacity of deriving knowledge, with readiness and accuracy, from books and documents."<sup>55</sup> Mann, on the other hand, believed that education required the deeper cultivation of character and virtue—and that without this emphasis the republic was at risk.

To make his case, Mann would assert, more adamantly than Everett, that education was not merely a complement to existing republican institutions. In Mann's argument, education was an *a priori* condition for the very existence of republican



government. It was essential to the higher development of individual citizens and to the social control necessary to sustain a republic over time. Turning away from this pragmatic question of *how* to administer education, Mann concentrated on *why* educational reform was "the highest earthly duty of the risen" (9-10).

*Analysis of "The Necessity of Education in a Republican Government"*

In Mann's day, phrenology—the study of human character and intellect through the shape of the skull—was a popular form of science. As Cara Finnegan argues, the writings of nineteenth-century phrenologists serve as a form of "image vernacular" capturing many of the ideological and social assumptions of the era.<sup>56</sup> A phrenologist's reading of Mann's skull provides some clues into his argumentative approach:

He can reconcile apparently discordant things, or meet those who think differently from himself, without making manifest, in a high degree, the real difference that may exist between them, and he will so far conform to an opponent as not to seem in opposition, until, by asking questions and quoting particulars, he can show good reasons for a counter belief thus, and lead his adversary into his own mode of thought.<sup>57</sup>

While his oratorical skills likely had more to do with his training at Brown than the shape of his head, these observations nonetheless characterized Mann accurately as an astute *dialectical* thinker. That is, he had a knack for transcending opposites, adopting an ironic stance outside of his own, and—as rhetorical theorist Kenneth Burke puts it—"employ[ing] . . . the possibilities of linguistic transformation."<sup>58</sup> Mann's efforts to position education at the center of America's republican ideology would require him to cleverly manipulate opposing positions and shift audiences to perspectives outside their own.

In his third lecture, Mann made four dialectical arguments that together supported his program for common school reform. First, he established a threat to American society posed by the newfound freedom of the individual mind in its relationship to society. Secondly, he crafted a broad definition of education that allowed it to mediate between the individual and society. Third, he critiqued the judgment of the Founders and the institutions of America while strategically upholding faith in each. And finally, he employed a method of residues, sweeping away other prospective institutional solutions and leaving education alone as the sole means to confront the consequences of democracy. Together, these strategies coalesced to situate education as the single best solution to the challenges posed to American society.

The Threat of the Freed Individual Mind

To understand Mann's argument for education, it is first necessary to examine how he understood the relationship of individuals to society.<sup>59</sup> He regarded all of history as a competition between "two forces; the innate force of the mind acting outwards, and the force of outward things acting upon the mind" (40). Through most of history, the external forces of "circumstances, laws, traditions, [and] customs" all controlled the

individual mind (40). In many nineteenth-century societies, Mann believed, the external still dominated the internal; in China, for example, social progress stagnated because all individuals were "transcripts and facsimiles" of their ancestors (40). In the Christian and Western world, however, Mann argued that the individual mind was freed. "After a conflict of sixteen centuries," he exclaimed, "the victory has been achieved. Mind has triumphed over the quellers [sic] of mind,—the internal force over the external" (42). The freedom of the individual mind, brought about by Christianity and American government, held great promise. Now, individual minds could reach "outwards into words and deeds" to transform the shape of their world and institutions (40).

Yet the freedom of the "unmanacled" mind frightened Mann (43). For most of history, governments and societies were stable because individual minds were limited. Now that they were unleashed, he feared, these minds could undermine American government. "Like an archangel," he cautioned, the freed mind would "be saved or lost by its obedience or its transgressions" (43). This claim would be central to Mann's contention that education was necessary to democratic society: it would direct individual minds along a path of obedience. But given the zeal for democracy that marked the Jacksonian era, Mann had a difficult case to make. Without denigrating the value of the freed individual mind, he had to prove that individuals freely acting upon society created a threat to the fabric of society.

To prove the problems posed by the unrestrained individual, Mann separated the individual from society to develop his theory of the human mind.<sup>60</sup> Considered in isolation, Mann explained, the individual had certain "propensities" or "faculties" of both "higher" and "lower" orders (14). The higher order propensities of reason, conscience, benevolence, and fraternity (19-21) served to control and shape the lower propensities of excess, appetite, and avarice (22-27). Without an internal voice of reason, Mann warned, the lower propensities could take control, and the American republic would be overtaken by greed, corruption, and factionalism—the un-virtuous traits the Founders feared at the start of the republic. Individuals were capable of self-government, Mann felt, but only if the higher propensities were strengthened to control the lower. The next section of this essay explores how Mann demonstrated, through a technique of ironic displacement, the role of education in cultivating these higher propensities.

