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The Impact of Marriage on African American Educators in Bexar County, 1880-1950

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The Impact of Marriage on African American Educators in Bexar County, 1880-1950

As a society, we are still having discussions about whether or not women “can have it all.” We have not moved past gendered expectations for men and women. Mollie Carey Brown, Fanny Ellis Starnes, and Lady Henrietta Boyd were Black educators in the San Antonio public school system in the late nineteenth century who have incredible stories that may feel familiar to some women today.¹ Mollie Carey Brown and Fanny Ellis Starnes both got married and ended their careers. Henrietta Boyd never got married, and remained a teacher until retirement. All three of these women had to fight gender expectations much like women today.

Scholarship on African American history in San Antonio, Texas is extremely limited. There are not many studies about Black schools, much less about Black educators. In uncovering these women’s professional work, I had to uncover their personal lives as well. This approach was a better way—and the only way—to get any kind of understanding of them, especially because the gaps in the public records indicate that no one was telling their stories or keeping any records of them. Two of the women got married and subsequently ended their teaching careers. The expectations for white, middle-class women of this era was that they would get married and take care of the household. Did these gendered expectations influence these educated African American women as well? Black women worked to lift their communities in the face of intense Jim Crow racism, but they still had limited life choices, having to choose between having a family or having a career. Researching the stories of these women brings to light the work of these impactful women, as well as how gender norms functioned in the African

¹ I will refer to Mollie Carey Brown as Carey Brown although her information starts before her marriage in 1887. I will refer to Fanny Ellis Starnes by Ellis Starnes throughout my paper although she didn’t get married until 1908. Note that there are discussions before her marriage. In several documents her name was spelled “Fannie”, but I will use “Fanny” since that was what was on her marriage certificate. In this paper, I will often refer to her as just Henrietta Boyd or just Boyd, removing the Lady. She is seen in many sources as this.

American community in Bexar County. These gendered expectations from the late nineteenth century are still issues that women today struggle to overcome.

Kenneth Mason's *African Americans and Race Relations in San Antonio, Texas, 1867-1937* has a chapter specifically about the education system after the Civil War. Mason explained that the Freedmen's Bureau had money that was supposed to go to the freedmen. However, some people wanted to ensure that African Americans remained in a low-class status by denying them the money.² According to Mason, Blacks already had schools which took place in churches. Unsurprisingly, the Freedmen's Bureau kept the white planters in mind when thinking of educational goals of blacks.³ Mason mentioned that white opposition led to the development of a rival school separate from the Freedmen's Bureau schools. Interestingly enough, San Antonio took the lead in establishing the first Black public school in Texas, which was called the Rincon Street Public Colored School.⁴

Illiteracy among African Americans was still 75.4 percent in 1880, which was three years before Mollie Carey Brown began her teaching career. The Rincon Street Public Colored School provided elementary classes, yet Blacks wanted high schools as well. Many Whites opposed these schools because they did not believe that Blacks should have "higher" educational opportunities.⁵ In 1891, the school was renamed Riverside. Mason explained that the salaries for Black instructors were higher than those of the White instructors.⁶ I could not find any evidence supporting this as the censuses for these teachers did not list their pay. Mason's introduction and

² Kenneth Mason. *African Americans and Race Relations in San Antonio, Texas, 1867-1937*, (New York & London: Garland Publishing, 1998), 127.

³ Mason, 128.

⁴ Mason, 129.

⁵ Mason, 133.

⁶ Mason, 138.

analysis of Black schools helped shape my research by providing insight on the progression of Black education.

Educator Lawson V. Bush's work also focuses on Black education in the south. He argues that independent Black institutions, or IBIs, in the south existed before the Freedmen's Bureau brought public education. Lawson uncovered evidence of an inspector from the Freedmen's Bureau who discovered many independent schools for African Americans throughout the south.⁷ These schools were in rural areas and, as Mason also found, in churches.⁸ Blacks found ways to educate themselves before the development of public schools.

