

## PAUL HANNA AND 'EXPANDING COMMUNITIES'

JARED R. STALLONES

The development and promotion of the “expanding communities” curriculum design for teaching elementary school social studies was a crucial episode in the history of social studies. Even a casual survey of current textbooks, state standards, and classroom practice reveals that the concentric circles of community study has been the dominant model for social studies in elementary schools for more than half a century.<sup>1</sup> An exhaustive treatment of the many applications and critiques of the expanding communities model is beyond the scope and space limitations of this forum. Instead, the following pages will profile how the model developed in the mind of its most effective promoter, Paul Robert Hanna.<sup>2</sup>

Paul Hanna understood early in his career the profound power of schooling as a tool of acculturation. He also understood the delicacy of this instrumental use of schools in a democratic society. Traditionalists sought to teach children the prevailing values and national myths of the United States, while some progressives wanted children’s natural interests to determine the content of the curriculum. Hanna noted that neither approach sufficiently prepared children for participation in a complex industrial democracy, the first being excessively focused on conservative social goals; the second being unduly individualistic. The influences of events and individuals in Hanna’s life persuaded him that young citizens needed a solid base of knowledge in the social sciences, but they also needed encouragement to develop analytical skills and independent thought processes to use that knowledge effectively. The result was the expanding communities curriculum model, which dwarfed alternative approaches to elementary social education and shaped the way that generations of schoolchildren were taught to view their world.

### Influences on Hanna’s Thought

In order to understand Paul Hanna’s view of social education, it is necessary to investigate the roots of his views on society and on how children should be taught. Paul Hanna was born in Sioux City, Iowa on June 21, 1902. Hanna was an only child during his formative years, and he recalled that his parents took his education very seriously. In fact, Hanna’s mother, Regula Figi Hanna, taught him to read before he started school. “We always had literature in the house,” he remembered. His mother kept a close watch on his academic performance throughout his school years, but she was also concerned that his education extend beyond the schoolroom in naturalistic experiences of discovery. Hanna remembered his mother recounting how, “farm experiences as a girl made her understand the rhythms of life, the sequence of seasons, the mystery of conception and birth.” She said, “it was, unfortunately, the children of my time who had to learn these things out of books rather than from actual first-hand experience.”<sup>3</sup>

Hanna seemed to attribute the largest influence on his early cast of mind to his father. George Archibald Hanna was a theologically and socially liberal Methodist minister. “I do not remember his preaching much about life in the hereafter or the miracles of the Old and New Testament,” Hanna recalled. “Rather his texts were usually related to the social, economic, political, and moral missions and problems of our time.”<sup>4</sup> Hanna and his father frequently engaged in philosophical discussion. In the home, “we were always discussing how the ills of society and the suffering of individuals could be relieved,” and this helped shape Hanna’s sense of his duty to make the world a better place. Indeed, a generation of reformers and progressives in education and other fields were motivated in their career choices by the

Social Gospel Movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>5</sup> Of his father's influence, Hanna said, "I suppose in another generation, back a generation, I would have been a minister or a missionary."<sup>6</sup>

Given the importance his parents placed on both academic and experiential learning, on social responsibility and individual achievement, it was perhaps not surprising that Paul Hanna developed a functional blend of social idealism and political pragmatism. Given his unique talents and considerable personal resources, it is not surprising that Hanna became a central force in most organizations and projects in which he was involved.

Hanna entered Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota, in the fall of 1920. The school's social activism and long history of public service were a comfortable fit for Paul Hanna, but it was the study of philosophy under Prof. Gregory D. Walcott that most stimulated his intellectual powers. Walcott offered Hanna a framework for all his previous learning, particularly in the capstone course for the honors degree in philosophy entitled "creative realism." Hanna described it as "a magnificent summation to one's previous undergraduate education. My previous courses in economics, political science, sociology, anthropology, history, and geography all came together and made unified sense...." Fifty years later, he still recalled it as "the greatest course I ever had."<sup>7</sup>

Perhaps even more important than Walcott's teaching was his encouragement of Hanna to pursue graduate studies at Columbia University. Through colleagues there, Walcott even arranged for Hanna to work as an assistant to John Dewey. Unfortunately, Dewey was in China that fall of 1924, and chose to remain there through the term, so Hanna had to seek out another advisor. He met William Heard Kilpatrick of Teachers College, and changed direction from the study of pure philosophy to the study of education.