### *Ironic Displacement: The Individual in Multiple Contexts*

Mann viewed education as a powerful social force that acted on individual minds in youth to shape them as adults. Education would, Mann argued, promote the "cultivation of the intellect" and allow individuals to access the "permanent and mighty laws which pervade all parts of the created universe" (3). Surprisingly, while Mann depicted "education" as extremely important, he did not define the word in an inherently positive way. Education, according to Mann, was neutral. It could be "virtuous" or "vicious"; it was "intimately related to every good, and to every evil, which, as mortal, or as immortal beings, we can desire or dread" (5). This conception of education strengthened Mann's argument in two important ways. First, it positioned

education as a mediator between the competing forces of the individual mind and society. This way, education could preserve individual freedom while ensuring obedience to social precepts regarding character.<sup>61</sup> Secondly, and more importantly, this conception of education made it an *inevitable* force in people's lives. In the absence of virtuous education, Mann portended, individuals would often be educated in other, more problematic ways that failed to regulate their excesses.

To demonstrate the rhetorical force of this content-neutral definition of education, Mann adopted a strategy of ironic transcendence. From this position, Mann imagined an individual in multiple social contexts to exhibit the role of education in each.<sup>62</sup> He first deposited the individual in a "far-off island in the ocean, like some Robinson Crusoe." There, "even in such a solitude," any prior education would have a tremendous influence on his behavior (5). Next, Mann placed the individual within a social context of career, fatherhood, and citizenship, observing how each experience was dictated "by those who plume its [the soul's] tender wings and direct its early course." The effects of education, Mann argued, rippled through the generations (5). Throughout the speech, the shifting contexts of varying societies and governments throughout history all underscored the same point: that "education" was inevitable, and that early educational experiences influenced the mind's later ability to control its "propensities" (5).

Having established education as neither inherently good nor evil, Mann built a case for his particular *type* of education reform as necessary, taking aim at proponents of local control. Mere education would not be enough, he implied; Massachusetts needed a system of common schools tailored to the unique concerns of a republican society. To make this argument, Mann identified many of his colleagues as attributing social challenges to a false cause. "We hear good men, every day," Mann said, "bemoaning the *ignorance* of certain portions of our country, and of individuals in all parts of it" (49). The ignorant, in Mann's view, did not pose any true threat to society. "The outcry against it [ignorance] is a false alarm, diverting attention from a real to an imaginary danger," he argued (49). Instead, Mann feared the threat made possible by the rise of democracy: the widespread dissemination and acceptance of "false knowledge," cultivating wrongheaded assumptions of danger to society. "An idiot is ignorant, and does little harm," Mann asserted, while "a maniac has false ideas, and destroys, burns and murders" (49). Building from his definition of education as content-neutral and inevitable, Mann established a justification for his particular set of education reforms. Simply being educated would not be enough; individuals could still be trained to falsehood, vindictiveness, demagoguery, or other threats to society. Only the moralistic training in republican virtue offered by the common schools would successfully mediate between the individual mind and society.

Negotiating Faith in America's Founders and Institutions

In *The Spirit of the Laws*, Montesquieu asserted that the "laws of education should be relative to the principles of the government." Each unique arrangement of government, he argued, will tend to shape human beings in particular ways, demanding a commensurate system of education. He characterized education in each form of government according to its primary end: "In monarchies, their object will be *honor*; in

republics, *virtue*; in despotisms, *fear*."<sup>63</sup> In the republic, he says, "the full power of education is needed":

Fear in despotic governments arises of itself from threats and chastisements; honor in monarchies is favored by the passions and favors them in turn; but political virtue is a renunciation of oneself, which is always a very painful thing. One can define this virtue as love of the laws and the homeland. This love, requiring a continuous preference of the public interest over one's own, produces all the individual virtues; they are only that preference. This love is singularly connected with democracies. In them alone, government is entrusted to each citizen. Now government is like all things in the world; in order to preserve it, one must love it.<sup>64</sup>

Mann carried Montesquieu's argument one step further: not only does each type of government demand a particular form of education, but the American republic in particular required a unique system of schools. "I shall not attempt to derive any proofs from the history of other Republics," Mann argued, because there were "so many points of difference between our own political institutions, and those of any other government calling itself free" that analogies to other republics did not hold (12). For Mann, the unique context of the American republic demanded unique educational institutions.

