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Article Summary: Frances E Duncombe, a thirty-year-old graduate student at the University of Nebraska, undertook original research on the psychology of Santa Claus. Duncombe's study, perhaps the first survey ever done on the subject of Santa Claus, was published in 1896 and was replicated on a new sample of Lincoln school children in 1977.

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Photographs / Images: Harry Kirke Wolfe about 1890; G Stanley Hall; Frances E Duncombe; Cover of July 1896 issue of the *North Western Journal of Education*; Harry Kirke Wolfe's psychology laboratory in Library Hall, University of Nebraska, about 1896

The Santa Claus Survey

A Pioneering Nebraska Study in Child Psychology

By Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr.

In the fall of 1895 Frances F. Duncombe, a thirty-year-old undergraduate student at the University of Nebraska, enrolled in a year-long course entitled "Seminar in Child Study." One of the course requirements was to undertake original research consistent with the goals and methods of the new and growing child study movement in America. Consequently, in February and March of 1896, Duncombe asked more than 1,500 Lincoln school children about their ideas about Santa Claus. Her study was published in the July 1896 issue of the *Northwestern Journal of Education*, a monthly journal edited at the University of Nebraska.¹ Duncombe's study, perhaps the first survey ever done on the psychology of Santa Claus, is typical of the questionnaire studies that comprised the child study movement of the 1890s and early 1900s. However, the published account of this study is almost unique because it describes the research methods and results in considerable detail. This level of detail even allowed Duncombe's study to be replicated on a new sample of Lincoln school children in 1977, a cross-generational comparison eighty-one years after Duncombe had collected her data.²

When Duncombe began her data collection, the science of psychology was less than twenty years old. Historians typically mark the beginning of the discipline with the founding of Wilhelm Wundt's psychology laboratory in 1879 at the University of Leipzig. Trained in philosophy and physiology, Wundt

sought to bring the new experimental methods from sensory physiology and neurophysiology to bear on the centuries-old philosophical questions about the nature of mind. A number of Americans journeyed to Leipzig to study with Wundt in the new science. One of those early students was Harry Kirke Wolfe, an 1880 graduate of the University of Nebraska. Wolfe finished his doctorate at Leipzig with Wundt in 1886, becoming the second American to earn his degree there in psychology.³ After working for two years in the public schools of California, Wolfe accepted a position in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Nebraska, where in 1889 he established one of the earliest psychology laboratories in America, and perhaps the first devoted exclusively to work with undergraduate students.⁴

Although Wolfe's laboratory at Nebraska was modeled after Wundt's, Wolfe's interests in psychology went beyond the psychophysical and introspective studies that were the bread and butter of Leipzig investigations. Wolfe came to Nebraska with strong interests in education. Both of his parents had been teachers, and he himself had taught in Nebraska schools before going to Germany to study in 1883, and as noted, taught again upon his return from Leipzig.

In his initial year at Nebraska Wolfe asked the chancellor and regents for help in establishing a pedagogy program within the Department of Philosophy. As department head of Philosophy (a dubious honor, given that he was the sole member of the department), he was required to file an annual report

with Chancellor Charles Bessey. In Wolfe's first report in May 1890 he asked for permission and financial support to establish a formalized program in pedagogical psychology that would include an elective course in pedagogics for would-be teachers. He also advocated another class based on psychophysics and the new experimental psychology that would include "original investigations in child nature."