During his ten years at Teachers College, first as a student, then as a young professor, Hanna's view of the role of the school in society took form. It grew to encompass concern for both the needs of the individual as well as the needs of society. The tension between the individual's needs and those of society was palpable on the Teachers College campus in those years. The faculty was populated by social reconstructionists such as Harold Rugg, George Counts, and others, but closely allied with Teachers College was the Lincoln School, which at that time was a bastion of individualistic, child-centered, progressive education. In addition, New York City itself was a hotbed of competing social philosophies. Hanna was fascinated with the lively variety of thought and words and was determined to understand them more fully. He "attended lectures and debates at the New School for Social Research and at other 'far out' institutions."<sup>8</sup>

Paul Hanna had the opportunity to experiment with his developing concepts of relevant curriculum when in the spring of 1925, he took the position of Superintendent of Schools in the small village of West Winfield, N.Y. The drab curriculum and uninspired instruction he found there appalled him. "There had been no attention...to the curriculum, to staff, to student affairs. There was not a single athletic team, nothing in publications or forensics. It was a dead school."<sup>9</sup>

For Hanna, this scanty curriculum reflected a deplorable neglect of student interest, and he worked to correct it. With the help of a willing faculty, he organized athletic teams, debate teams, school newspapers and annuals, and involved the school in community affairs. The influence of Kilpatrick's project method is seen in the description of some of these activities in the 1927 edition of the high school annual, *The Tournament*:

In West Winfield high school French, learned in the classroom, becomes the official spoken word in the club known as Le Cercle Francais. Parliamentary procedure studied in the English classes becomes something alive in the Hi-Y Club, Young Farmers' Club, and others. The Young Farmers' Club very practically tests the principles taught in agriculture. English reaches a fuller expression in the debates, plays, and declamation contests held throughout the school year.<sup>10</sup>

Hanna also put into practice some of his ideas of the school's role in society. He saw the schools as a learning center for the whole community. His students there surveyed community needs for their civics courses, and he was not beyond suspending the curriculum to take advantage of community events.

One student recalled speaking about his experiences showing a prize steer around the state before a hastily called assembly of the high school student body.<sup>11</sup>

Yet, for all these efforts to modernize the curriculum and respond to student interest, Hanna was uneasy. Relevance of the curriculum to the child was one concern, but a deeper one was beginning to surface—relevance of the curriculum to the needs of a democratic society. Hanna recalled his concern with the social studies curriculum at West Winfield, “I was increasingly aware of the inadequacy, the inappropriateness, the lack of match between the curriculum and what these children were interested in or what their lives were like. There was no relevance whatsoever.”<sup>12</sup>

Paul Hanna returned to Teachers College in the fall of 1927 to pursue his doctorate in curriculum and elementary education. He also began to work with Jesse Newlon, L. Thomas Hopkins, and Harold Rugg at the Lincoln School. From his experiences there he came to understand that, while children could suffer from curriculum that lacked relevance, they could also suffer from that which catered too much to their immediate interests. Lincoln School was renowned for its creative, inspiring teachers and their ability to mold the curriculum around their students’ natural interest. Hanna could discern no orderly curriculum, “...it was quite possible for a child progressing through the grades for 13 or 14 years in the Lincoln School and [sic] study nothing, say, but science, or nothing but sculpture. It was built on the idea that the child’s interest was the dominant factor in curriculum design. There was no general or common core to prepare one for a broad view of life...” Hanna suspected that the teachers were responding to something other than innate child interest. Dozens of these talented teachers’ projects were published by the school over the years, and Hanna observed that the same inquiries, “...happened year after year after year in that particular teacher’s room which was proof to me that it wasn’t innate, it was conditioned response to an exciting environment.” Hanna theorized that the teachers communicated their interest in certain topics to the students and then read it as the child’s own.<sup>13</sup>

