

Jean McGuire:

Portrait of an Education Activist

By Beth Castrodale
(Based on interviews with Jean McGuire)

In loving memory of Richard Kieffer Feeley (a.k.a. Rich Nice)

Contents

Introduction	4
Jean's Early Years	6
Memories of Her Mother	8
Memories of Her Father	9
Jean's School Years (Kindergarten Through Twelfth Grade)	11
Jean's College Years/Early Adulthood	15
The Howard University Years, and Jean's First Marriage	15
Financial Struggles and a Return to College	16
Jean's Second Marriage	17
Jean's Career with Boston Public Schools	19
The Teaching Years	19
Service As a Pupil Adjustment Counselor	22
The METCO Years	23
The Lead-Up to METCO	23
Jean's Role at METCO	24
Service on the Boston School Committee	27
Jean's Advice for Aging Healthfully	30
Stay Active	30
Stay Mentally Engaged	30
Eat Healthfully	31
Go Green	31
Appendix: A Selected List of Jean's Awards and Affiliations	32
Reference List	33
About the Author	35

Introduction

In the late summer of 2021, a neighbor and dear friend, Pat Feeley, called me, asking if I happened to know anything about a notable figure in the Boston community: Jean McGuire. Feeling a bit embarrassed, I told her that I did not. As Pat went on to describe Jean's many accomplishments, I came to realize that "notable" was a considerable understatement. In brief, from 1973 until 2016, Jean was the executive director of the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO, Inc.), one of the oldest voluntary school desegregation programs in the United States. She was also the first Black woman elected to the Boston School Committee, serving on that body for nearly ten years.

Pat and her husband, Tom, have a special connection to Jean. Their late son Richard had the pleasure of working with Jean and METCO for almost five years. Pat says that despite a chronic illness, Richard was happy every day he worked at METCO's after-school program. She recalls that he was inspired by all the staff there, who were committed to making learning a fun experience—but especially by Jean, who was always playing, dancing, and instilling a love of learning in every child.

Knowing that I'm a writer, Pat proposed that I commit Jean's story to words before too much more time passes. (At the time of my conversation with Pat, Jean was ninety years old, though you'd never guess that.) So, I ended up spending hours with Jean, both in person and on the phone, asking questions about her personal history and her history as an educator, counselor, executive, school-committee member, mentor, and community activist. In the process, I have come to share Pat's admiration for everything that Jean has achieved, often in the face of considerable adversity. Also, her energy and enthusiasm—and her sense of humor—are infectious, as is her continuing engagement with community issues. (Speaking of energy, for most days of the week, Jean swims for an hour at her local Y.) All of this has made her my role model for aging healthfully: physically, mentally, and civically.

This brief biography is based mostly on my interviews with Jean, and on remembrances that she's begun to record in a journal, sometimes in response to questions from me. However, to provide more background on METCO, the Boston School Committee, and other topics we discussed, I have consulted and integrated material from additional sources. Full details about these sources appear at the end of the biography.

As a final word, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Jean for taking so much time to share her story. Like so many other people in the community, I am thankful for her long history of activism in support of students, educators, schools, and racial justice. I am also grateful to Pat—another biography-deserving community activist—for connecting the two of us. Both women are inspirations.

–Beth Castrodale, September 2022

Jean's Early Years (and Remembrances of Her Parents)

Jean was born on April 11, 1931, in Massachusetts Memorial Hospital, a predecessor to Boston Medical Center. Her father, the Reverend James W. Mitchell (1898-1998), was also born in Boston, and at the time of Jean's birth, he was the priest-in-charge at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where the family lived at the time. Jean's mother, Eleanor Cora Euell Brown (1910-2002), who had been trained as a teacher, was born in Washington, D.C.

Jean was the firstborn of seven full siblings. The other six children were Jacky, born in 1933; Michael, born in 1934; twins Peter and Pamela, born in 1938; and twins David and Jonathan, born in 1940. Jean also had a half-sister, Jewell, whose mother, the Reverend Mitchell's first wife, had died after complications from childbirth (see p. 10).

Recalling the births of her youngest siblings, Jean says, "As children, we loved having all these new babies to talk about and later, play with!"

Jean's godfather was the renowned painter and illustrator Allan Rohan Crite (1910-2007), whom the Smithsonian American Art Museum describes as "a significant biographer of urban African-American life in Boston during the 1930s and 1940s." Jean says that she and her mother became the subject of one of Crite's paintings, which she believes was exhibited in St. Bartholomew's in Cambridge. (It appears that the painting is no longer on display there. However, as of this writing, two of Crite's paintings are on exhibit at the church.)



Figure 1 A photo of Jean's father, from the entrance to St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church



Figure 2 Young Jean with her parents and siblings. First row (left to right): Jean's brother Michael, her sister Jacky, and Jean. Second row: her mother and father holding twins Peter and Pamela. (Photo courtesy of Jean McGuire)

Eventually, Jean's family left Cambridge for Stoughton, Massachusetts, where her father had grown up, and they moved into a house that her paternal grandfather had built. It wasn't far from the African American cemetery, Maplewood, where several of her relatives were buried.

Not far from their new home was a one-room school, but Jean's mother didn't want her to go there, believing it wouldn't provide a quality education. So, Jean enrolled in another school, the Campbell School, where she attended the first and second grades (see p. 11). (For more on Jean's school years, see pp. 11-14.)

Unfortunately, the family lost the house during the Depression, and they had to move to what Jean calls a "poor farm." In time, however, they were able to buy a house in Canton, Massachusetts. It was affordable because a tree had fallen on it. Jean recalls that they had no electricity, and they had to bring water from the well to the house for bathing and other uses. Jean remembers that there were very few people of color in Canton, which she describes as "an incredibly racist town."

After World War II began, Jean's father went to work at the Watertown Arsenal near Boston (see p. 10). Consequently, the family moved into segregated federal housing for defense workers in Boston.

Jean says that despite the difficulties that she and her family faced, "I was a happy child. I grew up part in the city and part in the country, so I have wonderful memories of both." Remembering her and her siblings' upbringing, Jean wrote this in her journal:

Where we lived and went to school and church had a lot to do with what we became as adults. We had Daddy's siblings as aunts and uncles, and his father as Grandpa, in Stoughton on a farm ... and Mama's sister and brothers as aunts and uncles in Washington, D.C.

Among Jean's childhood memories was getting an Amosandra doll, the first mass-produced rubber doll with black skin. One of the advertising slogans for the doll was, "She drinks! She wets! She cries!" (Price, 2020). And advertising copy from Amosandra's manufacturer, Sun Rubber, proclaimed, "From her turned up nose to the tip of her toes, this adorable drinking-wetting doll will win her way right into your heart" (Price, 2020).

Jean also remembers the hours of fun she had jump roping, including doing the double Dutch. (In the double Dutch, the rope handlers swing two ropes in opposite directions while the jumper tries not to get tripped up. The jumper might also pull some fancy moves in the process.)

