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While No Child Left Behind (NCLB) moves toward proficiency in basic-skills development and in some ways represents progress toward equity, the plan ultimately shrinks the notion of educational excellence for all children, occasioning fallacies but not addressing compelling matters that relate to quality, equity, and academic achievement for all students. The plan potentially victimizes minority parents and students and sets a negative set of goals. It does not take into account the much lower educational resources that poor African American and other minority students start out with nor does it propose to remedy the discrepancy. Ultimately, the plan sets up public schools as examples of failure that will aid the administration's drive toward privatization.

Special Focus Articles

A League of Willing Workers: The Impact of Northern Philanthropy, Virginia Estelle Randolph
and the Jeanes Teachers in Early Twentieth-Century Virginia 111
Linda B. Pincham

Improvements in southern African American schools and communities in early 20th century Virginia came with the assistance of philanthropic organizations. The Jeanes Fund, in its own right and as a conduit for other philanthropic agencies, helped solve "the rural school problem." The Jeanes Fund recognized the work of Virginia Randolph whose philosophy and teaching techniques were adopted by the Jeanes teachers, a group of African American rural school supervisors, of which Virginia Randolph was the first. This article details the work of Virginia Randolph and the Jeanes teachers, illustrating how their contributions throughout the South earned accolades for local school and community improvements.

Mary S. Peake and Charlotte F. Forten: Black Teachers During the Civil War and Reconstruction 122
Kay Ann Taylor

This historical, archival discourse examines the teaching lives of Mary S. Peake and Charlotte L. Forten during the Civil War and Reconstruction through a limited life history approach. Particular significance of this work encompasses the use of archival sources, the limited life history approach, and analysis and interpretation of the women's lives through their teaching. Mary S. Peake was the first Black teacher for the American Missionary Association, and Charlotte L. Forten was the first Black woman to teach White children in Massachusetts at the Epes Grammar School of Salem and the only Black teacher to participate in the Philadelphia Port Royal Relief Association's experiment. It is a contribution to the roles of African American women in the history of American education. Without a full understanding of Black teachers, critical pieces of history remains absent from the collective educational literature. This article is foundational for future work surrounding female, 19th century African American schoolteachers and it strives toward eliminating their exclusion.

Bridging the Gap in Early Library Education History for African Americans: The Negro Teacher-Librarian Training Program (1936-1939)	135
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The development of a little-known library education program during the pre-Brown v. Board and pre-civil rights era is explored in detail. Scarcely noted in the literature, the program was hosted on four historically Black colleges and university (HBCU) campuses and is credited with training more than 200 African American teacher-librarians from 16 southern states during the Jim Crow period. Provided is an account of significant historical precursors, including the first-ever accreditation of southern Negro public high schools, details of the involvement of the American Library Association (ALA) through its Board of Education for Librarianship, the role of Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), other national and regional education organizations, and philanthropic foundations. It is noted that the efforts put forth in expediting this initiative and the success of the program are wedged between the end of the Hampton Library School program and the founding and existence of the Clark Atlanta University (CAU) School of Library Service, which currently faces closure. The author contextualizes the program's importance to the evolvement of secondary education of the largely undereducated and disenfranchised people of the southern region and the quiet impact on social change. Suggested also are the implications the geographic structure of this 1930s program has for recruitment of African Americans to library education programs today.

Jeremiah B. Sanderson: Educator and Organizer for the Rights of “Colored Citizens” in Early California	147
Jana Noel	

Jeremiah B. Sanderson, a free, New Bedford-educated Black man who was active within the abolitionist movement in the Northeast, moved to California during the Gold Rush era and became one of the most influential spokesmen and educators in the state. He successfully petitioned to get public funding for “colored schools” in the 1850s-1870s in Sacramento, San Francisco, and Stockton, with Black families from across the state sending their children to his school in Stockton. Sanderson was also a key organizer of state and district conventions during that time period that called for greater civil rights for Blacks in California.

General Articles

The Perceived Barriers to Integration in the Mississippi Delta	154
Suzanne E. Eckes	

This article identifies the barriers to educational integration in one Mississippi Delta town. Throughout the Mississippi Delta region, there are predominantly White private academies located in close proximity to predominantly Black public schools. Although de facto segregation among students exists throughout the country, the segregation in the Mississippi Delta is different. Specifically, many White students attend private academies that do not offer greater educational opportunity than the predominantly Black public schools. More than 40 individuals in Delta County were interviewed in order to identify the specific barriers to educational integration.

School Choice and the Standpoint of African American Mothers: Considering the Power of Positionality	168
Camille Wilson Cooper	

Scholars, educators, and reformers continue to debate the merit of school-choice reform. In this article, the author marshals in-depth interview data from low-income and working-class African American mothers to describe how they engage in the educational marketplace and construct their school choices. The mothers' data shed light on the potential of charter schools and school vouchers to offer parents equal educational opportunity. Their stories show that their positionality—race, class, and gender factors— powerfully influences their educational decision-making. The mothers are determined to seek agency for their families through their school choice making, yet they question whether charter schools and vouchers can help them. Drawing upon feminist theory, the author counters traditional assumptions about the mothers and their school choices by introducing the notion of “positioned choice.”

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Cover: Photograph of African schoolchildren in Tanzania, photographed by Paul Wellington Smith, Vice President of Professional Services at Providence Hospital, Washington, DC. Mr. Smith is an alumnus of Howard University, School of Pharmacy.