By the time Paul Hanna received his Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1929, he was thoroughly disillusioned with the traditional curriculum for its focus on content at the expense of students’ natural interest and with child-centered approaches for their indulgence of children’s curiosity at the expense of systematic exposure to content. He found neither particularly relevant to the lives children would lead in an economically complex, democratic society. This concern for children’s roles as citizens took on greater urgency with the onset of the Great Depression.

The devastating economic depression caused many educators to rethink the role of schools in society. Henry Harap recalled, “It was a time of a terrific awakening of the schools to their educational responsibilities.”<sup>14</sup> Scholars of curriculum went far beyond advocating certain instructional methods or new subject matter offerings and questioned the basic assumptions upon which their ideas were founded.

Discussions of these issues took place in various venues at Teachers College. One important forum was the regular faculty meeting held to plan the Education 200F course. The innovative foundations course was taught in several sections each presided over by a faculty panel. By 1930, Hanna was an assistant professor assigned to the course. Each week, the faculty panels met as a large committee, chaired by Harold Rugg, to plan the course as a whole. Nor were the topics of discussion limited to curriculum and instruction. Hanna recalled attending meetings in which the social problems of the Depression were discussed. “He [Harold Rugg] might take a half-hour to make the key issues of what the Depression was doing to the family, to the neighborhood, and so forth. And then it would be open for discussion. And, of course, you had...a wide, wide opinion. There were reactionaries, conservatives, there were radicals, there were those who wanted to go communist right now!”<sup>15</sup> Hanna also attended a bi-monthly dinner and discussion group. Harold Rugg recalled these gatherings as “canvassing informally, without programs planned in advance, the roots of every phase of our culture. In hundreds of hours of friendly argument we dug to the social foundations of education.”<sup>16</sup> In these wide-ranging discussions the strong views of influential men were reasoned, debated, and defended over and over again, and Hanna’s view of education and its role in the wider society was challenged and refined.

From all of his experiences in New York, Hanna concluded that the schools, and especially social science instruction, had failed to prepare children for productive lives in a complex, democratic society by

failing to provide them with solid, accurate information and guide them in its use. This failure was not just irresponsible but dangerous, as democratic government in the United States was under attack from both the right and left. Hanna was concerned that the Depression encouraged "...all kinds of wild ideas about how you change society through revolution—through evolution—whether you become technocrats or communists or what not." He recalled, "I kept thinking about the inadequate preparation that we Americans had had. We didn't understand what was happening. We didn't know history and geography had anything to do with the Depression." At the same time, influenced by Rugg's successful middle school textbooks, which integrated history and social science into social education topics, Hanna believed that adequate social education required instruction in all the social sciences. He thought "the separate subjects—history and geography—were inadequate for living in a modern society in which knowledge of economics, political science, and sociology were just as important as history and geography."<sup>17</sup> Hanna believed that Rugg's approach could be translated to elementary social education. He resolved to restructure the teaching of social science topics in the schools through a new curriculum of integrated social sciences, but he had not yet settled on a design for his new curriculum.

### Origins of Hanna's 'Expanding Communities' Design

Paul Hanna authored more than fifty social studies textbooks over a span of forty years. The best known were the elementary social studies textbooks that formed the Hanna Social Studies Series published by Scott, Foresman and Company. Through them, Hanna applied all that he had learned about curriculum design, thematic integration, and child interest to the task of social education. In them, Hanna expressed his 'expanding communities' approach to teaching social studies. Above all, the textbooks reflected Hanna's concern that children understand the processes of social and economic evolution so that they might learn to control them.

