

SCHOOLBOOK

a JOURNAL of EDUCATION

**Paideia School
Atlanta, Georgia**

I N T H I S I S S U E

**Fall 2014
Vol. 21 No. 1**

The Class of 2014 Ushers in Change in Graduation Ceremony

Paul Bianchi

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Paul Bianchi
Headmaster

Jennifer Hill
Editor

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2 Paideia School, located in northeast Atlanta, has some 990 students ages three to eighteen. Founded in 1971 by a group of parents, the school “actively strives for a heterogeneous population and attracts students from throughout the metropolitan Atlanta area. The ancient Greek word Paideia reflects the conscious pursuit of a series of educational goals by a community. It conveys the concept of a child’s total education: intellectual, artistic, and social.”

Building a Good School Is Steady and Ongoing Work

Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.

—GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

The end of the 2013–2014 school year was a harbinger of change for Paideia School. In the elementary, several veteran teachers—Missy Aue, Martha Roark, Peter Richards, and Martha Alexander—retired. Meanwhile at the other end of the continuum, the graduation ceremony of the Class of 2014 launched a new tradition of having students present vignettes of their time at Paideia, replacing headmaster Paul Bianchi’s longstanding one of making comments about each student. This class, said Paul, was aptly suited to make the transition. “We were right to begin this year with the Class of 2014 because this is not only an unusually talented class, it is also open-minded group and willing to engage.”

Teaching is an art and teachers at Paideia wield a variety of brushes creating their educational canvases. Tom Painting uses the ancient art of haiku to teach students eloquence in economy. Kelly Richards examines her artistic tools from a long career in a conversation with fellow teacher Brian Eames.

And finally, Matthew H. Bernstein uses the topic of movie going in the segregated South to teach us about our nation’s history.

Jennifer Hill
Editor

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PAIDEIA IS, as I am sure you know, a school founded on change, but in case you don’t know that or maybe haven’t thought about it in the last hour or so, I am going to remind you, briefly.

The school was begun by a group of parents who believed that traditional schools, both public and private, were unimaginative, too rigid, insufficiently intellectual, creative or child-centered. Those were generalizations, of course, and while there was some more specificity in their vision, the details of what, how, and how much to change by creating a new school were few. When it became clear that these parents’ vision was relatively unfocused, those of us who worked here at the beginning discovered we had tremendous latitude. We were given a remarkably clean slate, and we wrote on it. Such good fortune rarely comes one’s way in life; we were lucky, and we jumped at the opportunity.

Sometimes we wrote things on the clean slate that needed to be erased, often quickly; our plans either did not work out, or they were simply wrong-headed. This is neither the time nor the place to recite the litany of everything that didn’t work out. You’ll have to wait for the book, it could be a comic book.

Mostly we built Paideia by following our values and our beliefs about how children should be treated and what a school should be. We wanted a school intent on understanding and teaching each child; we resisted standardization. We wanted teachers to have freedom to teach and parents to be welcomed in the life of the school.

We cared that Paideia be a place that students looked forward to going to and, as we repeat often, were somewhat reluctant to leave at the end of the day. We attended to preparing children for the future, but we were also mindful, before mindfulness became a thing, of the present by insisting on the quality of every day. We wanted education and schooling to be enjoyable for children and adults alike.

There were more programmatic, organization, and cultural differences in the early Paideia from traditional schooling, but the important matter is that in American impulse for reform that bubbles up now and then, ours was a school of change.

It is hard to find many people who do not think that change is a good idea. It is almost as hard to find people who are entirely comfortable with change. As Dorothy Craft Evans, our assistant headmaster, likes to remind people at school, “change means something is going to be different; if there’s no difference, then it’s the same, and that wouldn’t be change. It might not all be easy. Change might mean you have to give up something.”

While it is usually hard for traditional schools to change long-established practices and programs, neither is it that easy for schools of reform to change. Even early on in Paideia’s history, like the second and third year of the school, there were people who were already speaking of the Old Paideia; the Old Paideia, I remember thinking at the time, was usually a mythical time fondly remembered for whatever the person who was remembering was fond of. The paint wasn’t even dry on the walls, and some were harkening back to a lost paradise. The school was growing some—a few more students, another building (making two buildings), and a few rules. These minor changes for some were the apple that caused them indigestion in the Garden of Eden. Alas, Paideia had, as Adam allegedly remarked to Eve, entered a period of transition. Transition means change.

And as the school has evolved, the changes, and some fretfulness surrounding the changes, have continued.

Which, in a forced segue, brings me to the changes in this graduation today.

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Today's ceremony is the first major change in the way we have done this in 40 years. When the first class graduated—seven of them in 1975, every senior did some kind of presentation—sang a song, read a poem, danced across the stage, stood and waved to parents. When we timed the program, it all added up to about 22 minutes. Well, I knew that we couldn't have a 22 minute graduation; it's not worth getting dressed up for. So I decided to pad the ceremony by saying a little something about each graduate. Not a speech, just a few sentences of farewell. I tried to talk slowly so we could at least reach 30 minutes.

People liked these farewells, so we continued them the next year. And the next year, and the next. The classes grew larger, so it took longer. Knowing that I would be doing this, I began to make notes throughout the year, so I got more long winded. Soon we were over an hour.

Definitely worth getting dressed for. Then two hours; up to three by the 1990s. My own daughters graduated during these years, so I would cry some when I read their farewells. Crying and pulling yourself together always takes longer.

Last year we clocked in at four hours and 45 minutes. Paideia graduation became a marathon, and there's some chance, not a good chance, but some chance, that even I could run a marathon in less than four hours and 45 minutes. As hard as it is to run a marathon, there was another problem. I grew up watching the Boston Marathon run through my home town of Framingham, Mass.; no one ever stayed to watch for four hours and 45 minutes. Mae West, a film sex symbol of the 1930s, once said that "Too much of a good thing is wonderful." She was wrong: sometimes too much of a good thing is...well...just too much.

While parents have generally reported that they while they really liked the graduation ceremony, previously undiagnosed attention deficit disorders kicked in sometimes around hour three, and many felt that it was not worth going on medication just to see their child graduate from high school.

So we decided to implement some of the changes that a small group of us had been talking about behind the scenes for more than a year. We chose to begin with this class, the Class of 2014. In November, I wrote everyone that Paideia graduation was going to change. Change, oy!

Like many matters at Paideia—questions like "when is it snowing enough to call off school?," "what does the word Paideia mean anyhow," or "which way is up?," the reactions to this announcement were mixed.

At first, most students did not welcome the news. They understood, being the bright young things that they are, why it might be necessary to change; they just thought it would make more sense to begin the new system next year with the Class of 2015. Many expressed the worry that graduation would be less personal. Not everyone would be spoken about, recognized, regardless whether the student had won the National Tap Dance Championship or was just a regular kid who didn't even dance in the back line of the musical.

We understood this concern. Above almost all else, a good school should be personal. Students should feel known by the adults in the school so that we can embrace their journey and help them along, teach them and befriend them.

Furthermore, ceremonies should speak to important values and reinforce those values. No ceremony will do this entirely, of course, but taken together—Paideia traditions such as the Feast and Monday Morning Meeting, the Barbecue/Square Dance and the Cross-Age Relay; Race Days in the junior and senior high, mentorship and peer leadership, sing-alongs, and Snoop Day—are public manifestations of what is happening in a classroom or an advising relationship.

We wanted the new format to remain as personal as possible, and for there to be many voices, not just a couple of speakers and three and a half hours of me. Once we all got past the shock of change, the students up here today jumped in to be part of creating something new. We were right to begin this year with the Class of 2014 because this is not only an unusually talented class, it is also an open-minded group and willing to engage. They have been great.

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Here is how we are going to continue today. Interspersed throughout the awarding of diplomas will be brief talks—we are calling them vignettes—written and delivered by students. These are not two minute autobiographies, but rather a snapshot of some part of the student's education, or coming of age, a defining relationship, or a thought to leave us with.

Heard altogether they offer a patchwork quilt of common themes in the class, of these students, these sons and daughters, these treasured friends and classmates. We will hear of some of the challenges they have experienced, and sometimes the obstacles they have overcome.

A good school endures, never feigning perfection but intent on improvement and responsiveness to the times.

Also, to maintain the ideal of the personal connections so important to everyone, we asked faculty members from throughout the school—not just the high school, but from the elementary and junior high too—to write a short personal remembrance of each graduate, a note of appreciation. Each student will have a couple of these letters in the folder with the diploma. While no one of these notes summarizes everything about a student's time at Paideia, or all their connections, these communications represent, perhaps speak for all of us.

A good school endures, never feigning perfection but intent on improvement and responsiveness to the times. I don't dwell on the old song, the alma mater, of the college I went to, but there is a line in the song about continuing "through calm and through storm."

We haven't had many storms this year besides some ice and snow—and I generally refuse to acknowledge those—but there are and will be changes: today for sure, and also in saying goodbye to some retiring teachers whose dedication have done so much to create the school we have. There will be more transitions to come.

As a school of reform, Paideia should continue to re-form itself, find different ways of doing that which has always been important. We are an independent school, and as such, we have the luxury and responsibilities of independence. We need to maintain the tradition of using that independence well, through calm and through storm, amid changes and tradition.

Let us begin.



Student Graduation Vignettes

6 Making the Change Our Own

I USED TO THINK I needed a page and a half of praise read by Paul Bianchi to my classmates and to you to validate my time at Paideia. What Paul would say about me would affirm that I meant something here, that I was special, and that people would remember me. I felt shocked and unsettled when Paul told us he wouldn't be writing his individual senior speeches this year. I lamented that a tradition was lost, and that I would never experience this part of the old Paideia. I protested to my parents and teachers how it wasn't fair that the change was happening to my graduating class, and to me. But no matter how upset I was, I couldn't reverse the decision.

My outlook changed when a teacher told me that the class of 2014 would always be known as the creators of a new tradition. Instead of complaining about how we wanted what everyone else had, we could make this our own. We would be special. We would be remembered.

My father told me that he never would have cared this much about his high school graduation. Maybe if Paideia were a different place, and I were someone who easily accepted change or thought traditions were silly, I would agree with my father. But I do care. I can't say that I don't wonder what Paul Bianchi would have said about me today. Regardless, I've realized I don't need one person to tell me I am important. Paideia has helped me learn that.

Carly Berlin

It's True, I'm Artist

THE MOST COMMON question I'd get relating to the college process was "Which art school are you going to?"

