The Challenges of "Literate" Language

Jared Hewitt

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by Jared Hewitt

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Contents

Chapter 1 Literacy 1

Chapter 2 Functional Illiteracy 63

Chapter 3 Information Literacy 66

Chapter 4 Literate Programming 92

Chapter 5 Literate American Slaves 113

Chapter 1

Literacy

Literacy is popularly understood as an ability to read and write in at least one method of writing, an understanding reflected by mainstream dictionaries. In this view, *illiteracy* would be considered to be the inability to read and write.

Some researchers suggest that the history of interest in the concept of “literacy” can be divided into two periods. Firstly is the period before 1950, when literacy was understood solely as alphabetical literacy (word and letter recognition). Secondly is the period after 1950, when literacy slowly began to be considered as a wider concept and process, i.e. functional literacy (Dijanošić, 2009).

This widening of the traditional concept of literacy took place as consensus emerged among researchers in composition studies, education research, and anthropological linguistics that it makes little sense to speak of reading or writing outside of some specific context—a position James Paul Gee describes as "simply incoherent." For example, even extremely early stages of acquiring mastery over symbol-shapes take place in particular social contexts (even if that context is simply "school"), and after print acquisition, any instance of reading and writing will always be enacted for a particular purpose and occasion and with particular readers and writers in mind. Reading and writing, therefore, are never separable from social and cultural elements. A corollary point, made by David Barton and Rosalind (Roz) Ivanic, among others, is that the effects of literacy acquisition on cognition and social relations are not

easily predictable, since, as Brian Street has argued, "the ways in which people address reading and writing are themselves rooted in conceptions of knowledge, identity, [and] being."

Other definitions and uses of the term "literacy"

The diversity among the definitions of literacy used by NGOs, think tanks, and advocacy groups since the 1990s suggests that this shift in understanding from "discrete skill" to "social practice" is both ongoing and uneven. Some of the definitions below remain fairly closely aligned with the traditional "ability to read and write" connotation, whereas others take a broader view:

- The 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (USA) included "quantitative literacy" (numeracy) in its treatment of literacy. It defined literacy as "the ability to use printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential". It included three types of adult literacy: prose (e.g., a newspaper article), documents (e.g., a bus schedule), and quantitative literacy (e.g., using arithmetic operations in a product advertisement).
- In 2015 the United Nations Statistics Division defined the *youth literacy rate* as "the percentage of the population aged 15–24 years who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on everyday life".

- In 2016, the *European Literacy Policy Network* defined literacy as "the ability to read and write ... in all media (print or electronic), including digital literacy".
- In 2018, UNESCO includes "printed and written materials" and "varying contexts" in its definition of literacy; e.g. "the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts".
- In 2019, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in its PIAAC adult skills surveys, includes "written texts" in its definition of literacy; e.g. "the ability to understand, evaluate, use and engage with written texts in order to participate in society, achieve one's goals, and develop one's knowledge and potential". And, it treats *numeracy* and *problem solving using technology* as separate considerations.
- In 2021, Education Scotland and the National Literacy Trust in the UK included oral communication skills (listening and speaking) under the umbrella of literacy.
- As of 2021, the International Literacy Association (Newark, Delaware, USA) includes "audible materials", "across disciplines" and "in any context" in its definition of literacy; e.g. "the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, compute, and communicate using visual, audible, and digital materials across disciplines and in any context".
- The expression "reading literacy" is used by the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study

(PIRLS) that has monitored international trends in reading achievement at the fourth grade since 2001.

- Other organizations might include numeracy skills and technology skills separately but alongside of literacy skills. And still others emphasize the increasing involvement of computers and other digital technologies in communication that necessitates additional skills (e.g. interfacing with web browsers and word processing programs; organizing and altering the configuration of files, etc.).

Some concerns over the perceived diminishment of traditional instruction in reading notwithstanding, the concept of "multiliteracies" has gained currency, particularly in English Language Arts curricula, on the grounds that reading "is interactive and informative, and occurs in ever-increasingly technological settings where information is part of spatial, audio, and visual patterns (Rhodes &Robnolt, 2009)". In addition, since the 1940s the term literacy is often used to mean having knowledge or skill in a particular field (e.g., computer literacy, statistical literacy, critical literacy, media literacy, ecological literacy, disaster literacy, health literacy, linguistic (i.e. language) literacy social literacy, quantitative literacy (numeracy) and visual literacy, e.g. body language, pictures, maps, and video). For more about reading and learning to read see Reading.

Functional illiteracy

Functional illiteracy relates to adults and has been defined in different ways; for example a) the inability to use reading,

writing, and calculation skills for their own and the community's development, b) the inability to read well enough to manage daily living and employment tasks that require reading skills beyond a basic level, and c) the inability to understand complex texts despite adequate schooling, age, language skills, elementary reading skills, and IQ. It is distinguished from *primary illiteracy* (i.e. the inability to read and write a short simple statement concerning one's own everyday life) and *learning difficulties* (e.g. dyslexia).

History

Prehistoric and ancient literacy

Origins of literacy

Between 3,500 BC and 3,000 BC, the ancient Sumerians invented writing. Script is thought to have developed independently at least five times in human history Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus civilization, lowland Mesoamerica, and China.

The earliest forms of written communication originated in Sumer, located in southern Mesopotamia about 3500-3000 BCE. During this era, literacy was "a largely functional matter, propelled by the need to manage the new quantities of information and the new type of governance created by trade and large scale production". Writing systems in Mesopotamia first emerged from a recording system in which people used impressed token markings to manage trade and agricultural production. The token system served as a precursor to early cuneiform writing once people began recording information on

clay tablets. Proto-cuneiform texts exhibit not only numerical signs, but also ideograms depicting objects being counted.

Egyptian hieroglyphs emerged from 3300 to 3100 BCE and depicted royal iconography that emphasized power amongst other elites. The Egyptian hieroglyphic writing system was the first notation system to have phonetic values.

Writing in lowland Mesoamerica was first put into practice by the Olmec and Zapotec civilizations in 900-400 BCE. These civilizations used glyphic writing and bar-and-dot numerical notation systems for purposes related to royal iconography and calendar systems.

The earliest written notations in China date back to the Shang Dynasty in 1200 BCE. These systematic notations were found inscribed on bones and recorded sacrifices made, tributes received, and animals hunted, which were activities of the elite. These oracle-bone inscriptions were the early ancestors of modern Chinese script and contained logosyllabic script and numerals.

Indus script is largely pictorial and has not been deciphered yet. It may or may not include abstract signs. It is thought that they wrote from right to left and that the script is thought to be logographic. Because it has not been deciphered, linguists disagree on whether it is a complete and independent writing system; however, it is genuinely thought to be an independent writing system that emerged in the Harappa culture.

These examples indicate that early acts of literacy were closely tied to power and chiefly used for management practices, and

probably less than 1% of the population was literate, as it was confined to a very small ruling elite.

Origins of the alphabet

According to social anthropologist Jack Goody, there are two interpretations that regard the origin of the alphabet. Many classical scholars, such as historian Ignace Gelb, credit the Ancient Greeks for creating the first alphabetic system (c. 750 BCE) that used distinctive signs for consonants and vowels. But Goody contests, "The importance of Greek culture of the subsequent history of Western Europe has led to an over-emphasis, by classicists and others, on the addition of specific vowel signs to the set of consonantal ones that had been developed earlier in Western Asia".

Thus, many scholars argue that the ancient Semitic-speaking peoples of northern Canaan (modern-day Syria) invented the consonantal alphabet as early as 1500 BCE. Much of this theory's development is credited to English archeologist Flinders Petrie, who, in 1905, came across a series of Canaanite inscriptions located in the turquoise mines of Serabit el-Khadem. Ten years later, English Egyptologist Alan Gardiner reasoned that these letters contain an alphabet, as well as references to the Canaanite goddess Asherah. In 1948, William F. Albright deciphered the text using additional evidence that had been discovered subsequent to Goody's findings. This included a series of inscriptions from Ugarit, discovered in 1929 by French archaeologist Claude F. A. Schaeffer. Some of these inscriptions were mythological texts (written in an early Canaanite dialect) that consisted of a 32-letter cuneiform consonantal alphabet.

Another significant discovery was made in 1953 when three arrowheads were uncovered, each containing identical Canaanite inscriptions from twelfth century BCE. According to Frank Moore Cross, these inscriptions consisted of alphabetic signs that originated during the transitional development from pictographic script to a linear alphabet. Moreover, he asserts, "These inscriptions also provided clues to extend the decipherment of earlier and later alphabetic texts".

The consonantal system of the Canaanite script inspired alphabetical developments in subsequent systems. During the Late Bronze Age, successor alphabets appeared throughout the Mediterranean region and were employed for Phoenician, Hebrew and Aramaic.

According to Goody, these cuneiform scripts may have influenced the development of the Greek alphabet several centuries later. Historically, the Greeks contended that their writing system was modeled after the Phoenicians. However, many Semitic scholars now believe that Ancient Greek is more consistent with an early form Canaanite that was used c. 1100 BCE. While the earliest Greek inscriptions are dated c. eighth century BCE, epigraphical comparisons to Proto-Canaanite suggest that the Greeks may have adopted the consonantal alphabet as early as 1100 BCE, and later "added in five characters to represent vowels".

Phoenician, which is considered to contain the first "linear alphabet", rapidly spread to the Mediterranean port cities in northern Canaan. Some archeologists believe that Phoenician scripture had some influence on the developments of the Hebrew and Aramaic alphabets based on the fact that these

languages evolved during the same time period, share similar features, and are commonly categorized into the same language group.

When the Israelites migrated to Canaan between 1200 and 1001 BCE, they also adopted a variation of the Canaanite alphabet. Baruch ben Neriah, Jeremiah's scribe, used this alphabet to create the later scripts of the Old Testament. The early Hebrew alphabet was prominent in the Mediterranean region until Chaldean Babylonian rulers exiled the Jews to Babylon in the sixth century BCE. It was then that the new script ("Square Hebrew") emerged and the older one rapidly died out.

The Aramaic alphabet also emerged sometime between 1200 and 1000 BCE. As the Bronze Age collapsed, the Aramaeans moved into Canaan and Phoenician territories and adopted their scripts. Although early evidence of this writing is scarce, archeologists have uncovered a wide range of later Aramaic texts, written as early as the seventh century BCE. Due to its longevity and prevalence in the region, Achaemenid rulers would come to adopt it as a "diplomatic language". The modern Aramaic alphabet rapidly spread east to the Kingdom of Nabataea, then to Sinai and the Arabian Peninsula, eventually making its way to Africa. Aramaean merchants carried older variations of Aramaic as far as India, where it later influenced the development of the Brahmi script. It also led to the developments of Arabic and Pahlavi (an Iranian adaptation), "as well as for a range of alphabets used by early Turkish and Mongol tribes in Siberia, Mongolia and Turkestan". Literacy at this period spread with the merchant classes and may have grown to number 15-20% of the total population.

The Aramaic language declined with the spread of Islam, which was accompanied by the spread of Arabic.

Classical and post-classical literacy

Until recently it was thought that the majority of people were illiterate in ancient times. However, recent work challenges this perception. Anthony DiRenzo asserts that Roman society was "a civilization based on the book and the register", and "no one, either free or slave, could afford to be illiterate". SimilarlyDupont points out, "The written word was all around them, in both public and private life: laws, calendars, regulations at shrines, and funeral epitaphs were engraved in stone or bronze.

The Republic amassed huge archives of reports on every aspect of public life". The imperial civilian administration produced masses of documentation used in judicial, fiscal and administrative matters as did the municipalities.

The army kept extensive records relating to supply and duty rosters and submitted reports. Merchants, shippers, and landowners (and their personal staffs) especially of the larger enterprises must have been literate.

In the late fourth century the Desert Father Pachomius would expect literacy of a candidate for admission to his monasteries:

they shall give him twenty Psalms or two of the Apostles' epistles or some other part of Scripture. And if he is illiterate he shall go at the first, third and sixth hours to someone who can teach and has been appointed for him. He shall stand before him and learn very studiously and with all gratitude.

The fundamentals of a syllable, the verbs and nouns shall all be written for him and even if he does not want to he shall be compelled to read.

In the course of the 4th and 5th century the Churches made efforts to ensure a better clergy in particular among the bishops who were expected to have a classical education, which was the hallmark of a socially acceptable person in higher society (and possession of which allayed the fears of the pagan elite that their cultural inheritance would be destroyed). Even after the remnants of the Western Roman Empire fell in the 470s, literacy continued to be a distinguishing mark of the elite as communications skills were still important in political and Church life (bishops were largely drawn from the senatorial class) in a new cultural synthesis that made "Christianity the Roman religion". However, these skills were less needed than previously in the absence of the large imperial administrative apparatus whose middle and top echelons the elite had dominated as if by right. Even so, in pre-modern times it is unlikely that literacy was found in more than about 30-40% of the population. The highest percentage of literacy during the Dark Ages was among the clergy and monks who supplied much of the staff needed to administer the states of western Europe.

Post-Antiquity illiteracy was made much worse by the lack of a suitable writing medium. When the Western Roman Empire collapsed, the import of papyrus to Europe ceased. Since papyrus perishes easily and does not last well in the wetter European climate, parchment was used, which was expensive and accessible only by the Church and the wealthy. Paper was introduced into Europe in Spain in the 11th century. Its use

spread north slowly over the next four centuries. Literacy saw a resurgence as a result, and by the 15th century paper had largely replaced parchment except for luxury manuscripts.

The Reformation stressed the importance of literacy and being able to read the Bible. The Protestant countries were the first to attain full literacy; Scandinavian countries were fully literate in the early 17th century.

Literacy and industrialization

Modern industrialization began in England and Scotland in the 18th century, where there were relatively high levels of literacy among farmers, especially in Scotland. This permitted the recruitment of literate craftsman, skilled workers, foremen and managers who supervised the emerging textile factories and coal mines. Much of a labor was unskilled, and especially in textile mills children as young as eight proved useful in handling chores and adding to the family income. Indeed, children were taken out of school to work alongside their parents in the factories. However, by the mid-nineteenth century, unskilled labor forces were common in Western Europe, and British industry moved upscale, needing many more engineers and skilled workers who could handle technical instructions and handle complex situations. Literacy was essential to be hired. A senior government official told Parliament in 1870:

- Upon the speedy provision of elementary education depends are industrial prosperity. It is of no use trying to give technical teaching to our citizens without elementary education; uneducated

> labourers—and many of our labourers are utterly uneducated—are, for the most part, unskilled labourers, and if we leave our work–folk any longer unskilled, notwithstanding their strong sinews and determined energy, they will become overmatched in the competition of the world.

Modern literacy

Spread of literacy since the mid-twentieth century

Literacy data published by UNESCO displays that since 1950, the adult literacy rate at the world level has increased by 5 percentage points every decade on average, from 55.7 per cent in 1950 to 86.2 per cent in 2015. However, for four decades, the population growth was so rapid that the number of illiterate adults kept increasing, rising from 700 million in 1950 to 878 million in 1990. Since then, the number has fallen markedly to 745 million in 2015, although it remains higher than in 1950 despite decades of universal education policies, literacy interventions and the spread of print material and information and communications technology (ICT). However, these trends have been far from uniform across regions.

Regional disparities

Available global data indicates significant variations in literacy rates between world regions. North America, Europe, West Asia, and Central Asia have achieved almost full adult literacy (individuals at or over the age of 15) for both men and women. Most countries in East Asia and the Pacific, as well as Latin

America and the Caribbean, are above a 90% literacy rate for adults. Illiteracy persists to a greater extent in other regions: 2013 UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) data indicates adult literacy rates of only 67.55% in South Asia and North Africa, 59.76% in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In much of the world, high youth literacy rates suggest that illiteracy will become less and less common as younger generations with higher educational attainment levels replace older ones. However, in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, where the vast majority of the world's illiterate youth live, lower school enrollment implies that illiteracy will persist to a greater degree.

According to 2013 UIS data, the youth literacy rate (individuals ages 15 to 24) is 84.03% in South Asia and North Africa, and 70.06% in Sub-Saharan Africa. Yet the literate/illiterate distinction is not clear-cut: for example, given that a large part of the benefits of literacy can be obtained by having access to a literate person in the household, some recent literature in economics, starting with the work of Kaushik Basu and James Foster, distinguishes between a "proximate illiterate" and an "isolated illiterate". The former refers to an illiterate person who lives in a household with literates and the latter to an illiterate who lives in a household of all illiterates. What is of concern is that many people in poor nations are not proximate illiterates but rather isolated illiterates.

That being said, literacy has rapidly spread in several regions in the last twenty-five years (see image). The global initiative of the United Nations to actualize the Sustainable Development Goal 4 is also gaining momentum.

Gender disparities

According to 2015 UIS data collected by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, about two-thirds (63%) of the world's illiterate adults are women. This disparity was even starker in previous decades: from 1970 to 2000, the global gender gap in literacy would decrease by roughly 50%. In recent years, however, this progress has stagnated, with the remaining gender gap holding almost constant over the last two decades. In general, the gender gap in literacy is not as pronounced as the regional gap; that is, differences between countries in overall literacy are often larger than gender differences within countries. However, the gap between men and women would narrow from 1990 onwards, after the increase of male adult literacy rates at 80 per cent (see image).

Sub-Saharan Africa, the region with the lowest overall literacy rates, also features the widest gender gap: just 52% of adult females are literate, and 68% among adult men. Similar gender disparity persists in two other regions, North Africa (86% adult male literacy, 70% adult female literacy) and South Asia (77% adult male literacy, 58% adult female literacy).

The 1990 World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand, would bring attention to the literacy gender gap and prompt many developing countries to prioritize women's literacy.

In many contexts, female illiteracy co-exists with other aspects of gender inequality. Martha Nussbaum suggests illiterate women are more vulnerable to becoming trapped in an abusive marriage, given that illiteracy limits their employment

opportunities and worsens their intra-household bargaining position. Moreover, Nussbaum links literacy to the potential for women to effectively communicate and collaborate with one another in order "to participate in a larger movement for political change."

Challenges of increasing female literacy

Social barriers prevent expanding literacy skills among women and girls. Making literacy classes available can be ineffective when it conflicts with the use of the valuable limited time of women and girls. School age girls, in many contexts, face stronger expectations than their male counterparts to perform household work and care after younger siblings. Generational dynamics can also perpetuate these disparities: illiterate parents may not readily appreciate the value of literacy for their daughters, particularly in traditional, rural societies with expectations that girls will remain at home.

A 2015 World Bank and the International Center for Research on Women review of academic literature would conclude that child marriage, which predominantly impacts girls, tends to reduce literacy levels. A 2008 analysis of the issue in Bangladesh found that for every additional year of delay in a girl's marriage, her likelihood of literacy would increase by 5.6 percent. Similarly, a 2014 study found that in sub-Saharan Africa, marrying early would significantly decrease a girl's probability of literacy, holding other variables constant. A 2015 review of the child marriage literature therefore would recommend marriage postponement as part of a strategy to increase educational attainment levels, including female literacy in particular.

Gender gap for boys in developed countries

While women and girls comprise the majority of the global illiterate population, in many developed countries a literacy gender gap exists in the opposite direction. Data from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) has consistently indicated the literacy underachievement of boys within member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). In view of such findings, many education specialists have recommended changes in classroom practices to better accommodate boys' learning styles, and to remove any gender stereotypes that may create a perception of reading and writing as feminine activities.

Socioeconomic impact

Many policy analysts consider literacy rates as a crucial measure of the value of a region's human capital. For example, literate people can be more easily trained than illiterate people, and generally have a higher socioeconomic status; thus they enjoy better health and employment prospects. The international community has come to consider literacy as a key facilitator and goal of development. In regard to the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the UN in 2015, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning has declared the "central role of literacy in responding to sustainable development challenges such as health, social equality, economic empowerment and environmental sustainability." A majority of prisoners have been found to be illiterate: In Edinburgh prison, winner of the 2010 Libraries Change Lives Award, "the library has become the cornerstone of the prison's literacy strategy" and thus recidivism and reoffending can be

reduced, and incarcerated persons can work toward attaining higher socioconomic status once released.

Health impacts

Print illiteracy generally corresponds with less knowledge about modern hygiene and nutritional practices, an unawareness which can exacerbate a wide range of health issues. Within developing countries in particular, literacy rates also have implications for child mortality; in these contexts, children of literate mothers are 50% more likely to live past age 5 than children of illiterate mothers. Public health research has thus increasingly concerned itself with the potential for literacy skills to allow women to more successfully access health care systems, and thereby facilitate gains in child health.

For example, a 2014 descriptive research survey project correlates literacy levels with the socioeconomic status of women in Oyo State, Nigeria. The study claims that developing literacy in this area will bring "economic empowerment and will encourage rural women to practice hygiene, which will in turn lead to the reduction of birth and death rates."

Economic impacts

Literacy can increase job opportunities and access to higher education. In 2009, the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) in Ireland commissioned a cost benefit analysis of adult literacy training. This concluded that there were economic gains for the individuals, the companies they worked for, and the Exchequer, as well as the economy and the country as a

whole—for example, increased GDP. Korotayev and coauthors have revealed a rather significant correlation between the level of literacy in the early 19th century and successful modernization and economic breakthroughs in the late 20th century, as "literate people could be characterized by a greater innovative-activity level, which provides opportunities for modernization, development, and economic growth".

Literacy promotion efforts

While informal learning within the home can play an important role in literacy development, gains in childhood literacy often occur in primary school settings. Continuing the global expansion of public education is thus a frequent focus of literacy advocates. These kinds of broad improvements in education often require centralized efforts undertaken by national governments; alternatively, local literacy projects implemented by NGOs can play an important role, particularly in rural contexts.

Funding for both youth and adult literacy programs often comes from large international development organizations. USAID, for example, steered donors like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Global Partnership for Education toward the issue of childhood literacy by developing the Early Grade Reading Assessment. Advocacy groups like the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education have frequently called upon international organizations such as UNESCO, the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization, and the World Bank to prioritize support for adult women's literacy. Efforts to increase adult literacy often encompass other development priorities as well; for example,

initiatives in Ethiopia, Morocco, and India have combined adult literacy programs with vocational skills trainings in order to encourage enrollment and address the complex needs of women and other marginalized groups who lack economic opportunity.

In 2013, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning published a set of case studies on programs that successfully improved female literacy rates. The report features countries from a variety of regions and of differing income levels, reflecting the general global consensus on "the need to empower women through the acquisition of literacy skills." Part of the impetus for UNESCO's focus on literacy is a broader effort to respond to globalization and "the shift towards knowledge-based societies" that it has produced. While globalization presents emerging challenges, it also provides new opportunities: many education and development specialists are hopeful that new ICTs will have the potential to expand literacy learning opportunities for children and adults, even those in countries that have historically struggled to improve literacy rates through more conventional means.

In 2007, the nonprofit organization LitWorldwas founded to promote literacy around the world. Based in the United States, the organization has developed programs to be applied internationally with the goal to teach children to speak, read, and write, regardless of ethnicity, gender, and economic status.

Literacy as a development indicator

The Human Development Index, produced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), uses education as

one of its three indicators; originally, adult literacy represented two-thirds of this education index weight. In 2010, however, the UNDP replaced the adult literacy measure with mean years of schooling. A 2011 UNDP research paper framed this change as a way to "ensure current relevance", arguing that gains in global literacy already achieved between 1970 and 2010 meant that literacy would be "unlikely to be as informative of the future."

Other scholars, however, have since warned against overlooking the importance of literacy as an indicator and a goal for development, particularly for marginalized groups such as women and rural populations. Many practitioners and academics are raising the alarm on the learning crisis, the reality that while the majority of children around the world are attending school, many of them are not learning.

The World Bank, along with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, has developed the Learning Poverty concept and associated measure, which measures the proportion of students who are unable to read and understand a simple text by age 10. This research found that 53% of children in low- and middle-income countries cannot read and understand a simple story by the end of primary school. In poor countries, the level is as high as 80 percent. Thus, it may be too soon to argue that literacy rates are less informative.

In fact, these new measures indicate that these startlingly high rates of illiteracy are an "early warning sign that SDG 4 for education and all related global goals are in jeopardy." Current progress in improving literacy rates is much too slow to meet

the SDG goals. At the current rate, approximately 43% of children will still be learning poor by 2030.

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) assesses children on reading and math skills at age 15. PISA-D encourages and facilitates PISA testing in low- and middle-income countries. In 2019, "PISA-D results reveal exceptionally low scores for participating countries. Only 23 percent of students tested achieved the minimum level of proficiency in reading, compared with 80 percent of OECD". Minimum proficiency requires students to read "simple and familiar texts and understand them literally", as well as demonstrating some ability to connect pieces of information and draw inferences, which is a relatively low bar for literacy.

Measuring literacy

In 2019, UNESCO Institute for Statistics estimated the global literacy rate at 86.5 percent. It is important to understand how literacy rates have been measured in the past, as well as how they are currently being measured. From 1975 until 1988, all countries that reported literacy rates did so through self-reports from heads of households.

This meant the head of a household answered a simple simple yes/no question asking whether household members could read and write. From 1988 to 2007, all countries that reported literacy data did so through self-reports from either heads of household or the individual themselves. Self-reported data is subjective and has several limitations. First, a simple yes/no question does not capture the continuum of literacy. Second, self-reports are dependent on what each individual interprets

"reading" and "writing" to mean. In some cultures, drawing a picture may be understood as "writing" one's name. Lastly, many of the surveys asked one individual to report literacy on behalf of others, "introducing further noise, in particular when it comes to estimating literacy among women and children, since these groups are less often considered heads of household".

In 2007, several countries began introducing literacy tests to determine a more accurate measurement of literacy rates, including Liberia, South Korea, Guyana, Kenya, and Bangladesh. However, in 2016, the majority of counties still reported literacy through either self-reported measures or other indirect estimates.

These indirect measurements are potentially problematic, as many countries measure literacy based on years of schooling. In Greece, an individual is considered literate if they have finished six years of primary education, while in Paraguay individuals are considered literate if they have completed just two years of primary school.

However, emerging research reveals that educational attainment, or years of schooling, does not correlate with literacy. Literacy tests show that in many low-income countries, a large proportion of students who have attended two years of primary school cannot read a single word of a short text.

These rates are as high as 90% of second-grade students in Malawi, 85.4% in India, 83% in Ghana, and 64% in Uganda. In India, over 50% of Grade 5 students have not mastered Grade 2 literacy. In Nigeria, only about 1 in 10 women who completed

Grade 6 can read a single sentence in their native language. This data reveals that literacy rates measured by years of schooling as a proxy are potentially unreliable and do not reflect the true literacy rates of populations.

Literacy as a human right

Unlike medieval times, when reading and writing skills were restricted to a few elites and the clergy, these literacy skills are now expected from every member of a society. Literacy is therefore considered human right essential for lifelong learning and social change. As supported by the 1996 Report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century, and the 1997 Hamburg Declaration: 'Literacy, broadly conceived as the basic knowledge and skills needed by all in a rapidly changing world, is a fundamental human right. (...) There are millions, the majority of whom are women, who lack opportunities to learn or who have insufficient skills to be able to assert this right. The challenge is to enable them to do so. This will often imply the creation of preconditions for learning through awareness raising and empowerment. Literacy is also a catalyst for participation in social, cultural, political and economic activities, and for learning throughout life'.

In 2016, the European Literacy Policy Network (ELINET) (an association of European literacy professionals) published a document entitled *European Declaration of the right to literacy*. It states that "Everyone in Europe has the right to acquire literacy. EU Member States should ensure that people of all ages, regardless of social class, religion, ethnicity, origin and gender, are provided with the necessary resources and opportunities to develop sufficient and sustainable literacy

skills in order to effectively understand and use written communication be in handwritten, in print or digital form."