Jean shared many memories of her parents, most of them happy, though both her mother and father experienced tragic losses, as discussed below.

Memories of Her Mother

Jean's mother grew up in Washington, D.C., which was highly segregated, and remains so today.

In her journal, Jean notes that at the time her mother was living in D.C., “the segregated capital of the United States of America had a large population of Black professionals, teachers, skilled workers, and the thousands of Blacks who kept the streets, schools, homes, and public buildings ‘spotless.’” Jean goes on to observe:

After all, legal segregation south of the Mason-Dixon Line and “practiced segregation” north of it were a bitter reality in the “world’s largest democracy”!

The only “plus” in this racialized equation was [the] development of a significant class of Black citizen (and military) leaders and skilled workers who supported both Black and White population needs of the District of Columbia and the metropolitan and rural areas of Maryland and Virginia. And they didn’t vote even though citizens were vocal and resisting the denial of that franchise even then.

Jean recalls one horrifying remembrance her mother shared: Her father (Jean’s grandfather) was a roofer in Washington, D.C., until a fellow laborer, a white man, pushed him from the roof where they’d been working, killing him. Previously, he’d been warned by one of the crew members, “We don’t want Black roofers.”

Jean’s mother got to know her father through the “Girls’ Friendly” volunteer-service groups that she participated in in D.C.--one at the AME Zion Church that Jean’s mother attended, and the other at the Episcopal church on 26th Street NW, where her father was serving as a priest (see p. 10).

Jean describes her mom as “a professional mother.” Although she received a bachelor’s degree at Miner Teachers College in Washington, D.C., she stayed at home after marrying Jean’s father, devoting herself to raising Jean and her siblings. Later, though, she received her master’s degree at Boston State, at the time Jean attended that school (see p. 16).

In her journal, Jean writes that her mother “taught all of her children everything ... she knew about living and being loving to each other, but not about sexuality.”

As a disciplinarian, her mom was firm but gentle, Jean recalls. “Mother never hit us,” Jean says. She remembers that if her mother was angered by something that Jean or one of her siblings had done, she’d cross her arms or tap her foot, and that was enough to get her message across. “We loved her, and we always got a hug and kiss when we went off to school,” Jean says. A “guiding light” for her mom was this saying: “People are made to be loved, and things are made to be used. Don’t get the two confused.”

Although Jean’s mother was kind, she was also tough in her own way. Jean recalls that she was a “crack shot” with her double-barreled shotgun. “She did not miss.”

Jean remembers how her mother enjoyed listening to the radio show “One Man’s Family,” but there were other programs the family enjoyed, including “Lights Out” and “Let’s Pretend,” a radio show for kids. Jean has fond memories of listening to these shows. “You made up a picture in your head” during the broadcasts, she says.

Jean recalls that when she and her siblings celebrated their birthdays, their mom made sure that they received fifty cents and a gift, and she’d also make them a cake.

Jean also remembers that her mother enjoyed growing things, a tradition that Jean has carried on. “She loved her strawberry beds,” Jean says, adding that her mom was also a piano player and an “excellent cook.” But she made sure that she wasn’t solely responsible for all of the cooking. Referring to herself and her siblings, Jean says, “All of us had to make one dinner, one breakfast, and one dessert every week.” Among Jean’s favorite childhood desserts were tapioca pudding and apple pan dowdy. (Jean continues to make a delicious apple pan dowdy, which I’ve had the privilege of enjoying.)

Jean describes her mother as a “clean freak.” One of her sayings was, “If you don’t do anything else, you wash your teeth, you wash your tush, and you wash your toes,” at least daily.



Figure 3 Jean with one of her delicious apple pan dowdies. (Photo courtesy of Pat Feeley)

Memories of Her Father

Jean’s father dropped out of high school to join the U.S. Navy, where he served in World War I. Jean says that because he looked white (his mother was Irish), and because he’d mentioned his skills with radios, he was able to become a radio operator instead of a cook, the role assigned to many other Black servicemen. According to Jean, he developed valuable techniques for picking up the sound of motors in enemy craft.

In her journal, Jean writes that her father “spent World War I protecting the U.S. fleet from German ships who were prowling the Atlantic looking for troop ships to sink!”

Remembering his time on U.S. ships during the war, he would say, “We brought them over alive and took them back dead.” The smell of death from the bodies being transported home put him in touch with “the fragility of life,” Jean says, making him want to go into the clergy.

After Jean’s father returned home from the war, the principal at his former high school found him selling corn outside of his father’s farm in Stoughton, Massachusetts. Sensing correctly that his former student was destined for better things, the principal got him a scholarship and a student job at Bates College in Maine. But he left after three years and enrolled in the Bishop Payne Divinity School, which prepared Black men to become Episcopal priests.

After his graduation, he was assigned to two Black Episcopal churches in Washington: one on 26th Street NW, and the other near Dupont Circle NW. He and a classmate from Bishop Payne Divinity School married sisters, Mary and Martha, both of whom died from complications from childbirth. After Jean’s parents married, her mother helped rear the daughter who survived the birth, Jewell, until Jewell went to live with one of her aunts, at age sixteen.

Although her father could pass as white, Jean remembers him saying, “I’m a colored man.” He supported the views of Black nationalist Marcus Garvey, and he became a member of the NAACP.

Jean says that her father believed that you are not an educated person unless you read the newspaper, and her family subscribed to several papers, including many Black ones. He took Jean and her siblings to the library every two weeks. “He loved the library.”

During World War II, her father worked as a machinist in the Watertown Arsenal, making guns for ships. Jean remembers visiting the arsenal during open houses that were held for the families of workers. “We crawled up those guns,” she says. “They were huge.”

Throughout his life, Jean’s father loved traveling and missionary work. Eventually, he moved to Jamaica to serve as an Episcopal priest. (By this time, he and Jean’s mother had divorced, after thirty years of marriage.) He first served at Portland Parish on Jamaica’s northeast coast and then got an assignment in the southern part of the island. For years, Jean visited the home where he’d lived in Jamaica, which remains in her family.

Eventually, Jean’s father moved in with her and her second husband, Clint, in Boston, and as he approached the end of life, she took care of him. He died six weeks before turning 100. (Jean’s mother lived to the age of 92.)

Jean says that her father’s mantra was “Do unto others,” and she has sought to carry on this tradition by looking out for other people. (As just one example of this, on an icy day in early

2022, Jean gave a ride to a woman whom she'd found carrying two heavy bags of groceries from a pickup site at a neighborhood health center, and who was bound for the South End of Boston, about two miles away. Noticing that the woman was lacking warm clothing, Jean gave her her gloves. She also gave the woman her phone number, in case she needed more assistance in the future.)

Jean's School Years (Kindergarten Through Twelfth Grade)

Throughout her school years, Jean was an avid and accomplished student, and she shared some happy memories of this time. However, her school years were also marred by experiences of racism and sexual assault.