The curriculum design that lay behind the textbooks first took shape during Hanna's work as a Curriculum Consultant in Social Studies to the Virginia State Education Department. State school curriculum reform projects had become a fixture in American education by the early 1930s. In 1931, Hollis L. Caswell was asked to lead a study and reform of the school curriculum in Virginia.<sup>18</sup> Caswell invited Hanna, his friend and colleague from Teachers College, to work with him and the two proved a formidable team.

Hanna planned to have the teachers of Virginia develop social studies units based on their students' interests, teach them, then report to him on the results. The reports would be collected, divided by grade levels, and then each grade level's reports would be divided by topic. Hanna anticipated that once the reports were sorted, one topic would stand out in each grade level, representing the natural interest of school children of that age. The reality was quite different. When the reports came in, they revealed no natural pattern of interests:

We had no bell-shaped curve of piles of papers, each pile representing a topic like 'the Mailman,' or 'the Fireman,' or 'the Aviator'. Instead we had piles of reports from the first grade through the elementary school that had no pattern. We found a stack of reports on aviation units in every grade. As many teachers reported units on aviation in the first grade as reported them in any other grade.... Indians! We found as many Indian units in the first grade as we found in the fourth or the seventh grades.<sup>19</sup>

This disturbing result prompted Hanna to jettison innate child interest as the principle around which to organize the curriculum, but he had nothing to take its place. Hanna was at a loss because he had promoted his survey as the tool that would "give us a structure as to how we could build the curriculum in the social studies" and it had failed.<sup>20</sup> He returned to New York in late spring of 1933 desperate to find a framework for the social studies curriculum.

At the time, Hanna was reading a two-volume study that impressed him, "President Hoover's magnificent reports, *[Recent] Social Trends and [Recent] Economic Trends*."<sup>21</sup> These documents appealed to him because of their systematic approach to social change.

The great engineer, Herbert Hoover, saw that we had to have national planning and he ought to take broad base studies of what society was at that time—what our objectives and long-range goals were, and then set up an educational system that would move us in the direction of those desirable goals.<sup>22</sup>

Hanna particularly was taken with a chapter that grouped basic human activities into broad categories such as communication, transportation, and health. He decided to adopt these categories as organizing principles for the scope of the content for the Virginia Curriculum.<sup>23</sup> He employed twenty-three chapter headings of Hoover's work as a vertical axis and the various grade levels as the horizontal axis. "So I took some twenty-three chapter headings out of *Recent Economic and Recent Social Trends* and made them the columns of my big wall chart and made the grades the rows and crossed the grades or levels of schools with these twenty-three categories of basic human activities."<sup>24</sup> The interaction of these two axes became the scope of the social studies curriculum for Virginia. The centers of student interest, such as home and school life, community life and pioneering activities comprised the sequence.

The scheme was too complicated. Hanna recalled, "When I went down and presented my huge chart, they [sic] covered a whole side of the library wall of the Department of Education in Virginia. I couldn't even remember what was on it."<sup>25</sup> He decided that he had to condense it and make it more useful for teachers. He could simply fall back on the traditional social science categories of economics, political science, and so on, but he feared that it would "scare most teachers not having had anything in these fields."<sup>26</sup> It would also violate what Hanna had come to believe about the importance of integration.

Instead of presenting information classified into the discrete content areas of the traditional social sciences, Hanna organized the subject matter into the twelve major social functions. These social functions were: production, distribution, consumption, conservation, transportation and communication, exploration and settlement, recreation, education, extension of freedom, esthetic expression, religious expression, and individual integration. Through refinement, they became known as the "Nine Basic Human Activities" in his later works. He considered these integrated categories to be more in line with the psychology of learning than were the traditional disciplinary divisions of knowledge. However, Hanna was neither a social scientist nor a child psychologist. His work in philosophy at Hamline University and his conversations with Harold Rugg may have convinced him that integrating disparate fields of knowledge was possible. Hanna wrote: "Human relations are those unitary life experiences that the specialists have broken up and classified into such subject-matter fields as history, geography, civics, economics, sociology, political science, esthetics, ethics, anthropology, individual and social psychology." His design was structured to incorporate information from these fields in a way that would mimic questions that interest children, such as "What makes some people live so differently from us? How were our grandparents able to live without modern machinery?"<sup>27</sup>