This was awkward because I wasn't exactly planning on going to art school. And it may seem like an odd question for someone to ask until you realize that my mother is one of the high school art teachers at Paideia, my sister is a freelance artist, and my dad was an art major in college. So right off the bat I was placed into the art world. Glitter glue was shoved in one hand and the 60-pack crayons in the other. My vocabulary wasn't fully developed, but I did know fancy terms like mixed media design and encaustic painting. And I could spend a few hours telling you about the museums into which I was dragged.

I didn't realize there was anything outside of the artist's life. I would have killed to go to the Build-A-Bear workshop on my birthday instead of an art history museum—thanks Mom. While others wanted to be astronauts or the president, I always said I wanted to be an artist when I grew up.

But as I became the stereotypically angsty teenager, I felt like my parents were ruining my life. I refused to go to those art museums. I rolled my eyes at dinner table conversations about how the paradigms of the art world were shifting in the 21st century. My desperate need for people to stop calling me an artist led me to begin to define myself as an academic. Paideia helped me develop my non-art interests. I found that I enjoyed math, science and economics. And as I branched out into these other subjects, I realized that I...maybe...sort of...kind of...possibly...missed art. I even took high school art with my mom. I began to celebrate my quirky family. By my senior year I made an art portfolio and took a great art history class. I willingly went to art museums, and I finally upgraded to the 120-pack of

crayons. So no, I'm not going to art school (in fact I plan to study economics at Boston University) but yes—despite all my resistance—I am an artist. Thanks Mom.

Naomi Carolan

A College Admission Breakup

DEAR ADMISSIONS OFFICE,
We need to talk.... I appreciate the time you took to consider my application, and I'm flattered that you chose to admit me, but it's not going to work out. Really, it hasn't been working out for a long time. You must know that. I just really need my space right now....

Your letters have been sweet—especially the ones that spelled my name right, and *especially* especially the ones that weren't addressed to "Ms. Alex Garrett"—but the truth is that regardless of what we've shared, I'll never be in love with you. You're just not the one, but you must have known I wasn't the one either. You haven't heard from me since I was admitted, and I know that I'm not exactly the only person you made yourself available to.

I've done the same thing—I've also led you on. So you can keep the letters I sent to you. All that sugar-sweet prose about being raised by a single mother, and learning lessons from sports, and how the children I tutored taught me more than I taught them.

In retrospect it wasn't right from the start and it's not you, it's me. I just can't give you what you need. Like mountains of cash. One year with you would cost more than the college I've chosen will cost in my entire lifetime. I can't work five jobs to help you sustain your extravagant lifestyle. Every time I visit you, I swear, there are landscapers and new buildings everywhere I look.

I do not want you to feel bad. This is for the best. You need to focus on wealthier suitors and I need to focus on my career. Everything happens for a reason, and I'm sure you realize there are other fish in the sea. Fish with more money.

I hope we can still be friends.

With kindest regards,
Alex Garrett

P.S. ...I'm keeping your t-shirt.

Alex Garret

A House Refuses to Burn

THE STRANGEST EXPERIENCE of my life happened in fifth grade. My teachers, Peter and Sydney, assigned us all characters in a medieval role-playing game. The luckiest kids were dukes and duchesses who got to rule over the town. Most of my classmates were bakers or farmers. There were a few unfortunate beggars. But that was a piece of cake compared to my role. *I was the wikka.* The witch. The outcast. During that hour every Friday, no one would speak to me in public for fear of ruining their reputation. My mystical powers alone could heal my classmates. At the same time, these powers were blamed whenever something when awry in the village. I used to dread that hour, standing alone, an independent, feared, sometimes appreciated and other times despised wikka.

At the end of the year, we burned the village, according to tradition. We were all amazed by how quickly the flames enveloped our role-play lives. When Peter finally pulled out the fire extinguisher, my friend nudged me. "Look, your wikka house is still there!" It was the only thing left. We tried to burn it again but it wouldn't light. I thought, my powers from the game have leapt into my real life! It was a sign. I secretly had inner powers. No, I knew I wasn't a real witch, but that didn't make the experience any less real or valuable. My house had survived a fire strong enough to destroy an entire village. Maybe it was a premonition, but I knew in that moment that, in the years to come, I would have the fortitude to weather any number of disasters, in nature and in life.

Isabel Goddard

Educating the Whole Person

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NOW THAT I have my diploma, I have a confession to make. Actually, I don't even know if it qualifies as a confession, because plenty of people in this room already know it. I never completed my sports credits, but here I am anyway. Sorry, Marty. Sorry, Juan. Sorry, Pauls. I guess a sports requirement is one of those rules that schools feel they have to have, but isn't always followed, like completing the junior questionnaire on time or not eating in the library.

Those of you who know me learned a long time ago that I never took to sports, and that never really bothered me until I started applying to colleges. Suddenly, I was faced with dozens of boxes to fill in to prove that I was well-rounded, and the implicit message was that I had to be athletic as well as many other things. And I really got worried. Then I thought about all my classmates. I don't know for sure, but I suspect that they couldn't check all of those boxes, either. Did that mean that they weren't well-rounded?

Everyone tells you that Paideia means education of the whole person, but I never really understood what that meant until this year when I saw the range of talent in the Class of 2014. There's academic talent for sure, but there's much more than that. There are track stars and tri-athletes as well as technology and math whizzes, budding entrepreneurs, gifted actors, varsity beekeepers and expert farmers. My classmates can sculpt and sing as well as they can take a test, and they embody the true meaning of Paideia.

Today I am graduating without sports credits, and I can live with that. The Class of 2014 showed me that being well-rounded can mean I have found things I love and devoted myself to them. So I want to thank you all for showing me that is the most important box I can check.

Weezie Haley

Only at Paideia

IF YOU SPEND enough time at Paideia, chances are pretty good that you're going to hear someone say the phrase "only at Paideia..."

"Only at Paideia" are we able to lounge on couches during class, walk around campus without shoes on, and call teachers by their first names. But the phrase "only at Paideia" has so many different meanings.

"Only at Paideia" would a science teacher bring in a waffle iron so upper level science students can make waffles every Wednesday.

"Only at Paideia" would the faculty need to post official four-square rules on the elementary playground.

"Only at Paideia" would there be a specific day set aside every year to talk about race or gender issues.

My most recent "only at Paideia" moment happened at a potluck dinner at Donna Ellwood's house, where we met to discuss a short term class that had ended two months earlier.

"Only at Paideia" would I have been able to take a short-term course about witches in literature and history. And "only at Paideia" would I be in my teacher's house with a witch.

While she was talking with us, one thing the witch said was that despite where we go from here, we are all connected because today we are here together. We are all connected because we have experienced things that could only happen at Paideia.

Although the evening at Donna's house was comforting, I am still nervous and sad today in the face of all these changes. While I'm pleased with the decisions I've made and ecstatic about the futures of the Class of 2014, I still am worried about saying goodbye and letting go. And part of the reason letting go is so hard is because I'm going to miss those things that really only could happen here.

This time in our lives is a time of endings and new beginnings. All this transition can produce vulnerability, stress, confusion, and a plethora of other feelings. But at the same time, for me, it has produced a great appreciation, love, and admiration for everyone that surrounded and supported me throughout my years at Paideia. It's made me more appreciative of things like Short Term, the Feast, and the student-teacher relationships that could only happen at Paideia.

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I am so lucky and blessed to have been able to experience the things that I have at this school. But beyond that, I am lucky to have been able to share these experiences with the Class of 2014 and the Paideia community. My years at Paideia were tremendously meaningful not just because of the people and the place, but because it could happen only at Paideia.

Bridget Johnson

Given Enough Time, I Will Get There

IT IS DIFFICULT for me to accurately explain to those of you who are unfamiliar with who I am just how bad a student I am. Or I suppose I should say, have been, because—Hi Family!—I spent the entirety of junior high standing up in front of the class with a kind of blank terror on my face, my time bisected between either hiding in the bathroom or forgetting about homework. My teachers hated me so much that I think they even began to like me, somehow, as if I wore down their sanity beyond reason. When I think back on that time period, an activity I participate in as infrequently as possible, I remember it only as a period of extended uncertainty. And then high school happened. As Beckett wrote: "No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better." If this actually were the true merit of a Paideia student, I would really be at the top of my class. I set the bar as high as I could.

No, but all joking aside, I have become increasingly aware through my continued time here that teachers may not actually expect you to remember specifics about, say, discrete logarithmic distribution, or the European-Prussian War. (I'm kidding about the Prussian War. I made that one up. I still don't know what Prussia was, exactly—I imagine some kind of Alon's cookie). What they teach resonates beyond just facts. I have learned here how to think, and how I think. After my teachers spent hours tirelessly analyzing and reading and re-reading with me, I actually stopped making the stupidest jokes I could, or at least—I slowed down saying them, and I saw that there was someone behind this veil of idiocy. There was me, with my very own set of ideas and loves and desires and opinions, and I could see where it had all

come from: from my friends, my teachers, my books and movies and family. And I think getting to see that I was not just a clown (though I bear many similarities) allowed me to get to where I am right at this moment. Without Paideia, I wouldn't be who I am today, or even know who I am today. But I was lucky enough to experience it, and here I am: nervous and uncomfortable, standing on a precipice in front of which opens my life. And coming to terms with myself, I know that I can take a step forward. And trip. But given enough time, I think that even I will get there. Thank you.

Ike Oedel

The Many Ways to Be Smart

Ari: What has Paideia taught me? Summing up my eight years of learning at Paideia in a two-minute vignette seemed impossible.

I have grown up here, and Paideia has helped shape me into the person I am today.

I have learned about everything from civil liberties to human cells. I have had to struggle through Taylor series and buffer solutions, and I have memorized countless facts and formulas along the way.

But what Paideia has really taught me goes beyond these things.

What I'll remember most is not what I have learned in my classes, but what I have learned from my peers.

Alex is like an older sister to me. I truly admire her unfailing compassion and empathy. She has been a role model to the younger girls on her volleyball team, and an inspiration to her junior high mentorship group.

Alex has always motivated me to try and be a kinder, more accepting person. She has taught me countless practical life skills that I will take with me to college. One of these skills you would usually find on page one of a cookbook.

Alex: One afternoon Ari and I were hanging out at her house and we were hungry. I suggested we make pasta and I grabbed a pot while she located the box. She started pouring the pasta into the waterless pot.

Alex: I grabbed the box out of her hand and asked, “What are you doing!”