Teaching literacy

Critiques of autonomous models of literacy notwithstanding, the belief that reading development is key to literacy remains dominant, at least in the United States, where it is understood as progression of skills that begins with the ability to understand spoken words and decode written words, and that culminates in the deep understanding of text. Reading development involves a range of complex language-underpinnings including awareness of speech sounds (phonology), spelling patterns (orthography), word meaning (semantics), grammar, (syntax) and patterns of word formation (morphology), all of which provide a necessary platform for reading fluency and comprehension. Once these skills are acquired, it is maintained, a reader can attain full language literacy, which includes the abilities to apply to printed material critical analysis, inference and synthesis; to write with accuracy and coherence; and to use information and insights from text as the basis for informed decisions and creative thought.

For this reason, teaching English literacy in the United States is dominated by a focus on a set of discrete decoding skills. From this perspective, literacy—or, rather, reading—comprises a number of subskills that can be taught to students. These skill sets include phonological awareness, phonics (decoding), fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. Mastering each of these subskills is necessary for students to become proficient readers.

From this same perspective, readers of alphabetic languages must understand the alphabetic principle to master basic reading skills. For this purpose a writing system is "alphabetic" if it uses symbols to represent individual language sounds, though the degree of correspondence between letters and sounds varies between alphabetic languages. Syllabic writing systems (such as Japanese kana) use a symbol to represent a single syllable, and logographic writing systems (such as Chinese) use a symbol to represent a morpheme.

There are any number of approaches to teaching literacy; each is shaped by its informing assumptions about what literacy is and how it is best learned by students. Phonics instruction, for example, focuses on reading at the level of letters or symbols and their sounds (i.e. sublexical),. It teaches readers to decode the letters or groups of letters that make up words. A common method of teaching phonics is synthetic phonics, in which a novice reader pronounces each individual sound and "blends" them to pronounce the whole word. Another approach is embedded phonics instruction, used more often in whole language reading instruction, in which novice readers learn about the individual letters in words on a just-in-time, just-in-place basis that is tailored to meet each student's reading and writing learning needs. That is, teachers provide phonics instruction opportunistically, within the context of stories or student writing that feature many instances of a particular letter or group of letters. Embedded instruction combines letter-sound knowledge with the use of meaningful context to read new and difficult words. Techniques such as directed listening and thinking activities can be used to aid children in learning how to read and reading comprehension.

Out of all the approaches to literacy instruction, the two that are the most commonly used in schools are structured literacy instruction and balanced literacy instruction. The structured literacy approach explicitly and systematically focuses on phonological awareness, word recognition, phonics and decoding, spelling, and syntax at both the sentence and paragraph levels. The balanced literacy approach, on the other hand, does not put much emphasis on phonics and decoding, and instead focuses on shared, guided, and independent reading as well as Grapheme representations along with context and imagery.

Both approaches have their critics - those who oppose structured literacy claim that by restricting students to phonemes, their fluency development is limited. Critics of balanced literacy claim that if phonics and decoding instruction is neglected, students will have to rely on compensatory strategies when confronted with unfamiliar text. These strategies include memorizing words, using context to guess words, and even skipping ones they do not know. These strategies are taught to students as part of the balanced literacy approach based on a theory about reading development called the three cueing system. The three-cueing system is used to determine the meaning of words by using grapho-phonetic cues (letter-sound relationships), syntactic cues (grammatical structure), and semantic cues (a word making sense in context). However, cognitive neuroscientists Mark Seidenberg and professor Timothy Shanahan do not support the theory. They say the three-cueing system's value in reading instruction "is a magnificent work of the imagination", and it developed not because teachers lack integrity, commitment, motivation, sincerity, or intelligence, but because they "were

poorly trained and advised" about the science of reading. In England, the simple view of reading and synthetic phonics are intended to replace "the searchlights multi-cueing model".

In a 2012 hypothesis, it has been proposed that reading might be acquired naturally if print is constantly available at an early age in the same manner as spoken language. If an appropriate form of written text is made available before formal schooling begins, reading should be learned inductively, emerge naturally, and with no significant negative consequences.

This proposal challenges the commonly held belief that written language requires formal instruction and schooling. Its success would change current views of literacy and schooling. Using developments in behavioral science and technology, an interactive system (Technology Assisted Reading Acquisition, TARA) would enable young pre-literate children to accurately perceive and learn properties of written language by simple exposure to the written form.

On the other hand, in his 2009 book, *Reading in the brain*, cognitive neuroscientist, StanislasDehaene, said "cognitive psychology directly refutes any notion of teaching via a 'global' or 'whole language' method." He goes on to talk about "the myth of whole-word reading", saying it has been refuted by recent experiments. "We do not recognize a printed word through a holistic grasping of its contours, because our brain breaks it down into letters and graphemes."

In Australia a number of State governments have introduced Reading Challenges to improve literacy. The Premier's Reading Challenge in South Australia, launched by Premier Mike Rann

has one of the highest participation rates in the world for reading challenges. It has been embraced by more than 95% of public, private and religious schools.

Post-conflict settings

Programs have been implemented in regions that have an ongoing conflict or in a post-conflict stage. The Norwegian Refugee Council Pack program has been used in 13 post-conflict countries since 2003. The program organizers believe that daily routines and other wise predictable activities help the transition from war to peace. Learners can select one area in vocational training for a year-long period. They complete required courses in agriculture, life skills, literacy and numeracy. Results have shown that active participation and management of the members of the program are important to the success of the program. These programs share the use of integrated basic education, e.g. literacy, numeracy, scientific knowledge, local history and culture, native and mainstream language skills, and apprenticeships.

Teaching non-native users

- Although there is considerable awareness that language deficiencies (lacking proficiency) are disadvantageous to immigrants settling in a new country, there appears to be a lack of pedagogical approaches that address the instruction of literacy to migrant English language learners (ELLs). Harvard scholar Catherine Snow (2001) called for a gap to be addresses: "The TESOL field needs a concerted research effort to inform literacy instruction for such

children ... to determine when to start literacy instruction and how to adapt it to the LS reader's needs". The scenario becomes more complex when there is no choice in such decisions as in the case of the current migration trends with citizens from the Middle East and Africa being relocated to English majority nations due to various political or social reasons. Recent developments to address the gap in teaching literacy to second or foreign language learners has been ongoing and promising results have been shown by Pearson and Pellerine (2010) which integrates Teaching for Understanding, a curricular framework from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. A series of pilot projects had been carried out in the Middle East and Africa (see Patil, 2016). In this work significant interest from the learners perspective have been noticed through the integration of visual arts as springboards for literacy oriented instruction. In one case migrant women had been provided with cameras and a walking tour of their local village was provided to the instructor as the women photographed their tour focusing on places and activities that would later be used for writings about their daily life. In essence a narrative of life. Other primers for writing activities include: painting, sketching, and other craft projects (e.g. gluing activities). A series of pilot studies were carried out to investigate alternatives to instructing literacy to migrant ELLs, starting from simple trials aiming to test the teaching of photography to participants with no prior photography background, to isolating painting and sketching activities that

> could later be integrated into a larger pedagogical initiative. In efforts to develop alternative approaches for literacy instruction utilising visual arts, work was carried out with Afghan labourers, Bangladeshi tailors, Emirati media students, internal Ethiopian migrants (both labourers and university students), and a street child.

It should be pointed out that in such challenging contexts sometimes the teaching of literacy may have unforeseen barriers.

The *EL Gazette* reported that in the trials carried out in Ethiopia, for example, it was found that all ten of the participants had problems with vision. In order to overcome this, or to avoid such challenges, preliminary health checks can help inform pre-teaching in order to better assist in the teaching/learning of literacy.

In a visual arts approach to literacy instruction a benefit can be the inclusion of both a traditional literacy approach (reading and writing) while at the same time addressing 21st Century digital literacy instruction through the inclusion of digital cameras and posting images onto the web. Many scholars feel that the inclusion of digital literacy is necessary to include under the traditional umbrella of literacy instruction specifically when engaging second language learners. (Also see: Digital literacy.)

Other ways in which visual arts have been integrated into literacy instruction for migrant populations include integrating aspects of visual art with the blending of core curricular goals.

Teaching migrant/immigrant language users

A more pressing challenge in education is the instruction of literacy to Migrant English Language Learners (MELLs), a term coined by Pellerine. It is not just limited to English. "Due to the growing share of immigrants in many Western societies, there has been increasing concern for the degree to which immigrants acquire language that is spoken in the destination country". Remembering that teaching literacy to a native in their L1 can be challenging, and the challenge becomes more cognitively demanding when in a second language (L2), the task can become considerably more difficult when confronted with a migrant who has made a sudden change (migrated) and requires the second language upon arrival in the country of destination. In many instances a migrant will not have the opportunity, for many obvious reasons, to start school again at grade one and acquire the language naturally. In these situations alternative interventions need to take place.

In working with illiterate people (and individuals with low-proficiency in an L2) following the composition of some artifact like in taking a photo, sketching an event, or painting an image, a stage of orality has been seen as an effective way to understand the intention of the learner.

In the accompanying image from left to right a) an image taken during a phototour of the participant's village. This image is of the individual at her shop, and this is one of her products that she sells, dung for cooking fuel. The image helps the interlocutor understand the realities of the participants daily life and most importantly it allows the participant the opportunity to select what they feel is important to them. b)

This is an image of a student explaining and elaborating the series of milestones in her life to a group. In this image the student had a very basic ability and with some help was able to write brief captions under the images. While she speaks a recording of her story takes place to understand her story and to help develop it in the L2. The third image is of a painting that had been used with a composite in Photoshop. With further training participants can learn how to blend images they would like to therefore introducing elements of digital literacies, beneficial in many spheres of life in the 21st century.

In the following image (see right) you can see two samples 1) One in Ethiopia from stencil to more developed composition based on a village tour, photography, and paintings. 2) In the Middle East at a tailor's shop focusing English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and in this example the writing has evolved from photography, sketching, and in situ exposure for the instructor (much like the village tour in sample one).

From the work based in Ethiopia, participants were asked to rate preference of activity, on a scale of 1-10. The survey prompt was: On a scale of 1 - 10 how would you rate photography as an activity that helped you get inspiration for your writing activities (think of enjoyment and usefulness). The following activities were rated, in order of preference - activities used as primers for writing:

- Photography 97%
- Oral presentations sharing your art 92%
- Process painting 84%
- Painting 82%

- Sketching 78%
- Gluing activities 72%
- Stencil/tracing activities 60%

More research would need to be conducted to confirm such trends. In bringing work together from students in culminating projects, authorship programs have been successful in bringing student work together in book format. Such artifacts can be used to both document learning, but more importantly reinforce language and content goals.

The culmination of such writings, into books can evoke both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Form feedback by students involved in such initiatives the responses have indicated that the healthy pressures of collective and collaborative work was beneficial.

Importance

Teaching people to read and write, the traditional meaning of literacy, is a very complex task in a native language. To do this in a second language becomes increasingly more complex, and in the case of migrants relocating to another country there can be legal and policy driven boundaries that prohibit the naturalization and acquisition of citizenship based on language proficiency. In Canada for example despite a debate, language tests are required years after settling into Canada. Similar exists globally, see:, and for example.

The *EL Gazette* reviewed Pellerine's work with migrant English language learners and commented: "Handing English language learners a sponge and some paint and asking them to 'paint what comes' might not appear like a promising teaching

method for a foreign language. But Canadian EL instructor and photographer Steve Pellerine has found that the technique, along with others based around the visual arts, has helped some of his most challenging groups to learn". Visual arts have been viewed as an effective way to approach literacy instruction - the art being primers for subsequent literacy tasks within a scaffolded curricular design, such at Teaching for Understanding (TfU) or Understanding by Design (UbD).

By continent

Europe

United Kingdom

Nearly one in ten young adult women have poor reading and writing skills in the UK in the 21st century. This seriously damages their employment prospects and many are trapped in poverty. Lack of reading skill is a social stigma and women tend to hide their difficulty rather than seeking help. Girls on average do better than boys at English in school.

England

Literacy is first documented in the area of modern England on 24 September 54 BCE, on which day Julius Caesar and Quintus Cicero wrote to Cicero "from the nearest shores of Britain". Literacy was widespread under Roman rule, but became very rare, limited almost entirely to churchmen, after the fall of the Western Roman Empire. In 12th and 13th century England, the ability to recite a particular passage from the Bible in Latin entitled a common law defendant to the so-

called benefit of clergy: i.e. trial before an ecclesiastical court, where sentences were more lenient, instead of a secular one, where hanging was a likely sentence. Thus literate lay defendants often claimed benefit of clergy, while an illiterate person who had memorized the psalm used as the literacy test, Psalm 51 ("O God, have mercy upon me..."), could also claim benefit of clergy. Despite lacking a system of free and compulsory primary schooling, England reached near universal literacy in the 19th century as a result of shared, informal learning provided by family members, fellow workers, and/or benevolent employers. Even with near universal literacy rates, the gap between male and female literacy rates persisted until the early 20th century. Many women in the West during the 19th century were able to read, but unable to write.

Wales

- Formal higher education in the arts and sciences in Wales, from the Middle Ages to the 18th century, was the preserve of the wealthy and the clergy. As in England, Welsh history and archaeological finds dating back to the Bronze Age reveal not only reading and writing, but also alchemy, botany, advanced maths and science. Following the Roman occupation and the conquest by the English, education in Wales was at a very low ebb in the early modern period; in particular, formal education was only available in English while the majority of the population spoke only Welsh. The first modern grammar schools were established in Welsh towns such as Ruthin, Brecon, and Cowbridge. One of the first modern national education methods to use the

native Welsh language was started by Griffith Jones in 1731. Jones was the rector of Llanddowror from 1716 and remained there for the rest of his life. He organized and introduced a Welsh medium circulating school system, which was attractive and effective for Welsh speakers, while also teaching them English, which gave them access to broader educational sources. The circulating schools may have taught half the country's population to read. Literacy rates in Wales by the mid-18th century were one of the highest.

Continental Europe

The ability to read did not necessarily imply the ability to write. The 1686 church law (*kyrkolagen*) of the Kingdom of Sweden (which at the time included all of modern Sweden, Finland, Latvia and Estonia) enforced literacy on the people, and by 1800 the ability to read was close to 100%. This was directly dependent on the need to read religious texts in the Lutheran faith in Sweden and Finland. As a result, literacy in these countries was inclined towards reading, specifically. But as late as the 19th century, many Swedes, especially women, could not write. The exception to this rule were the men and women of Iceland who achieved widespread literacy without formal schooling, libraries, or printed books via informal tuition by religious leaders and peasant teachers. Historian Ernest Gellner argues that Continental European countries were far more successful in implementing educational reform precisely because their governments were more willing to invest in the population as a whole. Government oversight allowed countries to standardize curriculum and secure

funding through legislation thus enabling educational programs to have a broader reach. Although the present-day concepts of literacy have much to do with the 15th-century invention of the movable type printing press, it was not until the Industrial Revolution of the mid-19th century that paper and books became affordable to all classes of industrialized society. Until then, only a small percentage of the population were literate as only wealthy individuals and institutions could afford the materials. Even today, the cost of paper and books is a barrier to universal literacy in some less-industrialized nations.

On the other hand, historian Harvey Graff argues that the introduction of mass schooling was in part an effort to control the type of literacy that the working class had access to. According to Graff, literacy learning was increasing outside of formal settings (such as schools) and this uncontrolled, potentially critical reading could lead to increased radicalization of the populace. In his view, mass schooling was meant to temper and control literacy, not spread it. Graff also points out, using the example of Sweden, that mass literacy can be achieved without formal schooling or instruction in writing.

North America

Canada

Colonialism (1600s–1762)

Research on the literacy rates of Canadians in the colonial days rested largely on examinations of the proportion of

signatures to marks on parish acts (birth, baptismal, and marriage registrations). Although some researchers have concluded that signature counts drawn from marriage registers in nineteenth century France corresponded closely with literacy tests given to military conscripts, others regard this methodology as a "relatively unimaginative treatment of the complex practices and events that might be described as literacy" (Curtis, 2007, p. 1-2).

But censuses (dating back to 1666) and official records of New France offer few clues of their own on the population's levels of literacy, therefore leaving few options in terms of materials from which to draw literary rate estimates.

In his research of literacy rates of males and females in New France, Trudel found that in 1663, of 1,224 persons in New France who were of marriageable age, 59% of grooms and 46% of brides wrote their name; however, of the 3,000-plus colony inhabitants, less than 40% were native born. Signature rates were therefore likely more reflective of rates of literacy among French immigrants.

Magnuson's (1985) research revealed a trend: signature rates for the period of 1680–1699 were 42% for males, 30% for females; in 1657–1715, they were 45% for males and 43% for females; in 1745–1754, they were higher for females than for males.

He believed that this upward trend in rates of females' ability to sign documents was largely attributed to the larger number of female religious orders, and to the proportionately more active role of women in health and education, while the roles of male religious orders were largely to serve as parish priests,

missionaries, military chaplains and explorers. 1752 marked the date that Canada's first newspaper—the *Halifax Gazette*—began publication.

From the British Conquest (1763) to Confederation (1867)

The end of the Seven Years' War in 1763 allowed two Philadelphia printers to come to Québec City and to begin printing a bilingual *Quebec Gazette* in 1764, while in 1785 Fleury Mesplet started publication of the *Montreal Gazette*, which is now the oldest continuing newspaper in the country.

In the 19th century, everything about print changed, and literature in its many forms became much more available. But educating the Canadian population in reading and writing was nevertheless a huge challenge. Concerned about the strong French Canadian presence in the colony, the British authorities repeatedly tried to help establish schools that were outside the control of religious authorities, but these efforts were largely undermined by the Catholic Church and later the Anglican clergy.

From the early 1820s in Lower Canada, classical college curriculum, which was monopolized by the Church, was also subject to growing liberal and lay criticism, arguing it was fit first and foremost to produce priests, when Lower Canadians needed to be able to compete effectively with foreign industry and commerce and with the immigrants who were monopolizing trade (Curtis, 1985). Liberal and lay attempts to promote parish schools generated a reaction from the Catholic and later the Anglican clergy in which the dangers of popular literacy

figured centrally. Both churches shared an opposition to any educational plan that encouraged lay reading of the Bible, and spokesmen for both warned of the evil and demoralizing tendencies of unregulated reading in general. Granted the power to organize parish schooling through the Vestry School Act of 1824, the Catholic clergy did nothing effective.

Despite this, the invention of the printing press had laid the foundation for the modern era and universal social literacy, and so it is that with time, "technologically, literacy had passed from the hands of an elite to the populace at large. Historical factors and sociopolitical conditions, however, have determined the extent to which universal social literacy has come to pass".

1868–1986

In 1871 only about half of French Canadian men in Canada self-reported that they were literate, whereas 90 percent of other Canadian men said they could read and write, but information from the Canadian Families Project sample of the 1901 Census of Canada indicated that literacy rates for French Canadians and other Canadians increased, as measured by the ability of men between the ages of 16 and 65 to answer literacy questions. Compulsory attendance in schools was legislated in the late 19th century in all provinces but Quebec, but by then, a change in parental attitudes towards educating the new generation meant that many children were already attending regularly. Unlike the emphasis of school promoters on character formation, the shaping of values, the inculcation of political and social attitudes, and proper behaviour, many parents supported schooling because they wanted their

children to learn to read, write, and do arithmetic. Efforts were made to exert power and religious, moral, economic/professional, and social/cultural influence over children who were learning to read by dictating the contents of their school readers accordingly. But educators broke from these spheres of influence and also taught literature from a more child-centred perspective: for the pleasure of it.

Educational change in Québec began as a result of a major commission of inquiry at the start of what came to be called the "Quiet Revolution" in the early 1960s. In response to the resulting recommendations, the Québec government revamped the school system in an attempt to enhance the francophone population's general educational level and to produce a better-qualified labour force. Catholic Church leadership was rejected in favour of government administration and vastly increased budgets were given to school boards across the province.

With time, and with continuing inquiry into the literacy achievement levels of Canadians, the definition of literacy moved from a dichotomous one (either a person could, or could not write his or her name, or was literate or illiterate), to ones that considered its multidimensionality, along with the qualitative and quantitative aspects of literacy. In the 1970s, organizations like the Canadian Association for Adult Education (CAAE) believed that one had to complete the 8th grade to achieve functional literacy. Examination of 1976 census data, for example, found that 4,376,655, or 28.4% of Canadians 15 years of age and over reported a level of schooling of less than grade 9 and were thus deemed not functionally literate. But in 1991, UNESCO formally acknowledged Canada's findings that assessment of

educational attainment as proxy measure of literacy was not as reliable as was direct assessment. This dissatisfaction manifested itself in the development of actual proficiency tests that measure reading literacy more directly.

Direct systematic measures of literacy in Canada, 1987 to present

Canada conducted its first literacy survey in 1987 which discovered that there were more than five million functionally illiterate adults in Canada, or 24 per cent of the adult population. Statistics Canada then conducted three national and international literacy surveys of the adult population — the first one in 1989 commissioned by the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) department.

This first survey was called the "Literacy Skills Used in Daily Activities" (LSUDA) survey, and was modeled on the 1985 U.S. survey of young adults (YALS). It represented a first attempt in Canada to produce skill measures deemed comparable across languages. Literacy, for the first time, was measured on a continuum of skills. The survey found that 16% of Canadians had literacy skills too limited to deal with most of the printed material encountered in daily life whereas 22% were considered "narrow" readers.

In 1994–95, Canada participated in the first multi-country, multi-language assessment of adult literacy, the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS). A stratified multi-stage probability sample design was used to select the sample from the Census Frame. The sample was designed to yield separate samples for the two Canadian official languages, English and

French, and participants were measured on the dimensions of prose literacy, document literacy and quantitative literacy. The survey found that 42.2%, 43% and 42.2% of Canadians between the ages of 16 and 65 scored at the lowest two levels of Prose Literacy, Document Literacy and Quantitative Literacy, respectively. The survey presented many important correlations, among which was a strong plausible link between literacy and a country's economic potential.

In 2003, Canada participated in the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (ALL). This survey contained identical measures for assessing the prose and document literacy proficiencies, allowing for comparisons between survey results on these two measures and found that 41.9% and 42.6% of Canadians between the ages of 16 and 65 scored at the lowest two levels of Prose Literacy and document literacy respectively. Further, Canadians' mean scores also improved on both the prose and the document literacy scales. Energy production:36%, transportation: 24%, homes and businesses: 12%, industry: 11%, agriculture: 10%, and waste: 7%.

The OECD's Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) is expected to produce new comparative skill profiles in late 2013.

Mexico

In the last 40 years, the rate of illiteracy in Mexico has been steadily decreasing. In the 1960s, because the majority of the residents of the federal capital were illiterate, the planners of the Mexico City Metro designed a system of unique icons to identify each station in the system in addition to its formal

name. However, the INEGI's census data of 1970 showed a national average illiteracy rate of 25.8%; the last census data puts the national average at 6.9%. Mexico still has a gender educational bias. The illiteracy rate for women in the last census was 8.1% compared with 5.6% for men. Rates differ across regions and states. Chiapas, Guerrero and Oaxaca, the states with the highest poverty rate, had greater than 15% illiteracy in 2010 (17.8%, 16.7% and 16.3 respectively). In contrast, the illiteracy rates in the Federal District (D.F. / Mexico City) and in some northern states like Nuevo León, Baja California, and Coahuila were below 3% in the 2010 census (2.1%, 2.2%, 2.6% and 2.6% respectively).

United States

Before the 20th century white illiteracy was not uncommon and many of the slave states made it illegal to teach slaves to read. By 1900 the situation had improved somewhat, but 44% of black people remained illiterate. There were significant improvements for African American and other races in the early 20th century as the descendants of former slaves, who had had no educational opportunities, grew up in the post Civil War period and often had some chance to obtain a basic education. The gap in illiteracy between white and black adults continued to narrow through the 20th century, and in 1979 the rates were about the same.

Full prose proficiency, as measured by the ability to process complex and challenging material such as would be encountered in everyday life, is achieved by about 13% of the general, 17% of the white, and 2% of the African American population. However 86% of the general population had basic

or higher prose proficiency as of 2003, with a decrease distributed across all groups in the full proficiency group vs. 1992 of more than 10% consistent with trends, observed results in the SAT reading score to the present (2015). According to the website of the museum Planet Word in Washington, DC, some 32 million adults in the U.S cannot read.

Cultural and westernized literacy for Native Americans in the United States

Before colonization, oral storytelling and communication composed most if not all Native American literacy. Native people communicated and retained their histories verbally—it was not until the beginning of American Indian boarding schools that reading and writing forms of literacy were forced onto Native Americans.

Many students ran away in an attempt to hold on to their cultural identity and literary traditions that were relevant to their community. While these formalized forms of literacy prepared Native youth to exist in the changing society, they destroyed all traces of their cultural literacy.

Native children would return to their families unable to communicate with them due to the loss of their indigenous language. In the 20th and 21st century, there is still a struggle to learn and maintain cultural language. But education initiatives and programs have increased overall—according to the 2010 census, 86 percent of the overall population of Native Americans and Alaska Natives have high school diplomas, and 28 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher.

U.S. public library efforts

The public library has long been a force promoting literacy in many countries. In the U.S. context, the American Library Association promotes literacy through the work of the Office for Literacy and Outreach Services. This committee's charge includes ensuring equitable access to information and advocating for adult new and non-readers. The Public Library Association recognizes the importance of early childhood in the role of literacy development and created, in collaboration with the Association for Library Service to Children, Every Child Ready to Read @your library in order to inform and support parents and caregivers in their efforts to raise children who become literate adults. The release of the National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) report in 2005 revealed that approximately 14% of U.S. adults function at the lowest level of literacy; 29% of adults function at the basic functional literacy level and cannot help their children with homework beyond the first few grades. The lack of reading skills hinders adults from reaching their full potential. They might have difficulty getting and maintaining a job, providing for their families, or even reading a story to their children. For adults, the library might be the only source of a literacy program.

30 April: Dia! Diversity in Action

Dia!, which stands for Diversity in Action and is also known as "El Día de losNiños/El día de loslibros (Children's Day/Book Day)", is a program which celebrates the importance of reading to children from all cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Dia! is celebrated every year on 30 April in schools, libraries, and homes, and this website provides tools and programs to

encourage reading in children. Parents, caregivers, and educators can even start a book club.

READ/Orange County

This community literacy program was initiated in 1992 by the Orange County Public Library in California. The mission of READ/Orange County is to "create a more literate community by providing diversified services of the highest quality to all who seek them." Potential tutors train during an extensive 23-hour tutor training workshop in which they learn the philosophy, techniques and tools they will need to work with adult learns. After the training, the tutors invest at least 50 hours a year to tutoring their student.The organization builds on people's experience as well as education rather than trying to make up for what has not been learned. The program seeks to equip students with skills to continue learning in the future. The guiding philosophy is that an adult who learns to read creates a ripple effect in the community. The person becomes an example to children and grandchildren and can better serve the community.

BoulderReads!

Located in Boulder, Colorado, the program recognized the difficulty that students had in obtaining child care while attending tutoring sessions, and joined with the University of Colorado to provide reading buddies to the children of students. Reading Buddies matches children of adult literacy students with college students who meet with them once a week throughout the semester for an hour and a half. The college students receive course credit to try to enhance the

quality and reliability of their time. Each Reading Buddies session focuses primarily on the college student reading aloud with the child. The goal is to help the child gain interest in books and feel comfortable reading aloud. Time is also spent on word games, writing letters, or searching for books in the library.