Wolfe stressed the importance of the new psychology for teachers, stating that such a course was necessary because "trainers of the mind ought to know whatever is known about mind." He reminded the chancellor that approximately half of the university's graduates pursued careers in teaching, meeting a demand brought on by the rapidly growing school-age population of the 1890s and by the small number of teachers coming from Nebraska's one, poorly supported, state normal school at the time (at Peru).⁵

The elective course in pedagogy was approved by Bessey and the Board of Regents, and the library fund for the department was increased to support book purchases for that course. In the next few years Wolfe expanded his pedagogy program adding courses on sensation, the history of education, child study, methods of teaching, applied ethics, and several other topics considered important for teacher training.⁶

The pedagogy program was a considerable success and attracted large enrollments. Wolfe found himself swamped with classes and students as he tried to keep programs going in philosophy, psychology, and pedagogy. Be-

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Santa Claus Survey

ginning in 1891 he initiated what would be annual requests for an additional faculty member for his one-person department. Finally, in 1895 the university hired George W. A. Luckey to work with Wolfe. Luckey assumed the teaching duties for most of the pedagogical courses; Wolfe, however, retained the course in child study and, when the university established a master's program in education, he taught a graduate child study course as well.

The child study movement in America began toward the end of the nineteenth century, stimulated by the organizing and proselytizing efforts of psychologist G. Stanley Hall. Hall, who had founded the first American psychology laboratory at Johns Hopkins University in 1883, was particularly interested in the application of psychology to education. He believed that for psychology to improve educational practice, psychologists should first know all there was to know about children. Child study became a national program involving parents, teachers, social workers, and psychologists as investigators, primarily employing the questionnaire as their method of study. These investigators studied such diverse topics as sensory capabilities, physical characteristics, humor, play, religious ideas, dreams, memory, attention span, and a host of other physical and psychological traits and abilities.

Hall's child study center at Clark University in the 1890s generated nearly two hundred different questionnaires, most of which were available for use by anyone who wrote to request them. His journal, *Pedagogical Seminary*, was founded in 1891 to publish some of the resultant and growing literature. Proponents of child study argued that with this new knowledge of the child, education would no longer be guesswork but would be a science.⁷

Wolfe was one of the earlier soldiers in Hall's child study army. Although he had no formal training with Hall, he was much influenced by his ideas. Wolfe lectured frequently to parents and



Harry Kirke Wolfe, about 1890. Archives and Special Collections. University of Nebraska-Lincoln



G. Stanley Hall. By permission of the Archives of the History of American Psychology, Akron, Ohio

teacher groups on the value of child study. In one of his many public lectures he stated:

If you would know the child make an effort to study it in any way that interests you. Persist and you will soon have all the methods of the specialists. The field is the most remarkable in nature. No earnest work can be lost. As soon as you learn one thing two others present themselves for answers and you are led on and in, until you are compelled to study the literature of the subject for your own peace of mind. The simplest and most effective rule, then is BEGIN. Do SOMETHING, it matters little what you do at first, you will find it leads straight into the midst of this new world. And if you would not be drawn in I warn you to shun even the appearance of Child Study.⁸

The recruitment of teachers and parents as original investigators in child study was one of the hallmarks of the movement. Hall encouraged it wherever he went, and made a point of it in his speech to the annual meeting of the Nebraska State Teachers Association in 1893. Clearly, teachers and parents had ready access to children for hours each day; using these two groups to collect data on child nature was a most practical way to deal with the immensity of the task.

Wolfe recommended that parents collect data by naturalistic observation, noting children's physical characteristics, their play behavior, their emotional expressions and moods. He recommended that teachers also test the aptitudes and abilities of children with particular emphases on sensory tests and tests of memory, imagination, attention, reasoning, and moral ideas.

Wolfe's travels throughout Nebraska led to the founding of the Nebraska Society for Child Study in 1895, one of many child study societies that were particularly popular in the Midwest. He was one of the 128 charter members of the Nebraska Society, whose stated goals were: a) to stimulate among the teachers and parents the study of child nature and child growth, b) to facilitate ongoing investigations by teachers and parents, and c) to acquaint teachers

and parents with the results already obtained from the study of children, and to show them how this knowledge could be used to advantage in educating and raising children.⁹

Wolfe began offering a two-semester elective child study course at Nebraska in 1892. The first semester was devoted to the nature of the child as revealed in the extant educational and psychological research. Typically only half of the first-semester students enrolled for the second half of the course, which was devoted to the methods of child study and the conduct of original research. Students in that second semester were encouraged to investigate a topic of their choice. His students studied children's interests in stories (nature stories, classic myths, fairy tales), poetic abilities, perceptions of symbols, preferences for pictures, development of number sense, imitation, and a host of other topics. It was in that second semester course of 1895-96 that Frances Duncombe began her research.