Gender impacted these women's lives which determined the sources available about them. African American sources are already difficult to find, and locating sources for African American women, especially during this time period, was even more challenging. The first two secondary sources from Mason and Lawson were based around institutions, but even then, all of the mentions of actual people, were about males. Historian Glenda Gilmore argues that Black women educators of this era throughout the South often took the lead in educational efforts, as well as community activism.⁹ Black women's work as teachers was one way they fought for the rights of the African American community. They were well educated and strong-willed women, fighting for both African American rights and the rights of women.¹⁰ Black women exercised agency in many ways despite the Jim Crow laws making it harder for them.¹¹

When doing primary source research, many times I would have to trace through the husbands first in order to link the information about the women, despite the influence Black

⁷ Lawson V. Bush. "Access, School Choice, and Independent Black Institutions: A Historical Perspective." *Journal of Black Studies* 34, no. 3, (January 2004), 386-401.

⁸ Mason, 388.

⁹ Glenda Gilmore. *Gender and Jim Crow: women and the politics of white supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), xxiv, 384.

¹⁰ Gilmore, xxiv, 384.

¹¹ Gilmore, xxiv, 384.

women had in their communities. A lot of the impact from women at the time has been forgotten because nobody saved the sources. Also, these women had a little visibility in the public sphere, but marriage took that away from them. Marriage is a big part of life for most women, but usually it becomes a choice between marriage or a career. Because these teachers got married, they lost their career whether by choice or by force. African American teachers played a huge role in this period when community-building was crucial. Most of these teachers were female, and despite their significance, the sources for them are limited.

It is important to look at the women's parents to gain insight on their childhood and backgrounds. Fanny Ellis Starnes was the sister of William Ellis, the man Karl Jacoby's recent book, *The Strange Career of William Ellis: The Texas Slave Who Became a Mexican Millionaire*, is about. Her father Charles Ellis was a slave in Kentucky. His owner decided to move to Victoria, Texas, taking Ellis Starnes' grandmother, Mary Ellis, uncle William Ellis, and father Charles Ellis with him.¹² The family was listed as mulatto which suggests that Mary Ellis was subject to sexual assault, but also that her mother likely was as well.¹³ Fanny Ellis Starnes' mother was Margaret Nelson, and she was also a slave on the same plantation as Charles Ellis. Charles Ellis and his brother William Ellis were able to buy an acre of land together once they were emancipated.¹⁴ In the next generation, Ellis Starnes' older siblings, Elizabeth Ellis and William Ellis were born into slavery, in 1858¹⁵ and 1864, respectively.¹⁶ William Ellis was one year of age when they were emancipated.¹⁷ Fanny Ellis Starnes was born in 1875 in Victoria,

¹² Karl Jacoby. *The Strange Career of William Ellis: The Texas Slave Who Became a Mexican Millionaire*, (New York City, NY: W. W. Norton Inc., 2017), 25-26.

¹³ Jacoby, 28.

¹⁴ Jacoby, 65.

¹⁵ Jacoby, 48.

¹⁶ Jacoby, 52.

¹⁷ Jacoby, 54.

Texas.¹⁸ Although Fanny Ellis Starnes wasn't born into slavery, her family was and that likely had influences on her. In fact, the kids still took part in picking cotton to raise money for school. Therefore, Ellis Starnes had exposure to the plantation that her parents and siblings once resided on.¹⁹ The racism and discrimination were still very much alive even after slavery ended. The Ellis family moved to the town to be closer to protection and for the schools.²⁰

The Freedman's Bureau developed two Black schools in Victoria, Texas. One was a Methodist school and one was a Baptist.²¹ The bitterness and resentment against African Americans in Victoria was so intense that it was not uncommon for whites to attack teachers who worked at these schools. Fanny Ellis Starnes and William Ellis were able to attend one of the schools. Jacoby suggests that this is because their older sister Elizabeth Ellis married Greene Starnes, who was one of the teachers. Many Black children didn't get that opportunity, including the Ellis' "cousins," who were not actually related, but were slaves on the same plantation. Most Black adolescents had to have a full-time job in order to help the family, and schools weren't free.²² The opportunity to be able to attend school very well could have been the reason that Fanny Ellis Starnes went into teaching.