Throughout the semester the pair work on writing and illustrating a book together. The college student's grade is partly dependent on the completion of the book. Although Reading Buddies began primarily as an answer to the lack of child care for literacy students, it has evolved into another aspect of the program. Participating children show marked improvement in their reading and writing skills throughout the semester.

Hillsborough Literacy Council (HLC)

Approximately 120,000 adults in Hillsborough County are illiterate or read below the fourth-grade level; According to 2003 Census statistics, 15 percent of Hillsborough County residents age 16 and older lacked basic prose literacy skills. Since 1986, the Hillsborough Literacy Council is "committed to improving literacy by empowering adults through education". Sponsored by the statewide Florida Literacy Coalition and affiliated with Tampa-Hillsborough Public Library System, HLC strives to improve the literacy ability of adults in Hillsborough County, Florida. Using library space, the HLC provides tutoring for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) in small groups or one-on-one tutoring. Through one-on-one tutoring, the organization works to help adult students reach at least

the fifth-grade level in reading. The organization also provides volunteer-run conversation groups for English practice.

South America

In 1964 in Brazil, Paulo Freire was arrested and exiled for teaching peasants to read. Since democracy returned to Brazil, however, there has been a steady increase in the percentage of literate people. Educators with the Axé project within the city of Salvador, Bahía attempt to improve literacy rates among urban youth, especially youth living on the streets, through the use of music and dances of the local culture. They are encouraged to continue their education and become professionals.

Africa

The literacy rates in Africa vary significantly between countries. The registered literacy rate in Libya was 86.1% in 2004 and UNESCO says that literacy rate in the region of Equatorial Guinea is approximately 95%, while the literacy rate is in South Sudan is approximately (27%). Poorer youth in sub-Saharan Africa have fewer educational opportunities to become literate compared with wealthier families. They often must leave school because of being needed at home to farm or care for siblings.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the rate of literacy has not improved enough to compensate for the effects of demographic growth. As a result, the number of illiterate adults has risen by 27% over the last 20 years, reaching 169 million in 2010. Thus, out of the 775 million illiterate adults in the world in 2010, more

than one fifth were in sub- Saharan Africa – in other words, 20% of the adult population. The countries with the lowest levels of literacy in the world are also concentrated in this region. These include Niger (28.7%), Burkina Faso (28.7%), Mali (33.4%), Chad (35.4%) and Ethiopia (39%), where adult literacy rates are well below 50%. There are, however, certain exceptions, like Equatorial Guinea, with a literacy rate of 94%.

Algeria

The literacy rate of Algeria is around 92%: education is compulsory and free in Algeria up to age of 17.

Botswana

Botswana has among the highest literacy rates in the developing world with around 85% of its population being literate.

Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso has a very low literacy rate of 28.7%. The government defines literacy as anyone at least 15 years of age and up who can read and write. To improve the literacy rate, the government has received at least 80 volunteer teachers. A severe lack of primary school teachers causes problems for any attempt to improve the literacy rate and school enrollment.

Djibouti

Djibouti has an estimated literacy rate of 70%.

Egypt

Egypt has a relatively high literacy rate. The adult literacy rate in 2010 was estimated at 72%. Education is compulsory from ages 6 to 15 and free for all children to attend. 93% of children enter primary school today, compared with 87% in 1994.

Eritrea

According to the Ministry of Information of Eritrea, the nation has an estimated literacy rate of 80%.

Ethiopia

The Ethiopians are among the first literate people in the world, having written, read, and created manuscripts in their ancient language of Ge'ez (Amharic) since the second century CE. All boys learned to read the Psalms around the age of 7. National literacy campaign introduced in 1978 increased literacy rates to between 37% (unofficial) and 63% (official) by 1984.

Guinea

Guinea has a literacy rate of 41%. The Guinea government defines literacy as anyone who can read or write who is at least 15 years old. Guinea was the first to use the Literacy, Conflict Resolution, and Peacebuilding project. This project was developed to increase agriculture production, develop key skills, resolve conflict, improve literacy, and numeracy skills. The LCRP worked within refugee camps near the border of Sierra Leone, however this project only lasted from 1999 to

2001. There are several other international projects working within the country that have similar goals.

Kenya

The literacy rate in Kenya among people below 20 years of age is over 70%, as the first 8 years of primary school are provided tuition-free by the government. In January 2008, the government began offering a restricted program of free secondary education. Literacy is much higher among the young than the old population, with the total being about 81.54% for the country. Most of this literacy, however, is elementary—not secondary or advanced.

Mali

Mali has one of the lowest literacy rates in the world, at 33.4%, with males having a 43.1% literacy rate and females having a 24.6% literacy rate. In 2015, the adult literacy rate was 33%. The government defines literacy as anyone who is at least 15 and over who can read or write. The government of Mali and international organizations in recent years has taken steps to improve the literacy rate. The government recognized the slow progress in literacy rates and began created ministries for basic education and literacy for their national languages in 2007. To also improve literacy the government planned to increase its education budget by 3%, when this was purposed it was at 35% in 2007. The lack of literate adults causes the programs to be slowed. The programs need qualified female trainers, which is a major problem because most men refuse to send female family members to be trained under male teachers.

Mauritius

Free education in Mauritius did not proceed beyond the primary level until 1976, so many women now in their 50s or older left school at age 12. The younger generation (below 50) are however extremely well educated with very high educational expectations placed upon pupils. Education is today free from pre-primary to tertiary (only admission fees remain at University level). Most professional people have at least a bachelor's degree. Mauritian students consistently rank top in the world each year for the Cambridge International O Level, International A and AS level examinations. Most Mauritian children, even at primary level, attend tuition after school and at weekends to cope with the highly competitive public school system where admission to prestigious public colleges (secondary) and most sought after university courses depend on merit based academic performance.

The adult literacy rate was estimated at 89.8% in 2011. Male literacy was 92.3% and Female literacy 87.3%.

Niger

Niger has an extremely low literacy rate at 28.7%. However, the gender gap between males and females is a major problem for the country, men have a literacy rate of 42.9% and women a literacy rate of 15.1%. The Nigerien government defines literacy as anyone who can read or write over the age of 15. The NiassTijaniyya, a predominant group of the Sufi brotherhoods, has started anti-poverty, empowerment, and literacy campaigns. The women in Kiota had not attempted to improve their education, or economic standing.

SaidaOumulKhadiriNiass, known as Maman, through talking to men and women throughout the community changed the community's beliefs on appropriate behavior for women because the community recognized she was married to a leader of the NiassTijaniyya. Maman's efforts has allowed women in Kiota to own small businesses, sell in the market place, attend literacy classes, and organize small associations that can give micro loans.

Maman personally teaches children in and around Kiota, with special attention to girls. Maman has her students require instructor permission to allow the girls' parents to marry their daughters early. This increases the amount of education these girls receive, as well as delaying marriage, pregnancy, and having children.

Senegal

Senegal has a literacy rate of 49.7%; the government defines literacy as anyone who is at least 15 years of age and over who can read and write. However, many students do not attend school long enough to be considered literate.

The government did not begin actively attempting to improve the literacy rate until 1971 when it gave the responsibility to Department for Vocational Training at the Secretariat for Youth and Sports.

This department and subsequent following departments had no clear policy on literacy until the Department of Literacy and Basic Education was formed in 1986. The government of Senegal relies heavily on funding from the World Bank to fund its school system.

Somalia

There is no reliable data on the nationwide literacy rate in Somalia. A 2013 FSNAU survey indicates considerable differences per region, with the autonomous northeastern Puntland region having the highest registered literacy rate at 72%.

Sierra Leone

The Sierra Leone government defines literacy as anyone over the age of 15 who can read and write in English, Mende, Temne, or Arabic. Official statistics put the literacy rate at 43.3%. Sierra Leone was the second country to use the Literacy, Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding project. However, due to fighting near the city where the project was centered causing the project to be delayed until an arms amnesty was in place.

Uganda

Uganda has a literacy rate of 72.2%.

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe has a high literacy rate of 86.5% (2016 est.).

Afghanistan

According to UNESCO, Afghanistan has one of the lowest literacy rates in the world. As of 2020, over 10 million youth and adults in Afghanistan are illiterate. However, since 2016,

the country has made significant progress. While in 2016/17 the literacy rate was at 34.8%, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics recently confirmed that it has increased to 43%. "That is a remarkable 8 per cent increase." In addition, the literacy rate for youths aged 15–24 has substantially increased and now stands at 65%.

However, there are a great number of people who lack literacy and opportunities for continuing education. There is also a substantial gender gap. The literacy rate for men stands at 55%, and for women it's only 29.8%. The UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning has provided technical support to the Government of Afghanistan since 2012 with the aim of improving the literacy skills of an estimated 1.2 million people.

To improve the literacy rate, U.S. military trainers have been teaching Afghan Army recruits how to read before teaching to fire a weapon. U.S. commanders in the region estimate that as many as 65% of recruits may be illiterate.

China

The PRC conducts standardized testing to assess proficiency in Standard Chinese, known as "putonghua," but it is primarily for foreigners or those needing to demonstrate professional proficiency in the Beijing dialect. Literacy in languages like Chinese can be assessed by reading comprehension tests, just as in other languages, but historically has often been graded on the number of Chinese characters introduced during the speaker's schooling, with a few thousand considered the minimum for practical literacy. Social science surveys in China have repeatedly found that just more than half the population

of China is conversant in spoken putonghua. In classical Chinese civilization the access to literacy in all classes originated with Confucianism, where previously literacy was generally limited to the aristocracy, merchants, and priests.

India

Literacy is defined by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, as "[the ability of] a person aged 7 years and above [to]... both write and read with understanding in any language." According to the 2011 census, 74.04 percent.

Laos

Laos has the lowest level of adult literacy in all of Southeast Asia other than East Timor.

Obstacles to literacy vary by country and culture as writing systems, quality of education, availability of written material, competition from other sources (television, video games, cell phones, and family work obligations), and culture all influence literacy levels. In Laos, which has a phonetic alphabet, reading is relatively easy to learn—especially compared to English, where spelling and pronunciation rules are filled with exceptions, and Chinese, with thousands of symbols to be memorized. But a lack of books and other written materials has hindered functional literacy in Laos, where many children and adults read so haltingly that the skill is hardly beneficial.

A literacy project in Laos addresses this by using what it calls "books that make literacy fun!" The project, Big Brother Mouse, publishes colorful, easy-to-read books, then delivers them by holding book parties at rural schools. Some of the books are

modeled on successful western books by authors such as Dr. Seuss; the most popular, however, are traditional Lao fairy tales. Two popular collections of folktales were written by SiphoneVouthisakdee, who comes from a village where only five children finished primary school.

Big Brother Mouse has also created village reading rooms, and published books for adult readers about subjects such as Buddhism, health, and baby care.

Pakistan

In Pakistan, the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) aims to bring literacy to adults, especially women. ISLAMABAD - UNESCO Islamabad Director Kozue Kay Nagata has said, "Illiteracy in Pakistan has fallen over two decades, thanks to the government and people of Pakistan for their efforts working toward meeting the Millennium Development Goals". "Today, 70 percent of Pakistani youths can read and write. In 20 years, illiterate population has been reduced significantly", she said while speaking at a function held in connection with International Literacy Day.

However, she also emphasised on the need to do more to improve literacy in the country and said, "The proportion of population in Pakistan lacking basic reading and writing is too high. This is a serious obstacle for individual fulfillment, to the development of societies, and to mutual understanding between peoples." Referring to the recent national survey carried out by the Ministry of Education, Trainings and Standards in Higher Education with support of UNESCO, UNICEF, and provincial and areas departments of education,

Nagata pointed out that, in Pakistan, although primary school survival rate is 70 percent, gender gap still exists with only 68 percent of girls' survival rate compared to 71 percent for boys. Specifically in the case of Punjab, she said, primary school survival rate today is better with 76 percent, but not without a gender gap of 8 percent points with 72 percent girls' survival rate compared to 80 percent for boys. She also pointed out that average per student spending in primary level (age 5–9) was better in Punjab: Rs 6,998, compared to the national average. In Balochistan, although almost the same amount (Rs 6,985) as in Punjab is spent per child, the primary school survival rate is only 53 percent. Girls' survival rate is slightly better with 54 percent than that of boys which is 52 percent. Literate Pakistan Foundation, a non-profit organization, which was established in 2003, is a case study, which brings to light the solutions for removing this menace from its roots. It works to improve rate of literacy in Pakistan.

The data of the survey shows that in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, primary school survival rate is 67 percent which is lower than the national average of 70 percent. Furthermore, gender gap also exists with only 65 percent of girls' survival rate compared to that of boys which is 68 percent. Per-student education expenditure in primary level (age 5–9) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is Rs 8,638.

In Sindh, primary school survival rate is 63percent, with a gender gap of only 67 percent of girls' survival rate compared to 60 percent for boys. Per student education expenditure in primary level (age 5–9) in Sindh is Rs 5,019. Nagata made reference to the survey report and mentioned that the most common reason in Pakistan for children (both boys and girls)

of age 10 to 18 years leaving school before completing primary grade is "the child not willing to go to school", which may be related to quality and learning outcome. She said, however, and sadly, for the girls living in rural communities the second highest reason for dropout is "parents did not allow" which might be related to prejudice and cultural norm against girls.

Philippines

About 91.6 percent Filipinos 10 to 64 years old were functional literate1 in 2019, according to the results of the 2019 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS). This translates to around 73.0 million out of 79.7 million in the same age group who are considered literate on a functional level Early Filipinos devised and used their own system of writings from 300 BC, which derived from the Brahmic family of scripts of Ancient India. Baybayin became the most widespread of these derived scripts by the 11th century. Early chroniclers, who came during the first Spanish expeditions to the islands, noted the proficiency of some of the natives, especially the chieftain and local kings, in Sanskrit, Old Javanese, Old Malay, and several other languages. During the Spanish colonization of the islands, reading materials were destroyed to a far much less extent compared to the Spanish colonization of the Americas. Education and literacy was introduced only to the Peninsulares and remained a privilege until the Americans came. The Americans introduced the public schools system to the country, English became the lingua franca in the Philippines. It was only during a brief period in the Japanese occupation of the Philippines that the Japanese were able to teach their language in the Philippines and teach the children their written language.

Sri Lanka

With a literacy rate of 92.5%, Sri Lanka has one of the most literate populations amongst developing nations. Its youth literacy rate stands at 98%, computer literacy rate at 35%, and primary school enrollment rate at over 99%. An education system which dictates 9 years of compulsory schooling for every child is in place. The free education system established in 1945, is a result of the initiative of C. W. W. Kannangara and A. Ratnayake. It is one of the few countries in the world that provide universal free education from primary to tertiary stage.

Oceania

Australia

Approximately 56% of Australians aged 15 to 74 achieve Level 3 literacy or above Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011–2012 and 83% of five-year-olds are on track to develop good language and cognitive skills Australian Early Development Census 2012 summary report. In 2012–2013, Australia had 1515 public library service points, lending almost 174 million items to 10 million members of Australian public library services, at an average per capita cost of just under AU$45 Australian Public Library Statistics 2012–2013.

Chapter 2

Functional Illiteracy

Functional illiteracy consists of reading and writing skills that are inadequate "to manage daily living and employment tasks that require reading skills beyond a basic level". People who can read and write only in a language other than the predominant language of where they live may also be considered functionally illiterate. Functional illiteracy is contrasted with illiteracy in the strict sense, meaning the inability to read or write simple sentences in any language.

The characteristics of functional illiteracy vary from one culture to another, as some cultures require better reading and writing skills than others. In languages with phonemic spelling, functional illiteracy might be defined simply as reading too slowly for practical use, inability to effectively use dictionaries and written manuals, etc. Sociological research has demonstrated that countries with lower levels of functional illiteracy among their adult populations tend to be those with the highest levels of scientific literacy among the lower stratum of young people nearing the end of their formal academic studies. This correspondence suggests that the capacity of schools to ensure students attain the functional literacy required to comprehend the basic texts and documents associated with competent citizenship contributes to a society's level of civic literacy.

A reading level that might be sufficient to make a farmer functionally literate in a rural area of a developing country might qualify as functional illiteracy in an urban area of a

technologically advanced country. In developed countries, the level of functional literacy of an individual is proportional to income level and inversely proportional to the risk of committing certain kinds of crime. In Russia, where more than 99% percent of the population is technically literate, only one-third of high school graduates can comprehend the content of scientific and literary texts, according to a 2015 study. The UK government's Department for Education reported in 2006 that 47% of school children left school at age 16 without having achieved a basic level in functional mathematics, and 42% fail to achieve a basic level of functional English. Every year, 100,000 pupils leave school functionally illiterate in the UK. In the United States, according to *Business* magazine, an estimated 15 million functionally illiterate adults held jobs at the beginning of the 21st century. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics in the United States:

- Over 60% of adults in the US prison system read at or below the fourth-grade level
- 85% of US juvenile inmates are functionally illiterate
- 43% of adults at the lowest level of literacy lived below the poverty line, as opposed to 4% of those with the highest levels of literacy.

The National Center for Education Statistics provides more detail. Literacy is broken down into three parameters: prose, document, and quantitative literacy. Each parameter has four levels: below basic, basic, intermediate, and proficient. For prose literacy, for example, a below basic level of literacy means that a person can look at a short piece of text to get a small piece of uncomplicated information, while a person who is below basic in quantitative literacy would be able to do

simple addition. In the US, 14% of the adult population is at the "below basic" level for prose literacy; 12% are at the "below basic" level for document literacy, and 22% are at that level for quantitative literacy. Only 13% of the population is proficient in each of these three areas—able to compare viewpoints in two editorials; interpret a table about blood pressure, age, and physical activity; or compute and compare the cost per ounce of food items. A Literacy at Work study, published by the Northeast Institute in 2001, found that business losses attributed to basic skill deficiencies run into billions of dollars a year due to low productivity, errors, and accidents attributed to functional illiteracy. The American Council of Life Insurers reported that 75% of the Fortune 500 companies provide some level of remedial training for their workers. As of 2003, 30 million (14% of adults) were unable to perform simple and everyday literacy activities.

UNESCO Definition

Illiteracy, as well as functional illiteracy, were defined on the 20th session of UNESCO in 1978 as follows: A person is illiterate who cannot with understanding both read and write a short simple statement on his everyday life.

A person is functionally illiterate who cannot engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his group and community and also for enabling him to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his own and the community's development.

Chapter 3

Information Literacy

The Association of College & Research Libraries defines **information literacy** as a "set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning".

The 1989 American Library Association (ALA) Presidential Committee on Information Literacy formally defined information literacy (IL) as attributes of an individual, stating that "to be information literate, a person must be able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information". In 1990, academic Lori Arp published a paper asking, "Are information literacy instruction and bibliographic instruction the same?" Arp argued that neither term was particularly well defined by theoreticians or practitioners in the field, further studies were needed to lessen the confusion and continue to articulate the parameters of the question.

The Alexandria Proclamation of 2005 defined the term as a human rights issue: "Information literacy empowers people in all walks of life to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social, occupational and educational goals. It is a basic human right in a digital world and promotes social inclusion in all nations." The United States National Forum on Information Literacy defined information literacy as "the ability to know when there is a

need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively use that information for the issue or problem at hand".

A number of other efforts have been made to better define the concept and its relationship to other skills and forms of literacy. Other pedagogical outcomes related to information literacy include traditional literacy, computer literacy, research skills and critical thinking skills. Information literacy as a sub-discipline is an emerging topic of interest and counter measure among educators and librarians with the advent of misinformation, fake news, and disinformation.

Scholars have argued that, in order to maximize people's contributions to a democratic and pluralistic society, educators should be challenging governments and the business sector to support and fund educational initiatives in information literacy.

History of the concept

In a 1976 article in Library Journal, scholars were already beginning to discuss the difficult task and subtleties in defining the term. In that article, which has widely been cited since its publication, M.R. Owens stated that "information literacy differs from context to context. All [people] are created equal, but voters with information resources are in a position to make more intelligent decisions than citizens who are information illiterates. The application of information resources to the process of decision-making to fulfill civic responsibilities is a vital necessity.

In a literature review published in an academic journal in 2020, Oral Roberts University professor Angela Sample cited several conceptual waves of IL definitions since circa 1970. Some of those broad conceptual approaches included information literacy defined as a way of thinking; information literacy defined as a set of skills, information literacy defined as a social practice. These concept waves in the academic world led to the adoption of *metaliteracy* as a mechanism of IL concepts, and the creation of threshold concepts and knowledge dispositions, eventually leading to the creation of the ALA's Information Literacy Framework.

The phrase "information literacy" first appeared in print in a 1974 report written on behalf of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science by Paul G. Zurkowski, who was at the time president of the Software and Information Industry Association. Zurkowski used the phrase to describe the "techniques and skills" learned by the information literate "for utilizing the wide range of information tools as well as primary sources in molding information solutions to their problems" and drew a relatively firm line between the "literates" and "information illiterates".

The American Library Association's Presidential Committee on Information Literacy released a report on January 10, 1989, outlining the importance of information literacy, opportunities to develop information literacy, and an Information Age School. The report's final name is the Presidential Committee on Information Literacy: Final Report. The recommendations of the Committee led to the creation later that year of the National Forum on Information Literacy, a coalition of more than 90 national and international organizations.

In 1998, the American Association of School Librarians and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology published *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning*, which further established specific goals for information literacy education, defining some nine standards in the categories of "information literacy", "independent learning", and "social responsibility".

Also in 1998, the Presidential Committee on Information Literacy updated its final report. The report outlined six recommendations from the original report, and examined areas of challenge and progress.

In 1999, the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) in the UK, published "The Seven Pillars of Information Literacy" model to "facilitate further development of ideas amongst practitioners in the field ... stimulate debate about the ideas and about how those ideas might be used by library and other staff in higher education concerned with the development of students' skills". A number of other countries have developed information literacy standards since then.

In 2003, the National Forum on Information Literacy, together with UNESCO and the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, sponsored an international conference in Prague with representatives from twenty-three countries to discuss the importance of information literacy within a global context. The resulting Prague Declaration described information literacy as a "key to social, cultural, and economic development of nations and communities, institutions and individuals in the 21st century" and declared its acquisition as "part of the basic human right of lifelong learning".

In the United States, IL was made a priority during President Barack Obama's first term, who designated October as National Information Literacy Awareness Month.

Presidential Committee on Information Literacy

The American Library Association's Presidential Committee on Information Literacy defined information literacy as the ability "to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information" and highlighted information literacy as a skill essential for lifelong learning and the production of an informed and prosperous citizenry.

The committee outlined six principal recommendations. Included were recommendations like "Reconsider the ways we have organized information institutionally, structured information access, and defined information's role in our lives at home in the community, and in the work place"; to promote "public awareness of the problems created by information illiteracy"; to develop a national research agenda related to information and its use; to ensure the existence of "a climate conducive to students' becoming information literate"; to include information literacy concerns in teacher education democracy.

In the updated report, the committee ended with an invitation, asking the National Forum and regular citizens to recognize that "the result of these combined efforts will be a citizenry which is made up of effective lifelong learners who can always

find the information needed for the issue or decision at hand. This new generation of information literate citizens will truly be America's most valuable resource", and to continue working toward an information literate world.

The Presidential Committee on Information Literacy resulted in the creation of the National Forum on Information Literacy.

National Forum on Information Literacy

In 1983, United States published "A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform", a report declaring that a "rising tide of mediocrity" was eroding the foundation of the American educational system.

The report has been regarded as the genesis of the current educational reform movement within the United States.

This report, in conjunction with the rapid emergence of the information society, led the American Library Association (ALA) to convene a panel of educators and librarians in 1987. The Forum, UNESCO and International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) collaborated to organize several "experts meetings" that resulted in the Prague Declaration (2003) and the Alexandria Proclamation (2005).

Both statements underscore the importance of information literacy as a basic, fundamental human right, and consider IL as a lifelong learning skill.

Global

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)

IFLA has established an Information Literacy Section. The Section has, in turn, developed and mounted an Information Literacy Resources Directory, called InfoLit Global. Librarians, educators and information professionals may self-register and upload information-literacy-related materials (IFLA, Information Literacy Section, n.d.) According to the IFLA website, "The primary purpose of the Information Literacy Section is to foster international cooperation in the development of information literacy education in all types of libraries and information institutions."

The International Alliance for Information Literacy (IAIL)

This alliance was created from the recommendation of the Prague Conference of Information Literacy Experts in 2003. One of its goals is to allow for the sharing of information literacy research and knowledge between nations. The IAIL also sees "lifelong learning" as a basic human right, and their ultimate goal is to use information literacy as a way to allow everyone to participate in the "Information Society" as a way of fulfilling this right. The following organizations are founding members of IAIL:

- Australian and New Zealand Institute for Information Literacy (ANZIIL), based in Australia and New Zealand

- European Network on Information Literacy (EnIL), based in the European Union
- National Forum on Information Literacy (NFIL), based in the United States
- NORDINFOlit, based in Scandinavia
- SCONUL (Society of College, National and University Libraries) Advisory Committee on Information Literacy, based in the United Kingdom

UNESCO Media and Information Literacy

According to the UNESCO website, this is their "action to provide people with the skills and abilities for critical reception, assessment and use of information and media in their professional and personal lives". Their goal is to create information literate societies by creating and maintaining educational policies for information literacy. They work with teachers around the world, training them in the importance of information literacy and providing resources for them to use in their classrooms.

UNESCO publishes studies on information literacy in many countries, looking at how information literacy is currently taught, how it differs in different demographics, and how to raise awareness. They also publish pedagogical tools and curricula for school boards and teachers to refer to and use.

Specific aspects

In "Information Literacy as a Liberal Art", Jeremy J. Shapiro and Shelley K. Hughes (1996) advocated a more holistic approach to information literacy education, one that

encouraged not merely the addition of information technology courses as an adjunct to existing curricula, but rather a radically new conceptualization of "our entire educational curriculum in terms of information". Drawing upon Enlightenment ideals like those articulated by Enlightenment philosopher Condorcet, Shapiro and Hughes argued that information literacy education is "essential to the future of democracy, if citizens are to be intelligent shapers of the information society rather than its pawns, and to humanistic culture, if information is to be part of a meaningful existence rather than a routine of production and consumption".

To this end, Shapiro and Hughes outlined a "prototype curriculum" that encompassed the concepts of computer literacy, library skills, and "a broader, critical conception of a more humanistic sort", suggesting seven important components of a holistic approach to information literacy:

- *Tool literacy*, or the ability to understand and use the practical and conceptual tools of current information technology relevant to education and the areas of work and professional life that the individual expects to inhabit.
- *Resource literacy*, or the ability to understand the form, format, location and access methods of information resources, especially daily expanding networked information resources.
- *Social-structural literacy*, or understanding how information is socially situated and produced.
- *Research literacy*, or the ability to understand and use the IT-based tools relevant to the work of today's researcher and scholar.

- *Publishing literacy*, or the ability to format and publish research and ideas electronically, in textual and multimedia forms ... to introduce them into the electronic public realm and the electronic community of scholars.
- *Emerging technology literacy*, or the ability to continuously adapt to, understand, evaluate and make use of the continually emerging innovations in information technology so as not to be a prisoner of prior tools and resources, and to make intelligent decisions about the adoption of new ones.
- *Critical literacy*, or the ability to evaluate critically the intellectual, human and social strengths and weaknesses, potentials and limits, benefits and costs of information technologies.

Ira Shor further defines critical literacy as "[habits] of thought, reading, writing, and speaking which go beneath surface meaning, first impressions, dominant myths, official pronouncements, traditional clichés, received wisdom, and mere opinions, to understand the deep meaning, root causes, social context, ideology, and personal consequences of any action, event, object, process, organization, experience, text, subject matter, policy, mass media, or discourse".