Ari: And I said, “I’m making pasta”

Alex: I thought this was weird, but I filled the pot with water and seconds later watched as Ari once again tried to pour the pasta into the pot. This girl aced AP chemistry, how did she not know the boiling point of water? Then it hit me...she had no clue how to make pasta.

For everyone that doesn’t know Ari let me explain. Ari is one of the smartest people I know. She works hard at everything she does, whether its school, tennis, or anything else she tries. I admire her ability to balance her obligations and her social life. I honestly don’t know how she has time to do it all.

Ari: Paideia has brought us together and taught us that that there are multiple ways of being smart.

Alex: And that the smartest people are those who realize just how much there is to learn from others. In our many years at Paideia, we have learned from each other and grown up together.

Ari: And it turns out you can make best friends with or without boiling water.

Ariadne Nichol and Alexandria Goldstein

A Developed Passion for Building

I HAVE AN UNUSUAL HOBBY. I build cairns. You may not have heard of cairns, I know I hadn’t until fifth grade, when in Peter and Sydney’s class, we studied various artists, ranging from Vincent Van Gogh to Salvador Dali. One of the artists we learned about was named Andy Goldsworthy, and he absolutely inspired me. Goldsworthy didn’t use paint or clay; instead he used whatever was at hand such as stones, thorns or even ice.

So it was, at the age of ten, I began my own adventures sculpting with nature in Highlands, North Carolina. Standing in the chilly waters of the Cullasaja River that summer, I discovered I had a love for rocks and a talent for balancing them in the most unlikely of combinations. I must have

constructed a hundred cairns along that beautiful river. Since then, I’ve probably built a thousand more, from the coast of Oregon to the coast of Maine.

My cairns are far from the functional piles of stones used for millennia as path markers; my cairns rarely last more than a day, they are as impermanent as the brief moment of beauty I seek to capture. Sometimes I have to be patient and wait for each stone to find its place. As I precariously balance rocks atop one another, I know that the slightest deviation of force could send them toppling to find new homes along the riverbed. Building cairns requires extreme concentration and attunement to each rock’s orientation; I must find the precise balance point. My sculptures serve as a metaphor of my relationship with nature: the careful balance that we all have to maintain between ourselves and the world around us, and a demonstration of how our life upon the earth is purely momentary.

Whether strolling along a beach, wading in a river, or walking through a forest, I learn what kind of creatures call these rocks home, how water flows over and around them, what grows in between them, and how nature has shaped the surrounding area over eons. This form of art brings me closer to nature than I ever have been before. Building cairns brings me a strange satisfaction. It replenishes my creative reserves.

As I take stock of my years at Paideia, I realize now it’s really not surprising that I would develop an unusual passion which would involve some sort of building, whether it’s a fort I made with my friends in the half day block room, a Roman column in Missy and Ken’s class, a model of a building from Atlanta’s skyline in Martha Roark’s class, a daub and wattle village in Peter and Sydney’s class or a ballistic pendulum in Martin’s AP physics class, I have learned through building. While my time at Paideia is temporary—and over now—a length of time that, looking back, feels no longer than the life of one of my cairns, the experience will remain with me forever.

Jimmy Peterson

Countdown to Goodbye

IF ONLY I HAD KNOWN 13 years would go by so fast. “Countdown to May 18th” was my motto this year. I even put a countdown app on my phone. Seventy-four days, 4 hours, 29 minutes and 36 seconds until graduation. That’s what it reads as I wrote this speech. But if I were allowed to have my phone and check it now, the clock would show all zeros. I’m here. We’re here. And I wish I had realized how quickly that time would go by.

As I was nearing junior high my mom expressed her interest in my doing the sixth grade over again. I told her: “I’m already looking at 13 years at this school. Isn’t that enough?” With a little arguing and probably some behind the scenes help from my dad, I only spent one year in the sixth grade. To be honest, I think I turned out just fine. I spent a total of 3,510 days, 84,240 hours, 5,054,400 minutes and 303,264,073 seconds at Paideia. And in my time here I have learned a lot.

Donna, Charlotte, Kristen and Carol taught me how to add and subtract. Jonathan and Kristi taught me how to multiply and divide. I learned how to proudly wear a toga during Missy and Ken’s Roman Celebration. Kelly and Kysha assisted me as I struggled with awful things such as geometry and cursive. To my dismay, Martha Roark taught me how to dissect many animals. I now know a lot about China and can even speak some Mandarin thanks to David and Becca. Similarly, Lina and Elisa are responsible for my knowledge of Ancient Greece. In junior high Bonnie and Uri forced, I mean helped, me work through obstacles in order to find my authentic self. But the most important thing I got out of my 303,264,073 seconds at this school is a second home. An extended family. If only I had known how much this place would mean to me in the end. Because if I had, maybe I would have listened to my mom and done sixth grade again.

Madison Redwine

Dreams of Rebellion Deferred

IN 5TH GRADE, I received the most backhanded compliment ever. My best friend sat me down: “Rebecca, as you know my birthday party will be a sleepover. This means there will be gossiping. That’s why I can’t invite you. I don’t want you to think less of me. You’re just *too nice*.”

Too nice, is that even a thing? My 5th grade brain could not comprehend that. I don’t recall Mother Teresa being asked to “tone it down a notch.” Regardless, I took what she said to heart. I made it my mission to become less of a goody-two shoes. Less of a “Hannah Montana” Miley Cyrus and a little more “We Can’t Stop” Miley Cyrus.

Year after year, I failed miserably. In 6th grade, I frequently wore a sparkly poncho to school, which essentially eliminated any chance I had of being edgy. In 8th grade, I *did* sneak into an R-rated movie, but I watched the entire film rolled up into a ball underneath the seats, convinced I was going to get caught and sent straight to the slammer. I worried a lot back then about getting sent to the slammer. So, I decided high school was going to be the game changer, that there I would *finally* be the rebel without a cause, the girl who doesn’t like school, who sneaks out late and graffiti’s the water tower just because, “whatever.”

My 5th grade self would be ashamed of what I’ve become. My friends are nice people, I generally do all my homework, and this afternoon marks my first and last chance to get on Paul Hayward’s radar. And in large part I can thank Paideia for that. I just found it too hard to dislike teachers, alienate peers, and tick people off when everyone here is just so damn entertaining.

The school is rebellious enough for the both of us. While I took literature classes taught by self-proclaimed old hippies who love nothing more than “sticking it to the man,” I considered signing up for a science short-term course entitled “Eat, Smoke, Weave.” Instead of falling for the leather-clad motorcyclist, I devoted all of my time and attention to my beloved history teacher.

I’m not saying I’m a good person, because I’m really not always. I haven’t parked in my assigned parking spot for months—Sorry Paul H! My room looks like a bomb went off in it—

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except that a bomb probably would have cleared more of the debris. You can often find me galavanting around campus, punching individuals in the stomach, which is my way of saying hello. Overall, I am not a renegade, simply because I care about school and the people in it too much. Now, as a 12th grader no, a high school graduate—I can say that while I'm not the person I once dreamt of being, I've realized that maybe I just had the wrong dream. Thank you.

Rebecca Sarvady

My Dad Was Right

EVER SINCE I was a little girl my mom never wanted me to play basketball, but she finally came to her senses once she saw me play for the first time, and now she's my biggest fan. My dad was a phenomenal basketball player in his hey day, so my only choice was to either play basketball or not play any sport at all. For some reason he really wanted me to play for Paul Meiere, Paideia's coach, and after my first summer with Paul, I thought everything my dad ever told me was a lie because all I ever heard come out of Paul's mouth was, "Defense, defense. Why can't I get five players on the court who want to play defense? My god y'all are killing me!"

The way he acted made me think he was either going to leave the gym because he was disgusted at how we were playing, or embarrass us on the court...well, he did both... multiple times. In the end there was a method to his madness because he made me a very smart basketball player.

Unfortunately, my dad never got the chance to watch me play in a Paideia jersey, but his sudden death didn't stop me. If anything it motivated me to keep going. It wasn't like I was playing just to play anymore. I had a purpose; it felt like instead of him watching me, he was playing right along side of me. Each game I left everything out on the court.

Now practice was a different story. Practices

with Paul were hard to take seriously because one day you could get nice grandpa Paul who would stop us during a water break to show us pictures of his twin granddaughters, and then the next practice you could get the Paul who barks at you like a dog to get you run suicide drills faster. Well, we girls stuck it out together. I don't mean each and every one of us ran every suicide, but the ones who couldn't keep going continued to cheer the rest of us on, and I think that's how we became family. If it weren't for Paul and the girls pushing me every day to become a better player, I wouldn't be playing basketball for Berry College next year. So although I will have a new coaching staff, new teammates, a new name across my jersey, no one will have the same impact on me as my team and coach at Paideia did. My dad was right after all. Paul Meiere is a great coach and I am better because of him.

Nia Smith

I Am Ready for the Future

WE RESTED on the side of the road, somewhere outside a desert in New Mexico. I saw great bright stars, mocking with their endless freedom. I noticed my mom's arms wrapped around my brother and me. She stared intensely at the empty road, waiting for the guide that helped us cross to the United States. Her red, teary eyes told me she had been crying since I fell asleep. I never thought that sitting on rocks could be so comfortable, but after walking for hours, it felt nice to lay still. After a couple of hours, the guide came back for us. He told us he found the house designated as the first pit stop in the U.S., a journey that ultimately took a couple of weeks. After resting for a few hours in the first house, we were quickly moved to a van and told to lay face down with another 10 people.

After 30 minutes, we arrived to the worst looking house I have ever seen. It was small and run down with no windows, and walls covered with moss. We quickly entered the house trying not to alert the neighbors of our presence. We were led through a dark hallway to the living room in the back, where we walked past a single room that was completely dark and wet. We were told

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to sit down, be quiet, and wait for our ride. About 30 people were already sitting on the floor when we arrived. Not wanting to think about it, we sat down and started hunting for food; however, the only food available were crackers and bologna sandwiches. I had never tasted bologna in my life and was disgusted by the taste.

As the hours went by, my hunger overcame my stubbornness and I ate the bologna sandwich with tears in my eyes. A couple of hours later, another group arrived. They were from El Salvador and they appeared to be more dead than alive. Seeing their crushed souls and bodies made me realize that regardless of what I had gone through, I was lucky. I promised myself that no matter what happened in my future, I would never give up. I think about the sacrifices made by my parents and me and I am grateful. Nine years later as I face my next adventure in life...college, I wanted to thank everybody: my family, my friends, and my teachers, for providing me with great opportunities. After my experience of coming to this country, I truly believe that nothing is impossible. Bring on college. I am ready.