Mann faced a challenge in making this argument, however: the audience's deep commitment to the Constitution and the Founders. Despite the gap of only one or two generations between the Founders and Mann, the appeals of the Founders already had a venerated status.<sup>65</sup> To critique their oversight while still acknowledging the "genius" of American institutions, Mann employed a dialectical maneuver: the implied opposite.<sup>66</sup> He began by noting one advantage of a despotic government: "It is justly alleged against despotisms, that they fetter, mutilate, almost extinguish the noblest powers of the human soul; but there is a *per contra* to this, for which we have not given them credit;— they circumscribe the ability to do the greatest evil, as well as to do the greatest good" (14). He then warned of the corollary peril posed by the development of the American republic. "If we maintain institutions, which bring us within the action of new and unheard-of powers, without taking any corresponding measures for the government of those powers, we shall perish by the very instruments prepared for our happiness" (16).

Mann faced a challenge to argue that American institutions had a propensity to cultivate evil without undermining the legacy of the Founders. In order to do that, he dissociated the Founders from the government they created:

The generation that moulded [sic] our institutions into their present form,—were born and educated under other institutions, and they brought into active life strong hereditary and traditional feelings of respect for established authority, merely because it was established,—of veneration for law, simply because it was law,—and of deference both to

secular and ecclesiastical rank, because they had been accustomed to revere rank. (39)

In other words, those who *crafted* the American republic, because they were educated under a monarchy, possessed an appreciation of honor that no longer pervaded the republic. The Founders—ever venerated for their republican virtue and Constitutional thought—were, in fact, not reared as republicans. For this reason, they could not envision the risks of a republican government lacking an appropriate system of education. By 1839, Mann argued, these risks had become unavoidable: "The generation of men now entering upon the stage of life,—the generation which is to occupy that stage for the next forty years,—will act out their desires more fully, more effectively, than any generation of men that has ever existed" (39). The baser propensities, untamed by proper education, would promote grave evils in the name of false knowledge. Mann cautioned: "The excellence of our institutions, if administered by an upright people, must be reversed and read backwards, if administered by a corrupt one" (45).

Mann spent little time reflecting on the patriotic, higher possibilities of the American system of government. Instead, he emphasized the democratic excesses to which the nation had proven susceptible. "It is a law of the passions, that they exert strength in proportion to the causes which excite them," Mann contended (46). In the United States, those inducements to excitement were countless. The free press allowed "men [to] cheer, inflame, [and] exasperate each other, as though they were neighbors in the same street" (46). The rise of commerce and gambling had led adolescents to abandon more noble forms of labor and education: "What cares a young adventurer for the immutable laws of trade, when he has purchased a ticket in some lottery of speculation, from which he expects to draw a fortune?" (47). Government offices had attracted "the vultures of cupidity and of ambition," leading young men to pursue fame and status that they have not earned (47). And, as always, the rise of partisan factions was poised to disrupt the unity of the republic: "If each party espouses and supports whatever is wrong on its own side, because such a course is deemed necessary to union and strength; and denounces whatever is right in the plans of its antagonists, because such are the approved tactics of opposition... can seer or prophet foretell but one catastrophe?" (48). For Mann, the American educational system was ill-adapted to meet the challenges of republican governance. What remained for him to prove was that the common school system alone had the solutions.

#### *The Method of Residues: What is Left but Education?*

In contrast to other demophobic politicians, Mann did not call for a reversal of the trend toward democracy. "The irresistible movement in the diffusion of power is still progressive, not retrograde," he argued, and "this, whether for good or for evil, will continue to be" (45). The only option for Americans was to modify its institutional responses to this inexorable trend toward democracy—most notably, through education. To make this case, Mann concluded by employing what Robert P. Newman

called the "method of residues": a process of reasoning in which each alternative is caricatured and swept away, leaving behind only a single solution.<sup>67</sup> Adopting one last ironic stance, Mann concluded that no other institution could enact the "exorcism" needed to counteract "the spirits we have raised" (53).