Mollie Carey Brown's parents were James R. Davis and Josephine Davis.²³ James R. Davis owned a barber shop, but he was also very active in civil rights. San Antonio newspaper *The White Republican* published an article on Wednesday, September 17, 1890 that detailed the

¹⁸ "California Death Index, 1940-1997," digital image s.v. "Fanny Starnes" (1875-1949), *Ancestry.com*.

¹⁹ Jacoby, 68.

²⁰ Jacoby, 58.

²¹ Jacoby, 58.

²² Jacoby, 67.

²³ There is the interesting question of why she had a different last name than her parents, but I have not found that answer.

demands Jim Davis had about the Black schools. One of the demands was that Black teachers should teach Black students which is important because these women were Black teachers.²⁴

Lists of the different public and private schools and their teachers appeared in the city directories. The 1877 directory listed three teachers at Rincon, the only public African American school at the time, and only one of them was Black.²⁵ In the 1879 city directory, there were only three male teachers.²⁶ The 1881 directory listed three female teachers.²⁷ In 1883, there were still only three teachers, but this is where Mollie H. Carey Brown appeared for the first time. Mollie Carey Brown was an assistant 3rd ward teacher. Also, according to this directory, she was still residing with her father.²⁸ An article in the *San Antonio Light*, published on June 23, 1883, named which teachers were to be re-elected for the following school year. Carey Brown was listed, but the article noted she needed a second-class certificate before she could be re-elected.²⁹ Since she appeared in the 1885 directory as a teacher, this suggests that she did receive that second-class certificate that was required for re-election two years prior.³⁰ Mollie Carey Brown and Fanny Ellis Starnes were both listed as teachers at the school in 1887. Carey Brown lived at 321 Hidalgo, and Ellis Starnes was listed to be boarding with Greene J. Starnes during this time at 13 Bonham.³¹ Both of these homes were ten minutes or less from the school which at the time was far since they did not have cars. Greene J. Starnes will be important in this research later.

Records were lost in a fire and because of that, the next city directory available is from 1891, which according to Mason, was the year that Rincon changed its name to Riverside.³²

²⁴ "A Word to Our Colored Brother," *The White Republican*, September 17, 1890.

²⁵ San Antonio City Directory, 1877, "Rincon," 36.

²⁶ San Antonio City Directory, 1879, "Rincon," 35.

²⁷ San Antonio City Directory, 1881, "Rincon," 39.

²⁸ San Antonio City Directory, 1883, "Mollie Carey," 68.

²⁹ "The City Public Schools," *San Antonio Light*, June 23, 1883.

³⁰ San Antonio City Directory, 1885, "Mollie Carey," 8.

³¹ San Antonio City Directory, 1887, "Mollie Carey and Fanny Ellis," 33.

³² Mason, 138.

This source showed that Mollie Carey Brown was no longer listed as a teacher. Fanny Ellis Starnes was still at Riverside public school.³³ Carey Brown was not even listed in the individuals' section of that year's directory. Eager to learn about where Carey Brown went, the next source I found for her was the 1900 census, where she was listed with her husband Mark Brown. The couple had six children that were born from 1888 to 1896, and this suggests why she probably stopped teaching in 1887. In this census, she was listed with no occupation. She also now lived at 524 Nolan St.³⁴