Aldo Urqiza

Thanks Mom

MY MOTHER taught me one of my first life lessons when I was seven years old. In my quest to become the coolest kid on the playground, I'd taken to addressing everyone as "dude." It began with "Thanks, dude," when she made me dinner, then progressed to "Calm down, dude," when she expressed her irritation at her new title. It was at that point that she finally snapped: "Don't call me that! You call your friends that, and I'm not your friend, I'm your mother!" As a quiet and introverted child, I was not one who could afford to lose very many friends, and the news came as a blow to my fragile ego.

At first I did not fully comprehend the lesson my mother taught me. I didn't understand what it meant that she was not my friend. Perhaps that explained her behavior when I broke my arm in a playground accident

in the fourth grade during recess; the injury would eventually require surgery and physical therapy.

More than one student on this stage today would take the blame for pushing me off the climbing structure, but the nurse's call to my mother made the incident sound like far less than a broken arm. As a nine-year old, I was sure a friend would have rushed to my aid immediately, regardless of the circumstances, but my mom would later admit to leisurely finishing her salad at home first.

But Mom, this is not a forum in which I'd like to air my grievances—quite the opposite, in fact. This is a thank you, albeit in the roundabout, convoluted, and puzzling way that comes most easily to me. This is to say that you were right. You're not my friend. I have a lot of friends on this stage today who are very dear to me and who I hope will always be a part of my life. And while some of them may have broken my arm in the fourth grade, none of them drove me to the hospital. Some of them may have enjoyed the kitten pictures I can't stop sharing, but none of them let the kittens into our home despite the many allergies. I have never had to teach one my friends how to work their new phone so they could call me every day while I was at summer camp. Some of my friends have commented on my love of the *Real Housewives* franchise, but none of them have sat through marathons of both the Atlanta and Beverly Hills series, ready to psychoanalyze each cast member to make our own concerns seem farther away for a moment.

Ten years later, I'm ready to accept that we're not friends. I can't say that I've quite found a better word for these past 18 years with you, but when I figure it out, Mom, you'll be the first to know.

Katharine Walls

One Line at a Time: How and Why Haiku

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night on the lake
I touch
the moon

Abby Shannon, grade 9

What do you see when you read Abby's poem? How do you feel about what you see? When was the first or the last time you observed the moon? Where were you? What was the occasion? What sights, sounds, smells do you recall from that time and place?

Feel free to write from memory, or if you happen to be reading this under the night sky, capture the moon in the here-and-now. If all else fails, use your imagination.

Okay. You're ready to write your own moon haiku. Almost... but first a few rules.

Since you'll be writing an English language haiku, I encourage you to abandon the 5-7-5 syllable structure you learned in school. The one of which there are 17 in Japanese haiku is different than the English language syllable. Ideally, haiku in English is written in approximately 11–12 syllables, 17 tops.

- You should be able to recite your poem in one conversational breath.
- Haiku are economic. Try limiting yourself to 10 or fewer words.
- Stick with three-lines for now.

Reread Abby's poem. Has she followed the rules so far? How many parts does Abby's poem have?

If you said two, you are correct: night on the lake/I touch the moon

Haiku often consist of a fragment and phrase. Our first grammar lesson will be to understand sentence fragments and phrases.

- Try not to rhyme but don't shy away from alliteration.
- Avoid similes.

My turn:

summit road
once more the moon
changes windows

The discussion you just followed is a brief introduction to English language haiku. Here's a promise. If you commit yourself to the practice, you'll learn more about the world, about writing and especially about yourself.

I teach haiku because I love it. I teach haiku because kids of all ages generally like it and some love it. I teach haiku because I feel it provides a cornerstone to literacy.

Haiku encourages experimentation with language. The power of language comes through play. Writing haiku is hard work, but playful at heart. Like all good poetry, haiku makes room for the reader to share in the poet's experience, thus jump starting a conversation about things that matter: family, friends, the environment, school, and mortality. In the words of Xavier University literature professor David Lanoue, *Haiku is life. Life is haiku.*

In haiku circles you'll often hear reference to the haiku moment. In so short a form as haiku the poet must get right to the point and show the particular thing that captures her or his attention- the one among the many, the close-up in the general scene, the last, the first, the opposite. Haiku work with the ordinary facts of life. One of the great surprises of this form of poetry is that in the ordinary, the every day, one can find the sublime. Haiku poets write in present tense to help the reader feel as if the haiku moment were happening now. Simple, uncomplicated images, common language, objective presentation and musical sensitivity to language are additional hallmarks of a successful haiku.

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Take for example this lovely poem by high school student Stuart Duffield:

moonless night
last of the rain
drips from the branches

The key to becoming a haiku poet is to stop, look and listen. In the words of ninth grader Emma Waldon, "Haiku is like a sculpture; a piece of art. If you sculpt it carefully, you can make a thing of beauty. Haiku is a big part of my life. It has come to define poetry for me. It's amazing how in such few words; you can express your thoughts and feelings. You can't sit down and just write a haiku whenever you want to. In order to write haiku, you have to be observant in every day. I was taught to observe through the five senses in everyday life. This helped me not only write poetry, but enjoy life more."

As a freshman, Grace Futral composed the following about her father when asked how she knew autumn was really here.

late autumn
his callused hands
feed the line

As a seventh grader, Liana Klin had all of the pieces to her haiku, but it was not until she discovered the perfect verb that her poem achieved this splendid representation of childhood innocence:

a crack
in the parking lot
I tightrope to the car

It is often the artful juxtaposition of concrete images that make a good haiku, one that is able to delight and surprise. The trick is to show, not tell, and when the poet achieves this her or his words resonate with meaning.

As a tenth grade student, Olivia Babuka Black achieves a wonderful juxtaposition of concrete images:

autumn wind
the spool
feeding thread

Emma Jones is a first place winner of the United Nations International Haiku Competition Middle School Division with the following:

in the ashes
embers
wink out

With what season would you associate Emma's haiku? In the haiku tradition there are five seasons, the fifth being the days leading up to and including the New Year.

Here is a favorite New Year haiku of mine, written by poet Pamela Miller Ness:

new year's rain
the circles in the puddle
widen

Borrowing from the Japanese, students explore the human condition through Sabi, (loneliness) Wabi, (austere beauty) and Yugen. (mystery) This haiku by sophomore Naima Dobbs hints at all three:

alone
the wind blows
the opposite direction

Virtually all holidays and cultural traditions are represented in haiku. Addison Owen composed this poem when he was in the eighth grade.

through the teeth
of the jack-o-lantern
the wind

People as a part of nature are also excellent subjects for haiku poems. Students are encouraged to be alert to human moments- both serious and humorous—where the essence of being human is revealed.

Abby Shannon captures one such moment here:

public library
the shy boy
wipes dust off a book

Tom Painting teaches in the junior high at Paideia. Before moving to Atlanta several years ago, he taught literature and creative writing at School of the Arts in Rochester, N.Y. In addition to haiku, his interests include hiking, and bird watching. He is married to Laura Brachman and has three children, Edith, Sarah and Philip. Since 2000, Tom's junior high and high school students have had winning haiku in the Nicholas Virgilio Memorial Haiku contest. His students have also been recognized in the United Nations International School Haiku competition. Tom's own haiku have appeared annually since 1998 in *The Red Moon Anthology of English Language Haiku*, published by Red Moon Press. He was the 2012 winner of the Haiku Society of America haibun contest and most recently has a haiku included in *Haiku in English: The First Hundred Years* published by W.W. Norton and Company.

In the next haiku, sophomore Danielle Murdoch reveals inner growth and awareness through the subtlety she observes in her home life.

*family dinner
the lights
too dim*

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Along the way, students read hundreds of haiku by accomplished haiku poets in order to discover “what works.” As confidence grows, students often feel compelled to experiment. There is plenty of room.

The challenge for the haiku poet is to make manifest that which is understood but not readily expressed.

A more recent development in English language haiku is the Gendai (non-normative) haiku movement. Lively debate about the merits and parameters of Gendai haiku often take place among haiku poets. Several Paideia students have ventured into this realm.

Monoku is but one form of Gendai haiku. As an eighth grader, Pearl Sullivan succeeded with the following:

frozen mid-laugh memories

At a certain point, after composing a number of haiku, students revise in order to find out what additional territories might be discovered or perhaps what’s lurking. The first phase is “internal” revision where the student works independently. I generally ask them to consider the following five activities:

· Revise for discovery: The first time you read your work, you are reading to discover what you still need to write about. What ideas or facts did you miss in writing the first time?

· Revise for meaning: Does your haiku say what you want it to say? Would you understand what you meant if you were not the writer? Are you assuming that everyone will know what you are talking about?

· Revise for order: Could your images be presented in a better order, a more effective order?

· Revise through grammar: Remove all modifiers and prepositional phrases from your poem to get to the subject/verb of the poem. Then one-by-one re-insert the modifiers and prepositional phrases, checking at each step that the addition is necessary.

· Revise for audience: Who will be reading your poem? Pretend you are the reader.

Ninth grade student Emma Jones has this to say about haiku and the writing process: “I like watching a haiku form. The original idea may change throughout the revision process. After chipping away unnecessary words and switching around the lines I often find myself with a new version that may or may not look how I originally intended it to be. Since haiku are written with so few words it has made me think about each word in all of my writing. Sometimes haiku is written about the smallest and seemingly unimportant moments in life. Writing and reading haiku has made me seek out these moments and grasp their importance and elegance, to write about or just appreciate.”

The challenge for the haiku poet is to make manifest that which is understood but not readily expressed.

As a community of writers, student haiku poets learn the language of critique and offer meaningful feedback. Often through the simple act of reading the work of others, students unlock the treasury of their own experience. The resulting conversations are both delightful and affirmative.

By extension, the study of haiku encourages an historical understanding of Old Japan, the poetic sensibilities of Eastern thought versus that of the West and the fascinating journey of haiku to our shores. Jack Kerouac and Richard Wright each wrote haiku. Students are generally delighted to read the novels *Haiku Guy* and *Laughing Buddha* by David Lanoue, whose protagonist sojourns between Old Japan and modern day New Orleans. Professor Lanoue is one of the foremost translators of the Japanese poet Issa, whose work students read in order to understand the breadth and scope of the haiku experience.

The study of haiku also acts a springboard to the visual and textual forms of haiga and haibun, which have become popular among western artists and poets.