Most of Mann's speech proceeded through concentric, thematically overlapping appeals. In his closing, however, he moved directly and logically through the foibles of various institutions that might protect the nation from the excesses of democracy. Laws could not protect America, he argued, because "the wills of the multitude prescribe and shape the law" (53). The Founders' institutional system of checks and balances would prove insufficient protection when the laws themselves were the product of a corrupt population (53). Higher education—the remedy to public ignorance that George Washington looked to in his efforts to promote a National University—also could not protect against democratic excesses.<sup>68</sup> "Our ancestors seem to have had great faith that the alumni of our colleges would diffuse a higher order of intelligence through the whole mass of the people," Mann observed (54). But they had failed to meet that obligation. The clergy, for whom Mann professed great reverence, likewise struggled against false knowledge, standing "like one solitary arborist working, single-handed and alone, in a wide forest, where there are hundreds of stooping and contorted trees" (55). And, of course, the press could not be trusted. It was too affected by the passions of partisanship, and, further, it "presupposes that the people are already supplied with the elements of knowledge and inspired with the love of right" (56). Without a public equipped to read and reason, a well-developed press would be insufficient in preserving democracy.

Close to the end of the speech, Mann finally described his solution to the perils of democracy: an educational system that mediated against the excesses of democracy. "I ask, with unmitigated anxiety," he began: "What institutions we now possess, that can furnish defence [sic] or barrier against the action of those propensities, which each generation brings into the world as a part of its being?" (57). For a republic already in decay, no solution that *presumed* an adequately trained population would do. In a phrase so important that he repeated it twice, Mann insisted that any effort to control human propensities "*must be mainly done, during the docile and teachable years of childhood.*" No matter how "wretched, incorrigible, [or] demoniac" an adult may become, Mann argued, "there was a time when he took the first step in error and in crime" (57) —and it was then that the tendency toward corrupt behavior could have been checked. Contra Edward Everett's more pragmatic and modest tone, Mann concluded that the system of education and the survival of the American republic were utterly fused. Unless America could find political leaders who would work "at all times and in all places, for the culture and edification of the whole people" (57), the very survival of the American republic would be at risk.

While driving home the essential interconnection of politics and education, Mann's peroration was also noteworthy for what it omitted: specific details about *how* his vision of educational reform would save the republic. This is the strategic rhetorical force of his method of residues: by eliminating all other possible options, he was free to leave his program—the only remaining option—relatively vague. To some extent, of

course, Mann's program of education was implied by the account of human development earlier in the speech. Mann also developed more specific pedagogical themes in his first two lectures and throughout his *Annual Reports*. Nonetheless, Mann's decision to forego an explicit discussion of pedagogy in this address suggests that, as a politician by training, he recognized the challenges of persuading a public of diverse religious and party affiliations to embrace a particular *program* of education. As was typical in his public lectures, Mann left the details ambiguous, preferring to cultivate public support for first principles rather than a detailed plan of action.

If Mann's choice to avoid explicit proposals was a pragmatic one, however, it nevertheless left a paradox at the heart of the address. In a speech on the integral relationship between *education* and *politics*, Mann spent little time talking specifically about *education*. And he apparently did so in order to cultivate the *ethos* of an *apolitical* expert. This oddity in the speech captured the irony of an educational reformer with an aim to discipline democracy. As Taylor writes, "Mann's program of civic education promises to dissolve political disputes, to make them impossible or, perhaps, unimaginable."<sup>69</sup> In this speech, Mann promised a more stable society of reasoning, civic-minded, and virtuous people. But the mere promotion of such an end, paradoxically, required judgments that were inherently political in nature—grounded in Mann's deep commitment to a Whig conception of virtue and temperance. The argument thus doubled back on itself, asserting the integral relationship of politics and education in principle, while distancing them from one another in practice.

### *The Echoes of Mann's Educational Arguments*

Mann's speech on "The Necessities of Education in a Republican Government" rested on a dialectical tension between the individual and the external force of governments. He introduced education to mediate the pair. In the process of advocating education to correct the foibles of democracy, however, Mann deepened the tension between government and education. The dialectical reasoning that pervaded the speech thus concluded, ironically, with a degree of dialectical uncertainty. Education could discipline politics, but was not itself political. This was the paradox of Mann's address. Indeed, as Taylor writes, this is "the paradox of democratic education" at the heart of American education reform across history: "the claim that a program of educational improvement will make the democratic citizenry worthy of the political respect due them simply by virtue of their equal political standing."<sup>70</sup>

Education continues to exist in an uneasy relationship with democracy—there to temper it, yet invoked in its name. The rhetoric of contemporary educational reform abounds with this tension, which manifests itself in a variety of rhetorical strategies reminiscent of Mann's. To lay all such tendencies of contemporary argument at Mann's feet would, of course, be folly; it is impossible, and unnecessary, to demonstrate influence over such a wide span of time. Yet we can point to certain peculiarities of American educational policy argument reminiscent of Mann that have recurred with remarkable consistency from 1839 to today. Specifically, three aspects of Mann's speech

have echoed down through the years: his stress on uniformity; his position "outside" of education; and his unwavering faith in the democratic potential of public education.

