

A Case Study in the Cultural Origins of Superpower: Liberal Individualism, American Nationalism, and the Rise of High School Life, a Study of Cleveland's Central and East Technical High Schools, 1890-1918

Author(s): Patrick J. Ryan

Source: *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (Spring, 2005), pp. 66-95

Published by: Cambridge University Press

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20461924>

Accessed: 08-11-2017 14:57 UTC

REFERENCES

Linked references are available on JSTOR for this article:

http://www.jstor.org/stable/20461924?seq=1&cid=pdf-reference#references_tab_contents

You may need to log in to JSTOR to access the linked references.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<http://about.jstor.org/terms>



JSTOR

Cambridge University Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *History of Education Quarterly*

A Case Study in the Cultural Origins of a Superpower: Liberal Individualism, American Nationalism, and the Rise of High School Life, A Study of Cleveland's Central and East Technical High Schools, 1890-1918

Patrick J. Ryan

At the beginning of the twentieth century about one in twenty American teenagers graduated from high school; by mid century over half of them did so; and today six of seven do. Along with this expansion in graduation, the experiences of high schooling became more significant. Though diversity existed at the school level, by the interwar period most high schools offered courses in "higher" academic subjects (literature, mathematics, and ancient and foreign languages), while they gave large numbers of students a chance to practice music, drama, and other fine arts. Business leaders and educators developed programs in technical-skill training. Courses in household economics, personal hygiene, and sex and reproduction appeared as well. A few schools operated with two shifts: day and night. Many maximized their capacity by rotating students between newly constructed gymnasiums, stadiums, fields, swimming pools, showers, cafeterias, laundries, machine shops, laboratories, performance halls, and libraries. Some provided up-to-date diagnostic and preventative medical and psychological services. Others developed vocational guidance. Nearly all established relationships with juvenile justice and youth custody agencies. More than any other institution, the increasingly comprehensive high schools of the twentieth-century redefined the social lives of American youths through teams, clubs, bands, and groups engaged in a long list of contests, games, performances, and other events. Early in the century extracurricular activities began to rival formal class work as the primary focus of secondary schooling. Today there is a joke told from Ohio to Texas, funny for its sad truth. Q: How do you pass a school levy? A: Put football on the chopping-block.¹

Patrick J. Ryan is an Associate Professor of Political Science at King's University College at the University of Western Ontario. This article is part of a larger project on social policy and the shaping of modern youth.

¹On the growing importance of basketball by the interwar era, see Robert S. Lynd and Helen M. Lynd, *Middletown: A Study of Contemporary American Culture* (New York: Harcourt,

History of Education Quarterly

Vol. 45

No. 1

Spring 2005

One could justifiably claim that comprehensive public high schooling is as indicative of American society as any institution. If so, our interpretation of it should be central to our understanding of the country. The longest standing view emerges from the efforts of educators who created free public schooling. "Now, surely nothing but universal education can counter-work this tendency to the domination of capital and the servility of labor," wrote Horace Mann in 1848. For Mann and so many Americans since, schooling promised to become "the great equalizer of the conditions of men," not through property ownership as agrarians and socialists demanded, but by providing "each man the [intellectual] independence and the means by which he can resist the selfishness of other men." A half-century later, Ellwood P. Cubberly continued to proclaim Mann's connection between public schooling, individual sovereignty, and social progress, by arguing that increasingly comprehensive and centralized schooling was the best way to produce "self-reliance and initiative" and to "assimilate and amalgamate [immigrants]... to Anglo-Saxon conception[s] of righteousness, law and order, and popular government...." After another half-century, Lawrence Cremin tempered Cubberly's professional advocacy with a more critical, but no less liberal view. Progressive education "implied the radical faith that culture could be democratized without being vulgarized, the faith that everyone could share not only in the benefits of the new sciences but in the pursuit of the arts as well." In the late-twentieth century an important variation on the dominant *progressive liberation* narrative has echoed Horace Mann again by exploring how high schooling was part of a wider upswing in *human capital* investment and contributed to the "take-off" of western economic growth over the past century.²

The first challenge to the idea that modern schooling would produce social progress and liberation through the development of individuals was

Brace, and Co., 1929). On the importance of football at American high schools by the turn of the century, see Benjamin G. Rader, *American Sports: From the Age of Folk Games to the Age of Spectators* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1983), 161-162. Students were far more engaged during these activities than during academic course-work in Mihayli Csikszmihayli et al., *Talented Teenagers: The Roots of Success and Failure* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 177-198.