Not much is known about Frances Duncombe. She was born in Pennsylvania in August 1865. Prior to her study at Nebraska she spent two years at the College of Wooster in Ohio. She moved to Lincoln in 1888 and entered the University of Nebraska in the fall of 1893, enrolling in Wolfe's beginning psychology course in her initial semester.¹⁰ After graduation from Nebraska in 1897, she began teaching English the following year at Lincoln High School, and she remained in that job until her retirement in 1936. From 1904 through 1917 she occasionally took graduate courses at Nebraska, but never finished a graduate degree.¹¹

The genesis of the idea for Duncombe's study is unknown. Given Wolfe's typical practices, it is likely that she chose the topic herself. She described her research as

an attempt to learn something of the mind of the child through the things with which he is familiar and in which he is interested. The old story of Santa Claus was selected as the subject for investigation, and work was begun with the hope of learning

something of the relation which exists between the mythical Santa Claus and the child.¹²

Contemporary social scientists have suggested that Santa Claus is the most striking and important of mythical figures of childhood in America today.¹³



This photograph of Frances E. Duncombe appeared in a Lincoln High School yearbook.

It is a myth that had reached great popularity in the United States as early as the 1870s and today transcends social class, ethnic background, and even many religious denominations.¹⁴ Yet despite its pervasiveness, the role of this myth in child development was largely unstudied until the 1980s.

As noted earlier, Duncombe's research may be the first study ever of the impact of the Santa Claus myth on children. Despite its priority claim and the soundness of its methodology, this study disappeared from the research literature on Santa Claus. No citations of Duncombe's research have been found in any of the subsequent studies of Santa Claus until the 1979 published ac-

count that replicated her study. A principal reason for the lack of citations to her research is that it was published in an obscure regional journal that ceased publication in 1901.

When Duncombe collected her data Lincoln, Nebraska, was a small midwestern city of 40,000 whose inhabitants included a number of recent immigrant groups: German, Irish, German-Russian, and others. For her research, Duncombe tested approximately 1,500 school children in grades four through eight, an enormous sample for studies of any time. Each child was asked to respond to a four-item questionnaire:

1. When you were little what did you think about Santa Claus? Tell all you can remember about your ideas of him.
2. How did you find out afterwards who he really is? How old were you, and how did you feel when you first learned this?
3. How do you think your former belief in Santa Claus has influenced you?
4. Do you think young children should be taught to believe in Santa Claus? Give your reasons.¹⁵