The best way to explore well-written English language haiku is to visit one of several journals or web sites. Highly recommended among the journals is *Modern Haiku* <www.modernhaiku.org> and one cannot go wrong by checking out the web site for the Haiku Society of America. <www.hsa-haiku.org> While on the Haiku Society of America web site, be sure to click the link to Annual Contests. There you’ll find the results to the Nicholas A. Virgilio Memorial Haiku Contest. This contest features award-winning poems from students’ grades 7–12. Another place to find excellent haiku and instruction is The Haiku Foundation web site. <www.thehaikufoundation.org>

As my students and I travel the haiku path, I’m reminded that we are on the same footing. Each of us must experiment with the difficulties of language and become keener observers of the world and ourselves.

*big sky
the uncertain legs
of the foal*

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Teaching Means You Are Going To Grow All Of The Time

A Q&A with Kelly Richards by Brian Eames

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What were your earliest years of teaching like?

The very first year that I taught, I knew nothing! Someone in the school had somehow given me permission or asked me what I would like to do, and I said, “Let’s put on a play.”

We did *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* with the third and fourth grade! Who does that? But it was awesome because I didn’t care... after all, what did I know? I thought, “This will be great! We’re going to have fairies, we’re going to have funny guys...” When I was 12, a neighborhood parent Kittie Miller, had done *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* with local kids just for fun, and I got hold of a copy of the script we had used. I made it even shorter because that was when we were 12 and these children were mostly 8 or 9. But I had seen Kittie do it with us, and I remembered how much fun it had been when I was a kid. We pulled it off. I wish I had a film of it. I remember how much fun I had doing it.

That was the one of the really fun parts of being a very young teacher, but there was lots that was hard. In the first one or two years in my early teaching I was alone in the class... frequently in tears.

What made it so hard?

Teaching forced me right from the beginning to do a lot of emotional growing in order to deal with the emotions of the people I was with all day long. I grew up in a family that was very mild-mannered. I can remember the first few kids I worked with who had huge tempers and how frightening it was! One of them I remember was bigger than I was—a really robust kid. I was sure that if he got angry—like throwing chairs kind of angry—I wouldn’t be able to hand it. I had to develop a voice that said, “No. Put the chair down.” Or I had to become open to the idea of physically putting my hands on his shoulders and holding him. That was new for me, and it was hard to learn.

Kelly Richards, a long-time teacher in Paideia’s elementary school, taught her last day on June 5, 2013. She began her teaching career in 1970, teaching for several years at the Shady Hill School in Cambridge, Mass., and starting at Paideia in 1983. Elementary teacher and book author Brian Eames sat down with Kelly to talk about her career with children and the challenges and joys that teachers face.

I learned from teaching that I had my own kind of attention problem. I had to learn persistence. The default in my life [a much younger self] was to find something else to do if I got to a really hard place, or to simply walk away from people who irritated me. But you can’t do that in a classroom. You have to work your way through the hard places; you don’t get to choose just the easy children. You are going to be called on to figure out what to do in situations you really would rather not be in.

I think that working with kids you are always confronted by places you might not have wanted to go because those kids push your buttons. They are right there in your face. The kids you need to learn from, they are the ones who show up in your classroom, and they are hard. They have been hard for me. I often end up really loving those kids, and I look back on them as gifts, but at the time it was a lot of sleepless nights and anxiety. That is part of the job. Teaching means you are going to grow all of the time, maybe not in directions you had chosen, but you are going to keep growing.

Did you have many mentors in your early years?

Not formally. It just wasn’t available at the time. But I did learn lots from watching other people. I listened to what some teachers would say to kids, and if I really liked that, I’d start using it. One of the very first teachers I worked with taught me something I have used ever since. I noticed that whenever she wanted to get the attention of students, she whispered. I thought, “That’s brilliant!” And from then on, for a long time, I whispered when I wanted students to be quiet. I’ve picked up practices in lots of places from lots of people, including apprentices and assistants I’ve taught with.

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The very first teacher mentor I ever had was in college. I went to work once a week in the Philadelphia public schools in a first grade classroom. I did this entirely on my own. I met Lovey Glenn and I asked her if I could come in and be a volunteer in her classroom. [There was actually a movie made about her in the late ’60s.]

Lovey was this beautiful black woman who was wild, and she had this group of inner city kids who would follow her into anything. What a firecracker. One day she got up on top of one of the desks and announced that the class was going to have a parade. All the kids made musical instruments that they paraded around. They loved her. I had no idea up until then that a teacher could get up on top of a desk. I had some radical teachers in high school who—*maybe*—sat on the front of their desks to talk to us, and that was radical. But this was Lovey in her mini-skirt and crazy hair and jingly bracelets, and she was so much fun. I don’t

You have to work your way through the hard places; you don’t get to choose just the easy children.

know that she would ever have thought of herself as a mentor, and I’m not sure I realized she was for me at the time, but when I look back, Lovey just gave me so much permission in one year of teaching. And she also had a classroom where different things were going on in different parts of the room. And since nothing in my own growing up had been like that, I saw right away, “Okay, right, we can do this. I see how this works.”

So a lot of fun for me over the years has been watching what other people do and saying, “Does this work, or in what ways does this work, or can I do this too?” It’s like when I put on that first play, I was really drawing on Kittie, the director that I had had when I was 12, in the neighborhood Shakespeare plays. If somebody asked me if I could direct a play, I said yes because I would be Kittie and do what she did. Then I learned to *do* Lovey Glen, and I learned to do [former longtime Paideia teacher] Shelley Marcus here, in little pieces. I took things from lots and lots of people.

But some of my most important mentors were those who helped me when kids were really hard for me, because I always felt like leaving. It was really hard for me to stay through difficult kids. I always felt like a failure, like it was my personal problem that they were as miserable as they were.

How has that changed?

When I was young, I didn’t have the perspective to see that this kid wasn’t just like this with me; he was like that in the whole world, carrying around all this pain. I think I felt the pain, and I just needed it to be over. I needed to fix it, and it was really hard. It still is, but I have a deeper perspective on it. As a young teacher, anyone who could help me with that stuff was really important to me. I could figure out really quickly who was going to help me. I would go to them and say, “I need help. I can’t do this. I said x and y and this kid said QRST and w, then left the room! I don’t know what to do.” And they would hear me and help me.

You have led a group for assistant teachers at Paideia for over 15 years now, engaging teachers relatively new to the profession in discussions about classroom craft, navigating relationship with lead teachers, parents, etc. Is that mentoring?

I see the group itself as mentoring. It offers support and a collegial forum in which for asking questions and firming up or clarifying ideas. But I can also take a clear leadership role. Sometimes when we’re talking about a situation that’s tricky each person will suggest possible actions to take, but there are moments when I feel strongly about a point of view—often it’s the “why” behind the “what”—and I’ll hold forth some on what I consider “best practice” in that situation. It’s just like the way we teach children—sometimes the group explores, sometimes the teacher points out. They’re both important.

Your teaching has evolved over the years. Have those changes been in response to changes you have noted in your students, or changes in yourself?

I certainly do not see any difference in kids today compared to 1970 in terms of what they bring in the door with them—their personalities, their worries, etc. I have, though, seen a really big difference in reading.

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Kids in the third grade now cannot read what kids in third grade at Shady Hill could read when I left—so about 1983. They really can't. There is the occasional kid who can, of course. But most just don't have that kind of... persistence, maybe? And they don't come in with the same degree of skill as readers. I think there has been a shift. Every year we get easier books for our classroom, not harder books, and more of those books that are part of a series. "Oh, do you like that book? Good! There are 15 more just like it." If I read a book aloud like an E. Nesbit book—a real literary kind of children's book I would sometimes read at Shady Hill—I find I just can't. I think an individual kid might be able to read that at home, but we just can't read it in class. It doesn't work. And because of that I find my teaching has had to change to a certain extent.

But, there is a really interesting possibility that part of why I teach differently is that in the meantime, I have become a parent. I think I see kids really differently from having become a parent. I have a different sense of what they need, and I feel more connection to their emotional lives and a concern for that. As a young teacher I was really wrapped up in creating really interesting curriculum. "Let's build a cactus out of cardboard! This will be great!" I could function that way with kids. I remember all sorts of projects I did with kids that were all-consuming, and I was very much like the older brother or sister that they were happy to follow into some project. Now I look for different things in my curriculum. I want kids to be independent... I want them to have an ownership of things. I have also changed how attuned I am to skills, which perhaps I did not take as seriously when I was a young whippersnapper. I think I see kids much more individually now. I think it has become more and more important to me that my classroom be a safe place for kids. From my own children, I have seen how much kids shut down when they are anxious, and then they can't learn! Or they can only do certain kinds of learning.

You are in the unique position of having been married to a teacher [Peter Richards taught 4th and 5th graders down the hall from Kelly.] What has that been like?

When we first came to Paideia I taught with Peter for four years, and at that time we were also the parents of a newborn to a four-year-old. In the beginning it was ideal because we had so much flexibility. Basically we shared a job and a half. Either of us could be at home with a kid, either of us could be at school: one person was going to be in school all day and one person was going to be in school half the day--that's the way we worked it out with Paul. By the time our oldest became 3, though, it was too much of the sameness. It really was too much talking about school, finally.

Many times kids from my class have gone directly into Peter's class the next year. I love that. We compare the things we observe in the same child over time. We do talk about kids, but we talk about teaching more. Peter will tell me something that he did that he is really proud of, or vice versa. One of the things that has been really fun that we mostly do on a long drive is that we brainstorm together. "How would you teach this?" That's so fun.

I love the connection that Peter and I have had through our teaching. I love that our family was all in school together, that our family was all on vacation together.... And, I think Peter is a fantastic teacher. I really appreciate him in a way that I imagine in most marriages you don't get to appreciate each other, and I know he feels the same way. Sometimes I'll look up and see him standing in our classroom just beaming, just loving what he sees. And I do the same. That is so cool.

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What do you look back on most fondly, and what do you think you will miss about classroom life?

I have loved doing plays with kids since that first production of *A Midsummer Nights Dream*. I did little plays when I taught in Poland, and when I returned to Shady Hill we did plays every year. When I first came to Paideia, Peter and I started doing *The Revels*. A few years later my class was putting on *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the *Fairy Rebel*, a whole series of Pilgrim/Separatist plays. Now Tony and I have started in on the *Buddha Play* and Martin Luther King Jr.'s *I Have a Dream* speech. I want kids not to worry about their "performance" on a day-to-day basis, but I really like coaching them into maximum performance for a performance. And I love how kids get bonded together doing a play. With so much of what we do in school, there is no culmination apart from the marker of the end of a year. A play creates a wonderful feeling. You work and work and work and put it on. So I look back on that with a lot of pleasure.