At the age of four, Jean went to the Houghton School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, for kindergarten. It was not a positive experience, and she has a scar on her head from when a white boy pushed her down some stairs at the school and called her a "nigger." Jean recalls: "All I remember was my mother grabbing me and saying, 'Let's leave.'" Not long afterward, the family moved from Cambridge to Stoughton, Massachusetts, and later to Canton, Massachusetts (see p. 7).

For the first and second grades, Jean attended the Campbell School in Stoughton, and starting with the third grade, she briefly attended schools in Boston before enrolling in the Kimball School in Stoughton. After her family moved to Canton, Jean attended the Eliot School until she reached the eighth grade. (During her time at this school, she was able to skip a grade.)

Jean was in the sixth grade when Pearl Harbor was bombed on December 7th, 1941, and she remembers being "glued to the radio" as President Franklin Roosevelt addressed the nation, famously referring to this day as "a date which will live in infamy." (She also treasures Roosevelt's assertion, from his first inaugural speech, that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.") Jean says, "My whole growing up/history was World War II," because it was all over the news.

Jean sat by the window at the Eliot School, and she remembers the school shaking as bomber planes flew east, in preparation to engage in the war. "The sky was black with bombers, and it went on and on. We were stunned." Jean recalls the teacher saying, "They're going out to protect us from the Germans."

Jean remembers singing "Over There" with schoolmates, as well as the tune "The White Cliffs of Dover," popularized by the English singer Vera Lynn. In England and beyond, this song expressed hope during some of the darkest times of the war.

In the seventh grade, while still at the Eliot School, Jean experienced racism once again. She recalls that her seventh-grade teacher, a Miss Sullivan, “didn’t like Black kids,” and Jean was also treated cruelly by certain students. That same school year, a white girl said to her, “It’s a disgrace to let niggers go to school with decent white people.” Reflecting on this, Jean says, “I never forgot that.”

For the eighth grade, Jean left the Eliot School and attended the Dearborn School in Roxbury, Massachusetts, a neighborhood of Boston. “I loved it,” she says. The other students in her class at the Dearborn were in their second year of French, but Jean hadn’t studied this language in Canton. So, the French teacher at the Dearborn kept her after school and taught her some basics of the language. She also took violin lessons.

For the ninth grade, Jean went to the Girls’ Latin School in Boston, where there were “eight Black girls and 300 white girls.” Her favorite teacher was her French instructor, who took Jean and the other students to a French restaurant on Beacon Hill, where they had to speak in French, and where Jean dined on coq au vin. Afterward, the teacher took the class to see the movie “Our Hearts Were Young and Gay,” and Jean enjoyed the film immensely.

In her English class at Girls’ Latin, Jean had yet another experience with racism. The teacher told the students that they had to recite a poem, so Jean decided on one recommended by her mother: “Dreams,” by Langston Hughes, which speaks to the importance of not letting go of dreams. Before Jean could recite the poem, the teacher stopped her and said, “Negroes can’t write poetry.” She demanded that Jean find a poem by a white man instead.

Jean’s first year at Girls’ Latin was to be her last. While she was attending summer school at English High, also in Boston, her maternal grandmother died in Washington, D.C. As Jean recalls in her journal, “everybody but Daddy and myself went ... to the funeral.” But after completing summer school, Jean also headed to D.C., where her mother had been staying. Remembering that time, Jean observed in her journal:

I took the train to D.C. by myself, with my violin, kitty, and a frozen beef roast Daddy sent to Mama (this was rare as meat was rationed, but we had 8 kids). By the time (8 hours) I arrived, the meat had thawed and was dripping on my clothes (plastics were not used then, only waxed paper and glass or metal for containers).

Still, they had the meat for dinner that evening, and Jean remembers that it was “delicious.”

Because school started earlier in D.C. than in Massachusetts, Jean’s mother sent her to the city’s Paul Laurence Dunbar High School, which was her own alma mater. Jean attended the school for the tenth through twelfth grades.

The nation's first Black public high school, Dunbar is noted for such alumni as Charles Hamilton Houston, who laid the legal groundwork for school desegregation; artist Elizabeth Catlett; and Edward Brooke III, the first African American elected to the U.S. Senate.

Jean was thrilled to be attending the school, where her cousins were also students: "It was another world and fabulous and all BLACK! I was so glad to go since it was coed and had aviation."

Thanks to Dunbar's aviation program, Jean learned to fly at fourteen, by taking lessons on the weekends. (She didn't learn to drive until she was thirty-six.) The lessons took place at an airfield in Croom, Maryland, that was established by Black pilots who served in World War II and were not permitted to use other airports. (At the time, all the armed services were segregated by race and gender. In relation to segregation by gender, a cousin of Jean's mother served in the Women's Army Corps during the Second World War.)

Jean graduated from Dunbar in 1948 and has attended numerous class reunions since then. (She highly recommends a book about the high school: *First Class: The Legacy of Dunbar, America's First Black Public High School*, by Alison Stewart and Melissa Harris-Perry.)



Figure 4 Jean has attended several Paul Laurence Dunbar High School reunions. In this photo from the 2008 reunion, she is in the second row, sixth from the left. (Photo courtesy of Jean McGuire)

Disturbingly, Jean was sexually assaulted twice during her school years. The first incident happened when she was a student at the Dearborn School. One day, at a train station, a man put his hands on her. At first, “Nobody helped me,” Jean says. “I never forgot that.” Finally, a transit worker intervened. He punched the man and told someone to call the police. Under stress from the incident, Jean left the scene with her books and the briefcase with her violin music, but she forgot her violin. Fortunately, she was able to retrieve the instrument later.

The second incident of sexual assault occurred at Paul Laurence Dunbar High, when an instructor felt her breast while she was receiving flight training. Jean’s mother had told her, “Don’t let anyone touch you,” and with these words in mind, Jean elbowed the instructor and told him, “Take this plane down!” Fortunately, that put an end to his assault.

Recalling these experiences, Jean commented that society needs to “work on the men and the boys” and teach them that they have no right to behave like the men who harmed her.

Jean's College Years/Early Adulthood

The Howard University Years, and Jean's First Marriage

In 1948, Jean began studying zoology at Howard University in Washington, DC. There, she met Toni Morrison (born Chloe Ardelia Wofford) through a friend. "She taught me how to write," Jean says. One time, Jean showed Morrison a paper for which she'd received a C plus. According to Jean, Morrison said, "You've gotta fluff it up a bit," meaning that she found the paper "too pedantic" with "too many *the*'s and *and*'s." She recommended that Jean use more vivid and specific language.

Jean has fond memories of one of her professors at Howard, the noted poet Sterling A. Brown (1901-1989). "I took Shakespeare under him," Jean says. Two poems of Brown's that have stayed with Jean are "[Long Gone](#)" and "[Old Lem](#)." The latter poem features a chilling line that is lodged in her memory: "They don't come by twos," "they" referring to those who have oppressed Blacks in the South.