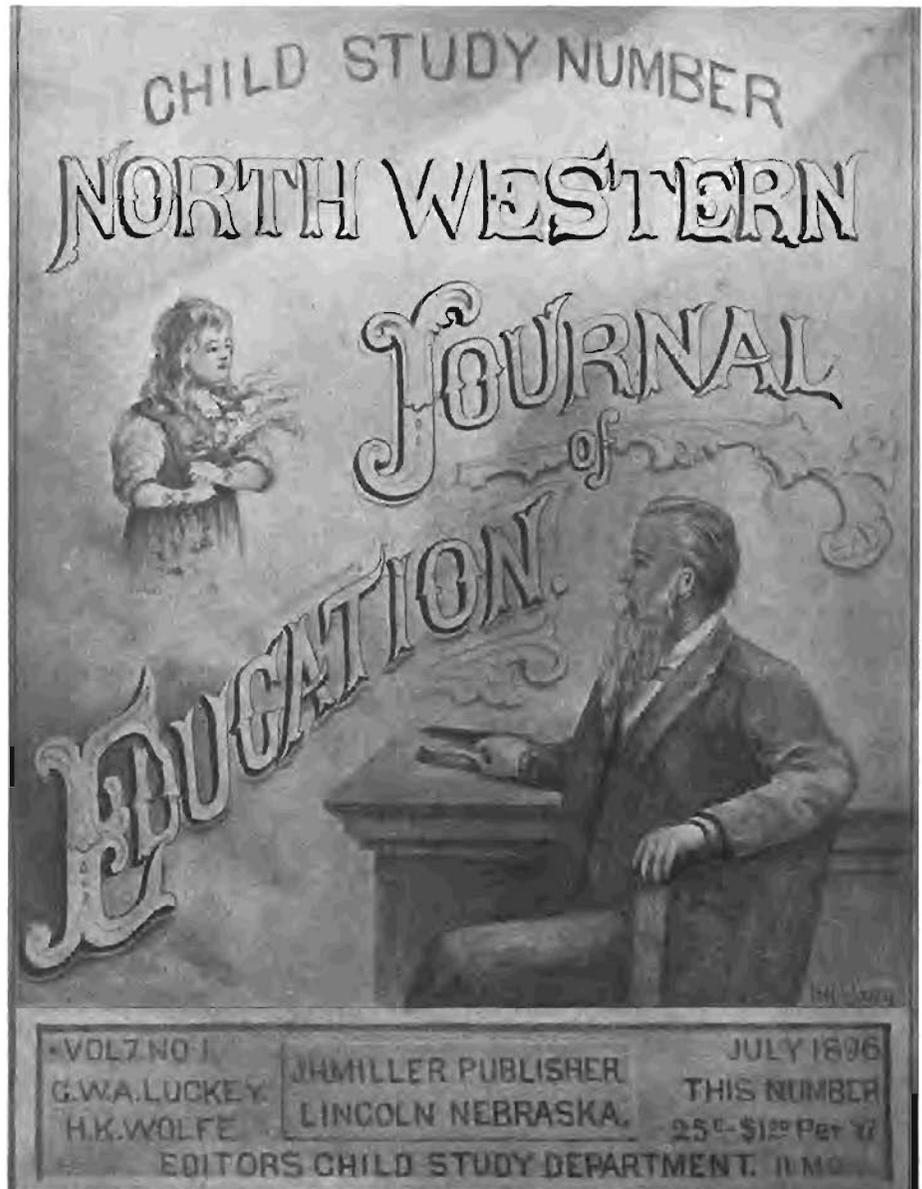
Duncombe may have generated the questions on her own; however, it seems likely that Wolfe had a hand in the design of the survey. This survey began with a very open-ended question that asked the children to respond in terms of what they believed when they were younger. The second question was really three questions, two of which could be easily scored. The third question was intended, principally, to investigate the claims that a belief in Santa Claus could lead to psychological problems when the myth was exposed. And the last question, essentially one of moral belief, asked the children whether they believed the myth should be taught to young children.

Duncombe collected the responses in individual classrooms by writing the questions on the board, one at a time, while children wrote answers to each

question in turn. After weeks of visiting the schools, Duncombe faced the daunting task of dealing with an enormous amount of qualitative data. She divided her respondents into ten groups based on gender and grade. For each question (or sub-question) she established a scoring rubric. For example, in the first question she scored responses about Santa in terms of whether children saw him as a supernatural figure (can fly around the world in a single night, can read wish lists consumed in a fire, can enter the house via a six-inch stove pipe) or as an actual man. If anything in the child's description endowed Santa with a supernatural power, then the response was placed in that category. If the attributes described were those of an ordinary person, then the response was classified as such. Given the nature of such open-ended questions, she also used an "indefinite" category for those responses that did not fit her other designations.