In order to provide a sequence for the curriculum content surrounding the basic human activities, Hanna and Hollis Caswell adapted the expanding environments pattern then in wide use, in which children learn concepts first in the context of familiar people, places, and events, then move to the less familiar by stages. By 1930, a significant number of school curriculum guides featured this pattern for sequencing content. Leo W. LeRiche persuasively argued that the expanding environments pattern grew out of the cultural epochs theory of child growth and development, in which individual child development mimics the cultural development of mankind through the ages.<sup>28</sup> However, Hanna and Caswell did not adopt the expanding environments model for that reason. Hanna chose his centers of study based on children's experience, not developmental stages. Hanna saw that "Human relations range all the way from the personal relation of 'me' and my family, my school, my community, to the general relation of the exchange of culture between races and nations."<sup>29</sup> Hanna viewed all people as living in multiple overlapping communities envisioned as a set of concentric circles with self at the center. Consequently, grades one and two investigated the expression of the twelve social functions in the home, the school, and the local community. At this point the Virginia plan diverged from what finally became the pattern for Hanna's textbooks. The next few grade levels focused on the theme of pioneering. Grades three and four dealt with geographical pioneering, grades five and six with technological pioneering, and grade seven with social pioneering. At grade eight, the focus shifted again to the social world, grade nine focused on

the American scene, grade ten on the western world, and grade eleven on the world. The twelve major social functions ran throughout these themes. Hanna claimed that his innovation was an improvement over the traditional “chronology of political events in history, the spatial-expansion sequence of geography, or the logical-structural outline of civics,” because it was more in tune with “the pupil and his interests, abilities, and needs.”<sup>30</sup> Hanna later developed a more elaborate expanding communities curriculum design that incorporated a complex pattern of concentric circles of community in which each child participated, but the genesis of his design was in the Virginia curriculum project.

In 1935, Hanna joined the School of Education faculty at Stanford University. Shortly thereafter, in an article for the *California Journal of Secondary Education*, he expressed his unifying theme for the social studies curriculum: the socio-economic evolution of man. In Hanna’s conception, man’s existence has been a constant struggle to satisfy material wants and needs. The struggle was relatively slow and unsuccessful until modern times, when man gave up superstition and magic in favor of science and reason. This new approach brought relative material prosperity, but the resulting technological change has outpaced the evolution of our social institutions. As a consequence, modern man is at an impasse. The improvements to life that should accompany his newfound control over nature are frustrated by outmoded social controls. The next period of human progress must come from social pioneering, which Hanna claimed “must consist of the cooperative efforts of all interdependent people to plan for the improvement of social and economic objectives deemed desirable and possible.”<sup>31</sup>

In his article, Hanna proposed a curriculum for California’s schools much like the one which he had developed in Virginia. Prominent in the curriculum design was Hanna’s list of major social functions as the scope of study. Hanna again claimed that these functions “encompass all the significant problems confronted in the man-to-man relationship in all cultures existing in time and space.”<sup>32</sup>

Hanna also made another strong argument for integration. He claimed that his design covered the “large number of separate subjects formerly taught.”<sup>33</sup> He claimed that the traditional content area divisions were unnecessary because “The studies in spiritual and aesthetic living, together with the social studies, constitute the sum total of the curriculum.”<sup>34</sup> Consequently, he proposed his design as the core curriculum with “economic geography, economics, sociology, political science, United States history, or state history” relegated to the status of electives.<sup>35</sup>

Perhaps Hanna’s most biting indictment of the traditional social studies curriculum came in a 1937 article published in *Childhood Education*. In it, he drew a distinction between “social studies,” “which brought to mind many weary hours of listless memorization of history dates, geographic place locations, and civic structures and virtues,” with what he preferred to label “social education” intended to “develop the child’s ability actually to live more effectively and richly as a member of a social group.”<sup>36</sup> Hanna’s view was that the underlying purpose of teaching the social sciences was lost in efforts to convey the factual information. As evidence, he claimed:

With all our reciting of the facts that Columbus, an Italian, discovered America in 1492 and that the Pilgrims, from England, landed at Plymouth in 1620 we go on hating foreigners as much as if we hadn’t learned the historic fact that most of us are originally from foreign shores. With all of our ‘book learning’ of the structure of city and state government we still have corruption in high places and indifference among our citizens. With all our geographic fact teaching we face increasing national insecurity because geography has not taught us to conserve our soil, forests, and other natural resources. Nor have we much evidence that through social studies we have aided in promoting happier family relations, bettering juvenile social behavior, obtaining higher standards of living, or generally in solving the vast number of problems that plague our culture.<sup>37</sup>

Hanna’s familiar solution was an activity-oriented curriculum that would provide children “more experiences in which they can contribute to socially significant projects.”<sup>38</sup>

#### The Hanna Social Studies Series

By the mid-1930s, however, Hanna was doing more than proposing solutions in journal articles. His curriculum design was making its way into classrooms. In 1935, after considering offers from other publishers, Paul Hanna contracted with Scott, Foresman and Company to produce the first two textbooks

that would eventually become the embodiment of Hanna's expanding communities curriculum design. Harry Johnston of Scott, Foresman and William S. Gray, a renowned reading specialist, had developed the idea of a unified set of curriculum materials built around a core of reading texts. Vocabulary, sentence structure, paragraph structure, and the like were first introduced in the reading books, then reinforced in series publications in science, social studies, and other subject areas. The program was called the *Everyday Life Stories* Series, and it relied heavily on stories as means for conveying information. Hanna developed immense respect for Gray and his ideas while working on the project. Hanna remembered him as "one of the most gentle scholars that I have ever known."<sup>39</sup>

Hanna initially wrote *Peter's Family* in 1935 and *David's Friends at School* in 1936 as part of the *Everyday Life Stories* books in the program. Their purpose was to introduce children in first grade to similarities in the ways the basic human activities were carried out in the home and in the school. The teacher's edition for each book included a cumulative vocabulary list indexed to the pages on which the words appeared in the book, suggested activities for each section, and an index of social studies concepts and where the application of each concept could be found in the book.

More books followed in quick succession.<sup>40</sup> In 1937, *Susan's Neighbors at Work* was issued to "broaden the pupil's understanding of human relationships and increase his ability to participate constructively in the life of his home, his school, and his community."<sup>41</sup> The book reflected Hanna's design in that students were shown how workers in the community carried out the basic human activities introduced earlier in the series. The teacher's edition followed the pattern of the earlier books. Teachers were expected to use activities or discussion to introduce new material, then help students read through sections in the text, and devise activities to extend learning or to answer questions that arose.

The third grade book in the series, *Centerville*, described the interactions of a town and its surrounding areas in performing the basic human activities. Students in the text were portrayed as active participants in the community, visiting businesses, contributing to community events, and the like. This portrayal must have exerted subtle pressure on teachers to copy that model in providing instructional activities for their own students. If subtlety was ineffective, the "Chapter for Teachers" at the back of the book admonished that, "Reading CENTERVILLE straight through without discussion or the exploring of many by-paths which are opened to view is not recommended."<sup>42</sup> For the less imaginative teacher, a section entitled "Special Study" listed ideas from the book that could be elaborated, and one entitled "Things for Children to Do" suggested productive activities. The "To Do" section reminded teachers that, "Doing things is necessary in the study of social ideas."<sup>43</sup> The "Chapter for Teachers" also suggested that two questions frame the study of each reading section: "How is Centerville different from our community?" and "How is Centerville like our community?" Through careful investigation of these questions, the authors hoped that children would "learn that all people, by living together in communities of various kinds, obtain food, clothes, homes, entertainment, and all other necessities of American Life."<sup>44</sup>

The fourth and fifth grade books in the series, *Without Machinery* and *Pioneering in Ten Communities*, expressed Hanna's grand curriculum design by focusing on technological, geographic, and social pioneering. The front material of *Without Machinery* acknowledged the contributions of academic specialists to its presentations. This was the first book in Hanna's series to acknowledge the input of social scientists. It represented one of his contributions to the social studies—enlisting prominent social scientists in curriculum development for elementary schools. In later years, even more social scientists expressed a willingness to work in the field as they perceived that Hanna had a serious-minded program for instruction.