Jean also participated in extracurricular activities at Howard. For one thing, because she was a "crack shot," like her mother (see p. 9), she joined the university's rifle team.

During her time at Howard, Jean dated Chuck Oxley, who had sat in front of her in her aviation class at Paul Laurence Dunbar High School. Jean recalls, "He had a neck and shoulders like the sculptures we used to draw at the Museum of Fine Arts [in Boston]." She remembers them having long conversations as they got to know each other.

Early in their relationship, Jean asked her mother if she could kiss him, and her mom told her the limit was three kisses. "After that," she said, "you get pregnant." This wasn't true, of course, but at the time, Jean believed her mother. She remembers: "Let me tell you, those were the three longest kisses I ever had in my life."

During her third year at Howard, Jean and Chuck married, and she left the institution. Chuck had been a member of the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion (a.k.a. the Triple Nickles), an all-Black unit of the U.S. Army. The Triple Nickles were attached to the 82nd Airborne in Fort Bragg, NC, where Jean and Chuck were married—but not at the Fort Bragg chapel, because Blacks were not allowed to use this space at the time. Instead, they were married off-site by a justice of the peace.



Figure 5 Jean's first husband, Chuck Oxley. (Photo courtesy of Jean McGuire)

As a former paratrooper, Chuck had hoped to find a job at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland, but he wasn't able to achieve that goal. Of course, as he searched for work, he was up against the significant barriers posed by racial discrimination. In time, Chuck found a job at a veteran's hospital, where he undertook such tasks as making beds and changing bed pans. But eventually, he was laid off from that job.

On a happier note, Jean and Chuck's first child, Joanna Cora Oxley McGuire, was born in Washington, DC, in 1952. The young family then moved to Boston, where Jean and Chuck's second child, David Edgar Oxley McGuire, was born in 1955.

Financial Struggles and a Return to College

In Boston, Chuck continued to struggle finding good, steady work, and he ended up leaving Jean. Although they eventually divorced, they remained close until the time of Chuck's death. "We were like brother and sister," Jean says.

When her marriage ended, Jean was in difficult financial straits. For a time, she, Joanna, and David lived in the Cathedral Housing Project in Boston's South End. Jean describes the project as "warehousing for poor people." Although it was "integrated from day one," Jean says that it was in poor condition, with elevators that were often out of service, to name just one problem. To get by, Jean worked at Filene's and Jordan Marsh (which used to be major department stores in Boston) and cooked and washed dishes for a nightclub, among other jobs. And because she is an adept seamstress, she also took in sewing work. Additionally, Jean received welfare. Eventually, she and her children moved to a new home on Blue Hill Avenue in Boston.

In 1958, Jean enrolled in the State Teachers College at Boston, which became Boston State College near the end of her tenure. (It later merged into the University of Massachusetts, Boston.) "I didn't want to teach," Jean says. "I wanted to be a doctor." She'd hoped to continue taking zoology and pre-med courses, as she'd done at Howard. But Jean says that the college wouldn't let her and the other Black students, who made up a small proportion of the student body, take anything but elementary education. (Fortunately, Jean's sister Pam was able to achieve her own dream of becoming a doctor. She pursued her medical studies at Northeastern University and Tufts University.)

Given the restrictions at Boston State, Jean studied education at the college, doing student teaching during her tenure there. Although she hadn't planned on becoming a teacher, she loved the experience, and she graduated with a B.S. in 1961. (While Jean was getting her undergraduate degree at Boston State, her mother pursued—and received—a master's degree at the same institution.)

Later, Jean received a master's degree in guidance from Tufts University, which prepared her to become the first Black pupil adjustment counselor in Boston Public Schools (see p. 22). Jean also holds honorary degrees from Salem State University (an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters) and Tufts University (Honorary Doctorates of Public Service), among other institutions.

Jean's Second Marriage

Jean's second husband was Clinton (Clint) McGuire, whom she met at a dinner party hosted by a mutual friend. When Jean showed up at the party, Clint was playing the piano, and the fact that they both played musical instruments was one of the ways they connected.

As Jean would come to learn, Clint fled his home state of Mississippi due to racism. Because his first wife could pass as white, a member of the Ku Klux Klan threatened Clint's life when he saw him with her. After this incident, they moved north, eventually settling in Boston, the home of his first wife's mother.

In addition to being a talented piano player, Clint was a dedicated employee of the Railway Mail Service, where he worked for thirty-two years. (With the Mail Service, which ceased operations in 1977, mail was sorted on trains and dropped off at various locations throughout the United States [Rasmussen, 2017].)

After Jean and Clint married in 1965, she moved into his house in Roxbury, her current home.

The church where they were married, (the now-defunct) St. Ann's Episcopal Church in Roxbury, strengthened the bond between Jean, Clint, and the larger community. Jean says, "I raised a lot of kids through my church," which connected her and Clint with runaways or abandoned children. Several of these kids stayed with the couple until they could be placed in foster care. One child lived with them for about six years.

Also, Jean fondly remembers the church's Christmas pageants. One Nativity play in particular stands out in her mind. The children insisted, to Jean's delight, that in modern times, Jesus would be born in a garage, not in a manger. As part of the manger scene, they included a toolbox with tools, and they pictured the baby lying next to a Volkswagen, instead of camels or donkeys. As



Figure 6 Jean's second husband, Clinton (Clint) McGuire. (Photo courtesy of Jean McGuire)

replacements for the gold, frankincense, and myrrh, “They had perfume and jewelry from their moms.”

Jean recalls that Clint and her first husband, Chuck, became close, partly because they were both only children. When Chuck called Jean, he would also spend a good amount of time talking to Clint over the phone.

Clint died in 2011.

Jean's Career with Boston Public Schools

The Teaching Years

Jean began her career at the Boston Public Schools as a student teacher, while she attended Boston State. After graduating from Boston State, in 1961, she continued working as a public-school teacher, until she became a pupil adjustment counselor (see p. 22). Throughout her teaching years, she taught grade school.

Jean's most acute memories are of her experiences at the Louisa May Alcott School in the city's South End. She threw herself into teaching there. "What I did the first year, I visited the home of all but one of my students," she says. She told the parents, "I'm your children's new teacher. Is there anything you'd like me to know about what you want for your kids? And I'll tell you what I'm doing." She also advised parents to read aloud to their children.

Still, her time at the Alcott School was a sobering experience. "You have no idea how bad these schools were in Boston," she remembers, "particularly in poor neighborhoods." At the time, the South End was one of the city's most impoverished neighborhoods (which is far from the case today). The Alcott School reflected this impoverishment.

As Jean recalls, the school had old-fashioned pull-chain toilets, no hot water, and only a DC current, so teachers couldn't plug in a record player. For fire drills, teachers and students had to go out the window and step onto a fire escape that stopped ten feet from the ground. "The teacher had to jump off and then catch the kids," she recalls.