Information literacy skills

Big6 skills

The Big6 skills have been used in a variety of settings to help those with a variety of needs. For example, the library of Dubai

Women's College, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates which is an English as a second language institution, uses the Big6 model for its information literacy workshops. According to Story-Huffman (2009), using Big6 at the college "has transcended cultural and physical boundaries to provide a knowledge base to help students become information literate" (para. 8). In primary grades, Big6 has been found to work well with variety of cognitive and language levels found in the classroom.

Differentiated instruction and the Big6 appear to be made for each other. While it seems as though all children will be on the same Big6 step at the same time during a unit of instruction, there is no reason students cannot work through steps at an individual pace. In addition, the Big 6 process allows for seamless differentiation by interest.

Issues to consider in the Big6 approach have been highlighted by Philip Doty:

This approach is problem-based, is designed to fit into the context of Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive objectives, and aims toward the development of critical thinking. While the Big6 approach has a great deal of power, it also has serious weaknesses. Chief among these are the fact that users often lack well-formed statements of information needs, as well as the model's reliance on problem-solving rhetoric. Often, the need for information and its use are situated in circumstances that are not as well-defined, discrete, and monolithic as problems.

Eisenberg (2004) has recognized that there are a number of challenges to effectively applying the Big6 skills, not the least of which is information overload which can overwhelm

students. Part of Eisenberg's solution is for schools to help students become discriminating users of information.

Another conception

This conception, used primarily in the library and information studies field, and rooted in the concepts of library instruction and bibliographic instruction, is the ability "to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively the needed information". In this view, information literacy is the basis for lifelong learning. It is also the basis for evaluating contemporary sources of information.

In the publication *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning* (AASL and AECT, 1998), three categories, nine standards, and twenty-nine indicators are used to describe the information literate student.

The categories and their standards are as follows:

Category 1: Information literacy

Standards: The student who is information literate

- accesses information efficiently and effectively.
- evaluates information critically and competently.
- uses information accurately and creatively.

Category 2: Independent learning

Standards: The student who is an independent learner is information literate and

- pursues information related to personal interests.
- appreciates literature and other creative expressions of information.
- strives for excellence in information seeking and knowledge generation.

Category 3: Social responsibility

Standards: The student who contributes positively to the learning community and to society is information literate and

- recognizes the importance of information to a democratic society.
- practices ethical behavior in regard to information and information technology.
- participates effectively in groups to pursue and generate information.

Since information may be presented in a number of formats, the term "information" applies to more than just the printed word. Other literacies such as visual, media, computer, network, and basic literacies are implicit in information literacy.

Many of those who are in most need of information literacy are often amongst those least able to access the information they require:

Minority and at-risk students, illiterate adults, people with English as a second language, and economically disadvantaged people are among those most likely to lack access to the information that can improve their situations. Most are not even aware of the potential help that is available to them.

As the Presidential Committee report points out, members of these disadvantaged groups are often unaware that libraries can provide them with the access, training and information they need. In Osborne (2004), many libraries around the country are finding numerous ways to reach many of these disadvantaged groups by discovering their needs in their own environments (including prisons) and offering them specific services in the libraries themselves.

Effects on education

The rapidly evolving information landscape has demonstrated a need for education methods and practices to evolve and adapt accordingly.

Information literacy is a key focus of educational institutions at all levels and in order to uphold this standard, institutions are promoting a commitment to lifelong learning and an ability to seek out and identify innovations that will be needed to keep pace with or outpace changes.

Educational methods and practices, within our increasingly information-centric society, must facilitate and enhance a student's ability to harness the power of information. Key to harnessing the power of information is the ability to evaluate information, to ascertain among other things its relevance, authenticity and modernity. The information evaluation process is crucial life skill and a basis for lifelong learning. According to Lankshearand Knobel, what is needed in our education system is a new understanding of literacy, information literacy and on literacy teaching. Educators need to learn to account for the context of our culturally and

linguistically diverse and increasingly globalized societies. We also need to take account of the burgeoning variety of text forms associated with information and multimedia technologies.

Evaluation consists of several component processes including metacognition, goals, personal disposition, cognitive development, deliberation, and decision-making. This is both a difficult and complex challenge and underscores the importance of being able to think critically.

Critical thinking is an important educational outcome for students. Education institutions have experimented with several strategies to help foster critical thinking, as a means to enhance information evaluation and information literacy among students. When evaluating evidence, students should be encouraged to practice formal argumentation. Debates and formal presentations must also be encouraged to analyze and critically evaluate information.

Education professionals must underscore the importance of high information quality. Students must be trained to distinguish between fact and opinion. They must be encouraged to use cue words such as "I think" and "I feel" to help distinguish between factual information and opinions. Information related skills that are complex or difficult to comprehend must be broken down into smaller parts. Another approach would be to train students in familiar contexts. Education professionals should encourage students to examine "causes" of behaviors, actions and events. Research shows that people evaluate more effectively if causes are revealed, where available.

Information in any format is produced to convey a message and is shared via a selected delivery method. The iterative processes of researching, creating, revising, and disseminating information vary, and the resulting product reflects these differences (Association of College, p. 5).

Some call for increased critical analysis in Information Literacy instruction. Smith (2013) identifies this as beneficial "to individuals, particularly young people during their period of formal education. It could equip them with the skills they need to understand the political system and their place within it, and, where necessary, to challenge this" (p. 16).

Education in the US

Standards

National content standards, state standards, and information literacy skills terminology may vary, but all have common components relating to information literacy.

Information literacy skills are critical to several of the National Education Goals outlined in the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, particularly in the act's aims to increase "school readiness", "student achievement and citizenship", and "adult literacy and lifelong learning". Of specific relevance are the "focus on lifelong learning, the ability to think critically, and on the use of new and existing information for problem solving", all of which are important components of information literacy.

In 1998, the American Association of School Librarians and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology published "Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning", which identified nine standards that librarians and teachers in K–12 schools could use to describe information literate students and define the relationship of information literacy to independent learning and social responsibility:

- Standard One: The student who is information literate accesses information efficiently and effectively.
- Standard Two: The student who is information literate evaluates information critically and competently.
- Standard Three: The student who is information literate uses information accurately and creatively.
- Standard Four: The student who is an independent learner is information literate and pursues information related to personal interests.
- Standard Five: The student who is an independent learner is information literate and appreciates literature and other creative expressions of information.
- Standard Six: The student who is an independent learner is information literate and strives for excellence in information seeking and knowledge generation.
- Standard Seven: The student who contributes positively to the learning community and to society is information literate and recognizes the importance of information to a democratic society.

- Standard Eight: The student who contributes positively to the learning community and to society is information literate and practices ethical behavior in regard to information and information technology.
- Standard Nine: The student who contributes positively to the learning community and to society is information literate and participates effectively in groups to pursue and generate information.

In 2007 AASL expanded and restructured the standards that school librarians should strive for in their teaching. These were published as "Standards for the 21st Century Learner" and address several literacies: information, technology, visual, textual, and digital.

These aspects of literacy were organized within four key goals: that "learners use of skills, resources, & tools" to "inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge"; to "draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations, and create new knowledge"; to "share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members of our democratic society"; and to "pursue personal and aesthetic growth".

In 2000, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), released "Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education", describing five standards and numerous performance indicators considered best practices for the implementation and assessment of postsecondary information literacy programs. The five standards are:

- Standard One: The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed.
- Standard Two: The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently.
- Standard Three: The information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.
- Standard Four: The information literate student, individually or as a member of a group, uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.
- Standard Five: The information literate student understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally.

These standards were meant to span from the simple to more complicated, or in terms of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, from the "lower order" to the "higher order". Lower order skills would involve for instance being able to use an online catalog to find a book relevant to an information need in an academic library. Higher order skills would involve critically evaluating and synthesizing information from multiple sources into a coherent interpretation or argument.

In 2016, the Association of College and Research Librarians (ACRL) rescinded the Standards and replaced them with the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, which offers the following set of core ideas:

- Authority is constructed and contextual
- Information creation as a process
- Information has value
- Research as inquiry
- Scholarship as conversation
- Searching as strategic exploration

The Framework is based on a cluster of interconnected core concepts, with flexible options for implementation, rather than on a set of standards or learning outcomes, or any prescriptive enumeration of skills. At the heart of this Framework are conceptual understandings that organize many other concepts and ideas about information, research, and scholarship into a coherent whole.

K–12 education restructuring

Today instruction methods have changed drastically from the mostly one-directional teacher-student model, to a more collaborative approach where the students themselves feel empowered. Much of this challenge is now being informed by the American Association of School Librarians that published new standards for student learning in 2007.

Within the K–12 environment, effective curriculum development is vital to imparting Information Literacy skills to students. Given the already heavy load on students, efforts must be made to avoid curriculum overload. Eisenberg strongly recommends adopting a collaborative approach to curriculum development among classroom teachers, librarians, technology teachers, and other educators. Staff must be encouraged to work together to analyze student curriculum needs, develop a

broad instruction plan, set information literacy goals, and design specific unit and lesson plans that integrate the information skills and classroom content. These educators can also collaborate on teaching and assessment duties

Educators are selecting various forms of resource-based learning (authentic learning, problem-based learning and work-based learning) to help students focus on the process and to help students learn from the content. Information literacy skills are necessary components of each. Within a school setting, it is very important that a students' specific needs as well as the situational context be kept in mind when selecting topics for integrated information literacy skills instruction. The primary goal should be to provide frequent opportunities for students to learn and practice information problem solving. To this extent, it is also vital to facilitate repetition of information seeking actions and behavior. The importance of repetition in information literacy lesson plans cannot be underscored, since we tend to learn through repetition. A students' proficiency will improve over time if they are afforded regular opportunities to learn and to apply the skills they have learnt.

The process approach to education is requiring new forms of student assessment. Students demonstrate their skills, assess their own learning, and evaluate the processes by which this learning has been achieved by preparing portfolios, learning and research logs, and using rubrics.

Efforts in K–12 education

Information literacy efforts are underway on individual, local, and regional bases.

Many states have either fully adopted AASL information literacy standards or have adapted them to suit their needs. States such as Oregon (OSLIS, 2009) increasing rely on these guidelines for curriculum development and setting information literacy goals. Virginia, on the other hand, chose to undertake a comprehensive review, involving all relevant stakeholders and formulate its own guidelines and standards for information literacy. At an international level, two framework documents jointly produced by UNESCO and the IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) developed two framework documents that laid the foundations in helping define the educational role to be played by school libraries: the School library manifesto (1999),.

Another immensely popular approach to imparting information literacy is the Big6 set of skills. Eisenberg claims that the Big6 is the most widely used model in K–12 education. This set of skills seeks to articulate the entire information seeking life cycle. The Big6 is made up of six major stages and two sub-stages under each major stages. It defines the six steps as being: task definition, information seeking strategies, location and access, use of information, synthesis, and evaluation. Such approaches seek to cover the full range of information problem-solving actions that a person would normally undertake, when faced with an information problem or with making a decision based on available resources.

Efforts in higher education

Information literacy instruction in higher education can take a variety of forms: stand-alone courses or classes, online tutorials, workbooks, course-related instruction, or course-

integrated instruction. One attempt in the area of physics was published in 2009.

The six regional accreditation boards have added information literacy to their standards. Librarians often are required to teach the concepts of information literacy during "one shot" classroom lectures. There are also credit courses offered by academic librarians to prepare college students to become information literate.

In 2016, the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL, part of the American Library Association) adopted a new "Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education", replacing the ACRL's "Information Literacy Standards for Higher Education" that had been approved in 2000. The standards were largely criticized by proponents of *critical information literacy*, a concept deriving from critical pedagogy, for being too prescriptive. It's termed a "framework" because it consists of interconnected core concepts designed to be interpreted and implemented locally depending on the context and needs of the audience. The framework draws on recent research around threshold concepts, or the ideas that are gateways to broader understanding or skills in a given discipline. It also draws on newer research around metaliteracy, and assumes a more holistic view of information literacy that includes creation and collaboration in addition to consumption, so is appropriate for current practices around social media and Web 2.0. The six concepts, or frames, are:

- Authority is constructed and contextual
- Information creation as a process
- Information has value

- Research as inquiry
- Scholarship as conversation
- Searching as strategic exploration

This draws from the concept of metaliteracy, which offers a renewed vision of information literacy as an overarching set of abilities in which students are consumers and creators of information who can participate successfully in collaborative spaces (Association of College, p. 2) There is a growing body of scholarly research describing faculty-librarian collaboration to bring information literacy skills practice into higher education curriculum, moving beyond "one shot" lectures to an integrated model in which librarians help design assignments, create guides to useful course resources, and provide direct support to students throughout courses. A recent literature review indicates that there is still a lack of evidence concerning the unique information literacy practices of doctoral students, especially within disciplines such as the health sciences.

Distance education

Now that information literacy has become a part of the core curriculum at many post-secondary institutions, the library community is charged to provide information literacy instruction in a variety of formats, including online learning and distance education. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) addresses this need in its Guidelines for Distance Education Services (2000):

Library resources and services in institutions of higher education must meet the needs of all their faculty, students, and academic support staff, wherever these individuals are

located, whether on a main campus, off campus, in distance education or extended campus programs—or in the absence of a campus at all, in courses taken for credit or non-credit; in continuing education programs; in courses attended in person or by means of electronic transmission; or any other means of distance education.

Within the e-learning and distance education worlds, providing effective information literacy programs brings together the challenges of both distance librarianship and instruction.

With the prevalence of course management systems such as WebCT and Blackboard, library staff are embedding information literacy training within academic programs and within individual classes themselves.

Education in Singapore

Public education

In October 2013, The National Library of Singapore (NLB) created the S.U.R.E, (Source, Understand, Research, Evaluate) campaign.

The objectives and strategies of the S.U.R.E. campaign were first presented at the 2014 IFLA WLIC. It is summarised by NLB as simplifying information literacy into four basic building blocks, to "promote and educate the importance of Information Literacy and discernment in informations searching".

Public events furthering the S.U.R.E. campaign were organised 2015. This was called the "Super S.U.R.E. Show" involving

speakers to engage the public with their anecdotes and other learning points, for example the ability to separate fact from opinion.

Higher Education

Information literacy is taught by librarians at institutes of higher education. Some components of information literacy are embedded in the undergraduate curriculum at the National University of Singapore.

Assessment

Many academic libraries are participating in a culture of assessment, and attempt to show the value of their information literacy interventions to their students. Librarians use a variety of techniques for this assessment, some of which aim to empower students and librarians and resist adherence to unquestioned norms. Oakleaf describes the benefits and dangers of various assessment approaches: fixed-choice tests, performance assessments, and rubrics.

Chapter 4

Literate Programming

Literate programming is a programming paradigm introduced by Donald Knuth in which a computer program is given an explanation of its logic in a natural language, such as English, interspersed with snippets of macros and traditional source code, from which compilable source code can be generated. The approach is used in scientific computing and in data science routinely for reproducible research and open access purposes. Literate programming tools are used by millions of programmers today.

The literate programming paradigm, as conceived by Knuth, represents a move away from writing computer programs in the manner and order imposed by the computer, and instead enables programmers to develop programs in the order demanded by the logic and flow of their thoughts. Literate programs are written as an uninterrupted exposition of logic in an ordinary human language, much like the text of an essay, in which macros are included to hide abstractions and traditional source code.

Literate programming (LP) tools are used to obtain two representations from a literate source file: one suitable for further compilation or execution by a computer, the "tangled" code, and another for viewing as formatted documentation, which is said to be "woven" from the literate source. While the first generation of literate programming tools were computer language-specific, the later ones are language-agnostic and exist above the programming languages.

History and philosophy

Literate programming was first introduced by Knuth in 1984. The main intention behind this approach was to treat a program as literature understandable to human beings. This approach was implemented at Stanford University as a part of research on algorithms and digital typography. This implementation was called "WEB" by Knuth since he believed that it was one of the few three-letter words of English that hadn't already been applied to computing. However, it correctly resembles the complicated nature of software delicately pieced together from simple materials. The practice of literate programming has seen an important resurgence in the 2010s with the use of notebooks, especially in data science.

Concept

Literate programming is writing out the program logic in a human language with included (separated by a primitive markup) code snippets and macros. Macros in a literate source file are simply title-like or explanatory phrases in a human language that describe human abstractions created while solving the programming problem, and hiding chunks of code or lower-level macros. These macros are similar to the algorithms in pseudocode typically used in teaching computer science. These arbitrary explanatory phrases become precise new operators, created on the fly by the programmer, forming a *meta-language* on top of the underlying programming language.

A preprocessor is used to substitute arbitrary hierarchies, or rather "interconnected 'webs' of macros", to produce the

compilable source code with one command ("tangle"), and documentation with another ("weave"). The preprocessor also provides an ability to write out the content of the macros and to add to already created macros in any place in the text of the literate program source file, thereby disposing of the need to keep in mind the restrictions imposed by traditional programming languages or to interrupt the flow of thought.

Advantages

According to Knuth, literate programming provides higher-quality programs, since it forces programmers to explicitly state the thoughts behind the program, making poorly thought-out design decisions more obvious. Knuth also claims that literate programming provides a first-rate documentation system, which is not an add-on, but is grown naturally in the process of exposition of one's thoughts during a program's creation. The resulting documentation allows the author to restart his own thought processes at any later time, and allows other programmers to understand the construction of the program more easily. This differs from traditional documentation, in which a programmer is presented with source code that follows a compiler-imposed order, and must decipher the thought process behind the program from the code and its associated comments. The meta-language capabilities of literate programming are also claimed to facilitate thinking, giving a higher "bird's eye view" of the code and increasing the number of concepts the mind can successfully retain and process. Applicability of the concept to programming on a large scale, that of commercial-grade programs, is proven by an edition of TeX code as a literate program.

Knuth also claims that literate programming can lead to easy porting of software to multiple environments, and even cites the implementation of TeX as an example.

Contrast with documentation generation

Literate programming is very often misunderstood to refer only to formatted documentation produced from a common file with both source code and comments – which is properly called documentation generation – or to voluminous commentaries included with code. This is the converse of literate programming: well-documented code or documentation extracted from code follows the structure of the code, with documentation embedded in the code; while in literate programming, code is embedded in documentation, with the code following the structure of the documentation.

This misconception has led to claims that comment-extraction tools, such as the Perl Plain Old Documentation or Java Javadoc systems, are "literate programming tools". However, because these tools do not implement the "web of abstract concepts" hiding behind the system of natural-language macros, or provide an ability to change the order of the source code from a machine-imposed sequence to one convenient to the human mind, they cannot properly be called literate programming tools in the sense intended by Knuth.

Critique

In 1986, Jon Bentley asked Knuth to demonstrate the concept of literate programming for his *Programming Pearls* column in the *Communications of the ACM*, by writing a program in WEB.

Knuth sent him a program for a problem previously discussed in the column (that of sampling *M* random numbers in the range 1..*N*), and also asked for an "assignment". Bentley gave him the problem of finding the *K* most common words from a text file, for which Knuth wrote a WEB program that was published together with a review by Douglas McIlroy of Bell Labs. McIlroy praised the intricacy of Knuth's solution, his choice of a data structure (a variant of Frank M. Liang's hash trie), and the presentation. He criticized some matters of style, such as the fact that the central idea was described late in the paper, the use of magic constants, and the absence of a diagram to accompany the explanation of the data structure. McIlroy, known for Unix pipelines, also used the review to critique the programming task itself, pointing out that in Unix (developed at Bell Labs), utilities for text processing (tr, sort, uniq and sed) had been written previously that were "staples", and a solution that was easy to implement, debug and reuse could be obtained by combining these utilities in a six-line shell script. In response, Bentley wrote that:

[McIlroy] admires the execution of the solution, but faults the problem on engineering grounds. (That is, of course, my responsibility as problem assigner; Knuth solved the problem he was given on grounds that are important to most engineers—the paychecks provided by their problem assigners.)

McIlroy later admitted that his critique was unfair, since he criticized Knuth's program on engineering grounds, while Knuth's purpose was only to demonstrate the literate programming technique. In 1987, *Communications of the ACM* published a followuparticle which illustrated literate programming with a C program that combined artistic

approach of Knuth with engineering approach of McIlroy, with a critique by John Gilbert.

Workflow

Implementing literate programming consists of two steps:

- Weaving: Generating a comprehensive document about the program and its maintenance.
- Tangling: Generating machine executable code

Weaving and tangling are done on the same source so that they are consistent with each other.

Example

A classic example of literate programming is the literate implementation of the standard Unix`wc` word counting program. Knuth presented a CWEB version of this example in Chapter 12 of his *Literate Programming* book. The same example was later rewritten for the noweb literate programming tool. This example provides a good illustration of the basic elements of literate programming.

Creation of macros

The following snippet of the `wc` literate program shows how arbitrary descriptive phrases in a natural language are used in a literate program to create macros, which act as new "operators" in the literate programming language, and hide chunks of code or other macros. The mark-up notation consists

of double angle brackets ("`<<...>>`") that indicate macros, the "`@`" symbol which indicates the end of the code section in a noweb file. The "`<<*>>`" symbol stands for the "root", topmost node the literate programming tool will start expanding the web of macros from. Actually, writing out the expanded source code can be done from any section or subsection (i.e. a piece of code designated as "`<<name of the chunk>>=`", with the equal sign), so one literate program file can contain several files with machine source code.

```
Thepurposeofwcistocountlines,words,and/orcharactersinalistoffiles.The
numberoflinesinafileis...../moreexplanations/

Here,then,isanoverviewofthefilewc.cthatisdefinedbythenowebprogramwc.nw:
<<*>>=
<<Headerfilestoinclude>>
<<Definitions>>
<<Globalvariables>>
<<Functions>>
<<Themainprogram>>
@

WemustincludethestandardI/Odefinitions,sincewewanttosendformattedoutpu
t
tostdoutandstderr.
<<Headerfilestoinclude>>=
#include<stdio.h>
@
```

The unraveling of the chunks can be done in any place in the literate program text file, not necessarily in the order they are sequenced in the enclosing chunk, but as is demanded by the logic reflected in the explanatory text that envelops the whole program.

Program as a web—macros are not just section names

Macros are not the same as "section names" in standard documentation. Literate programming macros can hide any chunk of code behind themselves, and be used inside any low-level machine language operators, often inside logical

operators such as "`if`", "`while`" or "`case`". This is illustrated by the following snippet of the `wc` literate program.

```
Thepresentchunk,whichdoesthecounting,wasactuallyoneof
thesimplesttowrite.Welookateachcharacterandchangestateifitbeginsorends
aword.

<<Scanfile>>=
while(1){
<<Fillbufferifitisempty;breakatendoffile>>
c=*ptr++;
if(c>' '&&c<0177){
/* visible ASCII codes */
if(!in_word){
word_count++;
in_word=1;
}
continue;
}
if(c=='\n')line_count++;
elseif(c!=' '&&c!='\t')continue;
in_word=0;
/* c is newline, space, or tab */
}
@
```

In fact, macros can stand for any arbitrary chunk of code or other macros, and are thus more general than top-down or bottom-up "chunking", or than subsectioning. Knuth says that when he realized this, he began to think of a program as a *web* of various parts.

Order of human logic, not that of the compiler

In a noweb literate program besides the free order of their exposition, the chunks behind macros, once introduced with "`<<...>>=`", can be grown later in any place in the file by simply writing "`<<name of the chunk>>=`" and adding more content to it, as the following snippet illustrates ("plus" is added by the document formatter for readability, and is not in the code).

```
 The grand totals must be initialized to zero at the beginning of the
program.
```

```
If we made these variables local to main, we would have to do this
initialization
explicitly; however, C globals are automatically zeroed. (Or
rather,``statically
zeroed.'' (Get it?)

<<Global variables>>+=
longtot_word_count, tot_line_count,
tot_char_count;
     /* total number of words, lines, chars */
   @
```

Record of the train of thought

The documentation for a literate program is produced as part of writing the program. Instead of comments provided as side notes to source code a literate program contains the explanation of concepts on each level, with lower level concepts deferred to their appropriate place, which allows for better communication of thought. The snippets of the literate `wc` above show how an explanation of the program and its source code are interwoven. Such exposition of ideas creates the flow of thought that is like a literary work. Knuth wrote a "novel" which explains the code of the interactive fiction game Colossal Cave Adventure.

Remarkable examples

- Axiom, which is evolved from scratchpad, a computer algebra system developed by IBM. It is now being developed by Tim Daly, one of the developers of scratchpad, Axiom is totally written as a literate program.

Literate programming practices

- The first published literate programming environment was WEB, introduced by Knuth in 1981

for his TeX typesetting system; it uses Pascal as its underlying programming language and TeX for typesetting of the documentation. The complete commented TeX source code was published in Knuth's *TeX: The program*, volume B of his 5-volume *Computers and Typesetting*. Knuth had privately used a literate programming system called DOC as early as 1979. He was inspired by the ideas of Pierre-Arnoul de Marneffe. The free CWEB, written by Knuth and Silvio Levy, is WEB adapted for C and C++, runs on most operating systems and can produce TeX and PDF documentation.

Other useful tools include

- The Leo text editor is an *outlining*editor which supports optional noweb and CWEB markup. The author of Leo mixes two different approaches: first, Leo is an outlining editor, which helps with management of large texts; second, Leo incorporates some of the ideas of literate programming, which in its pure form (i.e., the way it is used by Knuth Web tool or tools like "noweb") is possible only with some degree of inventiveness and the use of the editor in a way not exactly envisioned by its author (in modified @root nodes). However, this and other extensions (@file nodes) make outline programming and text management successful and easy and in some ways similar to literate programming.
- The Haskell programming language has native support for semi-literate programming. The compiler/interpreter supports two file name

extensions: `.hs` and `.lhs`; the latter stands for literate Haskell.

- The literate scripts can be full LaTeX source text, at the same time it can be compiled, with no changes, because the interpreter only compiles the text in a code environment, for example

```
% here text describing the function:
\begin{code}
fact0=1
fact(n+1)=(n+1)*factn
\end{code}
here more text
```

- The code can be also marked in the Richard Bird style, starting each line with a greater than symbol and a space, preceding and ending the piece of code with blank lines.
- The LaTeX`listings` package provides a`lstlisting` environment which can be used to embellish the source code. It can be used to define a `code` environment to use within Haskell to print the symbols something like:

```
\newenvironment{code}{\lstlistings[language=Haskell]}{\endlstlistings}

\begin{code}
comp::(beta->gamma)->(alpha->beta)->(alpha->gamma)
(g`comp`f)x=g(fx)
\end{code}
```

- can be configured to yield something like this:
- Although the package does not provide means to organize chunks of code, one can split the LaTeX source code in different files. See listings manual for an overview.
- The Web 68 Literate Programming system used Algol 68 as the underlying programming language,

although there was nothing in the pre-processor 'tang' to force the use of that language.

- The customization mechanism of the Text Encoding Initiative which enables the constraining, modification, or extension of the TEI scheme enables users to mix prose documentation with fragments of schema specification in their One Document Does-it-all format. From this prose documentation, schemas, and processing model pipelines can be generated and Knuth's Literate Programming paradigm is cited as the inspiration for this way of working.

Documentation generator

A **documentation generator** is a programming tool that generates software documentation intended for programmers (API documentation) or end users (end-user guide), or both, from a set of source code files, and in some cases, binary files. Some generators, such Javadoc, can use special comments to drive the generation. Doxygen is an example of a generator that can use all of these methods.