Possibly due to the influence of the social science professionals, instead of moving immediately into a story as the earlier books did, *Without Machinery* opened with an academic discussion of the ideas and concepts explained in the book. The book then developed through stories the overall concept that people in other parts of the world perform tasks similar to the ones Americans do, but without the help of the machinery that Americans use. It did this by profiling everyday life in villages around the world. Hanna expressed his concern that children understand the dilemma of modern man in the "Chapter for Teachers:" "Reading about people who don't build machinery, who develop ways of living to fit the

circumstances in which they find themselves, helps the child to understand the changes which the machine has brought in our own lives.”<sup>45</sup>

Hanna’s books were hugely successful. Within a few years, they had sold nearly 1.5 million copies, second only to the Rugg series in social studies textbook sales.<sup>46</sup> Overseas editions were published in later years, and a reflexive relationship arose between the books and Hanna’s expanding communities design. From the 1930s through the 1970s, whenever Hanna spoke or wrote about his curriculum design, he promoted the Scott, Foresman textbooks and whenever Scott, Foresman promoted the books, the influence of his design spread. Hanna put it this way:

By constantly hearing the name of Hanna people said, ‘well, let’s take a look at him. Let’s invite him in as a consultant; let’s have him speak to our teachers, or we will invite him to write an article.’ These things have a way of reinforcing each other. I know I would not be where I am today if it hadn’t been that I had salesmen and consultants in commercial organizations who just daily rapped on doors and talked about, ‘here is a product that Hanna has conceived.’<sup>47</sup>

Hanna embodied a formidable blend of scholar and entrepreneur, but other factors also contributed to the success of the design. First, Hanna’s timing was impeccable. His concentric circles model encouraged children to think of themselves as members of an international community just as the United States emerged from the isolationism of the Depression era into the globalism of the post-World War II decades. The curriculum design matched the mood of the times. Second, the model took hold and persists today in part because no more compelling design has been put forward.<sup>48</sup> Finally, the expanding communities model possesses an elegant simplicity that has proven useful to theorists and practitioners alike as evidenced by its influence on many state social studies curriculum designs.

### Conclusion

Paul Hanna’s long and productive life ended on April 8, 1988, but his influence continues in the ways that elementary school social studies is structured and taught. Paul Hanna developed his expanding communities design partly as an alternative to the deadness he saw in the traditional history and geography taught in the schools of his day and partly as a rejection of the notion that simply holding children’s interest was a sufficient goal for education in a rapidly changing industrial democracy. Instead, he believed that a broad base of knowledge, developed through experience and interaction, was the key to preparing effective citizens. A lifetime of curriculum study around the world only confirmed his conclusion. Hanna believed that helping children develop the knowledge to understand complex issues in their social and historical contexts places them—not the technocrats, dictators, or the elites—in control of their destinies. By this means, Hanna believed, the needs of both the individual and the larger society are met through the schools.

### NOTES

1. For instance, California begins by introducing students to basic human activities in a variety of contexts in kindergarten through grade two, then moves to historical studies in the local community (grade three), the state (grade four), the nation (grade five), and the world (grades six and seven). Texas begins with a similar emphasis on basic human activities, moving from self to family, classroom, school, and community in grades kindergarten through 3, then to historical studies of the state (grade four), nation (grade five), and world (grade six). These two states have the largest student populations in the nation and so have significant influence on textbook content nationwide.

2. A more complete discussion of Paul Hanna and his contributions to the social studies curriculum may be found in Jared Stallones, *Paul Robert Hanna: A Life of Expanding Communities* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Press, 2002).