Additionally, Jean says, the school had ancient *Fun with Dick and Jane* textbooks, and it was seriously overcrowded, with just thirty-six seats for forty-three students. By contrast, when Jean visited schools in the (mostly white and more affluent) West Roxbury neighborhood of Boston, there were sometimes just ten or fifteen students in classrooms. "There were empty seats!" she says. "I could not believe it." (In the coming years, such disparities would lead Black parents like Jean to advocate for giving their children access to better schools. As discussed on p. 23, this led first to boycotts, Freedom Schools, and Operation Exodus, and later to METCO. These disparities also factored into Jean's decision to run for the School Committee. See p. 27.)

Despite these challenges, Jean pressed on with her teaching, and she developed a passion for it. "I really miss teaching," she says. "I loved teaching. I loved the kids." In her view, education is crucial "to make sense of the world you live in ... to tell truths from falsehoods."

To this day, Jean keeps her "mantra" for teaching, a quotation from educator Ronald Edmonds, on her refrigerator: "We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us."

In her teaching days, Jean was always looking for ways to achieve that success, by engaging students and motivating them to learn.

Sometimes, this got her into trouble.

Jean says that if she could have her way, she would place public libraries in or next door to schools, removing the disadvantage that schools without their own libraries face. Because the Alcott School had this disadvantage, Jean arranged for her students to get cards from the South End Branch of the Boston Public Library. After a librarian got the cards ready, Jean took students on a four-block walk to the library to pick them up. Also, each student checked out two books. “But I got in trouble because I didn’t get permission from the superintendent,” Jean recalls. So, she called the assistant superintendent, Margaret Sullivan, and told her that higher-ups wanted to suspend her. A fellow lover of literature, Sullivan said she’d take care of the problem, and she did.

Understanding that many of her students came from families who couldn’t afford books, Jean regularly purchased books from Goodwill, and students would earn them by undertaking learning activities beyond the curriculum. Picking up on an idea she’d gotten from Margaret Sullivan, Jean had students make their own shelves for these books out of shoeboxes. She recalls: “I told everyone to get a shoebox. That’s going to be your first bookcase.” She then explained how students could build the bookcase by adding more shoeboxes, and she wrangled a bunch of shoeboxes for students who didn’t have any.

Jean also tried other approaches to help students become active learners.

She had them make their own books of “Words you don’t know.” On the front of the book, they’d write a question mark. Inside the book, they’d write down words they’d heard but didn’t know the meanings of. “That’s your vocabulary,” Jean would tell them. Then, they’d look the words up in the dictionary. (On her Goodwill trips, Jean would pick up dictionaries for students who didn’t have access to them.)

Jean also turned her classroom into a kind of school book, placing alphabet letters around the room that were at least a foot high: a big printed *A*, followed by a small printed *a*; a big cursive *A*, followed by a small cursive *a*; and so on. Beneath the letters were cardinal and ordinal numbers. For example, there would be number 1, followed by the word “one” (cardinal numbers). So, students would learn the number and the word for it. Then below this were the ordinal numbers “1st” and “first.” Students would learn how to use these numerical descriptions, too.

A teacher trainer had told Jean, “You don’t want to talk too much. Teach them with [a] pointer, and I did.” Jean used a pointer as she taught students the letters of the alphabet, cardinal and ordinal numbers, and how to use the letters, numbers, and numerical descriptions. She’d also have students pick up the pointer and point to letters in words they were learning.

Jean liked to teach with visuals, not just with the numbers and letters just described but also with photographs. “I had my curriculum that I had to teach,” she says. But she told students that they could also find pictures that interested them, and they could write about the subjects of the pictures, with Jean helping them learn new things about the subjects. At one point, Jean asked her students, “What animal should we study? They decided on the big cats.” So, Jean brought in pictures of various big cats, which sparked discussion and writing. For instance, if students were interested in a picture of a lion or tiger cub, the class might discuss how many brothers and sisters a cub could have. Or, while students studied a photo of a grown lion, Jean would help them learn about why the animal did or didn’t have a mane. Jean says that the big cats became a favorite subject of her students, and in her living room, she still shelves full of pictures of these creatures.



Figure 7 Jean with her "big cat" shelves.

A poetry lover, Jean was a big believer in bringing poetry into the classroom. “We had a poem of the week,” she recalls. She’d have students memorize at least a couple of lines from it. Behind this practice was Jean’s belief that all forms of literature “open up your senses to all the possibilities.” She wanted students to begin to see these possibilities.

Jean also found ways to make the study of math fun and engaging: She’d have students jump rope to times tables and equations: “*One plus one is two, two plus two is four, ...* You could hear the rope slapping.”

Thinking back on her teaching days, Jean recalled the importance of being a thoughtful and encouraging guide to students. “Don’t yell at kids,” she says. “They’ll associate learning with punishment, and they won’t pursue learning outside of school.”

Service as a Pupil Adjustment Counselor

After a few years, Jean moved on from teaching and became the first Black pupil adjustment counselor in the Boston Public Schools. (She was also one of the first women to hold this post.) Because the position was funded in part by the state, Jean and other pupil adjustment counselors also served parochial schools when requested.

In preparation for this work, she received a master’s degree in guidance from Tufts University and a certification as a guidance counselor. She also passed a state exam. As a pupil adjustment counselor, Jean got referrals from principals to look into certain issues with students at schools she’d been assigned to. These schools were in Brighton, Dorchester, Roxbury, parts of South Boston, and the South End.

“I was basically a trouble shooter,” Jean recalls, and the troubles she encountered usually had to be addressed at home.

Jean had noticed some of these issues when she was a teacher, and they were a big reason she went on to become a pupil adjustment counselor. For instance, after she’d created the big alphabet letters for her classroom (see p. 20), she noticed that some students still had trouble seeing them. It was clear that they needed glasses. When she noticed this problem as a pupil adjustment counselor, she’d advise the parents to have their kids’ eyes checked and get them glasses, if necessary. Other students needed shoes. If the measures she recommended carried a cost, “We’d help parents if they didn’t have the money.”

On a more troubling note, Jean says that she often had to deal with cases of incest, or other incidents of abuse.

Jean’s last job as a pupil adjustment counselor (before joining METCO) was at the Trotter School, named for William Monroe Trotter (1872-1934), a noted activist for African American civil rights. That seemed fitting given the next stage of her career.

The METCO Years

In 1973, Jean became the executive director of the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO, Inc.), one of the oldest voluntary school desegregation programs in the United States. This was one year before Judge W. Arthur Garrity Jr. ordered that Boston schools be desegregated via busing, igniting a firestorm of controversy.

But parents and activists like Jean were advocating for better education for Black students long before Garrity's ruling.