For good or for ill, we are with kids more time during the week, more waking hours than they are with their parents. Quite a responsibility comes with that. It's a lot of trust placed in us.

Another thing I get really proud of with kids are projects: art projects, sewing projects.... I look back with enormous fondness on things we've cooked...things we've painted.

I think I'll miss having an audience. I love some of those moments where I get to be inspired about something in the company of a whole bunch of people who are going to sit and listen. We get talking about something that seems really important and everybody is right there with me. And I appreciate that I get to have such an important role in kids' lives. I think that's where parenting led me to a lot of humility. For good or for ill, we are with kids more time during the week, more waking hours than they are with their parents. Quite a responsibility comes with that. It's a lot of trust placed in us.

I really enjoy the times with parents when it feels like we are on a team. There are lots of parents that I have gotten a kick out of being "related to" for that period of time. It's almost like I recognize that parents are really vulnerable through their children, so I often feel like that is a kind of tender relationship.

What do you think has drawn you back to Paideia for so many years?

When I came back to Paideia after my mommy hiatus, I really came back for the community, the chance to work in tandem with others, to all be pulling in the same direction. I had missed that in the time I spent at home, and I have felt deeply grateful for it ever since. I relish the sense of teaming up that I have with Tony and all the specialists we work with; but the team includes our colleagues, Mary Lynn and Barbara, Paul, the tutors, all the parental support we get. It extends to all the other faculty, because whether we work directly with each other or not, everyone contributes to making this place what it is, and of course we teach each other's children so we know each other in that vulnerable way. The whole school functions as a team. I can't imagine any place I could work where it would be more fun, where there would be more hugs, where I would be happier to return after a long summer away, and sadder to leave.

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Matthew H. Bernstein is chair of the Department of Film and Media Studies at Emory University. He is married to Natalie Bernstein, the elementary librarian at Paideia and they are parents of Paideia alumni Justin '02 and Adam '07. Matthew was the 2014 speaker in the Paideia Alumni Parent Council Lecture Series.

This piece and his lecture are drawn from his research for an upcoming book he is co-authoring with on movie culture in segregated Atlanta.

When most people of my generation think of Atlanta and the movies, they think of *Gone with the Wind*. David O. Selznick's 1939 Oscar-sweeping blockbuster Civil War epic—about the headstrong Scarlett O'Hara (Vivien Leigh), her love of Tara and Ashley Wilkes (Leslie Howard), her sometimes romantic partnership with Rhett Butler (Clark Gable), and her support team of Melanie (Olivia de Havilland), Mamma (Hattie McDaniel) and Prissy (Butterfly McQueen). There is also General Sherman's burning of the city. For decades, *GWTW* completely dominated the world's conception of the American South and of Atlanta. I've known people who have moved to Atlanta because of that film.

In December 1939, the eyes of the world—or at least of America—were on the city for the first time ever because of the film's premiere. The visiting stars included all of the major cast, except for Hattie McDaniel and Butterfly McQueen; the Selznick group were advised that including the most prominent black cast members could well “stir up trouble” for the proceedings and for the film itself. Nonetheless, eager, movie-mad Atlantans lined the sidewalks to see the motorcades of government officials, filmmakers and stars whiz by. Whites stood closest to the roadway, while black Atlantans stood several rows back. Later, lucky elite white Atlantans attended the Junior League Ball. There, among other spectacles, Martin Luther King Jr. sang in his father's church choir, dressed in period slave clothes in a stage tableau of the pre-Civil War South. This was a volunteer assignment that raised many eyebrows in Black Atlanta.¹

The premiere of *Gone with the Wind* in Atlanta in December 1939 was attended by all of the major cast with the exception of African-American cast members Hattie McDaniel and Butterfly McQueen because the movie's producers were advised their presence could “stir up trouble.”

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Yet, exciting as it was, the *Gone with the Wind* premiere was just the culminating event of over three decades of white and black Atlanta's love affair with the movies. I can only sketch the contours of that history here and I will focus mainly on the period between the teens and the 1930s. I should also specify that this sketch is a history not of movie-making, but of *moviegoing* and film culture in the segregated era that I am currently writing with the urban historian Dana F. White, Professor Emeritus of Emory University. In reconstructing Atlanta's film culture in the segregated era, we look at specific theaters and their biographies, as well as their connection to the city's growth; the distribution of films across the color line; the operation of censorship (Atlanta had three city censors between 1914 and 1962); and how Atlantans responded to key films about the South or about race relations that they saw—a response we construct from film reviews, letters to the editor and interviews with longtime residents. As I hope this essay will demonstrate, each of these elements give us a picture of a dynamic, complex movie culture, albeit one informed in every way by Jim Crow.

Since Atlanta was a city made great by railroads, I'll begin by noting that the connection between movies and race relations began here on parallel tracks. For it was actually in Atlanta that movies were projected to a group of viewers for the first time ever in the world—more specifically, in a tent on the midway of the 1895 Cotton States and International Exposition, in what would become Piedmont Park. Prior to this, people only watched movies one at a time, in peep show machines in retail parlors. The three-month Exposition had a disappointing turnout of less than 800,000 people; the temporary theater built by the inventors Thomas Armat and Charles Francis Jenkins was a complete failure. They eventually sold their patents to Thomas



Edison, who, with his marketing machine, rebranded it his latest marvel, the Vitascope, and brought it back to Atlanta theaters six months later to great acclaim and profit.²

On the opening day of this same 1895 event, the black leader and educator Booker T. Washington delivered his famous “Atlanta Compromise” speech, in which he stated “In all things that are purely social, we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress.” Reassuring southern whites that African-Americans would not make further demands for Civil Rights (or more specifically protest a series of segregation laws passed in Georgia in the 1890s), Washington’s sentiments (and Georgia laws) were given a definitive legal foundation the following year by the U.S. Supreme Court’s “separate-but-equal” decision in its *Plessy vs. Ferguson* decision. This ruling would stand as the law most predominantly in the south, and certainly in Atlanta. Any challenge to it, under any conceivable circumstance, would be suppressed instantly, a principle that informed every aspect of Atlanta life and Atlanta movie culture.

Segregation obviously operates spatially. The best known architectural example of Atlanta’s “segregated but equal” movie culture resides in the Fabulous Fox, which, incidentally, opened on Christmas Day, 1929, two months after the Wall Street crash. White customers bought their tickets from a booth on Peachtree Street and proceeded into the sumptuous lobby that led to the spectacular theater and its Moorish architecture. To reach the theater’s Buzzard’s Roost—several rows of seats at the top of the balcony and separated by a four foot wall—black Atlantans had to climb a lengthy, external staircase after purchasing their tickets at the separate side entrance on Ponce de Leon Avenue.

Many black Atlanta parents forbade their children to endure the humiliation of attending segregated seating, well before the Fox itself opened. The *Atlanta Independent*, a weekly black newspaper published from 1903 to 1928, actually devoted the front page of its February 3, 1921 edition to this question, mocking well-dressed “jim-crowed” black

Atlanta professionals and college students who preferred to go into alleys of white theaters to get segregated seating. The paper insisted that black residents instead should patronize the city’s lesser-known circuit of “colored” theaters dedicated to black patronage in the business district, south of the city or on the west side, where new black neighborhoods were growing.

Another form of segregation occurred residentially. The earliest large black theater was located inside the Oddfellows Building on Auburn Avenue, a structure that opened in 1914. Under various names (the Auditorium, the Paramount), this 500-seat house operated throughout the twenties until it became known as the Bailey’s Royal, the most prestigious theater in the city. This house was even briefly owned for less than a year by pioneering black businessman Heman Perry, creator of the Standard Life Insurance Company, who acquired it in February 1924 as the Paramount Theater (with no connection to the famous Hollywood studio). In the course of that year, Perry was excoriated multiple times by the *Atlanta Independent* when he fired a black manager and hired a white one, who, in the paper’s logic, could not be very competent if he could only find work in a black theater. (He might even be a KKK member, the paper speculated). “When white folks put Negroes in charge of white theaters,” the December 11, 1924 editorial “White Man in Charge of Negro Theatre” concluded, “it will be time for Negroes to put white men in charge of Negro theatres.” Clearly, the racial politics of movie theater management was a topic of concern to forward-thinking opinion makers, and Perry had insulted Atlanta’s black community with this hire that violated customs in the segregated era. Such matters became moot, however, when Perry’s financial empire collapsed the following January, and the theater reverted to white ownership with black management. (Atlanta would not see another black-owned movie theater until Magic Johnson took over the Greenbriar Mall 12 Cinema in 1996; he gave up ownership of it in 2010. Today, the Oddfellows auditorium is a courtyard for shops and offices).³

Another noted black theater in Atlanta was the 1500-seat Theater 81, at 81 Decatur Street (torn down to become to become part of the Georgia State University campus), which regularly featured live stage acts such as Ethel Waters and Bessie Smith. Decatur Street, though just two blocks south of Auburn Avenue, was decidedly more raucous. As Atlanta historian Skip Mason has put it, “What Decatur Street offered in crass, Auburn Avenue provided in class.”⁴ Yet a third black movie house, which opened in the fall of 1934, was the Ashby Street Theater, close to the Atlanta University campus, where black neighborhoods continued to grow. By that year, black Atlantans represented roughly a third of the city’s population: 105,000 out of 302,000 residents (for whom four black theaters did not provide nearly enough seating). The Ashby shared more in common with the classy Bailey’s Royal than the noisy Theater 81.

Black theaters were not allowed to book Hollywood’s most recent releases until they were in their final runs, which could take more than a year in major cities, or under six months in the South.

Black Atlanta was distinguished by the presence of a solid, educated black middle class in the city, home to the Atlanta University Center, where the study of race relations grew under the leadership of none other than W.E.B. DuBois. Teaching there from 1897 to 1910, DuBois made his famous pronouncement in his landmark 1903 volume *The Souls of Black Folk* that “The problem of the 20th Century is the problem of the color line.” In September 1935, after DuBois had returned to Atlanta University a year earlier to begin another decade of teaching, *Atlanta Daily World* spotted Professor W. E. B. Du Bois and reported that he was one of the Royal theater’s “most constant patrons,” along with Morehouse College President S.H. Archer.⁵ He likely began attending the Ashby after it opened later that fall.