Types of generation

Document generation can be divided in several types:

- Batch generation (generic technique)
- Text block correspondence (documents created based on pre-defined text blocks)
- Forms (forms for websites)
- Documentation synthesis:

- Documentation can be inferred from code
- Documentation can be inferred from execution traces
- Documentation can be inferred from mailing lists

Some integrated development environments provide interactive access to documentation, code metadata, etc.

Notebook interface

A **notebook interface** (also called a **computational notebook**) is a virtual notebook environment used for literate programming, a method of writing computer programs in a way that more closely matches how humans think. Some notebooks are WYSIWYG environments including executable calculations embedded in formatted documents; others separate calculations and text into separate sections.

Modular notebooks may connect to a variety of computational back ends, called "kernels". Notebook interfaces are widely used for statistics, data science, machine learning, and computer algebra.

At the notebook core is the idea of literate programming tools which can be described as "tools let you arrange the parts of a program in any order and extract documentation and code from the same source file.", the notebook takes this approach to a new level extending it with some graphic functionality and a focus on interactivity. According to Stephen Wolfram: "The idea of a notebook is to have an interactive document that freely mixes code, results, graphics, text and everything else.", and according to the Jupyter Project Documentation: "The notebook extends the console-based approach to interactive computing

in a qualitatively new direction, providing a web-based application suitable for capturing the whole computation process: developing, documenting, and executing code, as well as communicating the results. The Jupyter notebook combines two components".

History

Research on WYSIWYG mathematical systems supporting mixed text and calculations with a document metaphor begin to be published in 1987: Ron Avitzur's*Milo*, William Schelter's*INFOR*, Xerox PARC's *Tioga* and *CaminoReal*.

The earliest commercial system using the document metaphor was *MathCAD*, which also came out in 1987. *Wolfram Mathematica* 1.0 followed soon afterwards (1988). Later came *Maple* 5.2 (1992) and *Macsyma 2.0* (1995).

As the notebook interface increased in popularity over the next two decades, notebooks for various computational back ends ("kernels") have been introduced, including MATLAB, Python, Julia, Scala, SQL, and others.

Use

Notebooks are traditionally used in the sciences as electronic lab notebooks to document research procedures, data, calculations, and findings. Notebooks track methodology to make it easier to reproduce results and calculations with different data sets. In education, the notebook interface provides a digital learning environment, particularly for the

teaching of computational thinking. Their utility for combining text with code makes them unique in the realm of education. Digital notebooks are sometimes used for presentations as an alternative to PowerPoint and other presentation software, as they allow for the execution of code inside the notebook environment. Due to their ability to display data visually and retrieve data from different sources by modifying code, notebooks are also entering the realm of business intelligence software.

Notable examples

Example of projects or products of notebooks:

Free/open-source notebooks

- Apache Zeppelin — Apache License 2.0
- Apache Spark Notebook — Apache License 2.0
- IPython — BSD
- Jupyter Notebook (formerly IPython) — Modified BSD License (shared copyright model)
- Google Colaboratory — No setup Jupyter notebook environment — Free software
- Amazon SageMaker --- ML Focused Jupyter notebook environment --- Free Basic Access
- Pycharm Notebook Integration - jupyter notebook interface/frontend notebooks for Jetbrains IDEs, this is a premium feature but source code can be found here
- VSCode Notebook Support - jupyter notebook interface/frontend and API for VSCode

- JupyterLab — Revised BSD License
- Starboard - A shareable In-browser literal notebook, source code can be found here
- Mozilla Iodide — MPL 2.0; development in alpha stage
- R Markdown — GPLv3
- SageMath — GPLv3
- Org-mode on emacs (with the built-in babel addon) — GPL
- Xamarin Workbooks for DotNet — MIT
- Polynote Apache License 2.0
- GNU TeXmacs (a document processor which can act as notebook interface as well) — GPLv3
- Javalí Notebooks: Java based notebooks environment and LMS with debugging and unit test support, designed for the academy, a presentation video can be found here.,

Partial copyleft

- SMath Studio — Freeware, not libre: licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-No Derivatives

Proprietary notebooks

- Wolfram Mathematica
- Mathcad
- Noteable
- Noteable
- Deepnote
- Carbide
- Databricks cloud (founded 2013).

- Datalore
- Nextjournal
- Observable — Uses open-source components, but the look and feel are proprietary
- WolframAlpha Notebooks

Sweave

Sweave is a function in the statistical programming language R that enables integration of R code into LaTeX or LyX documents. The purpose is "to create dynamic reports, which can be updated automatically if data or analysis change".

The data analysis is performed at the moment of writing the report, or more exactly, at the moment of compiling the Sweave code with Sweave (i.e., essentially with R) and subsequently with LaTeX. This can facilitate the creation of up-to-date reports for the author.

Because the Sweave files together with any external R files that might be sourced from them and the data files contain all the information necessary to trace back all steps of the data analyses, Sweave also has the potential to make research more transparent and reproducible to others.

However, this is only the case to the extent that the author makes the data and the R and Sweave code available. If the author only publishes the resulting PDF document or printed versions thereof, a report created using Sweaveis no more transparent or reproducible than the same report created with other statistical and text preparation software.

Knitr

knitr is an engine for dynamic report generation with R. It is a package in the programming language R that enables integration of R code into LaTeX, LyX, HTML, Markdown, AsciiDoc, and reStructuredText documents. The purpose of knitr is to allow reproducible research in R through the means of Literate Programming. It is licensed under the GNU General Public License.

knitr was inspired by Sweave and written with a different design for better modularization, so it is easier to maintain and extend. Sweavecan be regarded as a subset of knitr in the sense that all features of Sweave are also available in knitr. Some of knitr's extensions include the R Markdown format (used in reports published on RPubs), caching, TikZ graphics and support to other languages such as Python, Perl, C++, Shell scripts and CoffeeScript, and so on.

knitr is officially supported in the RStudio IDE for R, LyX, Emacs/ESS and the Architect IDE for data science.

Workflow of knitr

Knitr consists of standard e.g. Markdown document with R-code chunks integrated in the document. The code chunks can be regarded as R-scripts that

- load data,
- performs data processing and

- creates output data (e.g. descriptive analysis) or output graphics (e.g. boxplot diagram).

The implementation of logical conditions in R can provide text elements for the dynamic report depended on the statistical analysis. For example:

> The Wilcoxon Sign test was applied as statistical comparison of the average of two dependent samples above.
> In this case, the calculated P-value was 0.56 and hence greater than the significance level (0.05 by default).
> This implies that "H0: there is no difference between the results in data1 and data2" cannot be rejected.

The text fragments are selected according to the script's results. In this example, if the P-value was lower than the significance level, different text fragments would be inserted in the dynamic report.

In particular, the second sentence would swap "less" for "greater," and the third sentence would be replaced to reflect rejection of the null hypothesis. Using this workflow allows creating new reports simply by supplying new input data, ensuring the methodology is reproduced identically.

Self-documenting code

In computer programming, **self-documenting** (or **self-describing**) source code and user interfaces follow naming conventions and structured programming conventions that enable use of the system without prior specific knowledge. In web development, **self-documenting** refers to a website that exposes the entire process of its creation through public documentation, and whose public documentation is part of the development process.

Objectives

Commonly stated objectives for self-documenting systems include:

- Make source code easier to read and understand
- Minimize the effort required to maintain or extend legacy systems
- Reduce the need for users and developers of a system to consult secondary documentation sources such as code comments or software manuals
- Facilitate automation through self-contained knowledge representation

Conventions

Self-documenting code is ostensibly written using human-readable names, typically consisting of a phrase in a human language which reflects the symbol's meaning, such as *article.numberOf Words* or *TryOpen*.

The code must also have a clear and clean structure so that a human reader can easily understand the algorithm used.

Practical considerations

There are certain practical considerations that influence whether and how well the objectives for a self-documenting system can be realized.

- uniformity of naming conventions

- consistency
- scope of the application and system requirements

Examples

Below is a very simple example of self-documenting code, using naming conventions in place of explicit comments to make the logic of the code more obvious to human readers.

```
size_tcount_alphabetic_chars(constchar*text)
{
if(text==NULL)
return0;

size_tcount=0;

while(*text!='\0')
{
if(is_alphabetic(*text))
count++;
text++;
}

returncount;
}
```

Criticism

JefRaskin criticizes the belief in "self-documenting" code by saying that code cannot explain the rationale behind why the program is being written or why it is implemented in such a way.

Chapter 5

Literate American Slaves

Lewis Adams

Lewis Adams (October 27, 1842 – April 30, 1905) was an African-American former slave in Macon County, Alabama, who is best remembered for his work in helping found the school in 1881 in Tuskegee, Alabama which grew to become the normal school that with its first principal, Booker T Washington, grew to become Tuskegee University.

Little is known of Adams' early life. It is known, however, that despite having no formal education, Adams could read, write, and speak several languages. He was an experienced tinsmith, harness-maker, and shoemaker. He was married to "Sallie" Sarah Adams with whom he had sixteen children. He was an acknowledged leader of the county's African-American community.

Adams was especially concerned that, without an education, the recently freed former slaves (and future generations) would not be able to fully support themselves. There were no institutions at that time to teach them essential skills. In partnership with a white former slave owner, Adams established a school in 1874.

In 1880, Adams was approached on behalf of two white candidates seeking election to the Alabama Senate. He was asked what it would take to get the votes of the community's black citizens. Rather than requesting and/or accepting

personal gifts, a common practice, he made a deal with the Democratic Party in Montgomery, promising to secure the African-American vote if funding would be provided for a Normal school for African Americans at Tuskegee. He and a banker, George W Campbell another former slave-owner skillfully convinced the Alabama Legislature to begin funding of US$2,000 annually for a "Negro Normal School in Tuskegee" starting in 1881. (*Normal schools*were so named because they taught future teachers educational standards or *norms*.)

Lewis Adams then recruited and hired another former slave, Booker T. Washington, upon recommendation of General Samuel C. Armstrong, the founder and principal of the Normal school for blacks in Hampton, Virginia, to become the first principal. From a humble beginning in a small school in a local church out-building on July 4, 1881, the school moved in 1882 to 100 acres (0.40 km) of plantation farmland, purchased with a $200 personal loan from the treasurer of Washington's former school (which eventually grew to become Hampton University).

Lewis Adams later served as translator of Italian, French and German for Booker T. Washington when he traveled to Europe. Lewis Adams' daughter Virginia Adams was the first graduate of Tuskegee Normal School to receive a diploma from Booker T. Washington, who led Tuskegee and later to some extent, led the nation in race relations.

Like Lewis Adams, Dr. Washington embraced the concept that former slaves needed practical job skills to support themselves and their families. Lewis Adams and Booker T. Washington had an uncle/nephew relationship with Adams guiding Washington

throughout the Tuskegee community. Adams and his family helped Washington galvanize support among the African-Americans in the Tuskegee community to support the growing school. Together Adams and Washington built the school into a self-contained, self-reliant community. Lewis Adams died in 1905.

In addition to building the school in Tuskegee, Washington became a famous orator and secured major funding from wealthy American philanthropists such as Andrew Carnegie, Collis P. Huntington, John D. Rockefeller, and Henry Huttleston Rogers. Despite his travels and widespread work, Dr. Washington remained principal of Tuskegee until his death in 1915, at the age of 59. At the time of his death, Tuskegee's endowment exceeded US$1.5 million.

Another famous African American who taught at the school of Lewis Adams' dreams was Dr. George Washington Carver.

Sam Aleckson

Samuel Williams (1852 – 1946?), better known by his pen name **Sam Aleckson,** was an American slave and author of *Before the War and After the Union: An Autobiography*. Like his father, Alexander Williams, his mother, Susan Williams, and his grandfather of the same name, Samuel Williams was born into slavery in 1852 in Charleston, South Carolina. His great-grandfather, Clement Williams, was brought from Africa in the Atlantic slave trade. Samuel Williams' memoir offers a rare look into the lives of the urban enslaved in North America and the ways freedmen negotiated their ways through Reconstruction and into the 20th century. Samuel Williams

had the great fortune of being taught the three "R's" by his owners. Once freed, he used his literacy to document his life and obtained publication in 1929. Williams quotes Shakespeare to readers of his autobiography by drawing from *Othello*: "I will a plain unvarnished tale deliver," a line often used in slave narratives but powerful here. The humbleness of this phrase belies a thoughtful, complex life story. While his memoir was actually published in 1929, Williams claims to have composed it in 1914 during a time when he feared he might go blind and wanted to document his life before that occurred. However, he did not go blind, and lived on for several more decades, most likely dying in Massachusetts in 1946.

Before the War

In his narrative, he states: "The place of my birth and the conditions under which I was born are matters over which, of course, I had no control. If I had, I should have altered the conditions, but I should not have changed the place; for it is a grand old city, and I have always felt proud of my citizenship." His mother and father were owned by separate families. Like many enslaved children, Williams sometimes lived in a family unit and sometimes did not; he lived in the households of both his father's enslavers for a good part of the time. During his early childhood, his mother and older brother worked with her owners while he remained in his grandmother's care because he was too young for any practical use.

Williams held some good memories of his early years, saying that of the family that enslaved him and his relatives, they were "of all slave holders, the very best." The younger children had almost all of their time free to play. Early on, Williams

would play with the neighbor's white children, and later with other black children on the plantation that to which he moved.

However, Sam makes sure to clearly indicate, "There is nothing good to be said of American slavery. I know it is sometimes customary to speak of its bright and its dark sides. I am not prepared to admit that it had any bright sides, unless it was the Emancipation Proclamation issued by President Abraham Lincoln..."

In his early childhood, while the four white children Williams played with were at school, Williams was taught how to read and write by the three unmarried white ladies who were most likely part of the family that enslaved Williams' father. He was taught using only one book, which he called "Thomas Dilworth's," referring to *A New Guide to the English Tongue* by Thomas Dilworth. From the book, Williams claims he learned about grammar, weights and measures, ciphers, and morals. In addition, Williams describes the popular use of slates for his lessons, as well as his fascination with fable illustrations that instructed what was moral and what was not: "...such as that of the man who prayed to Hercules to take his wagon out of the mire; of the two men who stole a piece of meat; of the lazy maids and of the kindhearted man who took a half frozen serpent into his house." He also states many slaves were punished for being found in possession of the schoolbook, though the reward of mastering the book was being considered a "prodigy of learning" within the slave community.

Of his owner, Williams stated: "Mr. Ward was what was called a 'good master.' His people were well-fed, well-housed, and not over-worked. There were certain inflexible rules however,

governing his plantation of which he allowed not the slightest infraction, for he had his place for the Negro... His place for the Negro was in subjection and servitude to the white man." Williams alludes to his master's classism, pointing out that his white supremacy ideology did not extend to all whites and that there were some he would have barred from slaveholding. Ward, like many other slaveholders, asserted his role as owner and enslaver with a paternalistic view. He provided well for his slaves while demanding complete obedience.

Ward, for example, took care to always know their whereabouts by insisting he authorize any departure from his land and as Williams depicts in his memoir, Ward had no qualms about punishing those slaves he felt defied him.

As a boy, Williams learned to ride horses from one of his enslavers. Williams states, "He taught me to ride, and when I could sit my horse well 'bare-back' he had a saddle made for me at the then famous 'McKinzie's' saddlery, sign of the 'White Horse' at the corner of Church and Chalmers Street." This training to ride was not wholly unique to Williams' experience. In fact, enslaved people were essential to the world of horse racing in the American South. Jockeys and trainers were commonly enslaved people.

Despite limited privileges, these enslaved horse riders were still subjected to the realities of being slaves in a slave society. Williams never became a formal jockey, however, and of this he says the following: "Possibly Mr. Dane had 'views', concerning me for he owned several fast horses, but before I was old enough to be of practical service, 'Sherman came marching through Georgia.'"

During the War

Williams recounts his arriving in Charleston one day to find that "men were going about the streets wearing blue cockades on the lapels of their coats." This was his first realization that there was a war going on, though the effects (amazingly high prices for everything and the disappearance of many of the young men to go fight) had been felt for a while. Williams recounts the conversations between other enslaved men and women at this time regarding the impending war and their support of the Union officer General Robert Anderson, who defied the Confederacy by trying to maintain Federal control of Fort Sumter. Free and enslaved African Americans were barred from being soldiers in the Confederacy. However, after Williams' older brother died of fever, the 10-year-old Williams took his brother's place as a Confederate officer's "boy." He ran errands for the soldiers but he was never mentioned in the remembrance of Confederate soldiers. Williams acknowledges this in his memoir: "And here I must admit I wore the 'gray.' I have never attended any of the Confederate reunions. I suppose they overlooked my name on the army roll!" Williams' childhood home on Guignard Street was destroyed by the Great Charleston Fire on December 11, 1861. This fire destroyed many of the main landmarks such as the Charleston Circular Church and Institute Hall where the Ordinance of Secession was signed, and Williams remembered it to be the biggest blaze he would ever see in Charleston. Remembering the event in his memoir, Williams describes how "the sparks seemed to rain down as we ran." Thus, Williams' memoir serves as an eye-witness account of the chaos and fear created by the Great Fire.

After the War

Once the Confederates surrendered, life in South Carolina changed dramatically for Williams and his family. They were reunited under one roof; Alexander Williams and his family resided on Princess Street in Charleston for many years.

Williams' account of this era includes reflections about the "Black Code" or laws passed to restrict civil and social rights of freedmen. He wondered why, at least in his time when writing his memoir in the 20th century, one did not hear much about this, saying that perhaps "somebody is ashamed of it."

In 1876, Williams' employer asked him to vote for General Wade Hampton. Williams chose not to vote in the election at all, even though he heard the General speak: "Our only desire he said, was to save our dear old state from utter ruin. Then, raising his right hand to heaven he said these very words as near as I can recollect, "If I am elected governor, I swear to God that not one right or privilege that you now enjoy shall be taken from you!" Williams also noted that many of the promises that General Hampton made did not come to fruition and that, in fact, acts of disenfranchisement and Jim Crow laws were being enacted against blacks during this era.

Sometime in the 1880s, Williams moved to Vermont (he appears to have moved initially to Springfield VT) and soon sent for his second wife and children (several from his first marriage and perhaps some step children or children from his second wife)to join him. While not much is known about his life in Vermont, he and his eldest daughter Susan show up in the 1910 census, living in Lebanon, NH where they worked as

servants for the Carter family. In Vermont, both worked for author Thomas H. Thomas. They were listed in the 1920 United States Federal Census, living in Windsor with the Thomas Family.

Williams appears to have moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts in the 1920s with his daughter Susan, who married an African-American lawyer/dentist named William Alexander Cox. Cox was also heavily involved in the National Negro Business League.

Autobiography

After an illness weakened Williams' eyes and he feared going blind, he decided to record events from his past. He was also motivated in writing his memoir by the desire to remind future generations of African Americans of the cruel experience of slavery, a reason disclosed in the memoir's preface: "It is a remarkable fact that very many of the immediate descendants of those who passed through the trying ordeal of American slavery know nothing of the hardships through which their fathers came. Some reason for this may be found in the fact that those fathers hated to harrow the minds of their children by the recital of their cruel experiences of those dark days.... While it is sweet to forgive and forget, there are somethings that should never be forgotten. If this humble narrative will serve to cause the youth of my people to take a glance backward, the object of the writer will have been attained." Williams' memoir, written in 1914, uses pseudonyms for the majority of individuals and places of which he speaks. For example, the Ward, Bale, and Dane families he discusses in his memoir are likely fake names just as Williams himself used a

pseudonym in order to author his work. His memoir was eventually published in 1929 by Gold Mind Publishing Company in Boston, Massachusetts. It is likely the memoir was published with the help of Williams' grandson, William A. Cox Jr, the son of William Alexander Cox. In the 1930 Federal Census, William A. Cox, Jr. was listed as a "typesetter" so it was most likely his knowledge of the trade that assisted his grandfather in publishing the 1929 memoir. Whether as a typesetter or in some other capacity, William A. Cox Jr. appears to have run or somehow been involved with a small press known as the Gold Mind Printers in Boston around the years of 1928 to 1930. It is probable that it is the same printing company that published Williams' memoir, as the publisher named in the book, Gold Mind Publishing Company, was based in the same city and has a similar name. Thus, it is likely Williams received his grandson's help in publishing his memoir.

Williams continued to live with his family for several decades after publishing his memoir and died in Massachusetts in 1946.

Newton Collins

Newton Isaac Collins Sr. (February 11, 1826 – September 7, 1903) was an African-American freed slave from Alabama who moved to Travis County, Texas, in the 1840s, where he was re-enslaved. After the Emancipation Proclamation, Collins again received his freedom and became a businessman, land owner and community leader in southeastern Travis County.

Biography

His mother was an African-American slave; his father was their master, Silas Collins, who manumitted the young Collins at an early age and saw to it that he was educated and apprenticed in carpentry.

After his father's death in the 1840s, Collins moved to the area that is now Manor, Texas, where he was re-enslaved by a family named Parsons. In 1854, he married Sarah Elizabeth Harrington, a fellow literate slave on the Parson estate, with whom he eventually had eight children.

With the promulgation of the Emancipation Proclamation in Texas on June 19, 1865, Collins again received his freedom. He then developed a carpentry business constructing houses and churches around Travis County, Texas. Over the succeeding decades his success in business enabled him to buy land in eastern Travis County, including some 506 acres (205 ha) of farmland in Pilot Knob, Texas, near what is now McKinney Falls State Park.

As Collins and his adult children's families settled in the area, he built and furnished a one-room school and a Methodist church to serve the community, and he hired a teacher and preacher to operate them. Collins died in Austin on September 7, 1903, and was buried in the Collins Cemetery on his family land in Pilot Knob. Newton Collins Elementary School in Easton Park, Austin, is named after Collins. It is thought to be the first modern school in Central Texas named for a former slave.

Amanda America Dickson

Amanda America Dickson (November 20, 1849 – June 11, 1893) was a bi-racial socialite in Georgia who became known as one of the wealthiest African American women of the 19th century after inheriting a large estate from her white planter father.

Born into slavery, she was the child of David Dickson, a white planter, and Julia Frances Lewis (Dickson), a young enslaved woman of his who was thirteen when her daughter was born. Amanda was raised by Elizabeth Sholars Dickson, her white grandmother and legal mistress. She was educated and schooled in the social skills of her father's class, and he helped her to enjoy a life of privilege away from the harsh realities of slavery before emancipation following the Civil War. In her late 20s, Dickson attended the normal school of Atlanta University, a historically black college, from 1876 to 1878.

After her father's death in 1885, Amanda Dickson inherited his estate. His white relatives challenged the will but Dickson ultimately won a successful ruling in the case. His estate included 17,000 acres of land in Hancock and Washington counties in Georgia. She married twice: her first husband was white and their sons predominately white. Their wealth enabled them to marry well.

Early life and education

Amanda America Dickson was born into slavery in Hancock County, Georgia. Her enslaved mother, Julia Frances Lewis

Dickson, was just 13 when she was born. Her father, David Dickson, was a white planter who owned her mother; he was one of the eight wealthiest planters in the county. When he was 40 years old, David Dickson had raped 12-year-old Julia Dickson, and she became pregnant. After Amanda was weaned, she was taken from her enslaved mother and maternal grandmother, Rose, to be raised in the household of her white paternal grandmother and mistress, Elizabeth Sholars Dickson. As Amanda grew, her grandmother used her as a domestic servant.

Throughout Amanda's childhood, her father became wealthier and more famous, renowned for his innovative and successful farming techniques. David Dickson showed that farmers could profit from slave labor without having to resort to violence to keep them in submission. By 1861, he was known as the "Prince of Georgia Farmers," having contributed perhaps more than any other farmer in Georgia at that time to the prosperity of the region.

Amanda's father showered her with love and affection. Her mother was a household slave, assigned as David's housekeeper, and she was forced also to provide him with sex. Amanda benefited greatly from her father's social status, enabling her to live a life of relative privilege as an enslaved child.

Evidence suggests that David Dickson took charge of Amanda's education. In her white grandmother's household, she learned to read, write, and play the piano, unlike what was permitted for her enslaved relatives. Amanda also learned rules of social etiquette appropriate for the social standing of her father's side

of the family. She learned to dress in a modest, elegant fashion and how to present herself as a "lady". Amanda also learned from her father how to conduct business transactions responsibly and how to maintain and protect her finances after marriage.

In 1864, Amanda's grandmother Elizabeth Sholars Dickson died. Amanda and her grandmother Elizabeth had shared a particularly close relationship, with Amanda spending much time in her grandmother's room. Amanda was legally held as Elizabeth's slave until her death. Beginning in 1801, Georgia had prohibited slaveholders from independently freeing their slaves, requiring an act of legislature (seldom given), for each request. Therefore, Elizabeth and David Dickson had no means to manumit Amanda and keep her with them in Georgia until the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which abolished slavery and involuntary servitude, was ratified on December 6, 1865.

At the age of twenty-seven, Amanda chose to leave the security of her home at her father's plantation in Hancock County, Georgia to attend the normal school of Atlanta University, where she studied teaching from 1876 to 1878.

Marriages

In 1866 at the age of sixteen, Amanda America moved to a small plantation in Floyd County, Georgia near the city of Rome. She married (or lived as if she was married to) Charles Eubanks, a white first cousin and Civil War veteran. Because of anti-miscegenation laws in Georgia at the time, Amanda America and Charles, as an interracial couple, could not

legally marry in Georgia. Therefore, they either never officially married, or they married out of state before returning to Georgia (but there is no surviving proof of a legal marriage.)

They had two sons: Julian Henry (1866–1937) and Charles Green Eubanks (1870–c. 1900). Their mixed-race sons were predominately white and later married prominent members of Georgia society. Julian Henry Eubanks married Eva Walton, the daughter of George Walton, who is credited as one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

Charles Green Eubanks married Kate Holsey, the daughter of Bishop Lucius Holsey and his wife Harriet. After four years of being married to (or living as a married couple with) Charles Eubanks, Amanda left her husband and returned to her father's plantation in 1870, shortly after giving birth to her second son, Charles Green. Charles Eubanks died a few years later on July 31, 1873. David Dickson's wife, Clara Harris Dickson, died the next day.

Years after having completed her teaching degree, Amanda America married a second time, on July 14, 1892. Her second husband was Nathan Toomer from Perry, Georgia, and she legally was known as Amanda America Dickson Toomer. Nathan Toomer was a wealthy, educated mixed-race man of her class. He was the child of an enslaved black woman, Kit, and a wealthy white Toomer man who had settled in Houston County, Georgia in the 1850s. As a young man, Nathan had served as the personal assistant to Colonel Henry Toomer, and in that capacity learned the ways of white upper-class gentlemen. Amanda died on June 11, 1893, eleven months after they were married.

David Dickson's will

When David Dickson died suddenly on February 18, 1885, Amanda America Dickson inherited the majority of his vast estate, which included 17,000 acres of land. His will left his estate to her "sound judgment and unlimited discretion" and prohibited interference from anyone, including any husband that she may have. In what became known as the David Dickson Will Case, seventy-nine white relatives of David Dickson disputed the will in court, mainly arguing that David Dickson was not of a sound mind when he wrote the will, that he was "unduly influenced" by Amanda America and Julia Dickson, and that Amanda America was not his child.

On July 6, 1885, probate judge R. H. Lewis ruled in favor of the will. In November 1885, the trial in the Superior Court of Hancock County began, with the eventual ruling siding with Amanda America Dickson and her two sons. Then, in March 1886, the white relatives filed their appeal with the Supreme Court of Georgia. On October 11, 1886, chief justice James Jackson, and associate justices Samuel Hall and Mark Blanford heard the case following the appeal. James Jackson expressed his firm conviction against upholding the will, saying, "I would rather died in my place than uphold the will." A few days later he became ill with pneumonia and died.

