

Timeline of William H. Kilpatrick's Life, Philosophical and Theoretical Foundations and Major Contributions

November 20, 1871 – Born

William Heard Kilpatrick was born to Reverend Dr. James Hines Kilpatrick and Edna Perrin Heard (Beyer, 469). Kilpatrick credits his father for teaching him to be open-minded and think logically and his mother for teaching him compassion and service to others (Izzo, 195).

1888 – Mercer University

Kilpatrick enrolled in courses at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia, which was the same university his father attended. During his junior year, Kilpatrick discovered Darwin's *The Origin of Species* which had a huge impact on his general philosophy of education (Beyer, 470).

1891 – John Hopkins University

Kilpatrick graduated from Mercer University and began studying at John Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland (Izzo, 195).

1892 – Blakely Elementary and High School

After only a year, Kilpatrick left John Hopkins University to teach as an algebra and geometry teacher and to fill the position of co-principal of the Blakely elementary and high school in rural Georgia (Beyer, 471). While there he began

thinking about what he termed *The Project Method* when he observed how students continued working on their projects even after a fellow instructor left the room for a time (Izzo, 195). Kilpatrick began incorporating a more flexible method of teaching by departing the room for periods of time and allowing students to work together in small groups (Izzo, 196).

While there, he also attended a summer normal school session at Rock, Georgia to advance his knowledge in pedagogy. He attended a lecture on educational ideas given by Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi while there which significantly affected his own philosophy. He now believed that students needed to be provided with meaningful, interesting experiences from which they could develop responsibility (Beyer, 471).

During this time he also attended a lecture given by Francis Parker who he came to regard as the first American progressive educator and a forerunner to Dewey (Beyer, 472).

1895 – John Hopkins University

Kilpatrick's interest in mathematics prompted him to return to John Hopkins University. While there he also enrolled in several philosophy courses which helped shape his own philosophy of education and teaching along with his commitment to science, inquiry and clear thinking (Beyer, 472).

1896 – Anderson Elementary School

Kilpatrick left John Hopkins University again to accept the position of principal at Anderson Elementary School in Savannah, Georgia (Beyer, 472). He also taught mathematics during this time (Izzo, 196). He further developed his own philosophy that the teacher should be the advocate of their students, and they should expect the best from their students, recognize their accomplishments, and respect their personal interests while creating educational experiences (Beyer, 473).

1897 – Mercer University

Kilpatrick accepted a position of professor of mathematics and astronomy at Mercer University. He also met with students training to become elementary school teachers during voluntary meetings and had them read the works of such educational theorists as Herbert Spencer and William James (Beyer, 473).

1898 – University of Chicago

He married Marie Beman Guyton (Izzo, 196) and also took a summer course at the University of Chicago offered by John Dewey who he came to highly respect (Beyer, 473).

1900 – Cornell University

Kilpatrick enrolled in a summer course at Cornell University where he studied under Charles DeGarmo. The idea that student's interests could change, should

be connected to related ideas and other interests, and developed with the guidance of a sensitive teacher further shaped his educational philosophy (Beyer, 474).

1904 – Mercer University

He became acting president of Mercer University and began a philosophical diary (Izzo, 196).

1906 – University of Tennessee

Kilpatrick's liberal ideas were challenged by Baptist Fundamentalists (Izzo, 196).

He also agreed to teach algebra and mathematics classes during a summer session at the University of Tennessee (Beyer, 474).

His wife also passed away at this time and his daughter went to live with relatives (Izzo, 196).

1907 – Teach College of Columbia University

Kilpatrick began studying at the Teacher College of Columbia University to earn his Ph.D., and he eventually joined the school's faculty (Izzo, 196).

1908 – Married

Kilpatrick married Margaret Manigault Pinckney who strongly supported his work in educational philosophy (Izzo, 196).

1912 – Montessori Method

He traveled to Italy to study the methods of Maria Montessori (Izzo, 197).

1918 – *The Project Method*

Kilpatrick published *The Project Method*, which officially marked the beginning of his career as a theorist (Izzo, 197).

1920s - Travels

Kilpatrick traveled extensively, and had the opportunity to meet with educators and government officials both at home in the U.S. and abroad (Izzo, 200).

1932 – *Education and the Social Crisis*

Kilpatrick published *Education and the Social Crisis* in response to the Great Depression (Izzo, 201).

1938 – Bennington College

Kilpatrick retired from Teachers College and helped found Bennington College in Vermont (Beyer, 479).

1941-1951 – New York Urban League

He served as president of the New York Urban League (Beyer, 479).

February 13, 1965 – Died

William H. Kilpatrick passed away.