First, Mann's entire conception of the individual—grounded in "propensities" common to all of humanity—was predicated on uniformity. Much of his argument hinges on the assumption that all people adapt and adjust to their context in basically the same way. It is not *individuals* who differ, but the social context that *shapes* the individual. To be sure, Mann argued that the individual mind had been unleashed in the American context—but only because every mind responded in the same way to the looser strictures of democratic-republican governance. This stress on the uniformity of human development lent itself to pedagogy that relied, in large part, on the introduction of standardized curricula and testing. Mann saw individuals in mechanistic terms; like Benjamin Rush before him, he believed that pupils could become "republican machines." And as Colleen E. Terrell argues, that meant that "character can be codified into a methodical art."<sup>71</sup> As Mann's tenure continued, he pursued a reform vision that stressed precisely that sort of codification of educational method. Following a trip to European schools, for example, Mann wrestled with Boston's schoolmasters in pamphlets and newspapers to encourage them to adopt more standardized pedagogy akin to Prussia's.<sup>72</sup> As historian William J. Reese suggests, this controversy served as a clear precursor to contemporary debates about testing and standards.<sup>73</sup> Though social perceptions of psychology have changed dramatically since Mann's time—he was a devout believer in phrenology, for instance—his underlying impulse to conformity still persists in educational reform arguments.

Second, Mann's legacy can be read in the nature of educational advocacy itself: it tends to move from the *outside* to the *inside* of education policy. Though Mann praises the cause of education, he does not argue to reform education for its own sake. Rather, he makes his case for education as a curative force—as a way of dealing with *other* social problems, particularly those of democracy. This movement, from political challenges to educational solutions, is reflected in Mann's own career trajectory: a politician first, then an education reformer. After all, he was selected to become Secretary of Education in part because he initially *lacked* a specific educational agenda. As Hinsdale writes, many supporters considered this to be Mann's strength as a reformer: "a teacher would be wedded to his own modes of instruction and discipline, and not be likely to possess the necessary impartiality."<sup>74</sup> Mann's credibility as a statesman pervaded his third lecture, providing him an "outsider's" standpoint from which to advocate for public education. In contemporary reform movements, a similar type of advocacy and expertise persists. For example, a 2012 Council on Foreign Relations task force on education, *U.S. Education Reform and National Security*, was led by two political figures who built their careers primarily outside of education: New York City Public Schools Chancellor Joel Klein, who only entered education after a career as an antitrust attorney; and former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who was chosen for the committee because of her national security experience. Like Mann, these advocates did not make the case for education itself directly, but rather concluded that "the United States' failure to educate its students" would leave them "unprepared to compete" and threatened "the country's ability to thrive in a global economy and



maintain its leadership role."<sup>75</sup> In the United States, it seems, education reform is driven by external threats, and those threats tend to be articulated by reformers outside the teaching profession.

A final aspect of Mann's argument that persists to this day was also evident in the Klein and Rice report: the faith that education alone can rectify certain social problems. Across history, education has been both praised and blamed for policy outcomes. As Carl L. Bankston III and Stephen J. Caldas argue, Americans possess a "civil religion" grounded in a "devotion to education as a primary means of solving the concerns of each decade."<sup>76</sup> The explosion of compulsory education in the early twentieth century, as Tracy Steffes has chronicled, relied largely on a uniquely American belief that tackling problems at the individual level through education was a better way to address social ills than most other institutional options.<sup>77</sup> The result has been a perpetual faith in—and disappointment with—the system of education in America.<sup>78</sup> Mann's speech, polemical in nature, contains early traces of both this faith and occasional dismay. The possibilities for education were, according to Mann, infinite—they stretched across time and pervaded every aspect of human society. And yet this intrinsic possibility rendered every other potential reform inadequate, incapable of living up to the potential offered by education. This confidence was essential in promoting the cause of education in the early republic, but it may have created unrealistic expectations that educational reform could solve all problems. As Katz attests, Mann and fellow reformers of the 1830s and 1840s left a legacy of education as "a dazzling diversionary activity turning heads away from the real nature of social problems."<sup>79</sup>