Judge Logan E. Bleckley filled his vacancy and refused to hear the case again. Associate justices Samuel Hall and Mark Blanford remained to deliver the ruling regarding whether the white relatives would receive a new trial. Ultimately, eight months later on June 13, 1887, Samuel Hall and Mark Blanford of the Georgia Supreme Court also ruled in favor of

Amanda America and her two sons, formally settling the dispute of David Dickson's will. Citing the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the Georgia Supreme Court affirmed the lower court's decision, saying that the rights and privileges of a black woman and her children would be the same rights and privileges of a white concubine or an illegitimate white woman and her children. So, the same laws governed the rights and privileges of women of both races.

Life in Augusta, Georgia

The death of her father, David Dickson, on February 18, 1885 was a pivotal turning point in Amanda America's life. Immediately after his death, she took measures to protect herself legally. Also, in part to distance herself from her disgruntled white relatives whom David Dickson had left out of his will, she moved to Augusta, Georgia, which was a familiar city to her.

She arrived in Augusta in 1886 and purchased a large, seven-bedroom house at 452 Telfair Street, which was in a multiracial neighborhood. White Georgians generally viewed black citizens within the racial caste system, without regard for wealth or class.

But some were willing to accept children of wealthy planters, especially if mostly white. Dickson became a member of the elite black community in Augusta, Georgia. She was held in high esteem by those who came to know her because of her wealth, elegance, and intelligence.

Family ordeal

Amanda America Dickson spent the last eleven months of her life as the wife of Nathan Toomer, from Perry, Georgia, whom she married on July 14, 1892. Her health was fragile throughout her second marriage, as she had several health problems which required the continual attention of her family physician, Thomas D. Coleman.

By 1893, Amanda America's health had greatly improved, but a disturbing family ordeal would be the catalyst for the further deterioration of her health and eventual death. Her younger son, twenty-three-year-old Charles Dickson, who was married to Kate Holsey, became infatuated with stepsister Mamie Toomer, who was only fourteen years old. On March 10, 1893, Nathan and Amanda brought Mamie to the St. Francis School and Convent in Baltimore, Maryland, an order of black nuns, in an attempt to protect her from Charles Dickson's misguided attentions. Charles Dickson conspired with his brother-in-law Dunbar Walton, his sister-in-law Carrie Walton Wilson, and a hired man, Louis E. Frank, to kidnap Mamie Toomer. Their plan was foiled. Walton, Frank, and their lawyer, E. J. Waring, were indicted by the grand jury of Baltimore, Maryland for conspiracy to kidnap Mamie Toomer. Charles Dickson escaped without any legal ramifications for his actions.

Death

In June 1893, with the kidnapping drama (involving Mamie Toomer, Charles Dickson, and Charles Dickson's co-conspirators) behind them, Nathan and Amanda America

purchased two first-class tickets from a sales representative of the Pullman Palace Car Company to transport them from Baltimore, Maryland back to Augusta, Georgia. Because of racial discrimination, they were denied their first-class accommodations and direct, unimpeded travel to Augusta. The delayed travel to Augusta and the conditions in the Pullman car, most notably the rising temperature, became intolerable for Amanda America. As a result, her health quickly deteriorated. Dr. F. D. Kendall, who examined her on the morning of June 9, 1893, noted that her heart and lungs appeared to be fine, but that she was obviously very nervous and anxious to return home. Dr. Kendall gave her anodyne, a pain-relieving medication.

Nathan and a very ill Amanda America arrived back at their home in Augusta, Georgia between four and five in the afternoon on June 9, 1893. She was quickly tended to by Dr. Eugene Foster, in place of their family physician, Thomas D. Coleman, who was out of town. She was diagnosed with neurasthenia (general exhaustion of the nervous system), or Beard's disease. Symptoms of neurasthenia, as described by nineteenth-century physicians, include "sick headache, noises in the ear, atonic voice, deficient mental control, bad dreams, insomnia, nervous dyspepsia (disturbed digestion), heaviness of the loin and limb, flushing and fidgetiness, palpitations, vague pains and flying neuralgia (pain along a nerve), spinal irritation, uterine irritability, impotence, hopelessness, claustrophobia, and dread of contamination." Amanda America Dickson Toomer died on June 11, 1893, with "complications of diseases" being the cause of death listed on her death certificate.

Amanda America Dickson Toomer's funeral took place at the Trinity Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in Augusta, Georgia. Amanda America died without a will, which resulted in a legal battle after her death for control of her estate. Her mother, Julia Frances Lewis Dickson, and her second husband, Nathan Toomer, both petitioned in court to be designated the temporary administrator of her estate. Ultimately, Julia Dickson, Nathan Toomer, and Amanda America's younger son, Charles Dickson, settled the dispute over Amanda America's estate amicably out of court.

Nine months after Dickson's death, Nathan Toomer married Nina Pinchback, the daughter of P. B. S. Pinchback, the Reconstruction Era senator-elect from Louisiana. On December 26, 1894, they became parents to Jean Toomer. He became known as a Harlem Renaissance writer, noted for his modernist novel *Cane* (1923).

Representation in popular culture

A House Divided (2000) is the television movie that depicts the life of Amanda America Dickson. It stars Jennifer Beals as Dickson, Sam Waterston as David Dickson, LisaGay Hamilton as Julia Frances Lewis Dickson, and Shirley Douglas as Elizabeth Sholars Dickson.

Frederick Douglass

Frederick Douglass (born **Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey**, c. February 1817 – February 20, 1895) was an American social reformer, abolitionist, orator, writer, and

statesman. After escaping from slavery in Maryland, he became a national leader of the abolitionist movement in Massachusetts and New York, becoming famous for his oratory and incisive antislavery writings. Accordingly, he was described by abolitionists in his time as a living counterexample to slaveholders' arguments that slaves lacked the intellectual capacity to function as independent American citizens. Likewise, Northerners at the time found it hard to believe that such a great orator had once been a slave.

Douglass wrote three autobiographies, describing his experiences as a slave in his *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845), which became a bestseller and was influential in promoting the cause of abolition, as was his second book, *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855). Following the Civil War, Douglass was active campaigner for the rights of freed slaves and wrote his last autobiography, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*.

First published in 1881 and revised in 1892, three years before his death, the book covers events both during and after the Civil War. Douglass also actively supported women's suffrage, and held several public offices. Without his permission, Douglass became the first African-American nominated for Vice President of the United States as the running mate and Vice Presidential nominee of Victoria Woodhull, on the Equal Rights Party ticket.

Douglass believed in dialogue and in making alliances across racial and ideological divides, as well as in the liberal values of the U.S. Constitution. When radical abolitionists, under the motto "No Union with Slaveholders", criticized Douglass's

willingness to engage in dialogue with slave owners, he replied: "I would unite with anybody to do right and with nobody to do wrong."

Life as a slave

Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey was born into slavery on the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay in Talbot County, Maryland. The plantation was between Hillsboro and Cordova; his birthplace was likely his grandmother's cabin east of Tappers Corner, (38.8845°N 75.958°W) and west of Tuckahoe Creek.

In his first autobiography, Douglass stated: "I have no accurate knowledge of my age, never having seen any authentic record containing it." However, based on the extant records of Douglass's former owner, Aaron Anthony, historian Dickson J. Preston determined that Douglass was born in February 1818. Though the exact date of his birth is unknown, he chose to celebrate February 14 as his birthday, remembering that his mother called him her "Little Valentine."

Birth family

Douglass was of mixed race, which likely included Native American and African on his mother's side, as well as European. In contrast, his father was "almost certainly white", according to historian David W. Blight in his 2018 biography of Douglass. Douglass said his mother Harriet Bailey gave him his name Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey and, after he escaped to the North in September 1838, he took the surname Douglass, having already dropped his two middle names.

He later wrote of his earliest times with his mother:

The opinion was...whispered that my master was my father; but of the correctness of this opinion I know nothing. ... My mother and I were separated when I was but an infant. ... It is a common custom, in the part of Maryland from which I ran away, to part children from their mothers at a very early age. ... I do not recollect of ever seeing my mother by the light of day. She was with me in the night. She would lie down with me, and get me to sleep, but long before I waked she was gone.

After separation from his mother during infancy, young Frederick lived with his maternal grandmother Betsy Bailey, who was also a slave, and his maternal grandfather Isaac, who was free. Betsy would live until 1849. Frederick's mother remained on the plantation about 12 miles (19 km) away, only visiting Frederick a few times before her death when he was 7 years old.

Early learning and experience

The Auld family

At the age of 6, Frederick was separated from his grandparents and moved to the Wye House plantation, where Aaron Anthony worked as overseer. After Anthony died in 1826, Douglass was given to Lucretia Auld, wife of Thomas Auld, who sent him to serve Thomas' brother Hugh Auld in Baltimore. Douglass felt that he was lucky to be in the city, where he said slaves were almost freemen, compared to those on plantations.

When Douglass was about 12, Hugh Auld's wife Sophia began teaching him the alphabet. From the day he arrived, she saw to

it that Douglass was properly fed and clothed, and that he slept in a bed with sheets and a blanket. Douglass described her as a kind and tender-hearted woman, who treated him "as she supposed one human being ought to treat another." Hugh Auld disapproved of the tutoring, feeling that literacy would encourage slaves to desire freedom. Douglass later referred to this as the "first decidedly antislavery lecture" he had ever heard.

Under her husband's influence, Sophia came to believe that education and slavery were incompatible and one day snatched a newspaper away from Douglass. She stopped teaching him altogether and hid all potential reading materials, including her Bible, from him. In his autobiography, Douglass related how he learned to read from white children in the neighborhood, and by observing the writings of the men he worked with.

Douglass continued, secretly, to teach himself how to read and write. He later often said, "knowledge is the pathway from slavery to freedom." As Douglass began to read newspapers, pamphlets, political materials, and books of every description, this new realm of thought led him to question and condemn the institution of slavery. In later years, Douglass credited *The Columbian Orator*, an anthology that he discovered at about age 12, with clarifying and defining his views on freedom and human rights. First published in 1797, the book is a classroom reader, containing essays, speeches, and dialogues, to assist students in learning reading and grammar. He later learned that his mother had also been literate, about which he would later declare:

I am quite willing, and even happy, to attribute any love of letters I possess, and for which I have got—despite of prejudices—only too much credit, not to my admitted Anglo-Saxon paternity, but to the native genius of my sable, unprotected, and uncultivated mother—a woman, who belonged to a race whose mental endowments it is, at present, fashionable to hold in disparagement and contempt.

William Freeland

When Douglass was hired out to William Freeland, he taught other slaves on the plantation to read the New Testament at a weekly Sunday school. As word spread, the interest among slaves in learning to read was so great that in any week, more than 40 slaves would attend lessons. For about six months, their study went relatively unnoticed. While Freeland remained complacent about their activities, other plantation owners became incensed about their slaves being educated. One Sunday they burst in on the gathering, armed with clubs and stones, to disperse the congregation permanently.

Edward Covey

In 1833, Thomas Auld took Douglass back from Hugh ("[a]s a means of punishing Hugh," Douglass later wrote). Thomas sent Douglass to work for Edward Covey, a poor farmer who had a reputation as a "slave-breaker". He whipped Douglass so frequently that his wounds had little time to heal. Douglass later said the frequent whippings broke his body, soul, and spirit. The 16-year-old Douglass finally rebelled against the beatings, however, and fought back. After Douglass won a physical confrontation, Covey never tried to beat him again.

Recounting his beatings at Covey's farm in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*, Douglass described himself as "a man transformed into a brute!" Still, Douglass came to see his physical fight with Covey as life-transforming, and introduced the story in his autobiography as such: "You have seen how a man was made a slave; you shall see how a slave was made a man."

From slavery to freedom

Douglass first tried to escape from Freeland, who had hired him from his owner, but was unsuccessful. In 1837, Douglass met and fell in love with Anna Murray, a free black woman in Baltimore about five years his senior. Her free status strengthened his belief in the possibility of gaining his own freedom. Murray encouraged him and supported his efforts by aid and money.

On September 3, 1838, Douglass successfully escaped by boarding a northbound train of the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad. The area where he boarded was thought to be a short distance east of the train depot, in a recently developed neighborhood between the modern neighborhoods of Harbor East and Little Italy. This depot was at President and Fleet Streets, east of "The Basin" of the Baltimore harbor, on the northwest branch of the Patapsco River. Research cited in 2021, however, suggests that Douglass in fact boarded the train at the Canton Depot of the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad on Boston Street, in the Canton neighborhood of Baltimore, further east.

Young Douglass reached Havre de Grace, Maryland, in Harford County, in the northeast corner of the state, along the southwest shore of the Susquehanna River, which flowed into the Chesapeake Bay. Although this placed him only some 20 miles (32 km) from the Maryland–Pennsylvania state line, it was easier to continue by rail through Delaware, another slave state. Dressed in a sailor's uniform provided to him by Murray, who also gave him part of her savings to cover his travel costs, he carried identification papers and protection papers that he had obtained from a free black seaman.

Douglass crossed the wide Susquehanna River by the railroad's steam-ferry at Havre de Grace to Perryville on the opposite shore, in Cecil County, then continued by train across the state line to Wilmington, Delaware, a large port at the head of the Delaware Bay. From there, because the rail line was not yet completed, he went by steamboat along the Delaware River further northeast to the "Quaker City" of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, an anti-slavery stronghold. He continued to the safe house of noted abolitionist David Ruggles in New York City. His entire journey to freedom took less than 24 hours. Douglass later wrote of his arrival in New York City:

I have often been asked, how I felt when first I found myself on free soil. And my readers may share the same curiosity. There is scarcely anything in my experience about which I could not give a more satisfactory answer. A new world had opened upon me. If life is more than breath, and the "quick round of blood," I lived more in one day than in a year of my slave life. It was a time of joyous excitement which words can but tamely describe. In a letter written to a friend soon after reaching New York, I said: "I felt as one might feel upon escape from a den of

hungry lions." Anguish and grief, like darkness and rain, may be depicted; but gladness and joy, like the rainbow, defy the skill of pen or pencil.

Once Douglass had arrived, he sent for Murray to follow him north to New York. She brought the basics for them to set up a home. They were married on September 15, 1838, by a black Presbyterian minister, just eleven days after Douglass had reached New York. At first they adopted Johnson as their married name, to divert attention.

Abolitionist and preacher

- The couple settled in New Bedford, Massachusetts, (an abolitionist center, full of former slaves), in 1838, moving to Lynn, Massachusetts, in 1841. After meeting and staying with Nathan and Mary Johnson, they adopted Douglass as their married name: Douglass had grown up using his mother's surname of Bailey; after escaping slavery he had changed his surname first to Stanley and then to Johnson. In New Bedford, the latter was such a common name that he wanted one that was more distinctive, and asked Nathan Johnson to choose a suitable surname. Nathan suggested "Douglass", after having read the poem *The Lady of the Lake* by Walter Scott, in which two of the principal characters have the surname "Douglas".

Douglass thought of joining a white Methodist Church, but was disappointed, from the beginning, upon finding that it was segregated. Later, he joined the African Methodist Episcopal

Zion Church, an independent black denomination first established in New York City, which counted among its members Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman. He became a licensed preacher in 1839, which helped him to hone his oratorical skills. He held various positions, including steward, Sunday-school superintendent, and sexton. In 1840, Douglass delivered a speech in Elmira, New York, then a station on the Underground Railroad, in which a black congregation would form years later, becoming the region's largest church by 1940.

Douglass also joined several organizations in New Bedford, and regularly attended abolitionist meetings. He subscribed to William Lloyd Garrison's weekly newspaper, *The Liberator*. He later said that "no face and form ever impressed me with such sentiments [of the hatred of slavery] as did those of William Lloyd Garrison." So deep was this influence that in his last biography, Douglass said "his paper took a place in my heart second only to The Bible."

Garrison was likewise impressed with Douglass, and had written about his anti-colonialist stance in *The Liberator* as early as 1839. Douglass first heard Garrison speak in 1841, at a lecture that Garrison gave in Liberty Hall, New Bedford. At another meeting,

Douglass was unexpectedly invited to speak. After telling his story, Douglass was encouraged to become an anti-slavery lecturer. A few days later, Douglass spoke at the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society's annual convention, in Nantucket. Then 23 years old, Douglass conquered his nervousness and gave an eloquent speech about his rough life as a slave.

While living in Lynn, Douglass engaged in early protest against segregated transportation. In September 1841, at Lynn Central Square station, Douglass and friend James N. Buffumwere thrown off an Eastern Railroad train because Douglass refused to sit in the segregated railroad coach.

In 1843, Douglass joined other speakers in the American Anti-Slavery Society's "Hundred Conventions" project, a six-month tour at meeting halls throughout the eastern and midwestern United States. During this tour, slavery supporters frequently accosted Douglass.

At a lecture in Pendleton, Indiana, an angry mob chased and beat Douglass before a local Quaker family, the Hardys, rescued him. His hand was broken in the attack; it healed improperly and bothered him for the rest of his life. A stone marker in Falls Park in the Pendleton Historic District commemorates this event.

In 1847, Frederick Douglass explained to Garrison, "I have no love for America, as such; I have no patriotism. I have no country. What country have I? The Institutions of this Country do not know me—do not recognize me as a man."

Autobiography

Douglass's best-known work is his first autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, written during his time in Lynn, Massachusetts and published in 1845. At the time, some skeptics questioned whether a black man could have produced such an eloquent piece of literature. The book received generally positive reviews and became an immediate bestseller. Within three years, it had been reprinted

nine times, with 11,000 copies circulating in the United States. It was also translated into French and Dutch and published in Europe.

Douglass published three versions of his autobiography during his lifetime (and revised the third of these), each time expanding on the previous one. The 1845 *Narrative* was his biggest seller, and probably allowed him to raise the funds to gain his legal freedom the following year, as discussed below. In 1855, Douglass published *My Bondage and My Freedom*. In 1881, after the Civil War, Douglass published *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, which he revised in 1892.

Travels to Ireland and Great Britain

Douglass's friends and mentors feared that the publicity would draw the attention of his ex-owner, Hugh Auld, who might try to get his "property" back. They encouraged Douglass to tour Ireland, as many former slaves had done. Douglass set sail on the *Cambria* for Liverpool, England, on August 16, 1845. He traveled in Ireland as the Great Famine was beginning.

The feeling of freedom from American racial discrimination amazed Douglass:

Eleven days and a half gone and I have crossed three thousand miles of the perilous deep. Instead of a democratic government, I am under a monarchical government. Instead of the bright, blue sky of America, I am covered with the soft, grey fog of the Emerald Isle [Ireland]. I breathe, and lo! the chattel [slave] becomes a man. I gaze around in vain for one who will question my equal humanity, claim me as his slave, or offer me an insult. I employ a cab—I am seated beside white people—I

reach the hotel—I enter the same door—I am shown into the same parlour—I dine at the same table—and no one is offended ... I find myself regarded and treated at every turn with the kindness and deference paid to white people. When I go to church, I am met by no upturned nose and scornful lip to tell me, '*We don't allow niggers in here!*'

Still, Douglass was astounded by the extreme levels of poverty he encountered, much of it reminding him of his experiences in slavery. In a letter to William Lloyd Garrison, Douglass wrote "I see much here to remind me of my former condition, and I confess I should be ashamed to lift up my voice against American slavery, but that I know the cause of humanity is one the world over. He who really and truly feels for the American slave, cannot steel his heart to the woes of others; and he who thinks himself an abolitionist, yet cannot enter into the wrongs of others, has yet to find a true foundation for his anti-slavery faith."

He also met and befriended the Irish nationalist and strident abolitionist Daniel O'Connell, who was to be a great inspiration.

Douglass spent two years in Ireland and Great Britain, lecturing in churches and chapels. His draw was such that some facilities were "crowded to suffocation". One example was his hugely popular *London Reception Speech*, which Douglass delivered in May 1846 at Alexander Fletcher's Finsbury Chapel. Douglass remarked that in England he was treated not "as a color, but as a man."

In 1846, Douglass met with Thomas Clarkson, one of the last living British abolitionists, who had persuaded Parliament to

abolish slavery in Great Britain's colonies. During this trip Douglass became legally free, as British supporters led by Anna Richardson and her sister-in-law Ellen of Newcastle upon Tyne raised funds to buy his freedom from his American owner Thomas Auld. Many supporters tried to encourage Douglass to remain in England but, with his wife still in Massachusetts and three million of his black brethren in bondage in the United States, he returned to America in the spring of 1847, soon after the death of Daniel O'Connell.

In the 21st century, historical plaques were installed on buildings in Cork and Waterford, Ireland, and London to celebrate Douglass's visit: the first is on the Imperial Hotel in Cork and was unveiled on August 31, 2012; the second is on the façade of Waterford City Hall, unveiled on October 7, 2013.

It commemorates his speech there on October 9, 1845. The third plaque adorns Nell Gwynn House, South Kensington in London, at the site of an earlier house where Douglass stayed with the British abolitionist George Thompson.

Douglass spent time in Scotland and was appointed "Scotland's Antislavery agent." He made anti-slavery speeches and wrote letters back to the USA. He considered the city of Edinburgh to be elegant, grand and very welcoming. Maps of the places in the city that were important to his stay are held by the National Library of Scotland. A plaque and a mural on Gilmore Place in Edinburgh mark his stay there in 1846.

"A variety of collaborative projects are currently [in 2021] underway to commemorate Frederick Douglass's journey and visit to Ireland in the 19th century."

Return to the United States

After returning to the U.S. in 1847, using £500 (equivalent to $46,030 in 2019) given him by English supporters, Douglass started publishing his first abolitionist newspaper, the *North Star*, from the basement of the Memorial AME Zion Church in Rochester, New York. Originally, Pittsburgh journalist Martin Delany was co-editor but Douglass didn't feel he brought in enough subscriptions, and they parted ways. The *North Star*'s motto was "Right is of no Sex – Truth is of no Color – God is the Father of us all, and we are all brethren."

The AME Church and *North Star* vigorously opposed the mostly white American Colonization Society and its proposal to send blacks back to Africa. Douglass also soon split with Garrison, perhaps because the *North Star* competed with Garrison's *National Anti-Slavery Standard* and Marius Robinson's *Anti-Slavery Bugle*. Besides publishing the *North Star* and delivering speeches, Douglass also participated in the Underground Railroad. He and his wife provided lodging and resources in their home to more than four hundred escaped slaves.

Douglass also came to disagree with Garrison. Earlier Douglass had agreed with Garrison's position that the Constitution was pro-slavery, because of the three-fifths clause its compromises related to apportionment of Congressional seats, based on partial counting of slave populations with state totals; and protection of the international slave trade through 1807. Garrison had burned copies of the Constitution to express his opinion. However, Lysander Spooner published *The*

Unconstitutionality of Slavery (1846), which examined the United States Constitution as an anti-slavery document. Douglass's change of opinion about the Constitution and his splitting from Garrison around 1847 became one of the abolitionist movement's most notable divisions. Douglass angered Garrison by saying that the Constitution could and should be used as an instrument in the fight against slavery.

In September 1848, on the tenth anniversary of his escape, Douglass published an open letter addressed to his former master, Thomas Auld, berating him for his conduct, and inquiring after members of his family still held by Auld. In the course of the letter, Douglass adeptly transitions from formal and restrained to familiar and then to impassioned. At one point he is the proud parent, describing his improved circumstances and the progress of his own four young children. But then he dramatically shifts tone:

Oh! sir, a slaveholder never appears to me so completely an agent of hell, as when I think of and look upon my dear children. It is then that my feelings rise above my control. ... The grim horrors of slavery rise in all their ghastly terror before me, the wails of millions pierce my heart, and chill my blood. I remember the chain, the gag, the bloody whip, the deathlike gloom overshadowing the broken spirit of the fettered bondman, the appalling liability of his being torn away from wife and children, and sold like a beast in the market.

In a graphic passage, Douglass asked Auld how he would feel if Douglass had come to take away his daughter Amanda as a slave, treating her the way he and members of his family had been treated by Auld. Yet in his conclusion Douglass shows his

focus and benevolence, stating that he has "no malice towards him personally," and asserts that, "there is no roof under which you would be more safe than mine, and there is nothing in my house which you might need for comfort, which I would not readily grant. Indeed, I should esteem it a privilege, to set you an example as to how mankind ought to treat each other."

Women's rights

In 1848, Douglass was the only African American to attend the Seneca Falls Convention, the first women's rights convention, in upstate New York. Elizabeth Cady Stanton asked the assembly to pass a resolution asking for women's suffrage. Many of those present opposed the idea, including influential Quakers James and Lucretia Mott. Douglass stood and spoke eloquently in favor of women's suffrage; he said that he could not accept the right to vote as a black man if women could not also claim that right. He suggested that the world would be a better place if women were involved in the political sphere.

In this denial of the right to participate in government, not merely the degradation of woman and the perpetuation of a great injustice happens, but the maiming and repudiation of one-half of the moral and intellectual power of the government of the world.

After Douglass's powerful words, the attendees passed the resolution.

In the wake of the Seneca Falls Convention, Douglass used an editorial in *The North Star* to press the case for women's rights. He recalled the "marked ability and dignity" of the proceedings,

and briefly conveyed several arguments of the convention and feminist thought at the time.

On the first count, Douglass acknowledged the "decorum" of the participants in the face of disagreement. In the remainder, he discussed the primary document that emerged from the conference, a Declaration of Sentiments, and the "infant" feminist cause. Strikingly, he expressed the belief that "[a] discussion of the rights of animals would be regarded with far more complacency...than would be a discussion of the rights of women," and Douglass noted the link between abolitionism and feminism, the overlap between the communities.

His opinion as the editor of a prominent newspaper carried weight, and he stated the position of the *North Star* explicitly: "We hold woman to be justly entitled to all we claim for man." This letter, written a week after the convention, reaffirmed the first part of the paper's slogan, "right is of no sex."

After the Civil War, when the 15th Amendment giving Blacks the right to vote was being debated, Douglass split with the Stanton-led faction of the women's rights movement. Douglass supported the amendment, which would grant suffrage to black men. Stanton opposed the 15th Amendment because it limited the expansion of suffrage to black men; she predicted its passage would delay for decades the cause for women's right to vote. Stanton argued that American women and black men should band together to fight for universal suffrage, and opposed any bill that split the issues. Douglass and Stanton both knew that there was not yet enough male support for women's right to vote, but that an amendment giving black men the vote could pass in the late 1860s. Stanton wanted to

attach women's suffrage to that of black men so that her cause would be carried to success.

Douglass thought such a strategy was too risky, that there was barely enough support for black men's suffrage. He feared that linking the cause of women's suffrage to that of black men would result in failure for both. Douglass argued that white women, already empowered by their social connections to fathers, husbands, and brothers, at least vicariously had the vote. African-American women, he believed, would have the same degree of empowerment as white women once African-American men had the vote. Douglass assured the American women that at no time had he ever argued against women's right to vote.

Ideological refinement

Meanwhile, in 1851, Douglass merged the *North Star* with Gerrit Smith's *Liberty Party Paper* to form *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, which was published until 1860.

On July 5, 1852, Douglass delivered an address to the ladies of the Rochester Anti-Slavery Sewing Society. This speech eventually became known as "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?"; one biographer called it "perhaps the greatest antislavery oration ever given." In 1853, he was a prominent attendee of the radical abolitionist National African American Convention in Rochester. Douglass's was one of five names attached to the address of the convention to the people of the United States published under the title, *The Claims of Our Common Cause*, along with Amos Noë Freeman, James Monroe Whitfield, Henry O. Wagoner, and George Boyer Vashon.