3. Paul Hanna, interview by Gerald Dorfman, Stanford, Calif., 10 November 1982.

4. Ibid.

5. See Robert M. Crunden, *Ministers of Reform: The Progressives’ Achievement in American Civilization* (New York: Basic Books, 1982), also David B. Tyack and Elizabeth Hansot, *Managers of Virtue: Public School Leadership in America 1820-1890* (New York: Basic Books, 1982).

6. Paul Hanna, interview by Martin Gill, Stanford, Calif., 5 September 1973.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. *The Tournament*. (West Winfield, N.Y.: privately printed, 1927).
11. W.F. Griffin, interview by Martin Gill, 21 February 1974, quoted in Martin Gill, "Paul R. Hanna: The Evolution of an Elementary Social Studies Textbook Series" (Ph.D. .diss., Northwestern University, 1974).
12. Hanna, interview, 1973.
13. Ibid.
14. Henry Harap, "The Beginnings of the John Dewey Society," *Educational Theory* 20 (1970): 157-63.
15. Paul Hanna, interview by Martin Gill, Stanford, Calif., 19 June 1974.
16. Harold Rugg, *The Teacher of Teachers: Frontiers of Theory and Practice in Teacher Education* (New York: Harper, 1952), 225.
17. Hanna, interview, 1973.
18. For a thorough treatment of Caswell's work in Virginia please see Lynn M. Burlbaw, "Hollis Leland Caswell's Contributions to the Development of the Curriculum Field" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas, 1989).
19. Hanna, interview, 1973.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. A similar listing of basic human activities appeared in Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown, A Study in Contemporary American Culture* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1929). Whether or not Hanna was informed by this work is unknown, but Hanna read widely the social science research of his day.
24. Hanna, interview, 1973.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Paul Hanna, *Making the Goods We Need* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1943), 130.
28. Leo W. LeRiche, "The Expanding Environments Sequence in Elementary Social Studies: The Origins," *Theory and Research in Social Education* 15 (1987): 137-54.
29. Paul Hanna, "Social Studies in the New Virginia Curriculum," *Progressive Education*.11 (1934): 129-34.
30. Ibid., 132.
31. Paul Hanna, "A Proposal for a Social Studies Curriculum, "for the Secondary Schools," *California Journal of Secondary Education* (1935): 412-28.
32. Ibid., 422.
33. Ibid., 421.
34. Ibid., 421.
35. Ibid., 426.
36. Paul Hanna, "Social Education for Childhood," *Childhood Education* 14 (1937): 74-77.
37. Ibid., 74.
38. Ibid., 77.
39. Hanna, interview, 1974.
40. For a complete listing of all of Paul Hanna's published works, including his social studies textbooks, see Stallones, 2002, Appendix A.
41. Paul Hanna, Genevieve Anderson, and William S. Gray, *Susan's Neighbors at Work* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1937), 232.
42. Paul Hanna, Genevieve Anderson, and William S. Gray, *Centerville* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1938), 278.
43. Ibid., 280.
44. Ibid., 279.
45. Paul Hanna, *Without Machinery* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1939), 272-73.
46. "Commerce for Children," *Time*, November 15, 1943, 25. Hanna's and Rugg's publications shared other similarities. Beginning in 1935, Hanna served as editor of a monthly classroom magazine entitled *Building America*. Lushly illustrated, the magazines were intended to spark classroom discussion on topics such as communication, transportation, housing, and food. Rugg and other progressives were frequent contributors.

Unfortunately, the magazine ran afoul of McCarthyite forces in California and was discontinued in 1948 after legislative investigations cast suspicion on them. The full story is recounted in Robert E. Newman, "History of a Civic Education Project Implementing the Social Problems Technique of Instruction" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1961).

47. Hanna, interview, 1974.

48. SPAN, *The Current State of Social Studies: A Report of Project SPAN* (Boulder: Social Science Education Consortium, 1982), 101.