For Mann, Democracy was not battering at the doors of Education; rather, Education was knocking at the doors of Democracy, warning that only through proper education could democracy be sustained. This tension between education and democracy has persisted over the years, although it was particularly acute in the context in which Mann spoke. As a Whig politician, Mann was alarmed by intemperance, concerned for his culture, and distressed by the excesses he sensed in the rapid democratization of American society in the antebellum era. He spoke at an uneasy moment—a moment when the American government had, in his mind, taken an irreversible plunge off of a democratic cliff. He thus stood, as a political figure, somewhere between the reactionary and revolutionary: in response to a massive social change, he sought not a reversal but a dramatic new course in his state's institutional commitment to education. For Mann, education alone seemed to provide the needed defense against the disunion he perceived on the horizon. For countless reformers since, educational reform seems to serve the same political purpose.

Author's Note: Michael J. Steudeman is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Communication at the University of Maryland. He thanks J. Michael Hogan and Shawn J. Parry-Giles for their extensive feedback on this project.

### Notes

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2 Charles Sumner, "Statue of Horace Mann. Letter to Dr. Samuel G. Howe, March 5, 1860," in *Charles Sumner: His Complete Works*, ed. George Frisbie Hoar (1872; rpt., Boston, MA: Lee and Shepard, 1900), 78.

3 Henry Barnard, *Memoirs of Teachers, Educators, and Promoters and Benefactors of Education, Literature, and Science*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (New York: F.C. Brownell, 1861), 374.

4 Ellwood P. Cubberly, *Public Education in the United States: A Study and Interpretation of American Educational History* (1919; rpt., Cambridge, MA: The Riverside Press, 1934), 226.

5 Lawrence A. Cremin, *American Education: The National Experience, 1783-1876* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 136.

6 Horace Mann, "Indispensableness Both of Intelligence and Morality to Free Institutions," *Common School Journal* 1 (1839): 5-6.

7 Bob Pepperman Taylor, *Horace Mann's Troubling Legacy: The Education of Democratic Citizens* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2010), 14.

8 Michael B. Katz, *The Irony of Early School Reform: Educational Innovation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Massachusetts* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 11.

9 Jennifer R. Mercieca, *Founding Fictions* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010), 18.

10 Alexander Hamilton, "Federalist No. 1: General Introduction, For the *Independent Journal*," in *The Federalist Papers*, ed. Jim Manis (State College: Pennsylvania State University Electronic Classics Series, 2001), 7; James Madison, "Federalist No. 10: The Same Subject Continued (The Union as a Safeguard Against Domestic Faction and Insurrection), From the *New York Packet*, Friday, November 23, 1787," in *The Federalist Papers*, 41-42.

11 Michael William Pfau, "Time, Tropes, and Textuality: Reading Republicanism in Charles Sumner's 'Crime Against Kansas,'" *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 6 (2003): 386.

12 Robert B. Westbrook "Public Schooling and American Democracy," in *Democracy, Education, and the Schools*, ed. Roger Soder (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1996), 128.

13 Michael Schudson, *The Good Citizen: A History of American Civic Life* (New York: The Free Press, 1998), 71.

14 Thomas Jefferson, "Letter to John Adams (October 28, 1813)," in *Educational Ideas in America: A Documentary History*, ed. S. Alexander Rippa (New York: David McKay Company, 1969), 140.

15 Schudson maintains that Jefferson's more liberal conception of education—focusing on diffuse elementary education, funneled into more elite education—was premised on "protect[ing] citizens against their own faulty judgments of character" and "cast[ing] the net widely to discover his leaders of 'genius and virtue'"—a "natural aristocracy" that would emerge to lead the ordinary citizens. Schudson, *The Good Citizen*, 72.

16 Saul Cornell, *The Other Founders: Anti-Federalism and the Dissenting Tradition in America, 1788-1828* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 68-80; see also James Jasinski, "Rhetoric and Judgment in the Constitutional Ratification Debate of 1787-1788: An Exploration of the Relationship between Theory and Critical Practice," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 78 (1992): 197-218.

17 Michael B. Katz, *Reconstructing American Education* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987).

18 John Locke, "Some Thoughts Concerning Education," in *On Politics and Education*, ed. Howard R. Penniman (1693; New York: Walter J. Black, 1947), 255-256.