In the second question responses were scored in terms of stated age, in terms of source of information (children, parents or other adults), and in terms of feelings (cheated, glad, sorry). The third question proved troublesome for most of the children. Only the eighth-graders were able to answer it, and even their answers were less than what Duncombe had hoped for. It seems, as Duncombe realized, that the concept of the question was not understood by the children. In the lower grades more than 70 percent chose not even to answer it. She reported her data for this question but argued that they were meaningless and did not discuss them.

Still, Duncombe obtained useful data for three of her four questions. She found that most children saw Santa Claus as a supernatural figure (89 percent), that children learned who Santa Claus really is about equally from their parents or other children, that they were about 6.3 years old (girls reported being slightly older than boys) when they stopped believing, and that their com-



Cover of July 1896 issue of the *North Western Journal of Education*.
Courtesy of author

mon feeling upon learning the news was sorrow.

Approximately 57 percent said that young children should be taught to believe in Santa Claus. Half of those gave as a reason that "it makes them happy," whereas a fifth of that group saw it as a means of behavioral control, that is, "it makes them be good." Another 37 percent said that young children should

not be taught to believe because it involves telling a lie and will disappoint them when they learn the truth.

In addition to the description of her scoring rubric for each question and the table of response percentages for her sample, Duncombe also reported some of the actual responses of the children. A selection of those is shown in the appendix to this article. Duncombe indi-

cated that she did not correct or alter them, but reproduced them exactly as they were written by the child. In reading these responses from school children of the 1890s the language is striking; it is evident that the children possessed a mastery of vocabulary and expressive form that is too often absent in their 1990s counterparts.¹⁶

The child study movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was, in some respects, the “pop psychology” of its day, and scientific psychologists and the nonscientific public responded in much the same way they do today. Scientific psychologists mostly rejected it; the public embraced it with great enthusiasm. Yet the movement began to lose its popularity in the first decade of the twentieth century. Critics within psychology had argued against the use of untrained individuals (parents and teachers) as data collectors. Others cautioned against the depersonalization of children, the belief that child study would dissolve personalities into elements. Children were to be loved, they argued, not studied.¹⁷ Psychologist James Mark Baldwin referred to the movement as a fad and argued that teachers conducting child study research were being deceived in “thinking that they [were] making contributions to science.”¹⁸ Harvard University’s flamboyant psychologist, Hugo Münsterberg, was particularly critical of child study. He wrote that “Child study . . . has for its aim only the collection of curiosities about the child as an end in itself.” And he certainly would have put Duncombe’s Santa Claus study in his curiosity category. In his view, the value of child study for psychology was akin to the value of hunting stories for scientific biology.¹⁹

The child study movement was never successful in fulfilling its grandiose ambitions: Psychologists searched for laws of human behavior in child study; university administrators sought a better means of training teachers; teachers, facing mounting enrollment pressures due to compulsory attendance laws and



Harry Kirke Wolfe's psychology laboratory in Library Hall, University of Nebraska, about 1896. Archives and Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

increased immigration, desired better outcomes for their students; and parents needed information on child rearing.²⁰ Too many people from too many diverse perspectives made those ambitions impossible to realize. However, the child study movement was the first effort to study children scientifically and to apply psychology to the practical problems of those who dealt with children. Eventually the movement gave way to a more theory-based and programmatic research effort in child development, whose studies were largely centered in university laboratories. One historian has described the role of the child study movement as bridging “the gap between pseudoscientific, philosophical speculations, and a true science of the child, between ‘rational’ education and educational psychology, between sentimental and scientific principles of child rearing.”²¹

Despite its problematic history, the child study movement has been credited with important accomplishments. It brought about educational reform, both in the training of teachers in normal colleges and in the nature of teaching practices in the schools. It fostered an interest in children’s activities outside the schools, for example, promoting the development of neighborhood playgrounds. And it facilitated the establish-

ment of organizations, such as the Boy Scouts, for organized play and moral training.²²

Although Hall had abandoned the movement by 1911, Wolfe never lost his faith in child study and stayed active in that work until his death in 1918. He continued to organize child study programs in Nebraska, especially summer school programs for teachers stressing the methods of child study. He also continued teaching his child study courses, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. His fervent belief that the study of the child was the very foundation of pedagogy would not allow him to leave the field, even though most of his colleagues in psychology had already done so.