We cannot say with certainty how many black Atlantans joined DuBois in attending “colored theaters” on a regular basis. There were many reasons why they wouldn’t. Paul K. Edwards, an economist at Fisk University, wrote in his 1932 *The Southern Urban Negro As a Consumer* that most southern black

movie theaters were “small and the type of entertainment is usually so inferior as to fail to interest at least the best element of the population.” At theaters with segregated sections, the entrance and seating arrangements further contributed to the fact that “a much smaller percentage of Negroes of all classes attends the theater than is true of whites.... Their interest, it would appear, is centered rather in their churches, clubs, and lodges.”⁶ This situation was exacerbated by the fact that typically around the country, black theaters were not allowed to book Hollywood’s most recent releases until they were in their final runs, which could take more than a year in major cities, or under six months in the South. By the early 1930s, it would be easier, and certainly cheaper, to stay home and listen to the radio for free.⁷

But contrary to Edwards’ generalization about inferior films being shown in black theaters, Bailey’s theaters in the early 1930s showed Hollywood first-run films typically within a month of their run in white theaters. Bailey’s Atlanta-based multi-state theater chain may have given the company some bargaining strength in negotiating playdates from national film distributors, such as Paramount, 20th Century Fox, MGM, RKO, and Warner Bros. The fact that Atlanta served as a major distribution hub for the southeast meant that prints of new films may well have sat in distributor offices during the clearance period between their first and subsequent runs in white theaters, if they were not being shipped to other locales. If so, Bailey likely persuaded the local office staff of national film distributors to put otherwise idle prints to work by showing them in black theaters, to which no white audiences would take the slightest interest or objection. As early as 1920, the city movie censor J.W. Peacock commented in his annual report to the Carnegie Library board that “Our colored [sic] theaters, are furnished the same pictures shown in the better white houses and verry [sic] frequently we find some of the best pictures showing in the Colored [sic] theaters.”⁸

This fact is evident in the *Atlanta Daily World*. In the 1930s especially, the paper devoted one of its six pages to movies and the theater. The pages were plastered with ads, previews, photos, various listings, and reviews. Most often, these reviews were taken direct from a film's press book, a folder of articles and photos that the studios devised and sent to theater managers who in turn could supply them to local newspapers. All you had to do was fill in the name of the theater where the film was playing, and the date it opened and presto—you had your review, which was always a very favorable plot summary, with praise for the cast. This was a boon to black newspapers which did not always have the staff to craft by-lined reviews. The *Atlanta Daily World* took advantage of these.

The overwhelming majority of films the *Daily World* covered consciously or uncon-

KKK chapter leaders subsequently rented *The Birth of a Nation* for recruitment meetings through the 1920s and beyond.

sciously perpetuated the ideology of white supremacy that had also informed the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision. These beliefs were cinematically enshrined in D.W. Griffith's racist epic *The Birth of a Nation*. This highly controversial, much protested film had opened in the spring of 1915 in the North and in Los Angeles, but arrived in Atlanta in December, 20 years after Washington's speech, and just weeks after the Thanksgiving revival of Ku Klux Klan on Stone Mountain. Inside the Atlanta theater, white residents whooped and hollered and gave the rebel yell as Griffith's masterfully-realized film, accompanied by thundering orchestral music, re-enacted the myth of the lost cause, of plantation slaves who loved their masters and knew their place, and of the black brutes who try to rape southern white women. Outside on Peachtree Street, KKK members in full regalia paraded up and down, inviting interested citizens to join their ranks. And join they did, in 1915 and thereafter; KKK chapter leaders subsequently rented *The Birth of a Nation* for recruitment meetings through the 1920s and beyond. A slightly cut version with synchronized sound appeared in late 1930.⁹

It took decades before American filmmakers gradually began to overturn Griffith's vision of the Civil War and the South and of African-Americans—arguably with the rise of Sidney Poitier's stellar career in the 1950s, the revisionist Blaxploitation plantation films of the 1970s, such as *Mandingo* (1975), the black film renaissance of the early 1990s, and continuing today, as with the 2014 Oscar winner *12 Years a Slave*.¹⁰

Yet an important milestone in that all-too-gradual change in the representation of African-Americans onscreen—and the biggest event film of the 1930s in black Atlanta, as around black America—was the 1934 *Imitation of Life*. In it, two single mothers, the white Bea (Claudette Colbert) and the black Delilah (Louise Beavers) join forces in their struggle to survive and raise their daughters during the Great Depression. After making a fortune on Delilah's family pancake recipe (a la the Aunt Jemima brand), both women suffer heartbreak at their daughter's hands: Bea's daughter Jessie (Rochelle Hudson) falls in love with her mother's fiancé, whom Bea must ultimately renounce; the light-skinned Peola (Fredi Washington) repeatedly runs away to try to pass as white, ultimately leading to Delilah's death by heartbreak. Based on a popular Fannie Hurst novel, this was the first Hollywood film to give black actors serious roles of dignity and suffering (as opposed to the comic servants or musical performers whom Hollywood favored in the wake of *The Birth of a Nation*'s many controversies). *Imitation of Life* also featured powerful performances by the black leads—contrasting Louise Beaver's performance of Christian stoicism with Fredi Washington's smoldering portrayal of a new generation that recognizes the arbitrariness of Jim Crow laws. The black plot completely overshadowed the white plot.

For all of these reasons, *Imitation of Life* received a phenomenal response from black moviegoers around the country. In Atlanta, *The Daily World* ran articles, interviews, reviews and photos from the film on a daily basis beginning with its one week run at the Fabulous Fox and increasing during its unprecedented 13-day run in the black Bailey theaters. Black movie fandom was alive and well in Atlanta—a fact further corroborated by the *Daily World*'s decision



The 1934 film *Imitation of Life* starring Louise Beavers and Claudette Colbert was an important milestone in how African-Americans were portrayed on screen.

Author's Collection

to run a movie popularity contest in January 1935, in which 132 residents voted for their favorite films, actors and entertainers. *Imitation of Life* came in third only because it had not yet played in the Bailey theaters (and could only be seen from the Buzzard's Roost of the Fabulous Fox).

The arbitrary ideology of white superiority, which *Imitation of Life* acknowledged but protested in the character of Peola, was not just apparent on the screen; it was maintained in the office of Atlanta's city film censor. In 1915, the Supreme Court in its infinite wisdom characterized movies as "a business pure and simple," comparable to the circus,

The South adored *The Birth of a Nation* and *Gone with the Wind*, but many other films were seen as insulting to the region or providing a whiff of social equality between the races. For example, southern censors were famous for cutting out musical sequences from MGM musicals in which Lena Horne sang.

and not a medium capable of expressing ideas (recall that 1915 saw the release of *The Birth of a Nation*). The upshot was that movies were not entitled to first amendment protection, i.e., freedom from prior restraint; and seven states and countless cities created censors or censorship boards. (To be fair, at this time, the movies were a frightening new medium to many civic and church leaders and even to ordinary American parents—its powers of influence over the young were seen to be as deleterious as the Internet or video games today.)

All censors objected to the depiction of crime without punishment, and the implication of a sexual relationship between an unmarried man and woman, or even a married man and woman. Southern censors were very sensitive to the way the South appeared on film. The South adored *The Birth of a Nation* and *Gone with the Wind*, but many other films were seen as insulting to the region or providing a whiff of social equality between the races. For example, southern censors were famous for cutting out musical sequences from MGM musicals in which Lena Horne sang. They did so for reasons that Atlanta's second censor explained in detail to Hollywood.

Atlanta's first censor took office in 1914. He was succeeded by two women of contrasting generations, educational level, aesthetic sensibilities and attitudes towards Hollywood. The first of these, Mrs. Alonzo Richardson, was listed in Atlanta's blue book. She was Coca Cola CEO's Robert Woodruff's Sunday school teacher. She was plugged in to the city's power elite. She was an example of the Southern Lady and club-woman metamorphosed into public figure and municipal spokesperson. She is also an example of how women of great intelligence and ability were a driving force in the city. Mrs. Richardson assumed her position in June 1925 at the age of 57.

Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of Mrs. Richardson's tenure in the post was how she saw herself: an ambassador. She explained the ways of Hollywood to Atlanta, but she very definitely explained the ways of Atlanta (and the South) to Hollywood. She usually did this by composing lengthy, chatty, often humorous letters to the PCA office. Here's one sample, from 1936:

*One more complaint. For a time we got away from having to see men bathing. There is really no entertainment in this necessary bodily function, so why do we have to see Rains, Montgomery, Morgan, in the bathtub? Is bathing such an event in anybody's life that it has to be photographed? I didn't think so, nor does the average audience. Female form may be beautiful, but "good Lord deliver us" from the naked male. Knockneed, many of these, certainly nothing beautiful in either of the aforesaid gentlemen whom we have had to see in the bathtubs recently.*¹¹

On a few occasions, however, Mrs. Richardson was less friendly. She arranged, with the consent of Atlanta's mayor Isaac Newton Ragsdale, for the banning of a big budget production of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1927. This move cemented her power in the city and the region, for other states and cities in the southeast followed Atlanta's example. When sound movies arrived, she chastised Hollywood for depicting southern whites as talking like "Negores"—as she frequently perhaps purposefully, mis-typed this word. Unfortunately, her views were held by a majority of white Americans in the 1930s and 1940s.