Fanny Ellis Starnes, on the other hand, was listed as a teacher at Riverside until 1903, when she also disappeared from the sources. Her residence changed throughout the years. From 1892 to 1895 she resided at 622 E. Crockett.³⁵ Then from 1897 to 1901, she resided at 513 N. Mesquite.³⁶ In the 1905 directory, "F. F. Ellis" was listed with no occupation, but she was still residing at the previous address.³⁷ Fanny Ellis Starnes married Greene J. Starnes in 1908.³⁸ Greene J. Starnes had been a well-known physician in San Antonio since 1885 and was widowed by Elizabeth Ellis, Ellis Starnes' older sister.³⁹ Again, Ellis Starnes was not listed as a teacher, but according to *Semi-Weekly Courier-Times* in Tyler, Texas on December 25, 1909, she attended a teacher's convention. This convention's fee was 50 cents and that money went to a library fund, as the newspaper admitted that they did not have a decent library.⁴⁰ Although Fanny Ellis Starnes was still active in the school system, the fact that she and Mollie Carey Brown got

³³ San Antonio City Directory, 1891, "Fanny Ellis," 102.

³⁴ 1900 U.S. Census, Bexar County, Texas, population schedule, San Antonio, p. 16, dwelling 524, family 194, Mollie Carey Brown; digital image, ancestry.com, accessed January 19, 2020.

³⁵ San Antonio City Directory, 1892-1895, "Fanny Ellis."

³⁶ San Antonio City Directory, 1897-1901, "Fanny Ellis."

³⁷ San Antonio City Directory, 1905, "Fanny Ellis," 101.

³⁸ Bexar County, Texas, Marriage license no. 26656 (1908), Greene J. Starnes and Fanny Ellis; The State of Texas, San Antonio, digital image, bexar.org, accessed January 20, 2020.

³⁹ Jacoby, 81.

⁴⁰ "Institute Teachers," *Semi-Weekly Courier-Times*, December 25, 1909.

married and stopped teaching afterward suggests that gendered expectations for women were prevalent in African American communities and households at this time, at least those of a rising educated middle-class. Ellis Starnes was listed one more time in the *Semi-Weekly Courier-Times* on November 29, 1910 as a convention attendee, but this was the last source that I could find linking her to the school system.⁴¹ In the 1910 census, she was listed with her husband and her step-children, who were also her nieces.⁴²

THE STATE OF TEXAS, } No. 26656
COUNTY OF BEXAR. }

To any regularly Licensed or Ordained Minister of the Gospel, Jewish Rabbi, Judge of the District Court, Judge of the County Court, or Justice of the Peace:

YOU, OR EITHER OF YOU, are hereby authorized to solemnize or join in the Holy Union of Matrimony
G. J. Starnes and Fanny T. Ellis et al.
in accordance with the laws of this State, and that you make due return of this, your authority, to my office, in sixty days from date hereof, certifying how you have executed the same.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND and the seal of the County Court of Bexar County, this 9th day
of June 1908.
Frank R. Newton
County Clerk, Bexar County.
By Aug. Schuppert Deputy.

THE FOREGOING LICENSE executed by me, joining the within named parties in the Holy Union of Matrimony, this the 9th
day of June 1908.

Witnesses:
Harry Swann
St. Paul M. C. Church

Courtesy of the Bexar County Clerk Office.
Fanny Ellis Starnes' and Greene J Starnes'
marriage certificate.

Sources do not indicate that Fanny Ellis Starnes and Mollie Carey Brown ever taught again. Teachers tended to come, and go and both of these women stayed for quite some time. Mollie Carey Brown died on February 24, 1947 at 81 years old. Her death certificate listed her occupation as “housework.”⁴³ This is important because it shows that her daughter, Bettie Brown, who filled out the death certificate, did not likely see her as a teacher. Perhaps she never knew about her mother’s past, or perhaps Carey Brown thought that her job as a mother and wife

⁴¹ “Local Institute for Teachers,” *Semi-Weekly Courier-Times*, November 29, 1910.

⁴² 1910 U.S. Census, Bexar County, Texas, population schedule, San Antonio, p. 6, dwelling 622, family 71, Fanny Ellis Starnes; digital image, ancestry.com, accessed January 21, 2020.