As for Duncombe, there is no evidence that she was involved in child study subsequent to her Santa Claus survey. Nevertheless, her research project of a century ago is important in several ways. It provided the earliest psychological study of children’s ideas about Santa Claus. Indeed, the next published study on this topic that has been found did not appear until 1936.²³

The data collected by Duncombe constitute an important resource today for the fields of developmental, cognitive, and social psychology, as well as the field of social history. Contemporary

Santa Claus Survey

studies have supported her finding of the average age of discovery, an age consistent with modern theories (for example the cognitive-stage theory of Jean Piaget) about the development of cognitive abilities, including the age at which children can differentiate fantasy and reality.

Duncombe's data provide valuable insights about the thinking of American children a century ago, revealed in what they said and how they said it. Given that organized psychology in America celebrated its centennial as recently as 1992, one can appreciate that psychological research prior to Duncombe's study is not abundant.²⁴

Further, Duncombe's article provided unusual detail of her procedures (including the months in which she actually collected her data),²⁵ the exact wording of her questions, the scoring rubrics that she used for each question, and the data analyses. That level of detail was critically important to permit a direct replication of her study in 1977. Such replications in psychology are quite rare for research reported in the nineteenth century. Studies of that era were typically not described in sufficient detail to permit replication. But it is those very kinds of replications that provide social scientists with one of the best research tools to make behavioral, cognitive, and social comparisons across generations. For these reasons it is important to revisit Duncombe's pioneering work as we near the centennial of her investigation of Nebraska children.

Appendix: Responses from Duncombe's 1896 Sample

Question 1: When you were little, what did you think about Santa Claus? Tell all you can remember about your ideas of him.

My parents never believed in telling us what they always thought foolish and told us just the opposite. I don't remember at any time of believing it, but they

said Santa Claus was the good spirit in people's hearts that made them give presents, and so I think to this day. (Thirteen-year-old boy)

When I was little I thought Santa Claus was a large man who came around Christmas Eve to give presents to good children. I thought he came down the chimney to enter the house. If we knew some [piano] pieces he would give us something. In Russia some old man would put on a big overcoat and wrap himself up so nothing could be seen of him. Then he would come in and ask the first one if he knew anything, if not he would go to the next. (Thirteen-year-old boy)

On Christmas eve I would hang up my stocking and expect the respected personage would come down the chimney and fill my stocking to the brim. I remember how I would write down a list of things on a paper of what I wished to get and throw it in the stove, where it would be consumed, and expect it to go up the chimney to Santa Claus. (Twelve-year-old boy)

Question 2: How did you find out afterwards who he really is? How old were you, and how did you feel when you first learned this?

I hung up my stockings behind the stove so that Santa Claus could get warm and papa and mamma thought I was asleep and the door was open and I saw papa putting something in my stocking and I felt as if I had not been good. I was eight or nine years old when I found it out. (Eleven-year-old girl)

When I was about five years of age, I began to suspect Santa Claus' existence. One day I climbed up into mamma's lap and said "Mamma, tell me the honest truth, is there a Santa Claus?" And mamma told me that there was not but it was only a sweet little German story. (Ten-year-old girl)

A boy told me that there were no Santa Claus and I did not believe him at first. I was about six years old when I found it out. I was mad when I found out. I

thought I would not get anything. (Eleven-year-old boy)

Question 3: How do you think your former belief in Santa Claus has influenced you?

It has taught me that we should try to help others, as there is no Santa Claus to do it. It also made me try to be good when I thought of the big book in which names of the good children were kept. (Twelve-year-old boy)

It made me think for a while that everything that my parents told me was to fool me. (Thirteen-year-old boy)

Question 4: Do you think young children should be taught to believe in Santa Claus? Give your reasons.