Of course her influence extended to the black theaters. In her second month on the job, she reached out to the black community, seeking "a group of intelligent, reliable colored women who will review the colored theatres, thus giving us the advantage, as with white theaters, of many viewpoints."¹² She found a leader in a "Mrs. Butler (the wife of the best colored [sic] physician in the city and who is a leader among his people) has undertaken this..." She never referred to this group again in her monthly reports; more immediately, whenever Mrs. Richardson needed to assess a "colored theater," she dispatched the Carnegie library's black janitor to report back to her.¹³

By 1943, Mrs. Richardson was consistently expressing bewilderment that anyone would find black performers entertaining—especially when the musical *Stormy Weather*—starring Bill Bojangles Robinson, Lena Horne, Cab Calloway, Katherine Dunham, Fats Waller, Dooley Wilson, and the astonishing Nicholas Brothers—was held over for several weeks in

By 1943, [Atlanta's movie censor] Mrs. Richardson was consistently expressing bewilderment that anyone would find black performers entertaining

the city. She would become so exercised by this trend in Hollywood that she directly wrote to MGM producer Eddie Mannix to praise the studio for creating a film like *The Gang's All Here* (1943), a Latin American flavored musical starring Carmen Miranda, "the lady in the tutti-frutti hat"—and which had no black performers at all. She reported comments she received on the film, such as "At last the Producers have realized that white people *can* be entertained without having to inject Negroes." She at this point was taking the gloves off: "We cannot understand the desire to exploit these people, and who to us represent paganism at its height, when they are doing their natural things, and the acts of monkeys when they are aping the white folks." She promised Mannix she would continue to cut out offending scenes, walk out of the theater with less offending ones, and put up with them in recognition of the industry's fine war efforts, but she would await the return of "our boys" to set things right—whatever that meant.¹⁴

In all such letters to Hollywood, Mrs. Richardson adopted the stance of being a friend to the industry, explaining why she would have to cut offensive scenes or ban offensive films, for the good of the industry as well as the good order of the city of Atlanta. Her successor two years later shared her views on crime, illicit sexual and social equality between the races. Christina Smith, however, took a far more skeptical view of the Hollywood studios. Smith was a college-educated, former leader of the local branch of the League of Women Voters, and she banned many more films, ordered many more cut scenes and in general took a more confrontational tone towards the industry. While her actions generated several lawsuits against the city, the Supreme Court reversed its 1915 decision seven years after she assumed her post, finally recognizing that movies could indeed convey ideas—a fact everyone else in America clearly recognized by the 1930s, and that was undeniable after Hollywood's contribution to the World War II effort. In 1962, a judge invalidated the city ordinance empowering the censor position.¹⁵

The year 1962 also witnessed the desegregation of Atlanta theaters. While not a top priority for the Civil Rights movement, it was a definite goal, achieved at theaters stretching from Raleigh, North Carolina, to Memphis, Tennessee, by a variety of means, including "stand ins" outside the theater, as opposed to the "sit ins" that began in 1960 at Rich's Department Store, Grady Memorial Hospital, and elsewhere. Mayors William B. Hartsfield and Ivan Allen began quietly negotiating with downtown business leaders and merchants to end desegregation of all kinds. When President John F. Kennedy publicly praised Atlanta's "responsible, law-abiding" approach to desegregating public schools in August 1961, and the state saw the integration of the University of Georgia, the momentum gradually extended to the movie theaters. City Hall arranged for two black students to be admitted to four of the downtown movie theaters—the Roxy, the Rialto, Loews' Grand, and the Fabulous Fox—to test the waters. When there was no

protest by white patrons, Atlanta's movie theaters were declared desegregated. One year later, when Atlanta residents watched Atticus Finch (Gregory Peck) defend Tom Robinson (Brock Peters) against a false rape charge by a white woman in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, they saw, in the words of historian Thomas Doherty, "a mise en scene that mirrored the set design in at least some of the theaters playing the film."¹⁶ By the time the screen adaptation of Harper Lee's classic played the Capri Theater in Buckhead to a mixed audience, segregated balconies were officially outlawed in Atlanta. And yet—Atlanta's black theaters carried on through the early 1970s.

Atlanta's cinematic heroines have shifted from Miss Scarlett to Miss Daisy (like Vivien Leigh, Jessica Tandy won a Best Actress Oscar) to—most recently—Tyler Perry's unruly Madea.

There was a major difference between official desegregation of theaters and active integration of moviegoing. There are still movie houses today that because of residential location or habit, continue to cater to different audiences. At the same time, as mall theaters and free-standing multiplexes demonstrate, integrated movie watching is a majority practice, at least in the central city.

While Atlanta's love affair with the movies has surged and diminished for nearly 110 years, it has remained a steady infatuation. It encompasses the release of the second Oscar winning film about race relations in Atlanta, *Driving Miss Daisy*, which premiered precisely 50 years almost to the day after *Gone with the Wind*, but to the chagrin of many Atlantans, not in Atlanta, but in New York City. Over the course of this period, Atlanta's cinematic heroines have shifted from Miss Scarlett to Miss Daisy (like Vivien Leigh, Jessica Tandy won a Best Actress Oscar) to—most recently—Tyler Perry's unruly Madea, a character he developed out of stage plays he wrote, directed and performed on a circuit of southern churches.¹⁷ Today, Atlanta stands as the 12th largest film market in the country, even as most Americans under 35 associate

Atlanta with hip hop music. Its signature resident filmmaker and TV producer-director is Mr. Perry and he exploits the contemporary Atlanta landscape like no one else. It's fun to imagine what Mrs. Richardson or even Christina Smith, would have made of this.¹⁸

Atlanta and Mr. Perry, however, have company. The city and state have entered an unprecedented phase of filmmaking since the passage of the Georgia Entertainment Industry Investment Act in May 2005.¹⁹ Well over 50 films and TV shows are shot here annually, with huge studio facilities being built in Gwinnett county and Fayetteville, among other locations, and Atlanta now stands as one of the top five states for filmmaking in the nation. Relatively few of these films are actually set in Atlanta or Georgia. In any case, moviemaking is at last catching up to moviegoing as a central part of Atlanta's cinema history. The excitement and glamour of movie stars on Peachtree Street overshadows the history of "colored" theaters, film censors, and audience excitement over individual films. I hope I have demonstrated, however, that history is worth knowing, for it is multi-faceted and tells us a great deal about everyday life in segregated Atlanta.

1. Matthew H. Bernstein, "Selznick's March: The Atlanta Premiere of *Gone with the Wind*," *Atlanta History* 43, no. 2 (Summer 1999), 7–33, reprinted in Matthew H. Bernstein and Dana F. White, eds., *Atlanta at the Movies* (Athens: University of Georgia, 2015), forthcoming.
2. Steve Goodson, "Atlanta and the Movies," in *Highbrows Hillbillies & Hellfire: Public Entertainment in Atlanta, 1880–1930* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2002), 79; this entire chapter is reprinted in Matthew H. Bernstein and Dana F. White, eds., *Atlanta at the Movies* (Athens: University of Georgia, 2015), forthcoming.
3. The first black theater on record was a storefront nickelodeon which opened in 1907. Randy Gue, "Nickel Madness: Atlanta's Storefront Movie Theaters, 1906–1911," *Atlanta History* 43, no. 2 (Summer 1999), 34–44. On the Auditorium Theater, see Dana F. White, "'A Landmark in Negro Progress': The Auditorium Theatre 1914–1925," *Marquee* 34, No. 4 (2002): 15–21, reprinted in Matthew H. Bernstein and Dana F. White, eds., *Atlanta at the Movies* (Athens: University of Georgia, 2015), forthcoming.
4. Skip Mason, *Black Atlanta in the Roaring Twenties* (Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, 1997), 2.
5. *Atlanta Daily World*, September 25, 1935: 5.
6. Paul K. Edwards, *The Southern Urban Negro as a Consumer* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1932 and 1969), 184.
7. For an excellent and pioneering overview of black theaters and segregation practices, from which this paragraph draws, see Douglas Gomery, "Movie Theaters for Black Americans," in *Shared Pleasures: A History of Movie Presentation in the United States* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), 155–170. Gomery discusses black theaters' access to major studio films on p. 163.
8. J.A. Peacock, Letter to Mr. W.C. Caraway, Chairman, Board of Review, December 31, 1920, in the author's possession.
9. See Steve Goodson, "Atlanta and the Movies," in *Highbrows Hillbillies & Hellfire: Public Entertainment in Atlanta, 1880–1930* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2002), 78–107; this entire chapter is reprinted in Matthew H. Bernstein and Dana F. White, eds., *Atlanta at the Movies* (Athens: University of Georgia, 2015), forthcoming.
10. See Donald Bogle, *Toms, Coons, Mammies Mulattoes and Bucks*, 4th edition (New York: Continuum, 2001), and Thomas Cripps, *Slow Fade To Black* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), and Cripps, *Making Movies Black: The Hollywood Message Movie from World War II to the Civil Rights Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), and Ed Guerrero, *Framing Blackness: The African-American Image in Film* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), three excellent and detailed accounts of the shifting terms of black representation in films from Hollywood and from outside Hollywood. Matthew Bernstein, *Hollywood Black & White: How Hard Is It to Do the Right Thing*, Schoolbook, Spring 2002.
11. Mrs. Zella Richardson, Letter to Joseph I. Breen, June 26, 1936, "Road Gang" File, MPPDA Collection, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Margaret Herrick Library, Beverly Hills, California.
12. Mrs. Richardson, Report of the Secretary to the Atlanta Board of Review July 14, 1925, in author's possession.
13. Mrs. Richardson, Report of the Secretary to the Atlanta Board of Review August 1, 1925, in author's possession.
14. Mrs. Zella Richardson, Letter to E.J. Mannix (MGM), January 8, 1944, "Battle of Russia" File, MPPDA File, MPPDA Collection, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Margaret Herrick Library, Beverly Hills, California.
15. Pat Murdock, "'The Lone Lady Censor': Christine Smith Gilliam and the Demise of Film Censorship in Atlanta," Special Issue, *Atlanta History*, vol. 43, no. 2

- (Summer 1999): 68–82, reprinted in Matthew H. Bernstein and Dana F. White, eds., *Atlanta at the Movies* (Athens: University of Georgia, 2015), forthcoming.
16. Thomas Doherty, “Race Houses, Jim Crow Roosts, and Lily White Palaces: Desegregating the Motion Picture Theater,” in Richard Maltby, Melvin Stokes and Robert C. Allen, editors, *Going to the Movies: Hollywood and the Social Experience of Cinema* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2007), 204.
17. For more on the historical significance of *Driving Miss Daisy* to Atlanta, see S. Zebulon Baker, “*Driving Myth Daisy*: Race, History and the Utility of the Past in Making Modern Atlanta,” in Matthew H. Bernstein and Dana F. White, eds., *Atlanta at the Movies* (Athens: University of Georgia, 2015), forthcoming.
18. See Miriam Petty, “In the Black Mecca: Atlanta in the Films of Tyler Perry,” in Matthew H. Bernstein and Dana F. White, eds., *Atlanta at the Movies* (Athens: University of Georgia, 2015), forthcoming.
19. The Georgia Tax Incentive program offers filmmakers a twenty percent investment tax credit if they spend a minimum of \$500,000 in production or post-production in the state (and an additional 10% tax credit if they use the Georgia promotion logo in their credits). Films and tv shows are still planned and edited predominantly in Los Angeles, but principal photography is growing rapidly.

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