Like many abolitionists, Douglass believed that education would be crucial for African Americans to improve their lives; he was an early advocate for school desegregation. In the 1850s, Douglass observed that New York's facilities and instruction for African-American children were vastly inferior to those for whites. Douglass called for court action to open all schools to all children. He said that full inclusion within the educational system was a more pressing need for African Americans than political issues such as suffrage.

John Brown

On March 12, 1859, Douglass met with radical abolitionists John Brown, George DeBaptiste, and others at William Webb's house in Detroit to discuss emancipation. Douglass met Brown again when Brown visited his home two months before leading the raid on Harpers Ferry. Brown penned his Provisional Constitution during his two-week stay with Douglass. Also staying with Douglass for over a year was Shields Green, a fugitive slave that Douglass was helping, as he often did.

The secret meeting in the Chambersburg stone quarry

Shortly before the raid, Douglass, taking Green with him, travelled from Rochester, via New York City, to Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, John Brown's communications headquarters. He was recognized there by Blacks, who asked him for a lecture. Douglass agreed, although he said his only topic was slavery. John Brown, incognito, sat in the audience; Shields Green joined him on the stage. A white reporter, referring to "Nigger Democracy", called it a "flaming address" by "the notorious Negro Orator".

There, in an abandoned stone quarry for secrecy, Douglass and Green met with Brown and John Henri Kagi, to discuss the raid. After discussions lasting, as Douglass put it, "a day and a night", he disappointed Brown by declining to join him, considering the mission suicidal. To Douglass's surprise, Green went with Brown instead of returning to Rochester with Douglass. Anne Brown said that Green told her that Douglass promised to pay him on his return, but David Blight called this "much more ex post facto bitterness than reality.

Almost all that is known about this incident comes from Douglass. It is clear that it was of immense importance to him, both as a turning point in his life—not accompanying John Brown—and its importance in his public image. The meeting was not revealed by Douglass for 20 years. He first disclosed it in his speech on John Brown at Storer College in 1881, trying unsuccessfully to raise money to support a John Brown professorship at Storer, to be held by a Black man. He again referred to it stunningly in his last *Autobiography.*

After the raid, which took place between October 16 and 18, 1859, Douglass was accused both of supporting Brown and of not supporting him enough. He was nearly arrested on a Virginia warrant, and fled for a brief time to Canada before proceeding onward to England on a previously-planned lecture tour, arriving near the end of November. During his lecture tour of Great Britain, on March 26, 1860, Douglass delivered a speech before the Scottish Anti-Slavery Society in Glasgow, "The Constitution of the United States: Is It Pro-Slavery or Antislavery?", outlining his views on the American Constitution. That month, on the 13th, Douglass's youngest daughter Annie died in Rochester, New York, just days shy of

her 11th birthday. Douglass sailed back from England the following month, traveling through Canada to avoid detection.

Douglass's Storer College address (1881)

Years later, in 1881, Douglass shared a stage at Storer College in Harpers Ferry with Andrew Hunter, the prosecutor who secured Brown's conviction and execution. Hunter congratulated Douglass.

Photography

Douglass considered photography very important in ending slavery and racism, and believed that the camera would not lie, even in the hands of a racist white, as photographs were an excellent counter to the many racist caricatures, particularly in blackface minstrelsy. He was the most photographed American of the 19th century, consciously using photography to advance his political views. He never smiled, specifically so as not to play into the racist caricature of a happy slave. He tended to look directly into the camera to confront the viewer, with a stern look.

Religious views

As a child, Douglass was exposed to a number of religious sermons, and in his youth, he sometimes heard Sophia Auld reading the Bible. In time, he became interested in literacy; he began reading and copying bible verses, and he eventually converted to Christianity. He described this approach in his last biography, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*:

I was not more than thirteen years old, when in my loneliness and destitution I longed for some one to whom I could go, as to a father and protector. The preaching of a white Methodist minister, named Hanson, was the means of causing me to feel that in God I had such a friend. He thought that all men, great and small, bond and free, were sinners in the sight of God: that they were by nature rebels against His government; and that they must repent of their sins, and be reconciled to God through Christ. I cannot say that I had a very distinct notion of what was required of me, but one thing I did know well: I was wretched and had no means of making myself otherwise.

I consulted a good old colored man named Charles Lawson, and in tones of holy affection he told me to pray, and to "cast all my care upon God." This I sought to do; and though for weeks I was a poor, broken-hearted mourner, traveling through doubts and fears, I finally found my burden lightened, and my heart relieved. I loved all mankind, slaveholders not excepted, though I abhorred slavery more than ever. I saw the world in a new light, and my great concern was to have everybody converted. My desire to learn increased, and especially, did I want a thorough acquaintance with the contents of the Bible.

Douglass was mentored by Rev. Charles Lawson, and, early in his activism, he often included biblical allusions and religious metaphors in his speeches. Although a believer, he strongly criticized religious hypocrisy and accused slaveholders of *wickedness*, lack of morality, and failure to follow the Golden Rule. In this sense, Douglass distinguished between the "Christianity of Christ" and the "Christianity of America" and considered religious slaveholders and clergymen who defended

slavery as the most brutal, sinful, and cynical of all who represented "wolves in sheep's clothing".

Notably, in a famous oration given in the Corinthian Hall of Rochester, he sharply criticized the attitude of religious people who kept silent about slavery, and held that religious ministers committed a *blasphemy* when they taught it as sanctioned by religion. He considered that a law passed to support slavery was "one of the grossest infringements of Christian Liberty" and said that pro-slavery clergymen within the American Church "stripped the love of God of its beauty, and leave the throne of religion a huge, horrible, repulsive form", and "an abomination in the sight of God".

Of ministers like John Chase Lord, Leonard Elijah Lathrop, Ichabod Spencer, and Orville Dewey, he said that they taught, against the Scriptures, that "we ought to obey man's law before the law of God". He further asserted, "in speaking of the American church, however, let it be distinctly understood that I mean the great mass of the religious organizations of our land. There are exceptions, and I thank God that there are. Noble men may be found, scattered all over these Northern States ... Henry Ward Beecher of Brooklyn, Samuel J. May of Syracuse, and my esteemed friend [Robert R. Raymonde]".

He maintained that "upon these men lies the duty to inspire our ranks with high religious faith and zeal, and to cheer us on in the great mission of the slave's redemption from his chains". In addition, he called religious people to embrace abolitionism, stating, "let the religious press, the pulpit, the Sunday school, the conference meeting, the great ecclesiastical, missionary, Bible and tract associations of the land array their immense

powers against slavery and slave-holding; and the whole system of crime and blood would be scattered to the winds."

During his visits to the United Kingdom between 1846 and 1848, Douglass asked British Christians never to support American churches that permitted slavery, and he expressed his happiness to know that a group of ministers in Belfast had refused to admit slaveholders as members of the Church.

On his return to the United States, Douglass founded the *North Star*, a weekly publication with the motto "Right is of no sex, Truth is of no color, God is the Father of us all, and we are all Brethren." Douglass later wrote a letter to his former slaveholder, in which he denounced him for leaving Douglass's family illiterate:

Your wickedness and cruelty committed in this respect on your fellow creatures, are greater than all the stripes you have laid upon my back or theirs. It is an outrage upon the soul, a war upon the immortal spirit, and one for which you must give account at the bar of our common Father and Creator.

- —*Letter to His Old Master. To my Old Master Thomas Auld.*

Sometimes considered a precursor of a non-denominational liberation theology, Douglass was a deeply spiritual man, as his home continues to show. The fireplace mantle features busts of two of his favorite philosophers, David Friedrich Strauss, author of "The Life of Jesus", and Ludwig Feuerbach, author of "The Essence of Christianity". In addition to several Bibles and books about various religions in the library, images of angels and Jesus are displayed, as well as interior and

exterior photographs of Washington's Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church. Throughout his life, Douglass had linked that individual experience with social reform, and like other Christian abolitionists, he followed practices such as abstaining from tobacco, alcohol and other substances that he believed corrupted body and soul.

Civil War years

Before the Civil War

By the time of the Civil War, Douglass was one of the most famous black men in the country, known for his orations on the condition of the black race and on other issues such as women's rights. His eloquence gathered crowds at every location. His reception by leaders in England and Ireland added to his stature.

Fight for emancipation and suffrage

Douglass and the abolitionists argued that because the aim of the Civil War was to end slavery, African Americans should be allowed to engage in the fight for their freedom. Douglass publicized this view in his newspapers and several speeches. In August 1861 he published an account of the First Battle of Bull Run, noting that some blacks were already in the Confederate ranks. A few weeks later, Douglass brought the subject up again, quoting a witness to the battle who said they saw black Confederates "with muskets on their shoulders and bullets in their pockets." Douglass conferred with President Abraham Lincoln in 1863 on the treatment of black soldiers,

and with President Andrew Johnson on the subject of black suffrage. President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which took effect on January 1, 1863, declared the freedom of all slaves in Confederate-held territory. (Slaves in Union-held areas were not covered by this war-measures act; slaves in Union-held areas and Northern states were freed with the adoption of the 13th Amendment on December 6, 1865.) Douglass described the spirit of those awaiting the proclamation: "We were waiting and listening as for a bolt from the sky ... we were watching ... by the dim light of the stars for the dawn of a new day ... we were longing for the answer to the agonizing prayers of centuries."

During the U.S. Presidential Election of 1864, Douglass supported John C. Frémont, who was the candidate of the abolitionist Radical Democracy Party. Douglass was disappointed that President Lincoln did not publicly endorse suffrage for black freedmen. Douglass believed that since African-American men were fighting for the Union in the American Civil War, they deserved the right to vote.

With the North no longer obliged to return slaves to their owners in the South, Douglass fought for equality for his people. He made plans with Lincoln to move liberated slaves out of the South. During the war, Douglass also helped the Union cause by serving as a recruiter for the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment. His eldest son, Charles Douglass, joined the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, but was ill for much of his service. Lewis Douglass fought at the Battle of Fort Wagner. Another son, Frederick Douglass Jr., also served as a recruiter.

After Lincoln's death

The post-war (1865) ratification of the 13th Amendment outlawed slavery. The 14th Amendment provided for citizenship and equal protection under the law. The 15th Amendment protected all citizens from being discriminated against in voting because of race.

On April 14, 1876, Douglass delivered the keynote speech at the unveiling of the Emancipation Memorial in Washington's Lincoln Park. He spoke frankly about Lincoln, noting what he perceived as both positive and negative attributes of the late President. Calling Lincoln "the white man's president", Douglass criticized Lincoln's tardiness in joining the cause of emancipation, noting that Lincoln initially opposed the expansion of slavery but did not support its elimination. But Douglass also asked, "Can any colored man, or any white man friendly to the freedom of all men, ever forget the night which followed the first day of January 1863, when the world was to see if Abraham Lincoln would prove to be as good as his word?" He also said: "Though Mr. Lincoln shared the prejudices of his white fellow-countrymen against the Negro, it is hardly necessary to say that in his heart of hearts he loathed and hated slavery ..."

The crowd, roused by his speech, gave Douglass a standing ovation. Lincoln's widow Mary Lincoln supposedly gave Lincoln's favorite walking-stick to Douglass in appreciation. That walking-stick still rests in his final residence, "Cedar Hill", now preserved as the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site.

After delivering the speech, Frederick Douglass immediately wrote to the National Republican newspaper in Washington (which published five days later, April 19), criticizing the statue's design and suggesting the park could be improved by more dignified monuments of free Black people. "The negro here, though rising, is still on his knees and nude," Douglass wrote. "What I want to see before I die is a monument representing the negro, not couchant on his knees like a four-footed animal, but erect on his feet like a man."

Reconstruction era

After the Civil War, Douglass continued to work for equality for African-Americans and women. Due to his prominence and activism during the war, Douglass received several political appointments. He served as president of the Reconstruction-era Freedman's Savings Bank.

Meanwhile, white insurgents had quickly arisen in the South after the war, organizing first as secret vigilante groups, including the Ku Klux Klan. Armed insurgency took different forms. Powerful paramilitary groups included the White League and the Red Shirts, both active during the 1870s in the Deep South. They operated as "the military arm of the Democratic Party", turning out Republican officeholders and disrupting elections. Starting 10 years after the war, Democrats regained political power in every state of the former Confederacy and began to reassert white supremacy. They enforced this by a combination of violence, late 19th-century laws imposing segregation and a concerted effort to disfranchise African Americans. New labor and criminal laws also limited their freedom.

To combat these efforts, Douglass supported the presidential campaign of Ulysses S. Grant in 1868. In 1870, Douglass started his last newspaper, the *New National Era*, attempting to hold his country to its commitment to equality. President Grant sent a Congressionally sponsored commission, accompanied by Douglass, on a mission to the West Indies to investigate if the annexation of Santo Domingo would be good for the United States. Grant believed annexation would help relieve the violent situation in the South by allowing African Americans their own state. Douglass and the commission favored annexation, however, Congress remained opposed to annexation. Douglass criticized Senator Charles Sumner, who opposed annexation, stating if Sumner continued to oppose annexation he would "regard him as the worst foe the colored race has on this continent."

After the midterm elections, Grant signed the Civil Rights Act of 1871 (also known as the Klan Act), and the second and third Enforcement Acts. Grant used their provisions vigorously, suspending *habeas corpus* in South Carolina and sending troops there and into other states. Under his leadership over 5,000 arrests were made. Grant's vigor in disrupting the Klan made him unpopular among many whites, but earned praise from Douglass. A Douglass associate wrote that African Americans "will ever cherish a grateful remembrance of [Grant's] name, fame and great services."

In 1872, Douglass became the first African American nominated for Vice President of the United States, as Victoria Woodhull's running mate on the Equal Rights Party ticket. He was nominated without his knowledge. Douglass neither campaigned for the ticket nor acknowledged that he had been

nominated. In that year, he was presidential elector at large for the State of New York, and took that state's votes to Washington, D.C.

However, in early June of that year, Douglass's third Rochester home, on South Avenue, burned down; arson was suspected. There was extensive damage to the house, its furnishings, and the grounds; in addition, sixteen volumes of the *North Star* and *Frederick Douglass' Paper* were lost. Douglass then moved to Washington, D.C. Throughout the Reconstruction era, Douglass continued speaking, emphasizing the importance of work, voting rights and actual exercise of suffrage. His speeches for the twenty-five years following the war emphasized work to counter the racism that was then prevalent in unions. In a November 15, 1867, speech he said "A man's rights rest in three boxes. The ballot box, jury box and the cartridge box. Let no man be kept from the ballot box because of his color. Let no woman be kept from the ballot box because of her sex." Douglass spoke at many colleges around the country, including Bates College in Lewiston, Maine, in 1873.

In 1881, Douglass delivered at Storer College, in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, a speech praising John Brown and revealing unknown information about their relationship, including their meeting in an abandoned stone quarry near Chambersburg shortly before the raid.

Family life

Douglass and Anna Murray had five children: Rosetta Douglass, Lewis Henry Douglass, Frederick Douglass Jr.,

Charles Remond Douglass, and Annie Douglass (died at the age of ten). Charles and Rosetta helped produce his newspapers.

Anna Douglass remained a loyal supporter of her husband's public work. His relationships with Julia Griffiths and OttilieAssing, two women with whom he was professionally involved, caused recurring speculation and scandals. Assing was a journalist recently immigrated from Germany, who first visited Douglass in 1856 seeking permission to translate *My Bondage and My Freedom* into German. Until 1872, she often stayed at his house "for several months at a time" as his "intellectual and emotional companion."

Assing held Anna Douglass "in utter contempt" and was vainly hoping that Douglass would separate from his wife. Douglass biographer David W. Blight concludes that Assing and Douglass "were probably lovers." Though Douglass and Assing are widely believed to have had an intimate relationship, the surviving correspondence contains no proof of such a relationship.

After Anna died in 1882, in 1884 Douglass married again, to Helen Pitts, a white suffragist and abolitionist from Honeoye, New York. Pitts was the daughter of Gideon Pitts Jr., an abolitionist colleague and friend of Douglass's. A graduate of Mount Holyoke College (then called Mount Holyoke Female Seminary), Pitts worked on a radical feminist publication named *Alpha* while living in Washington, D.C. She later worked as Douglass's secretary.

Assing, who had depression and was diagnosed with incurable breast cancer, committed suicide in France in 1884 after hearing of the marriage. Upon her death, Assing bequeathed

Douglass $13,000, albums, and his choice of books from her library.

The marriage of Douglass and Pitts provoked a storm of controversy, since Pitts was both white and nearly 20 years younger. Her family stopped speaking to her; his children considered the marriage a repudiation of their mother. But feminist Elizabeth Cady Stanton congratulated the couple. Douglass responded to the criticisms by saying that his first marriage had been to someone the color of his mother, and his second to someone the color of his father.

Final years in Washington, D.C.

The Freedman's Savings Bank went bankrupt on June 29, 1874, just a few months after Douglass became its president in late March.

During that same economic crisis, his final newspaper, *The New National Era*, failed in September. When Republican Rutherford B. Hayes was elected president, he named Douglass as United States Marshal for the District of Columbia, the first person of color to be so named. The Senate voted to confirm him on March 17, 1877. Douglass accepted the appoint, which helped assure his family's financial security. During his tenure, Douglass was urged by his supporters to resign from his commission, since he was never asked to introduce visiting foreign dignitaries to the President, which is one of the usual duties of that post. However, Douglass believed that no covert racism was implied by the omission, and stated that he was always warmly welcomed in presidential circles.

In 1877, Douglass visited his former slavemaster Thomas Auld on his deathbed, and the two men reconciled. Douglass had met Auld's daughter, Amanda Auld Sears, some years prior. She had requested the meeting and had subsequently attended and cheered one of Douglass's speeches. Her father complimented her for reaching out to Douglass. The visit also appears to have brought closure to Douglass, although some criticized his effort.

That same year, Douglass bought the house that was to be the family's final home in Washington, D.C., on a hill above the Anacostia River. He and Anna named it *Cedar Hill* (also spelled *CedarHill*). They expanded the house from 14 to 21 rooms, and included a china closet. One year later, Douglass purchased adjoining lots and expanded the property to 15 acres (61,000 m). The home is now preserved as the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site.

In 1881, Douglass published the final edition of his autobiography, *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*. That year he was appointed as Recorder of Deeds for the District of Columbia. His wife Anna Murray Douglass died in 1882, leaving the widower devastated. After a period of mourning, Douglass found new meaning from working with activist Ida B. Wells. He remarried in 1884, as mentioned above.

Douglass also continued his speaking engagements and travel, both in the United States and abroad. With new wife Helen, Douglass traveled to England, Ireland, France, Italy, Egypt and Greece from 1886 to 1887. He became known for advocating Irish Home Rule and supported Charles Stewart Parnell in Ireland.

In addition to his travel abroad during those years, he lectured in small towns in the United States. On December 28, 1885, the aging orator spoke to the literary society in Rising Sun, a town in northeastern Maryland below the Mason–Dixon line. The program, "The Self-Made Man," attracted a large audience including students from Lincoln University in Chester County, PA, the Oxford Press reported. "Mr. Douglass is growing old and has lost much of his fire and vigor of mind as well as body, but he is still able to interest an audience. He is a remarkable man and is a bright example of the capability of the colored race, even under the blighting influence of slavery, from which he emerged and became one of the distinguished citizens of the country," the Chester County PA newspaper remarked.

At the 1888 Republican National Convention, Douglass became the first African American to receive a vote for President of the United States in a major party's roll call vote. That year, Douglass spoke at Claflin College, a historically black college in Orangeburg, South Carolina, and the state's oldest such institution.

Many African Americans, called Exodusters, escaped the Klan and racially discriminatory laws in the South by moving to Kansas, where some formed all-black towns to have a greater level of freedom and autonomy. Douglass did not favor this, nor the Back-to-Africa movement. He thought the latter resembled the American Colonization Society which he had opposed in his youth. In 1892, at an Indianapolis conference convened by Bishop Henry McNeal Turner, Douglass spoke out against the separatist movements, urging blacks to stick it out. He made similar speeches as early as 1879, and was criticized both by fellow leaders and some audiences, who even booed

him for this position. Speaking in Baltimore in 1894, Douglass said, "I hope and trust all will come out right in the end, but the immediate future looks dark and troubled. I cannot shut my eyes to the ugly facts before me."

President Harrison appointed Douglass as the United States's minister resident and consul-general to the Republic of Haiti and Chargé d'affaires for Santo Domingo in 1889. but Douglass resigned the commission in July 1891 when it became apparent that the American President was intent upon gaining permanent access to Haitian territory regardless of that country's desires. In 1892, Haiti made Douglass a co-commissioner of its pavilion at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

In 1892, Douglass constructed rental housing for blacks, now known as Douglass Place, in the Fells Point area of Baltimore. The complex still exists, and in 2003 was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Death

On February 20, 1895, Douglass attended a meeting of the National Council of Women in Washington, D.C. During that meeting, he was brought to the platform and received a standing ovation. Shortly after he returned home, Douglass died of a massive heart attack. He was 77.

His funeral was held at the Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church. Thousands of people passed by his coffin to show their respect. Although Douglass had attended several churches in the nation's capital, he had a pew here and had

donated two standing candelabras when this church had moved to a new building in 1886. He also gave many lectures there, including his last major speech, "The Lesson of the Hour."

Douglass's coffin was transported to Rochester, New York, where he had lived for 25 years, longer than anywhere else in his life. He was buried next to Anna in the Douglass family plot of Mount Hope Cemetery. Helen was also buried there in 1903.

Works

Writings

- 1845. *A Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (first autobiography).
- 1853. "The Heroic Slave." Pp. 174–239 in *Autographs for Freedom*, edited by Julia Griffiths. Boston: Jewett and Company.
- 1855. *My Bondage and My Freedom* (second autobiography).
- 1881 (revised 1892). *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (third and final autobiography).
- 1847–1851. *The North Star*, an abolitionist newspaper founded and edited by Douglass. He merged the paper with another, creating the *Frederick Douglass' Paper*.
- 2012. *In the Words of Frederick Douglass: Quotations from Liberty's Champion*, edited by John R. McKivigan and Heather L. Kaufman. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. ISBN 978-0-8014-4790-7.

Speeches

- 1841. "The Church and Prejudice"
- 1852. "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" In 2020, National Public Radio produced a video of descendants of Douglass reading excerpts from the speech.
- 1859. *Self-Made Men.*
- 1863, July 6. "Speech at National Hall, for the Promotion of Colored Enlistments."
- 1881. *John Brown. An address by Frederick Douglass, at the fourteenth anniversary of Storer College, Harper's Ferry, West Virginia, May 30, 1881. Dover, New Hampshire. 1881.*

Legacy and honors

- Roy Finkenbine argues:

The most influential African American of the nineteenth century, Douglass made a career of agitating the American conscience.

He spoke and wrote on behalf of a variety of reform causes: women's rights, temperance, peace, land reform, free public education, and the abolition of capital punishment. But he devoted the bulk of his time, immense talent, and boundless energy to ending slavery and gaining equal rights for African Americans.

These were the central concerns of his long reform career. Douglass understood that the struggle for emancipation and

equality demanded forceful, persistent, and unyielding agitation. And he recognized that African Americans must play a conspicuous role in that struggle. Less than a month before his death, when a young black man solicited his advice to an African American just starting out in the world, Douglass replied without hesitation: "Agitate! Agitate! Agitate!"

The Episcopal Church remembers Douglass with a Lesser Feast annually on its liturgical calendar for February 20, the anniversary of his death.

Many public schools have also been named in his honor. Douglass still has living descendants today, such as Ken Morris, who is also a descendant of Booker T. Washington. Other honors and remembrances include:

- In 1871, a bust of Douglass was unveiled at Sibley Hall, University of Rochester.
- In 1895, the first hospital for Blacks in Philadelphia, PA was named the Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital. Black medical professionals, excluded from other facilities, were trained and employed there. In 1948, it merged to form Mercy-Douglass Hospital.
- In 1899, a statue of Frederick Douglass was unveiled in Rochester, New York, making Douglass the first African-American to be so memorialized in the country.
- In 1921, members of the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity (the first African-American intercollegiate fraternity) designated Frederick Douglass as an honorary member. Douglass thus became the only man to receive an honorary membership posthumously.

- The Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge, sometimes referred to as the South Capitol Street Bridge, just south of the US Capitol in Washington, D.C., was built in 1950 and named in his honor.
- In 1962, his home in Anacostia (Washington, D.C.) became part of the National Park System, and in 1988 was designated the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site.
- In 1965, the United States Postal Service honored Douglass with a stamp in the Prominent Americans series.
- In 1999, Yale University established the Frederick Douglass Book Prize for works in the history of slavery and abolition, in his honor. The annual $25,000 prize is administered by the Gilder Lehrman Institute for American History and the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at Yale.
- In 2002, scholar MolefiKete Asante named Frederick Douglass to his list of *100 Greatest African Americans*.
- In 2003, Douglass Place, the rental housing units that Douglass built in Baltimore in 1892 for blacks, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- In 2007, the former Troup–Howell bridge, which carried Interstate 490 over the Genesee River in Rochester, was redesigned and renamed the Frederick Douglass – Susan B. Anthony Memorial Bridge.

- In 2010, the Frederick Douglass Memorial was unveiled at Frederick Douglass Circle at the northwest corner of Central Park in New York City.
- In 2010, the New York Writers Hall of Fame inducted Douglass in its inaugural class.
- On June 12, 2011, Talbot County, Maryland, installed a seven-foot (2-meter) bronze statue of Douglass on the lawn of the county courthouse in Easton, Maryland.
- On June 19, 2013, a statue of Douglass by Maryland artist Steven Weitzman was unveiled in the United States Capitol Visitor Center as part of the National Statuary Hall Collection, the first statue representing the District of Columbia.
- On September 15, 2014, under the leadership of Governor Martin O'Malley a portrait of Frederick Douglass was unveiled at his official residence in Annapolis, MD. This painting, by artist Simmie Knox, is the first African-American portrait to grace the walls of Government House. Commissioned by Eddie C. Brown, founder of Brown Capital Management, LLC, the painting was presented at a reception by the Governor.
- On January 7, 2015, as a parting gift in honor of Governor Martin O'Malley's last Board of Public Works a portrait of Frederick Douglass was gifted to him by Peter Franchot. Two editions of this artwork, by artist Benjamin Jancewicz, were purchased from GalerieMyrtis by Peter Franchot and his wife Ann both as a gift for the Governor as well as to add to their own collection. The Governor's edition now hangs in his office.

- In November 2015, the University of Maryland dedicated Frederick Douglass Plaza, an outdoor space where visitors can read quotes and see a bronze statue of Douglass.
- On October 18, 2016, the Council of the District of Columbia voted that the city's new name as a State is to be "Washington, D.C.", and that "D.C." is to stand for "Douglass Commonwealth."
- On April 3, 2017, the United States Mint began issuing quarters with an image of Frederick Douglass on the reverse, with the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site in the background. The coin is part of the America the Beautiful Quarters series.
- On May 20, 2018, Douglass was awarded an honorary law degree from the University of Rochester. The degree, which was accepted by Douglass's great-great-great-grandson, was the first posthumous honorary degree that the university had granted.
- The final public lecture of Frederick Douglass was on February 1, 1895, at West Chester University, nineteen days before his death. Today, there is a statue of him on the university campus commemorating this event. The Frederick Douglass Institute has a West Chester University program for advancing multicultural studies across the curriculum and for deepening the intellectual heritage of Douglass.
- In New York State there is the "Let's Have Tea" sculpture of Douglass and Susan B. Anthony.
- On September 30, 2019, Newcastle University opened the 'Frederick Douglass Centre', a key teaching

component for their School of Computing and Business School. Frederick Douglass stayed in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1846 on a street adjacent to the new University campus.