I don't think anyone ought to declare right up and down to children that there really is a Santa Claus, but just to speak of him as some good, unseen person. Because when a child should find out while it is still young, before it can understand, then it will lose some faith in what its mother says afterwards. (Fifteen-year-old girl)

Indeed I do think that young children should be taught to believe in Santa Claus. In the first place it is a pretty myth and will give them pleasure and will never do them any harm, unless it is used to frighten them into being good, and even then I think it won't hurt them to amount to anything. I believe in giving little children all the harmless pleasure they can have. Let them believe in fairy tales and myths, it won't do them any harm, and little children find out soon enough that things are not as they are represented to be, without having it drummed into them from early childhood. (Thirteen-year-old girl)

It is all right for rich people to teach their children to believe in Santa Claus. But not for poor people. Rich people can give their children presents where a poor man cannot. All children will expect presents from Santa Claus. And if they do not receive them they will feel bad. (Twelve-year-old boy)

Notes

¹ Frances E. Duncombe, "Children's Idea about Santa Claus," *Northwestern Journal of Education* 7 (July 1896):37-42.

² Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr., Jacqueline P. Langley, and Rosalie J. Hall, "Santa Now and Then," *Psychology Today* 13 (December 1979):36-44.

³ Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr., *Harry Kirke Wolfe: Pioneer in Psychology* (Lincoln/London: University of Nebraska Press, 1991). For a treatment of Wundt's thirty-three American doctoral students see Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr., Maureen Durkin, Michelle Link, Marilyn Vestal, and Jill Acord, "Wundt's American Doctoral Students," *American Psychologist* 47 (1992):123-31.

⁴ Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr., "Psychology at the University of Nebraska, 1889-1930," *Nebraska History* 56 (Fall 1975):375-87.

⁵ Harry K. Wolfe, "Annual Report of the Department of Philosophy" (May 15, 1890), Board of Regents Papers, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Archives and Special Collections.

⁶ *Ibid.*, (May 29, 1891).

⁷ For a history of Hall's involvement in the child study movement in America see Dorothy Ross, *G Stanley Hall. The Psychologist as Prophet* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), and Emily S. Davidson and Ludy T. Benjamin, Jr., "A History of the Child Study Movement in America" in J. A. Glover and R. R. Ronning, eds., *Historical Foundations of Educational Psychology* (New York: Plenum Press, 1987), 41-60.

⁸ Harry K. Wolfe, "The Theory of Child Study," n.d., Wolfe Papers, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Archives and Special Collections, 20.

⁹ Harry K. Wolfe, "The State Societies for Child Study," *Northwestern Journal of Education* 7 (July 1896):42-46.

¹⁰ Grade book for Harry K. Wolfe, 1893-94, Wolfe Papers.

¹¹ It is not apparent that Duncombe participated in the extracurricular activities typical of school teachers. A search of the yearbooks of Lincoln High School during her tenure turned up her photograph as a member of the faculty but nothing more. There are no indications of involvement with the yearbooks, with the school newspaper (*The Advocate*), or with any of the other English-related efforts such as school plays or variety shows. She never coached any of the girls' sports teams, was never a class sponsor, and never the recipient of a yearbook dedication, despite teach-

ing at the school for forty years. In the archival records of Lincoln High School the only mention of her was found in an "underground" newspaper published by some senior class members in 1905. The author (or authors) commented on each of the teachers. For Duncombe the brief description read, "Disposition: Bright and cheery; Occupation: Talking; First impression: Workable; Present impression: Nit." Duncombe died in Lincoln at age eighty-eight on August 14, 1958. Her obituary in the April 17 *Lincoln Star* occupied a mere seven lines.

Some information on Duncombe was gathered from records of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Alumni Office and from Joseph G. Svoboda at the University Archives and Special Collections. Information from historical records of Lincoln High School was supplied by Randal M. Ernst.