The Lead-Up to METCO

As a teacher and a pupil adjustment counselor, Jean had observed that Boston Public Schools serving poorer neighborhoods had overcrowded classrooms and poor teaching materials, to name just a couple of the problems (see p. 19). Additionally, students received little or no instruction in Black history and culture, Jean recalls.

In 1963 and 1964, thousands of students boycotted the Boston Public Schools to protest what amounted to de facto segregation (Lake, 1964). In parallel to the boycotts, civil-rights activists organized Freedom Schools, which sought to deliver the kind of education that was lacking in the Boston Public Schools. This included instruction in Black history and civil rights, among other topics. Jean recalls that for the most part, the classes were held in Black churches. She also recalls that some of the students and instructors were white, with the white instructors traveling from the suburbs to Boston.

In 1965, Massachusetts enacted the Racial Imbalance Act, which required desegregation of schools where more than half of students were of one race (Gellerman, 2014). However, the all-white Boston School Committee refused to comply with the law (see p. 27), leading Black parents, including Jean, to take matters into their own hands (Gellerman, 2014). An enrollment policy in Boston allowed children to attend any school in which there was an open seat (Rowe, 2020). So, at the start of the 1965 school year, two Black parents, Ellen Jackson and Elizabeth Johnson, led Operation Exodus, in which students from Roxbury, a largely Black neighborhood of Boston, were enrolled in mostly white Boston schools with extra capacity ("METCO's History").

Leaders of schools outside of Boston expressed interest in participating in the program. With the help of Ruth Batson, the first woman elected president of the NAACP's New England Regional Conference, they helped develop METCO, which enrolled students from Boston (and now also Springfield) in well-resourced and largely white suburban schools ("METCO's History"). The program is funded largely by the state.

Jean's Role at METCO

On the subject of funding, Jean says her chief role at METCO was to “get the money,” and she says that over her forty-three years as executive director, she raised \$30 million dollars for the program, which as of this writing has thirty partner districts (“METCO Partner Districts”).

Furthermore, Jean says that under her leadership, METCO “doubled its size and number of graduates. Even more important was the increase in developing a suburban support system in the METCO towns or cities.”

In evaluating schools for the METCO program, Jean considered five characteristics that she still has pinned to her refrigerator. (These echo characteristics described in the 1986 *Chairman's Report on Children in America*, issued by the U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor.) Word-for-word, they are:

1. Strong leadership at the administrative level
2. High expectations that no child will fall below minimum levels of achievement
3. An orderly and safe school atmosphere conducive to learning and teaching
4. An intent that student acquiring of basic and higher order basic skills will take precedence over all school activity
5. Frequent and consistent monitoring and evaluation of student progress

In the early days, Jean discovered that METCO wasn't welcome in every school district. “Milton was the first town I took out of METCO,” Jean says, “for good reason.” According to Jean, some METCO students said they didn't want to go to the Milton schools anymore. They said that other students were unkind to them, some citing racist behavior.

And in the 1970s, the town of Danvers decided not to participate in METCO. A 1975 article in the *Danvers Herald* quoted members of the Danvers School Committee about why they were opposed to the program. One of them said that integration “does not accomplish its aim, which is to make the kids do better than they did in their own schools” (Rogal, 1975). Another expressed the belief that schools should not be responsible for social change. For her part, Jean remembers a disturbing meeting about METCO at Danvers High School. During it, a white man stood up and said, “Look, if you gotta let these niggers come out here, don't let them live out here, because I moved out here to get away from them.” This reaction made it pretty clear that METCO students wouldn't exactly be welcomed at the school.

Jean says that despite these troubling incidents, other districts were more open to METCO, with positive outcomes. Referencing Massachusetts data, *The Atlantic* reported, “About 98 percent of METCO kids graduate from high school, compared with somewhere between 60 to 70 percent of students who attend schools in Boston, and nine in 10 say they plan to go on to higher education, compared with 59 percent in Boston” (Semuels, 2019).

Additionally, the author of the *Atlantic* article, Alana Semuels, who attended school with METCO enrollees, observed that “the METCO students aren’t the only ones whose lives are shaped by the program. My classmates and I benefited tremendously from sitting next to METCO kids during the school day, and from befriending kids who weren’t all white and upper-middle-class” (Semuels, 2019). Echoing this sentiment, Jean says she is pleased that METCO gives “suburban (mostly Caucasian) school systems the experience of teaching and learning with students who may have different ways of being treated, perceived, and living than they do (or think they do).”

For their part, METCO students typically encounter few students or teachers of color in the schools they attend, which can sometimes make them feel isolated. To help students cope with such challenges, METCO assigns counselors to each participating school (Cornish, 2016).

Jean says that despite all of METCO’s efforts, “The schools are still segregated.” A big reason for this, she says, is the continued lack of affordable housing in suburban Boston, with residential segregation essentially sustaining educational segregation.

A *Boston Globe* report supported Jean’s observation, noting that Massachusetts’ “highest-achieving school systems remain highly segregated, by any reasonable measure” (Scharfenberg, 2020). According to the *Globe* piece, in the Boston suburb of Wellesley, schools are 84 percent white and Asian, with this figure reaching 94 percent in the suburb of Duxbury. Additionally, the *Globe* reported that in “the last decade alone, the number of ‘intensely segregated’ nonwhite schools in Massachusetts — that is, schools with at least 90 percent students of color — has grown by more than a third, from 143 to 192” (Scharfenberg, 2020). These latter statistics were drawn from a report titled *School Integration in Massachusetts: Racial Diversity and School Accountability*.

Jean's service as METCO’s executive director came to an end in 2016. METCO board members said that they reached an agreement with Jean for her retirement, wanting to move the program in a new direction. As the *Boston Globe* reported in December 2016, the board had decided earlier that year to eliminate the executive-director position and replace it with a chief executive position, which would be filled by someone with fund-raising expertise (Vaznis & Rosen, 2016).

But Jean countered the board’s description of her departure, saying that she was fired from METCO. As the *Globe* also reported, Jean had wanted to stay on for two more years, hoping to complete such tasks as “finding more opportunities for students, more schools to participate, and more money to get them there. With affordable housing scarce around Boston, many communities are still not racially or economically integrated, she said. ‘If housing is integrated, you don’t need to run buses between Boston and Marblehead, and Scituate, and Cohasset, and Brookline, and Wellesley,’ she said. ‘That’s what I get upset about: that we have failed the

citizens here about freedom and access to the Boston metropolitan area” (Vaznis & Rosen, 2016).

Over the years, Jean has stayed in touch with many of the thousands of students who have graduated from the METCO program, and she’s also remained connected to many of the suburban families who hosted METCO students.

(Northeastern University in Boston has an extensive collection of METCO’s records, dating from 1966 to 2005. For more information about the collection and how to access it, use the internet search terms “Northeastern University” and “METCO.”)