⁴³ Bexar County, Texas, Death certificate no. 768 (1947), Mollie Carey Brown; Texas Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics, San Antonio, digital image, ancestry.com, accessed January 20, 2020.

was the most important. Fanny Ellis Starnes was listed as a voter in 1928 after moving to California with her family. Her voter registration listed her occupation as “teacher,” showing that she identified as one.⁴⁴ According to the California death index, Ellis Starnes died on November 16, 1949 in Los Angeles, California.⁴⁵

| | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. PLACE OF DEATH STATE OF TEXAS | | TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS | |
| COUNTY OF Bexar | | | |
| CITY OR PRECINCT NO. San Antonio | | | |
| 2. FULL NAME OF DECEASED Mollie Brown | | | |
| LENGTH OF RESIDENCE WHERE DEATH OCCURRED 62 YEARS MONTHS DA | | | |
| RESIDENCE OF THE DECEASED STREET AND NO. 520 Nolan CITY San | | | |
| PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS | | | |
| 3. SEX Female | 4. COLOR OR RACE Negro | | |
| 5. SINGLE, MARRIED, WIDOWED OR DIVORCED (WRITE THE WORD) Widowed | | | |
| 6. DATE OF BIRTH May 1, 1865 | | | |
| 7. AGE YEARS 81 | MONTHS 9 | DAYS 23 | IF LESS THAN 1 DAY HOURS |
| 8A. TRADE, PROFESSION OR KIND OF WORK DONE Housework | | | |

Mollie Carey Brown’s death certificate showing that her occupation was listed as “housework”.

While Mollie Carey Brown and Fanny Ellis Starnes both had marriage and children in common, Lady Henrietta Boyd did not. She continued her career for a long time. She was first listed as a teacher in 1891 at Santa Clara School.⁴⁶ She was not listed again as a teacher until 1895 as a half-day teacher at Riverside.⁴⁷ In the 1900 census, Henrietta Boyd lived with both of her parents and siblings, listed at 918 Indiana St. Here she was listed as a public-school teacher who had been unemployed for 3 months. This census was conducted in June, so it could make sense why she was considered unemployed since it was summer. She was listed as 29 years old at this time.⁴⁸ She was not listed in the directory again until 1901, when she was a teacher at

⁴⁴ "California Voter Registrations, 1900-1968," s.v. "Fanny E. Starnes" (1928), *Ancestry.com*.

⁴⁵ "California Death Index, 1940-1997," digital image s.v. "Fanny Starnes" (1875-1949), *Ancestry.com*.

⁴⁶ San Antonio City Directory, 1891, "Henrietta Boyd," 49.

⁴⁷ San Antonio City Directory, 1895, "Fanny Ellis," 8.

⁴⁸ 1900 U.S. Census, Bexar County, Texas, population schedule, San Antonio, p. 9, dwelling 918, family 86, Henrietta Boyd; digital image, *ancestry.com*, accessed January 21, 2020.

Centre Street School.⁴⁹ In 1940, she was listed to have at least completed three years of college.⁵⁰ Since these time gaps between her years teaching exists, it could be that she attended college during one of the gaps. It is confusing as to why she was listed as only being unemployed for three months in the census⁵¹ yet, in the directory she was not listed as a teacher from 1895 until 1901.

On May 6, 1938, the *San Antonio Register* announced the teachers who accepted recommendations to teach again. There were 86 teachers listed, but there were six honor teachers which included Henrietta Boyd.⁵² In 1940, Boyd was still an honor teacher.⁵³ In 1944, there was a dinner to honor retired teachers. Boyd was one of the teachers honored out of eleven.⁵⁴ These three sources show that Henrietta Boyd was an important person to her community. She was educated enough to teach honor classes, and impactful enough to have her career recognized and honored. As a woman, especially as an African American woman, to be publicly recognized is remarkable. The source from 1944 also indicates that at some point between 1940 and 1944, she retired from teaching. Henrietta Boyd died in 1951 at 75 years old.⁵⁵ All the evidence suggests that because Henrietta Boyd didn't get married, she was able to continue her career. It is likely that because of her career in teaching, there were many more sources on her professional life than there were for Carey Brown and Ellis Starnes. It is important to note that Boyd seemed to be

⁴⁹ San Antonio City Directory, 1901, "Henrietta Boyd," 7.