19 Jeremy Engels, "Demophilia: A Discursive Counter to Demophobia in the Early Republic," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97 (2011): 131-154; Engels's essay largely responds to Robert L. Ivie's *Democracy and America's War on Terror* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2005).

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22 Mary Peabody Mann, *Life of Horace Mann* (Boston, MA: Walker, Fuller, and Company, 1865), 11-12; reprinted in Barnard, *Memoirs of Teachers*, 366.

23 Cremin, *American Education*, 134.

24 Jonathan Messerli, *Horace Mann: A Biography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), 55.

25 Messerli, *Horace Mann*, 74-82.

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27 Barnard, *Memoirs of Teachers*, 370-371.

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29 Susan Zaeske, "Hearing the Silences in Lincoln's Temperance Address: Whig Masculinity as an Ethic of Rhetorical Civility," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 13 (2010): 396.

30 Barnard, *Memoirs of Teachers*, 372.

31 Taylor, *Horace Mann's Troubling Legacy*, 11; Messerli, *Horace Mann*, 303.

32 Horace Mann, *An Oration Delivered before the Authorities of the City of Boston, July 4, 1842*, 5th ed. (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1800), 29.

33 Mann, *An Oration Delivered before the Authorities of the City of Boston*, 30.

34 Horace Mann, "Means and Objects of Common School Education," in *Lectures on Education* (Boston, MA: Ide & Dutton, 1855), 55-56.

35 Horace Mann, "End Poverty Through Education: From Twelfth Annual Report (1848)," in *Horace Mann on the Crisis in Education*, ed. Louis Filler (Yellow Springs, OH:

Antioch Press, 1965), 124; see also Chris Beneke, "The Idea of Integration in the Age of Horace Mann," in *Inequity in Education: A Historical Perspective*, ed. Debra Meyers and Burke Miller (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), 101-114.

36 Cremin, *American Education*, 141.

37 Horace Mann, "Tenth Annual Report (1846)," in *The Republic and the School: Horace Mann on the Education of Free Men*, ed. Lawrence A. Cremin (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1957), 60.

38 Massachusetts Department of Education, *Horace Mann Centennial*, 19-22.

39 Burke Aaron Hinsdale, *Horace Mann and The Common School Revival in the United States* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898), 107.

40 Messerli, *Horace Mann*, 241.

41 Hinsdale, *Horace Mann and The Common School Revival in the United States*, 108-110; Messerli, *Horace Mann*, 242-246.

42 Horace Mann, "Universal Suffrage Creates a Partnership," *Common School Journal* 1 (1838): 6-7; Taylor, *Horace Mann's Troubling Legacy*, 26.

43 Cremin, *American Education*, 136.

44 Messerli, *Horace Mann*, 284.

45 Messerli, *Horace Mann*, 280.

46 Being a perfectionist, Mann was ever cautious about publishing his lectures; he refused to have them printed in newspapers concurrent with when he delivered them. Per the request of the Board of Education in 1844, Mann published the entire series of his lectures in a single volume. In the preface, Mann made a note on the authenticity of the text: "In preparing this volume, the author was led to doubt whether he should retain those portions of the lectures which contained special and direct allusions to the times and circumstances in which they were delivered." He opted to publish the original drafts, he explained, "because it presents the lectures as they were delivered, and because it gives an aspect of practical reform rather than of theoretic speculation to the work." Horace Mann, *Lectures on Education* (Boston, MA: Ide & Dutton, 1855), ix.

The following dates for this particular address can be ascertained from reading Mann's published diary entries and contemporaneous news articles:

August 31: Mann references a poor audience for his convention lecture in Northampton.

September 1: Refers to another convention scheduled for September 2.

September 11: In a letter to his friend George Combe, Mann remarks that he has spoken at "six educational conventions" since their last meeting that summer. His previous diary entries indicate he left Combe's residence in early August.

Sept. 14-17: *The-New Bedford Mercury* references a convention address by Mann.

Sept. 21: Mann reflects on a completed lecture in Nantucket.

Sept. 24: Mann remarks on a poor turnout for his lecture in Barnstable.

Sept. 29: Mann discusses his lecture in Plymouth.

Oct. 1: Mann discusses his lecture in Dedham.

See Mann, *The Life of Horace Mann*, 114-121; "Education Convention," *The New-Bedford Mercury*, September 20, 1839, 1.