Service on the Boston School Committee

For years, the Boston School Committee was all white, and beginning in 1963, it was chaired by Louise Day Hicks, whom Jean describes as “very racist.” Hicks led the committee in defying the 1965 Racial Imbalance Act, which required desegregation of schools where more than half of students were of one race (see p. 23). Eventually, Judge W. Arthur Garrity Jr. ordered the desegregation of Boston schools, and there was heightened interest in bringing more racial balance to the school committee.

In 1977, John O’Bryant became the first African American to be elected to the committee in more than seventy years. He encouraged Jean to run for a post as well. She did, hoping to address weaknesses she saw as a teacher and pupil adjustment counselor in Boston’s schools (see p. 22). In 1981, Jean became the first Black woman elected to the Boston School Committee, serving on that body for nearly ten years. “I ran six times and won five,” she says.



Figure 8 A sign from one of Jean’s School Committee campaigns. (Photo courtesy of Pat Feeley)

Jean says she felt ready for the job from the start: “I worked in just about every school in Boston, so when I went to the School Committee, I knew Boston inside and out.”

Speaking of her runs for the School Committee, Jean says, “I did the work. I went to every bar in Boston. I wanted [patrons] to know who I was. My last name is McGuire, so that’s a good Irish name. I’d say, ‘I’m the Black Irish.’ They liked that. But mostly, I asked people, ‘Have you been to your child’s school?’ It was amazing—particularly [in the case of] the men—they hadn’t been to see their children’s teachers. I said, ‘When [the teachers] see your child’s face, they should see your face, or your wife’s, or your boyfriend’s, or your girlfriend’s—some adult who is concerned about the quality and care of [the child’s] education.’” In fact, Jean says that her motto at METCO was, “Don’t let a stranger teach your child. Go see your child’s teacher when you don’t have to.”

Jean’s time on the School Committee ended in 1992, when the Boston School Committee became the state’s only appointed one after voters narrowly supported a nonbinding referendum that called for appointing committee members instead of electing them (Martin, 2021). Leading up to the referendum, *The Christian Science Monitor* observed that the committee “has long been criticized as too unwieldy and politically influenced to be an effective policymaking body” (Ross, 1991). The newspaper went on to quote then-Mayor Ray Flynn as saying, “The present structure does not work. [It] does not provide the level of accountability to the parents and the schoolchildren of this city.”

This move from an elected to an appointed committee was opposed by the NAACP and many citizens of color, including Jean.

As she told WGBH reporter Meg Woolhouse: “The whole idea of giving up any vote for anything, [even if] it’s dog catcher, you don’t give it away. That’s power!” (Woolhouse, 2021)

Over the years that the appointed committee has been in place, many citizens of color have expressed the view that it has overlooked their concerns. This helped drive an effort to return to an elected committee. In 2021, a nonbinding ballot question calling for this change passed by a wide margin (Martin, 2021). As of this writing, it’s yet to be determined how the election outcome will translate into policy. Boston Mayor Michelle Wu is in favor of a hybrid school committee, composed of both appointed and elected members, but others would like to see a fully elected body.

For her part, Jean has been a big fan of returning to an elected School Committee, and she says she’ll run again if given the opportunity. “I don’t care whether I win or not, I just want to get the pro-school vote out. I want Latin, foreign languages, and math [to be part of the curriculum]. I want classical stuff. I want kids to have some substance.”

Reflecting back on her time on the School Committee, Jean is pleased that in Boston and nationally, there has been more racial equity in relation to schools:

There are now instances where people of all sexes and colors are elected to city and suburban school committees [and] hired as superintendents (or ... considered in superintendent searches), principals, teachers, custodians, [and] transportation staff than were ever before.

But one issue that remains a concern for Jean—not just in connection with the School Committee—is preserving and expanding the right to vote:

[W]here institutional structure equates who gets what, and where, and when, the right to citizenship and its power of the vote is key to the maintenance of any democracy!

Citizens should be automatically registered to vote by 16 or 18 years, depending on the local, state, or federal election rules, and have the right to run for office anywhere in the U.S. and its territories.

When we don't [vote] because of apathy or ignorance or legal (or illegal) roadblocks, we are in deep trouble. Some things are absolutely essential to adult citizenry! The ability to create the right [to vote] and maintain it, is the *sine qua non* of our freedom.

Despite recent efforts to subvert voting rights, Jean remains hopeful given the advances that have been made in terms of racial justice:

When court cases began to challenge the long-standing hiring practices of a segregated America, and as the all-important access to the right to vote began to open the doors of power [for Blacks] and a chance to get the finances necessary to maintain any small gains to access ... anything, hope became and is still becoming a part of Black life.

Even though new generations are gaining in visibility in this American and world political and financial life, the task is to maintain victories in equity and fairness and make justice JUST US.

Jean's Advice for Aging Healthfully

As of this writing, Jean is ninety-one years old, but you would never know it. When I asked her for advice on staying healthy as we age, she responded by saying, "Your heart is the motor. Your mind is the steering wheel and brakes." We need to tend to both of them, she says. Here's some of her advice for doing that:

Stay Active

Jean swims almost every day at her local Y. "I like to swim because it gives me energy," she says. "It also strengthens my heart." She says that after she encouraged her second husband, Clint, to swim, it significantly extended his life. Before that time, he'd been a long-term smoker in poor physical condition. But she says that after he cut out smoking and got into the pool, his health improved significantly.

Although Jean highly recommends swimming, she believes that any form of physical activity is beneficial. "Get a dog and walk it." Or, she says, do little bouts of exercise whenever you can find time during the day. Jean says that while you're working in the kitchen, for instance, you might do push-ups against the edge of the sink.

As an aside, Jean says she would love it if there could be swimming pools in every school. "Because if you've got no legs or one leg or one arm you can swim," she says. "You can do adaptive aquatics with the floats. It's [an] exercise that kids who are handicapped can do."

Stay Mentally Engaged

Today, Jean remains actively engaged in the world around her. As she likes to say, "I'm never bored." She reads the print version of the *Boston Globe* daily, among other publications, and she regularly cuts out articles on various topics of interest to her. (Jean has remarked that although her daily newspaper delivery has become expensive, she can't imagine stopping it. "That's my treat—my cigarettes, whisky, and wild men.")

Jean has also maintained her passion for reading books, and she (rightly) describes her house as a library: it has shelves and shelves of books. She says that an architect once told her, "Lady, if you didn't have those bookcases on weight-bearing walls, your house would fall down."

Additionally, Jean believes that television can have a place in keeping us mentally engaged, though she didn't always hold this view. Years ago, she came to detest inane TV shows like "The Three Stooges" and "Blondie," and she didn't want her children to watch them. She was also troubled by Westerns, in which Native Americans were shot by white men. "Television was a wasteland," she recalls. Especially concerning to Jean was the dearth of Black people on TV, and when "The Nat King Cole Show" stopped airing, in 1957, she nearly gave up on the medium. (Although Cole made the decision to end the show, the move followed the program's

struggles to find advertising sponsorship. He remarked at the time, “Madison Avenue is afraid of the dark” [Johnson, 2020].)