⁵⁰ 1940 U.S. Census, Bexar County, Texas, population schedule, San Antonio, p. 18, dwelling 934, family 180, Henrietta Boyd; digital image, ancestry.com, accessed January 21, 2020.

⁵¹ 1900 U.S. Census, Bexar County, Texas, population schedule, San Antonio, p. 9, dwelling 918, family 86, Henrietta Boyd; digital image, ancestry.com, accessed January 21, 2020.

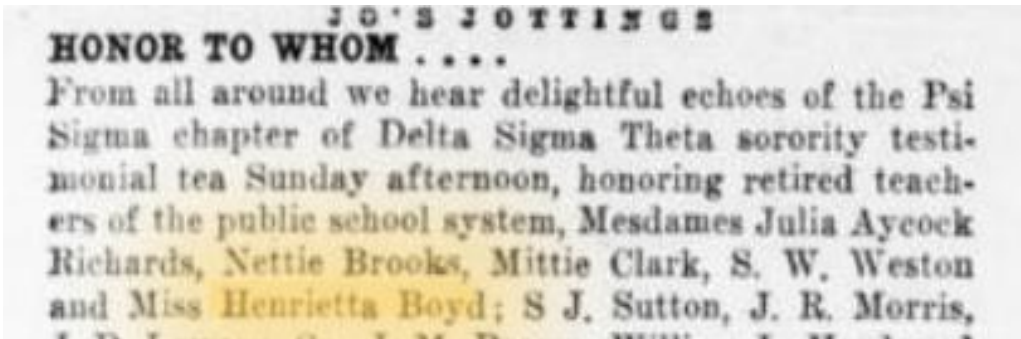
⁵² "They Teach Again," *San Antonio Register*, May 6, 1938.

⁵³ "Honor Teachers," *San Antonio Register*, April 26, 1940.

⁵⁴ "Honored Retired Teachers," *San Antonio Register*, May 26, 1944.

⁵⁵ Bexar County, Texas, Death certificate no. 3512 (1951), Henrietta Boyd; Texas Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics, San Antonio, digital image, ancestry.com, accessed January 23, 2020.

an exception. Most of the teachers did get married and leave their careers, but Henrietta Boyd didn't do either.



The article showing that Henrietta Boyd was honored at a dinner for retired teachers.

A *San Antonio Express* article, published on September 16, 1917, included a list of the public-school teachers, and Marguerite Starnes Moore,⁵⁶ who was Fanny Ellis Starnes' stepdaughter and niece, appears alongside Henrietta Boyd.⁵⁷ This brought up the question of whether there was a generational line of teachers, since Bettie Brown, Mollie Carey Brown's daughter, was also a teacher. There was not much information on Bettie Brown at all. Starnes Moore first appeared in a newspaper as a new teacher in 1916.⁵⁸ In the 1920 census, she was still living with her parents and was still a teacher.⁵⁹ Marguerite Starnes Moore married Richard Moore in June of 1921.⁶⁰ When the entire family moved to California, Marguerite Starnes Moore entered the University of California- Southern Branch for pre-med.⁶¹ As her father was a well-known doctor, it was not surprising that she would go into the medical field as well, but this was also an indication that she left teaching. I cannot find any evidence that shows her children becoming teachers.

⁵⁶ I will refer to Marguerite as Starnes Moore, although she didn't marry until 1921.

⁵⁷ "Board Announces Assignments of Teachers 1917-18," *The San Antonio Express*, September 16, 1917.

⁵⁸ "New Teachers are Elected by Board," *The San Antonio Express*, August 26, 1916.

⁵⁹ 1920 U.S. Census, Bexar County, Texas, population schedule, San Antonio, p. 4, dwelling 513, family 47, Marguerite Starnes Moore; digital image, ancestry.com, accessed March 4, 2020.