- A statue of Douglass located in Rochester, New York's Maplewood Park was vandalized and torn down over the weekend of July 4, 2020.
- In 2020, Douglas Park in Chicago, which was named for U.S. Senator Stephen A. Douglas, was renamed Douglass Park, in honor of Frederick and Anna Douglass. In the 1850s the senator had promoted "popular sovereignty" as a middle position on the slavery issue and made "blatant assertions of white superiority." The name change was the result of a multi-year student-led campaign to rename the park.
- A plaque on Gilmore Place in Edinburgh, Scotland marks his stay there in 1846. In 2020 a mural of his image was added nearby.
- On June 19, 2021, on Boston Street in the Canton neighborhood of Baltimore, Maryland, two panels were unveiled at the spot where, as it had shortly before been discovered, Douglass had boarded the train that took him to his freedom from enslavement.
- On August 18, 2021, the Frederick Douglass Park in Lynn, Massachusetts was dedicated, directly across the street from the site of the Central Square railroad depot where Douglass was forcibly removed from the train in 1841. The park features a bronze bas-relief sculpture of Douglass.

In popular culture

Film and television

- Robert Guillaume portrays Douglass during a speech about the American slave trade in the 1985 miniseries *North and South* (Season 1, episode 3).
- *Glory* (1989) features Douglass, played by Raymond St. Jacques, as a friend of Francis George Shaw.
- In Ken Burns' 1990 documentary *The Civil War*, Douglass is voiced by actor Morgan Freeman.
- The 2004 mockumentary film *C.S.A.: The Confederate States of America* features the figure of Douglass in an alternative history.
- In *Akeelah and the Bee* (2006), characters discuss Douglass near a bronze bust of him by sculptor Tina Allen.
- The 2008 documentary film *Frederick Douglass and the White Negro* tells the story of Douglass in Ireland and the relationship between African and Irish Americans during the American Civil War.
- Douglass appears in *Freedom*.
- In the 2015 documentary film *The Gettysburg Address*, the role of Frederick Douglass is voiced by actor Laurence Fishburne.
- A miniseries based on James McBride's 2013 novel, *The Good Lord Bird*, was released, with Daveed Diggs as Douglass. Douglass is portrayed negatively.

Literature

- The 1946 novel *A Star Pointed North* by Edmund Fuller presents an account of Douglass's life.
- Terry Bisson's*Fire on the Mountain* (1988) is an alternate-history novel in which John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry succeeded and, instead of the Civil War, the Black slaves emancipated themselves in a massive slave revolt. In this history, Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman are the revered founders of a Black state created in the Deep South.
- Douglass is a major character in the novel *How Few Remain* (1997) by Harry Turtledove, depicted in an alternate history in which the Confederacy won the Civil War and Douglass must continue his anti-slavery campaign into the 1880s.
- Douglass appears in *Flashman and the Angel of the Lord* (1994) by George MacDonald Fraser.
- Douglass, his wife, and his alleged mistress, OttilieAssing, are the main characters in Jewell Parker Rhodes' *Douglass' Women* (New York: Atria Books, 2002).
- Douglass is the protagonist of Richard Bradbury's novel *Riversmeet* (Muswell Press, 2007), a fictionalized account of Douglass's 1845 speaking tour of the British Isles.
- Douglass's time in Ireland is fictionalized in Colum McCann's *TransAtlantic* (2013).
- A comedic representation of Douglass is made in James McBride's 2013 novel *The Good Lord Bird*.

- In 2019, author David W. Blight was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for History for *Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom*.

Painting

- In 1938–39, African-American artist Jacob Lawrence created *The Frederick Douglass* series of narrative paintings. They were part of the historical series started by Lawrence in 1937, which included painted panels about prominent Black historical figures such as Toussaint Louverture and Harriett Tubman. During his preparatory work, Lawrence conducted research at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, drawing primarily from the autobiographies of Frederick Douglass: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845) and *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (1881). For this series the artist used a multipanel-plus-caption format that allowed him to develop a serial narrative that was not possible to convey by means of traditional portrait or history painting. Instead of reproducing Douglass's original narratives verbatim, Lawrence constructed his own visual and textual narrative in the form of 32 panels painted in tempera and accompanied with Lawrence's own captions. The structure of the painting series is linear and consists of three parts (the slave, the fugitive, the free man) which offer an epic chronicle of Douglass's transformation from slave to leader in the struggle for the liberation of Black people. *The*

Frederick Douglass series is currently in the Hampton University Museum.

Other media

- Frederick Douglass appears as a Great Humanitarian in the 2008 strategy video game *Civilization Revolution*.
- In 2019, Douglass was the focus of the exhibition *Lessons of the Hour – Frederick Douglass* by British artist Isaac Julien, at New York's Metro Pictures Gallery and Memorial Art Gallery.

William B. Gould

William Benjamin Gould (November 18, 1837 – May 25, 1923) was a former slave and veteran of the American Civil War, serving in the U.S. Navy. His diary is one of only a few written during the Civil War by former slaves that has survived, and the only by a formerly enslaved sailor.

Early life

William B. Gould was born in Wilmington, North Carolina on November 18, 1837, to an enslaved woman, Elizabeth "Betsy" Moore, and Alexander Gould, an English-born resident of Granville County, NC. He was enslaved by Nicholas Nixon, a peanut planter who owned a large plantation site on Porters Neck. and at Rocky Point. Gould worked as a plasterer at the antebellum Bellamy Mansion in Wilmington, North Carolina and carved his initials into some of the plaster there.

The outbreak of the Civil War brought danger to Wilmington in the form of crime, disease, threat of invasion, and "downright bawdiness." This prompted many slave owners to move inland, resulting in less supervision over those they were enslaving. During a rainy night on September 21, 1862, Gould escaped with seven other enslaved men by rowing a small boat 28 nautical miles (52 km) down the Cape Fear River. They embarked on Orange Street, just four blocks from where Gould lived on Chestnut St. Sentries were posted along the river, adding additional danger. The boat had a sail, but they did not raise it until they were out in the Atlantic for fear of being seen.

Just as the dawn was breaking on September 22, they rushed out into the Atlantic Ocean near Fort Caswell and hoisted their sail. There, the USS *Cambridge* of the Union blockade picked them up as contraband. Other ships in the blockade picked up two other boats containing friends of Gould in what may have been a coordinated effort. Though Gould had no way of knowing it, within an hour and a half of his rescue President Abraham Lincoln convened a meeting of his cabinet to finalize plans to issue the Emancipation Proclamation.

During the war, his home was burned and with it a family Bible. His birthday was inscribed in that Bible but that was the only record of his birth.

Naval service

There had been some concern about the numbers of slaves who were escaping and making it to Union ships before Gould's escape. One captain had written to the Navy Department

asking what was to be done with them as they did not have room for the extra men. William A. Parker, the captain of the *Cambridge*, however, had written to Acting Rear Admiral Samuel Phillips Lee just five days before picking up Gould that his ship was short 18 men due to desertions and sickness. As a result, he said, he intended to fill the vacancies with escaped slaves.

After his boarding the *Cambridge*, Gould notes that he was "kindly received by officers and men." In his diary he noted that on October 3, 1862 he took "the Oath of Allegiance to the Government of Uncle Samuel." Upon joining the U.S. Navy onboard the *Cambridge*, he was given the rank of First Class Boy. At the time, boy was the highest rank a black sailor could earn. He was later promoted to landsman and then ward room steward, making him a petty officer but without the authority that came as an officer of the line.

The *Cambridge* was part of the Atlantic Blockading Squadron, enforcing the blockade of the Confederate coastline. Gould found the work to be difficult and lonely, recording after just three months on the ship that all the men had the blues. Still, Gould believed he was "defending the holiest of all causes, Liberty and Union." During his service he saw combat and chased Confederate ships across the Atlantic Ocean to Europe. In a span of five days, the *Cambridge* and two other ships were able to capture four blockade runners and chase a fifth to shore.

Gould also served on the USS Ohio. While onboard of the Ohio, he came down with the measles and had to leave the ship to go to the hospital. His time in the hospital, from May to October

1863, is the only time he broke from his habit of writing in his diary. During this time he was visited by one of his maternal cousins, a Jones, who was the child of emancipated slaves who moved north for fear of being re-enslaved.

In October 1863, after he was recovered, Gould was transferred to the USS Niagara. The ship was in port in Gloucester, Massachusetts, waiting for a full complement of men. On December 10, it unexpectedly left port and raced up the eastern seaboard to Nova Scotia chasing after the *Chesapeake*. The *Chesapeake*had been captured off the coast of Cape Cod by Confederate sympathizers from the Maritime Provinces.

From June 1, 1864 until well into 1865, Gould and the *Niagara* sailed to and around Europe, searching for Confederate ships. The *Niagara* was involved in two major confrontations while in Europe, including the taking of the CSS Georgia. It stalked the CSS Stonewall along the coasts of Spain and Portugal, but declined to fight the armored ship and let it get away. It was also on the hunt for the *CSS Alabama*, the *CSS Florida*, the *CSS Shenandoah*, and the *Laurel*, but they did not find them.

While off the coast of Cadiz, Spain, those on board the *Niagara* learned of the surrender of the Confederate Army. "I heard the Glad Tidings that the Stars and Stripes had been planted over the Capital of the D--nd Confederacy by the invincible Grant," Gould committed to his diary. Not knowing that it signaled the end of the war, the *Niagara* set sail again, this time searching for Confederate ships in Queenstown, Ireland. The Irish came out in great numbers to see the American warship. Leaving Ireland, the Niagara sailed to Charlestown, Massachusetts,

where Gould received an honorable discharge after three years of service in the United States Navy.

During his first leave from the ship in the spring of 1863, Gould visited Mary Moore Jones, his maternal aunt, in Boston and then his eventual wife, Cornelia Reed, on Nantucket. There were a number of other women that he visited in New York during leaves as well. Gould had an active social life during leaves, attending concerts, lectures, and public meetings. During his time in New York he also met William McLaurin, a future North Carolina state representative.

Though black men served alongside white men in the Navy during the Civil War and made up roughly 15% of the Union Navy, Gould experienced racism while serving onboard the USS Cambridge. Black soldiers from a Maryland regiment who had been taken aboard temporarily were "treated shamefully," Gould said, when they were not allowed to eat out of mess pans and were called disparaging names. The incident seemed to be out of the ordinary, suggesting that it was not common while serving.

Post-war life

Career

Gould visited Wilmington after the war, perhaps in October 1865, and found it to be largely deserted, very unlike the bustling city he knew before the war. He found it to be an improvement, however, where many of the trappings of the former slave economy had been removed.

Gould married in 1865 and spent his first year as a married man working as a plasterer on Nantucket. After living in New Hampshire and in Taunton, Massachusetts for a time, in 1871 the Goulds moved to 303-307 Milton Street in Dedham, Massachusetts. In Dedham, Gould became a building contractor and pillar of the community. Gould "took great pride in his work" as a plasterer and brick mason. His skill was rewarded with contracts for public buildings, including several schools.

He helped to build the new St. Mary's Church in his adopted hometown of Dedham. While working on the church, one of his employees improperly mixed the plaster. Even though it was not visible by looking at it and though the defect would not be discovered for some time, Gould insisted that it be removed and reapplied correctly. The decision nearly bankrupted him, but it helped cement his reputation in the town. He also worked as a stonemason, constructing buildings around Dedham.

He later took the minutes of the Hancock Mutual Relief Association.

Social and civic life

Shortly before he got sick with the measles, Gould met John Robert Bond, another black sailor serving on the *Ohio.* The Gould home was close to the border with Readville, where Bond settled after the war. The two would reconnect ten years after the war and become good friends. Gould would later serve as godfather to Bond's second son.

Gould helped to build the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepard in Oakdale Square, though as a parishioner and not as a contractor. He and his wife were baptized and confirmed there in 1878 and 1879.

As a signer of the Articles of Incorporation, he was one of its founders. Gould's family remained active members of the church and, along with the Bonds and one other family, the Chesnuts, were the only black parishioners. There was only one other black family in Dedham at the time. Gould and his family were more likely to experience subtle slights on account of their race as opposed to outright racism while living in Dedham.

Gould was extremely active in the Charles W. Carroll Post 144 of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR). He "held virtually every position that it was possible to hold in the GAR from the time he joined [in 1882] until his death in 1923, including the highest post, commander, in 1900 and 1901." He attended the statewide encampments of the GAR in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with Bond and other black veterans from the area. He also joined the Mt. Moriah Masonic Prince Hall Lodge in Cambridge with several other black veterans. In 1911, Gould was interviewed by the local veteran's association about his wartime experiences.

By 1886, Gould would earn enough esteem in the community to be appointed to the General Staff and to lead the parade held in honor of Dedham's 250th anniversary. Gould gave a speech at Dedham's 1918 Decoration Day celebrations at which he received "an ovation welcome." He also regularly spoke to school children on Memorial Day and presided over the town's

celebrations of the holiday. Gould was driven through town on parade days into the 1920s in cars adorned with red, white, and blue decorations.

Gould was a committed Republican, as were his children. He adamantly opposed the notion that newly emancipated blacks should be repatriated to Africa or Haiti, saying they had been born under the American flag and would know no other.

Family

After he was discharged from the Navy on September 29, 1865 at the Charlestown Navy Yard in Massachusetts, Gould considered moving back to North Carolina where he believed he would have "a fair chance of success [in] my business". Instead, he immediately went to Nantucket where he married Cornelia Williams Read, on November 22, 1865 at the African Baptist Church on Nantucket. Rev. James E. Crawford, Read's uncle, officiated. Gould had known Read since childhood, and she was his most frequent wartime correspondent. Cornelia, who had been purchased out of slavery, was then living on Nantucket.

Their oldest daughter, Medora Williams, was born on Nantucket, and their oldest son, William B. Gould Jr., was born in Taunton. The rest, Fredrick Crawford, Luetta Ball, Lawrence Wheeler, Herbert Richardson, and twins James Edward and Ernest Moore, were all born in Dedham.

The 1880 United States census lists a boy with the last name of Mabson living with the Goulds and working as an employee of Gould's. The child is almost certainly the son of one of

Gould's nephews through his sister Eliza, George Lawrence Mabson or William Mabson.

Five of his sons would fight in World War I and one in the Spanish–American War. A photo of the six sons and their father, all in military uniform, would appear in the NAACP's magazine, *The Crisis*, in December 1917. The three youngest sons, all officers, were training to go and fight in World War I in France. Gould's great-grandson would describe them as "a family of fighters."

Literacy

It is unknown where Gould learned to read and write as it was illegal to teach those skills to slaves. However, it is clear that he was educated and able to express himself elegantly. In his diary, Gould quoted Shakespeare, had some knowledge of French, and knew a handful of Spanish expressions. It is possible that he was educated in the Front Street Methodist Church near Nixon's slave quarters, or at St. John's Episcopal Church.

During stops in New York while in the Navy, Gould frequently visited the offices of *The Anglo-African*, an abolitionist newspaper. Gould raised funds for the publication, become an avid reader, and serve as a correspondent under the nom de plume "Oley." While onboard the *Niagara*, Gould often corresponded with Robert Hamilton, the publisher.

During the war, Gould sent and received a large number of letters. None of them survive, but each is noted in his diary. They include family, friends, former shipmates, other

contraband, and acquaintances in North Carolina, New York, Massachusetts. He corresponds frequently with George W. Price who escaped with him, and with Abraham Galloway, both of whom served in the North Carolina General Assembly after the war. He most frequently writes to his eventual wife, Cornelia Reed, and they exchange at least 60 letters during the war. Cornelia attended school after she moved to Nantucket; it is unclear whether she knew how to read and write prior.

Diary

Beginning with his time on the *Cambridge* and continuing through his discharge at the end of the war, Gould kept a diary of his day-to-day activities. According to John Hope Franklin, Gould's diary is one of three known diaries in existence written during the Civil War by former slaves, and the only one by a Union sailor. It is a "wealth of information about what it was like to be an African-American in the Union Navy."

The diary begins on September 27, 1862, five days after boarding the Cambridge, and runs until his discharge on September 29, 1865. There is a section missing, which included the dates of September 1863 to February 1864. It consists of two books plus 40 unbound pages. It is thought that some sections of the diary, which would cover late 1864 and early 1865, have been destroyed.

In the diary, Gould chronicles his trips to the northeastern United States, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, and England. The diary is distinguished not only by its details and eloquent tone, but also by its author's reflections on the conduct of the war, his own military engagements, race, race

relations in the Navy, and what African Americans might expect after the war and during the Reconstruction Era.

Legacy

Gould died on May 25, 1923, at the age of 85 and was interred at Brookdale Cemetery in Dedham. The *Dedham Transcript* reported his death under the headline "East Dedham Mourns Faithful Soldier and Always Loyal Citizen: Death Came Very Suddenly to William B. Gould, Veteran of the Civil War."

Gould's diary was discovered 35 years after his death, in 1958, when his attic was being cleaned out. His grandson, William B. Gould III, showed it to his son, William B. Gould IV. At the time, they had known that Gould served in the Navy during the Civil War, but not if he had been enslaved or free prior to his service.

Gould IV began researching his ancestor's life, a process that would last more than 50 years. While teaching at Harvard in the 1970s, Gould IV researched his namesake's life in nearby Dedham. When he served as the chairman of the National Labor Relations Board under President Bill Clinton in the 1990s, he searched the National Archives. It was only in 1989 that Gould IV discovered his ancestor had been enslaved prior to the war. Gould IV found a notation in the log of the *Cambridge* that noted Gould had been picked up as contraband and listed the name of his enslaver.

Gould IV went on to edit his great-grandfather's diary and publish it as a book titled *Diary of a Contraband: The Civil War Passage of a Black Sailor*. He donated the original diary to the

Massachusetts Historical Society in 2006. The forward to the published edition was written by United States Senator Mark O. Hatfield. According to Hatfield, Gould's "outstanding life, in Dedham, Massachusetts, following the war, exemplifies American citizenship at its best--citizenship that burned brightly because our nation transcended the inhumanity of slavery."

Gould's diary was featured on the July 3, 2001 edition of Nightline. In 2020, the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts donated copies of the book to local schools and libraries.

On November 9, 2020, the Town of Dedham renamed a 1.3 acre park as the William B. Gould Memorial Park. The park was formally dedicated on September 23, 2021 before a crowd of more than 100. The park on Mother Brook is about .5 miles from Gould's home on Milton Street. A committee was established to erect a sculpture of him on the site by Memorial Day 2023, the 100th anniversary of Gould's death. The names of four finalists, all artists of color, were announced at the dedication.

A pew at the Church of the Good Shepherd is dedicated to Gould and Cornelia.

Archibald Grimké

Archibald Henry Grimké (August 17, 1849 – February 25, 1930) was an American lawyer, intellectual, journalist, diplomat and community leader in the 19th and early 20th centuries. He graduated from freedmen's schools, Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, and Harvard Law School and

served as American Consul to the Dominican Republic from 1894 to 1898. He was an activist for rights for blacks, working in Boston and Washington, D.C. He was a national vice-president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), as well as president of its Washington, D.C. branch.

Early life and education

Grimké was born into slavery near Charleston, South Carolina, in 1849. He was the eldest of three sons of Nancy Weston, who was also born into slavery as the daughter of an enslaved African or African-American female, and her white owner Henry W. Grimké, a widower. Henry acknowledged his sons, although he did not manumit (free) them, or make the rest of his family aware of their existence. Archibald's brothers were Francis and John. Henry was a member of a prominent, large slaveholding family in Charleston. His father and relatives were planters and active in political and social circles.

After becoming a widower, Henry moved with Weston to his plantation outside of Charleston. He was a father to his sons, teaching them and Nancy to read and write. In 1852, as he was dying, Henry tried to protect his second family by willing Nancy, who was pregnant with their third child, and their two sons Archibald and Francis to his legal (white) son and heir Montague Grimké, whose mother was Henry's deceased wife. He directed that they "be treated as members of the family," but Montague never provided well for them.

Henry's sister Eliza, executor of his will, brought the family to Charleston and allowed them to live as if they were free, but

she did not aid them financially. Nancy Weston took in laundry and did other work; when the boys were old enough, they attended a public school with free blacks. In 1860 Montague "claimed them as slaves," bringing the boys into his home as servants. Later he hired out both Archibald and Francis. After Francis rebelled, Montague Grimké sold him. Archibald ran away and hid for two years with relatives until after the end of the Civil War.

After the American Civil War ended, the three Grimké boys attended freedmen's schools, where their talents were recognized by the teachers. They gained support to send Archibald and Francis to the North. They studied at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, established for the education of blacks.

Grimké sisters

By the time Henry began his relationship with Weston, his two half-sisters, Sarah and Angelina, had been gone from Charleston for years. Unwilling to live in a slave society, they left the South and their family and became noted abolitionists and feminists, drawing on their first-hand knowledge of slavery's horrors.

Together known as the Grimké sisters, they were active as writers and speakers in Northern abolitionist circles, having joined the Quakers and the American Anti-Slavery Society. After Angelina married Theodore Weld, the three lived and worked for years in New Jersey. They operated a school together. In 1864, they moved to Hyde Park, Massachusetts, a new community outside Boston.

In February 1868 Angelina Grimké Weld read an article in which Edwin Bower, a professor at Lincoln University near Philadelphia, compared Lincoln's all-black student body favorably with "any class I have ever had," with special praise for a student named Grimké, who came to the university "just out of slavery." Stunned, she investigated, and found that Archibald and his siblings were her brother's children. She and Sarah acknowledged the boys and their mother Nancy Weston as family, and tried to provide them with better opportunities. They paid for their nephews' education: Archibald and Francis attended Harvard University and Howard University, respectively, for law. Francis shifted to Princeton Theological Seminary and became a minister. The Grimkés introduced the young men to their abolitionist circles. The youngest son John dropped out of school and returned to the South, losing touch with his brothers and the Grimkés. Their professors had found them extraordinary students, and both Archibald and Francis graduated from Lincoln in 1870. A Lincoln catalog of 1871 lists Archibald as "Instructor of English grammar".

Brothers

Francis J. Grimké did graduate work at Princeton Theological Seminary and became an ordained Presbyterian minister. He married Charlotte Forten, of the prominent Philadelphia black abolitionist family. She was also an abolitionist and a teacher, and became known for her diaries, written mostly from 1854 to 1864. He headed the 15th Street Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC, for more than 40 years. Francis died in 1939.

The youngest brother, John Grimké, did not stay in school. He went to Florida and cut himself off from his family. He died in 1915 in New York City.

Marriage and family

After getting established with his law practice in Boston, Massachusetts, Grimké met and married Sarah Stanley, a white woman from the Midwest. They had a daughter, Angelina Weld Grimké, born in 1880. They separated while their daughter was young, and Stanley returned with Angelina to the Midwest when the girl was three. When Angelina was seven, Stanley started working. She brought Angelina back to Archibald in Boston. The couple never reconciled, and Stanley never saw her daughter again; she committed suicide by poisoning in 1898.

In 1894, Grimkéwas appointed consul to the Dominican Republic. While he held this position, his daughter Angelina lived for years with his brother Francis and his wife Charlotte in Washington, D.C., where Francis was minister of the 15th Street Presbyterian Church.

After graduating from school, Angelina became a teacher and writer. Her essays and poetry were published by *The Crisis* of the NAACP. In 1916, she wrote the play *Rachel*, which addressed lynching, in response to a call by the NAACP for works to protest the controversial film *The Birth of a Nation*. It is one of the first plays by an African American considered to be part of the Harlem Renaissance. In addition, she wrote poetry, some of which is now considered the first lesbian work by an African American.

Career

Archibald Grimké lived and worked in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Boston area most of his career. Beginning in the 1880s, he began to get active in politics and speaking out about the rise of white supremacy following the end of Reconstruction in the South. From 1883–1885 he was editor of the *Hub*, a Republican newspaper that tried to attract black readers. Archibald supported equal rights for blacks, both in the paper and in public lectures, which were popular in the nineteenth century. He became increasingly active in politics, and was chosen for the Republican Party's state convention in 1884. That year he was also appointed to the board of Westborough Insane Hospital, a state hospital. Archibald became involved in the women's rights movement, which his aunts had supported, and addressed it in the *Hub*. He was elected as president of the Massachusetts Woman Suffrage Association. Believing that the Republicans were not doing enough, he left the party in 1886. In 1889, he joined the staff of the Boston Herald as a special writer.

In the South, the situation for Blacks was deteriorating, and Archibald continued the struggle against racism, allying at times with other major leaders of the day. He had also become involved in Frederick Douglass' National Council of Colored People, a predecessor to the NAACP, which grappled with issues of education for blacks, especially in the South. Archibald disagreed with Booker T. Washington about emphasizing industrial and agricultural education for freedmen (the South still had a primarily agricultural economy). He

believed there needed to be opportunities for academic and higher education such as he had.

In 1901, with several other men he started *The Guardian*, a newspaper in which they could express their views. They selected William Monroe Trotter as editor. Together Grimké and Trotter also organized the Boston Literary and Historical Association, which at the time was a gathering of men opposed to Booker T. Washington's views. For a time he was allied with W.E.B. Du Bois, but Grimké continued to make his own way between the two groups.

Despite earlier conflict with Washington and his followers, in 1905, Grimké started writing for *The New York Age*, the leading black paper; it was allied with Washington. Archibald wrote about national issues from his own point of view, for instance, urging more activism and criticizing President Theodore Roosevelt for failing to adequately support black troops in Brownsville, Texas, where they were accused of starting a riot.

Continuing his interest in intellectual work, he served as president of the American Negro Academy from 1903 to 1919, which supported African-American scholars and promoted higher education for blacks. He published several papers with them, dealing with issues of the day, such as his analysis in "Modern Industrialism and the Negroes of the United States" (1908). He believed that capitalism as practiced in the United States could help freedmen who left agriculture to achieve independence and true freedom.

In 1907 he became involved with the Niagara Movement and later with the NAACP, both of which were founded by Du Bois. Men continued to struggle to find the best way to deal with

racism and advance equal rights, at a time when lynching of black men in the South continued.

After his daughter graduated from college, Archibald became increasingly active as a leader in the NAACP, which was founded in 1909. First he was active in Boston, for instance, writing letters in protest of proposed federal legislation. to prohibit interracial marriages. (The legislation was not passed.) In 1913, he was recruited by national leaders to become the president of the Washington, DC branch and moved to the capital with his daughter Angelina. His brother Francis and his wife Charlotte still lived there.

Grimké led the public protest in Washington, D.C., against the segregation of federal offices under President Woodrow Wilson, who acceded to wishes of other Southerners on his cabinet. Grimké testified before Congress against it in 1914 but did not succeed in gaining changes. About this time, he also became a national vice-president of the NAACP. The organization supported the U.S. in World War I, but Grimké highlighted the racial discrimination against blacks in the military and worked to change it.

He fell ill in 1928. At the time, he and Angelina were living with his brother Francis, by then a widower. His daughter and brother cared for him until his death in 1930.

Legacy and honors

- 1919, the NAACP awarded him the Spingarn Medal for his life work for racial equality.

- In 1934, the Phelps Colored Vocational School was renamed Grimke Elementary School in his honor. The school was closed in 1989 and the building served as headquarters for the Washington D.C. Fire and Corrections Departments until 2012, when the main building was left vacant. The gymnasium has housed the African American Civil War Museum since 2010.

Published writings

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- Pamphlets and articles (most recent first)
- *The shame of America : or, The Negro's case against the Republic. Occasional papers, no. 21. Washington, D.C.: American Negro Academy. 1924. Retrieved January 9, 2021.*
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