¹² Duncombe, "Children's Idea About Santa Claus," 37.

¹³ Norman N. Prentice, Linda K. Schmechel, and Martin Manosevitz, "Children's Beliefs In Santa Claus: A Developmental Study of Fantasy and Causality," *Journal of the American Academy of Child Psychiatry* 18 (1979):658-67.

¹⁴ K. L. Richards, *How Christmas Came to the Sunday Schools: The Observance of Christmas in the Protestant Church Schools of the United States* (Detroit: Gale Publishers, 1971, reprint of the 1934 edition); J. H. Barnett, "Christmas in American Culture," *Psychiatry* 9 (1946):51-65. See also Tommy R. Thompson, "Sales, Santa, and Good Fellows: Celebrating Christmas in Omaha," *Nebraska History* 68 (Fall 1987):127-41. Thompson notes, "Even the beautiful window displays could not capture the attention of the young people like the magical figure of Santa Claus" (p. 128).

¹⁵ Duncombe, "Children's Idea about Santa Claus," 38.

¹⁶ The replication of Duncombe's study (see note 2) tested approximately nine hundred children, grades four through eight, in Lincoln, Nebraska, in February and March 1977. Compared to the children in 1896, the children from the later study were as likely to see Santa Claus as an actual man (35 percent) as having supernatural powers (39 percent). The 1977 children learned who Santa really was more often from parents (40 percent) than they did from other children (16 percent), and they were six months older when they made that discovery. A higher percentage of the 1977 children thought that young children should be taught to believe in Santa Claus (70 percent in 1977 to 57 percent in 1896). Many of the responses from the 1977 sample are interesting, but beyond

the scope of this article. A favorite of the authors was from a fourth-grade girl who responded to question 2 as follows: "My sister asked our dad if she could leave Santa a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, and my dad said he would probably want a Reuben. And my dad likes Reubens."

¹⁷ Hugo Münsterberg, "The Danger from Experimental Psychology," *Atlantic Monthly* 81 (February 1898):159-67.

¹⁸ James M. Baldwin, "Child Study," *Psychological Review* 5 (1898):218-20, quotation from p. 219.

¹⁹ Münsterberg, "The Danger from Experimental Psychology," 165. Even William James joined the chorus of critics of child study: "By all means let child-study go on,—it is refreshing all our sense of the child's life. . . . But, for Heaven's sake, let the rank and file of teachers be passive readers if they so prefer, and feel free not to contribute to the accumulation." In William James, *Talks to Teachers and Students* (New York: Henry Holt, 1899), 12-13.

²⁰ A. W. Siegel and S. H. White, "The Child Study Movement: Early Growth and Development of the Symbolized Child" in H. W. Reese and L. Lipsitt, eds., *Advances in Child Development and Behavior* 17 (New York: Academic Press, 1982), 233-85.

²¹ E. Belden, "A History of the Child Study Movement in the United States, 1870-1920," (Ph.D. diss., University of California - Berkeley, 1965), 2.

²² See, for example, D. Cavallo, *Muscles and Morals* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), and D. I. Macleod, *Building Character in the American Boy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983).

²³ Edgar A. Doll, "Preliminary Standardization of the Vineland Social Maturity Scale," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 6 (1936):283-93.

²⁴ G. Stanley Hall founded the American Psychological Association in 1892 and served as its first president. The centennial meeting of the association was held in Washington, D. C., in August 1992.

²⁵ Knowing the months when Duncombe collected her responses was most important for the replication of her survey. Researchers have shown that children's drawings of Santa Claus are larger in the months before Christmas than afterwards, presumably because of excitement and anticipation. Therefore one might expect responses to be qualitatively different if surveys were given at different times of the year relative to Christmas. See R. A. Craddick, "Size of Santa Claus Drawings as a Function of Time Before and After Christmas," *Journal of Psychological Studies* 12 (1961):121-25.