⁶⁰ Bexar County, Texas, Marriage license no. 60687 (1921), Marguerite Starnes and Richard Moore; The State of Texas, San Antonio, digital image, bexar.org, accessed March 3, 2020.

⁶¹ *Officers and Students*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1923.

The question of whether married women should continue their work as teachers was the focus of a *San Antonio Light* article in 1884. A man by the name of Alderman Dwyer asked San Antonio's mayor whether married women were allowed to teach or not. Mayor French responded that while there was no actual rule against it, it would be better if they did not. His reason was that married women has the responsibility to take care of their household and raise their own children. The article states, "[H]e, with others thought it best they should not hold positions in public schools."⁶² While this article demonstrates that some people were against the idea of having married women teach, it also suggests that this was not only about teaching. Although the question was directed at teaching, because the mayor explained that they should be home, it is assumed that he believed all married women should be at home.⁶³

In 1886, the *San Antonio Daily Light* published an article that was conflicting to the last one. Someone by the name of Cherry Bob sent a letter to the newspaper explaining why married teachers made the best teachers. The reasoning was "they are free of such troubles that the single lady is so often subjected to."⁶⁴ This writer explains how single women were too concerned with finding a husband and married women didn't have to be anymore. The source also talked about how it was reasonable to think that mothers will do better at teaching children.⁶⁵ The author also said, "[T]his by no means is intended as a reflection upon the abilities of our single lady teachers, but only to point out a few of the advantages their married sisters have over them; this they can easily overcome by going and do likewise."⁶⁶ Although this source supports the idea of married

⁶² "School Board Meeting," *The San Antonio Light*, February 8, 1884.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ "Married Women," *The San Antonio Daily Light*, June 25, 1886.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

women working as teachers, it also supports the general idea that being married will make you better which reinforced the gender norm at the time.

These sources show how there were multiple perspectives on whether married women should be allowed to teach. These perspectives are entrenched in gendered expectations for women. Some believed married women should not teach because they belonged at home, whereas others thought that single women could only focus on finding a husband, which would draw their attention away from their students. It is clear that there were some people who believed that there was no alternative to marriage and that it was a necessity. Marriage did not seem to be a choice, instead it was an expectation for women.

Another source that explained the role of female teachers and marriage was an article in *The Daily Express* in 1907. This article talked about how many of the teachers were set to get married. These teachers wanted to be re-elected anyway, but they planned to resign. It was stated that the teachers did this because they did not want it to look like they were dropped from the school. They wanted people to understand that they could be re-elected, but they chose to leave on their own. Under this explanation though, it does name a teacher and said that she “was not re-elected on account of having been married recently.”⁶⁷ The fact that the school board stated that she wouldn’t be able to be re-elected illustrates that although it seemed like the women were making the choice to resign, the school board was also making that choice. This source also gave insight to how the women viewed their reputation. They knew that they would be leaving their jobs, but they made sure that people knew that it was not because they were a bad person or teacher, and that it was their choice. This is an indication that these women exercised agency while having limited options.

⁶⁷ “Several Teachers Will Marry,” *The Daily Express*, June 11, 1907.

Black women did hold very important roles in the community. African Americans were uncomfortable with the ideas of whites teaching their children, and so many Black women stepped up to diminish that concern. With these sources, it is safe to assume that both marriage and motherhood impacted the teachers' careers. All three of these women were impactful as they were some of the first women to teach in San Antonio's Black public schools. The little visibility that Mollie Carey Brown and Fanny Ellis Starnes had in the public sphere was drowned out by their marriages. Unfortunately, for these women, the situation was likely seen as either they teach or get married and have a family. Lady Henrietta Boyd never did get married. This may reinforce the notion that female teachers were aware that marriage could impact their careers. The bigger argument is that although these women faced issues that women today don't, like the Jim Crow laws, the broader picture is the same: many educated, middle-class women are often forced to choose between having a career or staying at home

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