But Jean believes that television has improved greatly in recent years, and she has become a big fan of educational programming. She believes that such programming can be a great learning resource, especially nature and science shows, which do a great job of conveying things visually—for example, the size and motion of a giant squid. In this context, she has described TV as the “university of the air” and “poor people’s school.”

Eat Healthfully

Jean’s core advice is, “Eat the rainbow.” She says that almost everyone can find fruits or vegetables they like that go with rainbow colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and so on. Eating a diversity of those fruits and vegetables will benefit your body and mind, she says. Also, Jean usually cooks from scratch, and she mostly avoids processed foods. This helps to minimize her consumption of sugar, sodium, and other unhealthy additives.

Go Green

Jean finds nature restorative, and she regularly walks her dog, Bailey, in Franklin Park, a large green space right next to her house. She’s also made her own green spaces closer to home.

She planted every tree in her yard, having gotten them from Franklin Park, when trees were being removed there. (Although Japanese longhorn beetles killed most of her beloved birches, one still remains.) In her front yard, she’s established what she calls a “critter corner,” a nook in the greenery, where one can take a seat on a bench and relax and reflect.

Inside Jean’s house, some rooms look like miniature forests. A regularly flowering hibiscus shrub takes up much of her dining room, and a large succulent in her living room was grown from a cutting she took in Jamaica.

Jean is a supporter of environmental activism and Greta Thunberg, and she loves the maxim “There is no Planet B.” Jean has embellished this by saying, “Forget going to Mars—that’s bullshit.”

Appendix: A Selected List of Jean’s Awards and Affiliations

Awards

- Alice K. Pollitzer Award
- Certificate of Appreciation from James P. Timilty Middle School (Real People, Real Heroes Promising Pals Program)
- Chancellor’s Award for Longstanding Community Commitment and Service from the University of Massachusetts, Boston
- Hero Among Us honoree in recognition of Black History Month (This award was established by the Boston Celtics.)
- Lifetime Achievement Award recipient from Community Change Inc.
- Lifetime of Service Award from the Boston Education Justice Alliance
- The Mary Lyon Award for Advancing Gender Equity in Schools, from the American Association of University Women, Massachusetts
- Stanley R. Berkowitz Allied Professional Award for Outstanding Commitment to the Children of Massachusetts (from the Massachusetts Psychological Association)

Affiliations

- Jean has served as a board member for such organizations as the Black Educators Alliance of Massachusetts (BEAM), the Boston Children's Museum, Community Change Inc., Encampment for Citizenship, and the Massachusetts Women’s Political Caucus.
- Jean is a member of the Boston Alumnae Chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta sorority, which the DST website describes as “a sisterhood of more than 200,000 predominately Black college-educated women.” Among other things, the sorority raises money for college scholarships.

Reference List

- Allan Rohan Crite. Smithsonian American Art Museum. <https://americanart.si.edu/artist/allan-rohan-crite-1047>
- Cornish, Audie. (2016). Looking back on 50 years of busing in Boston. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/10/05/495504360/looking-back-on-50-years-of-busing-in-boston>
- Gellerman, B. (2014). How the Boston busing decision still affects schools 40 years later. WBUR. <https://www.wbur.org/news/2014/06/20/boston-busing-ruling-anniversary>
- Johnson, D. (2020). “The Jackie Robinson of television”: The Nat King Cole Show. Indiana Public Media. <https://indianapublicmedia.org/nightlights/nat-king-cole-show.php>
- Lake, Ellen. (1964). 20,000 pupils stay out of class; Boston Freedom Schools overflow. *Harvard Crimson*. <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1964/2/27/20000-pupils-stay-out-of-class/>
- Martin, N. (2021). Boston voters supported an elected school committee. Now what? *Boston Globe*. <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2021/11/03/metro/boston-voters-supported-an-elected-school-committee-now-what/>
- METCO’s History. METCO, Inc. <https://metcoinc.org/about/metco-history/>
- METCO Partner Districts. METCO, Inc. <https://metcoinc.org/about/partner-districts/>
- Price, M. J. (2020). Local history: Barberton company’s Black doll changed complexion of toy industry. *Akron Beacon Journal*. <https://www.beaconjournal.com/story/news/2020/11/30/black-doll-amosandra-changed-complexion-toy-industry-produced-barberton-sun-rubber/6432813002/>
- Rasmussen, F. N. (2017). When the last Railway Mail Service delivered. *The Baltimore Sun*. <https://www.baltimoresun.com/features/retro-baltimore/bs-fe-retro-railway-mail-20170615-story.html>
- Rogal, K. (1975). School board shuns Metco. *Danvers Herald*. Box 44, File 16, METCO Archives.
- Ross, E. (1991). Boston mayor seeks reins of balky city school system. *Christian Science Monitor*. <https://www.csmonitor.com/1991/0325/25081.html>
- Rowe, S. W. (2020). Essay: 50 years after “Operation Exodus,” racial trauma remains. *Boston Globe*. <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/01/03/opinion/essay-50-years-after-operation-exodus-racial-trauma-remains/>
- Scharfenberg, D. (2020). Massachusetts’ public schools are highly segregated. It’s time we treated that like the crisis it is. *Boston Globe*. <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/12/11/opinion/massachusetts-public-schools-are-highly-segregated-its-time-we-treated-that-like-crisis-it-is/>
- Samuels, A. (2019). The utter inadequacy of America’s efforts to desegregate schools. *The Atlantic*. <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2019/04/boston-metco-program-school-desegregation/584224/>

- Vaznis, J., & Rosen, A. (2016). Longtime Metco director says she was forced out. *Boston Globe*. <https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2016/12/25/friction-mars-departure-longtime-metco-director/Ct1zoDqpdPPhqNZYwEIWI/story.html>
- Woolhouse, M. (2021). Racial justice: The effort to bring back an elected Boston School Committee. WGBH. <https://www.wgbh.org/news/education/2021/09/01/racial-justice-the-effort-to-bring-back-an-elected-boston-school-committee>

About the Author

Beth Castrodale worked as a newspaper reporter until her love of books led her to the publishing field. She was a senior editor at Bedford/St. Martin's and is the founding editor of the book-review website Small Press Picks. Her short fiction and essays have appeared in such publications as *Live Write Thrive*, *Printer's Devil Review*, *the Smoky Blue Literary and Arts Magazine*, and *Writing and Wellness*. Her debut novel, *Marion Hatley*, was a finalist for a Nilsen Prize for a First Novel from Southeast Missouri State University Press, and an excerpt from her second novel, *In This Ground*, was a shortlist finalist for a William Faulkner – William Wisdom Creative Writing Award. Castrodale's third novel is *I Mean You No Harm*. An excerpt from her fourth novel, *The Inhabitants*, landed her an artist grant from the Mass Cultural Council. It is slated to be released by Regal House Publishing in the fall of 2024.