Bibliography – Scenes of Instruction in Early America

Suggestions from EARAM-L

-Primary Sources
-Note: these are organized (loosely) chronologically

Grammar treatises and textbooks
- “See the debates over education and language (What was an English Education in a republican world?), especially those linking the ways in which ideas about the nature of grammar were connected with politics.”
- see Rush's "Thoughts Upon the Mode of Education Proper in a Republic."
- “see books like Dilworth’s A New Guide to the English Tongue (1740) which had a long run in the colonies/states--40 editions between 1747 and 1840. Even more popular was Lowth's A Short Introduction to English Grammar, which made the argument, offered elsewhere, that the grammar of English was distinct from but equal to the grammar of Latin. And of course the work of Noah Webster, starting with the original speller and going on to the dictionary--these offer quite different understandings of language and politics.”

Gardner Jr., Nathaniel.
- “There is a very interesting Latin verse meditation on the travails of an early American Latin teacher written by Nathaniel Gardner Jr. sometime before 1750. It is included in Leo Kaiser's anthology of Early American Latin Verse.”

Smith, William. A General Idea of the College of Mirania. 1753
- “Not a novel, but [it] set forth a novel plan for an academy to be organized and taught according to Enlightenment principles. Smith's Mirania impressed Benjamin Franklin so much that Franklin maneuvered to bring in Smith to run the newly founded Academy/College of Philadelphia (forerunner of the U of Pennsylvania). Political differences, however, soon split Smith and Franklin. Smith was eventually imprisoned, but he wasn't stopped: he taught his classes from his jail cell. So maybe there is a pedagogical angle here after all.”

New England singing school tradition

Wheatley, Phillis
- “Emory's MARBL has a copybook with a poem by Phillis Wheatley—the book is dated at the same time as Wheatley's poetry which suggests something about teaching and learning in Boston.”
- “The Phillis Wheatley Historical Society has information on how Phillis was tutored (texts etc) by older 'sis' Mary Wheatley, plus letters she wrote to a fellow slave who reputedly had come over on an slave ship from Africa with her—both of them highly literate. The education of slaves is an interesting sub-topic and in Wheatley's case also reveals indirectly the standards used for more upper end schooling of everyone in that early time.”


Dock was a Pennsylvania Mennonite teacher. “The entire piece describes his teaching methods, which rejected corporeal punishment and used some experiential learning approaches that seem to anticipate Montessori education.”

Fithian, Philip Vickers, journal and letters (1773-1774)

- quite a bit of family education throughout the correspondence

- “friend of Charles Brockden Brown and William Dunlap—and a poet, librettist, and editor himself. [The diary] features several pages of his recollections of his youth, including his schooling in the 1770s and 1780s.”

- fun fact: Robert Frost wrote a preface to a 1924 edition of this
- Dartmouth Reference Library has additional Burroughs archives (see this post and the comments for more: http://northwesthistory.blogspot.com/2008/07/bring-me-head-of-stephen-burroughs.html)


Brown, Charles Brockden. *Ormond; or, the Secret Witness*. 1799.
- “has passages on tutoring, which might be characterised, ‘how to bring up your child as part of the radical Enlightenment’”

Vickery, Sukey. *Emily Hamilton and Other Writings*. 1803.
- the journal fragment in *Emily Hamilton* mentions her instruction of her children

Emerson, Ralph Waldo
- “letters to his brother William from *Emerson’s Letters*, vol. I. Emerson writes in detail about what he learns in 1815 and 1816, including humorous anecdotes about his own juvenile poetry and his classmates’ errors in geography class (he characterizes his geographic instruction as a “vacation”)”

Crocker, Hannah Mather
- “an early advocate of women’s education. She writes about this in her published works *Letters on Freemasonry* (1815) and *Observations* (1818), but there’s more in her other works, not least her recently edited and published *Reminiscences* and Connie Post’s edited collection of various of her manuscript writings. As it happens, there’s a very new author society dedicated to her works with a webpage currently available at http://www3.nd.edu/~hmcs/ (of which I am one of the founders).

- schoolhouse of Ichabod Crane

Hermain Vaill’s observations of New England schools
- “The first letter collected in *To Marry An Indian: The Marriage of Harriett Gold and Elias Boudinot in Letters, 1823-1839* treats this subject. Its author, Herman Vaill (an educator), describes his observations of a number of New England schools”

Letters by Cherokee students in Cherokee Nation mission schools
- see Hilary Wyss’s *English Letters and Indian Literacies* for examples of these letters and at the writings of Catharine Brown (see *Cherokee Sister: The Collected Writings of Catharine Brown, 1818-1823*).
-“This might not be the kind of thing you seek because it doesn't speak to specific pedagogical practices or methodologies, but [...] young Mary recalls the rich education she received in her grandfather's home in England, which stands in contrast to ‘the loneliness of unreciprocated intellect’ she experiences in Plymouth. Otherwise, the letters embedded in this novel (and others with an epistolary element) might provide a glimpse into the representation of literacy.”

Hale, Sarah. “The Poor Scholar” and “Village Schoolmistress.” Both published in the first year of the *Ladies’ Magazine* (1828) and collected in *Sketches of American Character*.
-“the "Village Schoolmistress" is quite interesting because it has a second part, "William Forbes," that is published months--6 I believe--after the first part.


Sedgwick, Catharine Maria. “Old Maids.” 1834.
-“in which a female school teacher has her beau stolen by her beloved younger sister”

Douglass, Frederick, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. 1845.
-scenes with Sophia Auld, his self-education in Baltimore, and his attempts to keep school


-**Secondary Sources**

-“doesn't deal with sites of formal pedagogy at all, but I think it does make clear the moral and ethical dimensions that came to subsist with literacy during the 19C”


-“about children and consent in the early modern era.” Look especially at “the section on catechisms and how the infant baptism debates influenced broader debates about the importance of consent to contracts and also education.”


-“I argue that Anne Bradstreet's early poems, the so-called 'quaternions,' might well have been used a form of Early American pedagogy.”

- “looks at the first generation of teachers in Boston in the 1820s-50s (I think) who attempted to professionalize themselves through educational journals, lyceums, etc.”


- has “a brilliant study of working men’s societies and how they used unconventional materials and methods in their literary practices”