47 Horace Mann, "Means and Objects of Common School Education," in *Lectures on Education*, 11-62.

48 Horace Mann, "Special Preparation, a Pre-Requisite to Teaching," in *Lectures on Education*, 63-116.

49 Original text is Horace Mann, "The Necessity of Education in a Republican Government," in *Lectures on Education*, 117-162. All subsequent citations of the text refer to the numbered paragraph of the text as published on *Voices of Democracy*.

50 Mann, *The Life of Horace Mann*, 117.

51 Mann, *The Life of Horace Mann*, 122.

52 Mann, *The Life of Horace Mann*, 122.

53 Edward Everett, "The Importance of Education in a Republic," in *Importance of Practical Education and Useful Knowledge: Being a Selection from His Orations and Other Discourses* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1847), 334-347.

54 "Taunton Common School Convention," *Common School Journal* 1 (1839): 219.

55 Everett, "The Importance of Education in a Republic," 338.

56 Cara A. Finnegan, "Recognizing Lincoln: Image Vernaculars in Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture," *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 8 (2005): 31-58.

57 The phrenological account is cited at length at the end of Barnard's memoir. Barnard, *Memoirs of Teachers*, 397-399.

58 Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives* (1945; rpt., Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 402.

59 By building his argument upon this internal/external conflict, Mann was invoking what Burke calls the "paradox of substance"—that "to tell what a thing is, you place it in terms of something else." This tendency, Burke argued, is an inevitable product of language—but one that language also has the power to obfuscate. Burke, *A Grammar of Motives*, 24.

60 He made what Burke calls a "materialistic" gesture, arguing for certain innate instincts in every person. As Burke writes, when "motives are intrinsic to human agents, they may be expected to demand expression whatever the social and political structure may be." Burke, *A Grammar of Motives*, 49.

61 For more on Mann's employment of education as a mediator of social forces, see Kathleen Edgar Kendall, "Education as the 'Balance Wheel of the Social Machinery': Horace Mann's Arguments and Proofs," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 54 (1968): 13-21.

62 Robert Terrill calls these ironic shifts in context "paratactic vistas" or visualizations that juxtapose scenes to highlight contrasts. Robert E. Terrill, "Irony, Silence, and Time: Frederick Douglass on the Fifth of July," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 89 (2003): 217.

63 Charles de Secondat Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, trans. and ed. Anne M. Cohler, Basia Carolyn Miller, and Harold Samuel Stone (1748; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 31.

- 64 Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*, 35-36.
- 65 David Zarefsky and Victoria J. Gallagher, "From 'Conflict' to 'Constitutional Question': Transformations in Early American Public Discourse," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 76 (1990): 247-261.
- 66 Burke, *A Grammar of Motives*, 516-517.
- 67 Robert P. Newman, "Under the Veneer: Nixon's Vietnam Speech of November 3, 1969," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 56 (1970): 168-178.
- 68 See Albert Castel, "The Founding Fathers and the Vision of a National University," *History of Education Quarterly* 4 (1964): 280-302.
- 69 Taylor, *Horace Mann's Troubling Legacy*, 14.
- 70 Taylor, *Horace Mann's Troubling Legacy*, 7.
- 71 Colleen E. Terrell, "'Republican Machines': Franklin, Rush, and the Manufacture of Civic Virtue in the Early Republic," *Early American Studies* 1 (2003): 103-109.
- 72 For details on this history, see Stanley K. Schultz, *The Culture Factory: Boston Public Schools, 1789-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 138-153; Harold Schwartz, *Samuel Gridley Howe: Social Reformer, 1801-1876* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956), 120-136.
- 73 William J. Reese, *Testing Wars in the Public Schools: A Forgotten History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 57-68.
- 74 Hinsdale, *Horace Mann and The Common School Revival in the United States*, 110.
- 75 Joel I. Klein and Condoleezza Rice, "Task Force Report: U.S. Education Reform and National Security," *Council on Foreign Relations*, March 2012, <http://www.cfr.org/united-states/us-education-reform-national-security/p27618> (accessed September 5, 2014).
- 76 Carl L. Bankston III and Stephen J. Caldas, *Public Education: America's Civil Religion; A Social History* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2009), 8.
- 77 Tracy L. Steffes, *School, Society, & State: A New Education to Govern Modern America, 1890-1940* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 25.
- 78 David B. Tyack and Larry Cuban, *Tinkering Toward Utopia: A Century of Public School Reform* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).
- 79 Katz, *The Irony of Early School Reform*, 217.