²Horace Mann, "Report for 1848," in *Life and Works of Horace Mann* vol. 3 edited by Mary Peabody Mann (Boston: Walker Fuller, 1867): 668-670, also see 665-666; Ellwood P. Cubberly, *Changing Conceptions of Education* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1909): 15-16; idem., *Public Education in the United States: A Study and Interpretation of American Educational History* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934); Lawrence Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957* (New York: Knopf, 1961), ix. The works cited in this essay often included features of more than one school of thought; however, highlighting prominent continuities of thought allows us to make sense of the debate. Jurgen Herbst has recently pointed out, in the pages of this journal, that the progressive historical argument from Cubberly forward equated progress and liberation with state control and bureaucratic centralization of schooling. See Herbst, "Nineteenth-Century Schools between

the simple observation that access to schooling was inequitably distributed. This *unequal access* to schooling critique became an important part of the movements to abolish child labor and to establish civil rights for racial minorities. It continues today in studies as diverse as the powerful stories written by Jonathan Kozol and curricular analysis offered by David Angus and Jeffrey Mirel. On the surface the *unequal access* line contradicts the story of *progressive liberation*, but clearly the two threads worked together to advance demands for more accessible, comprehensive, universal public schooling.³

However, as the *unequal access* argument developed, it encouraged deep questioning of the progressive promises of American educational history. One result was the articulation of a much harsher *social control thesis* on schooling. In the heyday of *social control* in 1974, Martin Carnoy summed up the position well by arguing that modern schooling was a project of “cultural imperialism,” because it moved children of the poor and racial minorities from “traditional to capitalistic hierarchies,” without giving them the tools to significantly alter their own conditions. From this point, it is a simple deduction that the solution to social injustice was not equal access to schools, but “deschooling” society. Though the term *social control* has fallen from fashion, educational research continues to develop its core claims. In their recent study of Abilene, Kansas, John Modell and Trent Alexander concluded that while nineteenth-century schools supported social inequality by restricting admissions, the increasingly accessible institutions that emerged in the early twentieth-century affirmed social hierarchies through “the engaging social environment within the school walls.” Similarly, Patrick Miller on historically black colleges and Cynthia Commacchio on Ontario high schools have uncovered ways that athletic programs “replicate the differentiating structures of the larger society.”⁴

Community and State: The Cases of Prussia and the United States,” *History of Education Quarterly* 42 (Fall 2002): 317-318.

One of Mann’s central claims in his “Report of 1848” was that individual human “intelligence” (meaning knowledge and skill) creates economic growth, and that education can increase “intelligence.” On “human capital,” see Joel Spring, “Education and Human Capital” chapter 8 in *The American School, 1642-1990*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1990); James S. Coleman, “Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital,” *American Journal of Sociology* 94 Supplement (1988): S95-S120; Claudia Goldin and Lawrence F. Katz, “Human Capital and Social Capital: The Rise of Secondary Schooling in America, 1910-1940,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 29 (Spring 1999): 683-713.

³For examples of the long-running literature on inequality in American society see Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York* (New York: C. Scribner’s sons, 1901); Louis R. Harlan, *Separate and Unequal: Public School Campaigns and Racism in the Southern Seaboard States, 1901-1915* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1958); Jonathan Kozol, *Savage Inequalities: Children in America’s Schools* (New York: Crown Publishing, 1991); David Angus and Jeffrey Mirel, *The Failed Promise of the American High School, 1890-1995* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1999).

⁴Martin Carnoy, *Education as Cultural Imperialism* (New York: David McKay, 1974): 18; John Modell and J. Trent Alexander, “High School in Transition: Community, School,

An equally fierce denunciation of modern schooling flowed from mid twentieth-century sociological study of alienated youth. David Reisman's thesis that an "organizational society" fostered "other-directed" reputation-governed personalities implied a sharp criticism of progressive schooling even for the most privileged youth. From the 1950s to the 1980s a series of *cultural critics* including Paul Goodman, Kenneth Keniston, Christopher Lasch, Joseph Kett, and William Graebner strengthened Reisman's link between schooling and a "culture of narcissism" that supposedly produced "passive" generations "growing-up absurd." According to Graebner, the creation of formal extracurricular activities destroyed student activism because educators understood that student-led groups "were private rather than public, independent rather than supervised, participatory rather than spectatorial, self-directed rather than other-directed." Comprehensive schooling failed to liberate us from social hierarchy because of the power that bureaucracy exercised over all students. This line of *cultural criticism* focused its attention on the contradiction between individualism and modern organization that Americans have yet to resolve.⁵

and Peer Group in Abilene, Kansas, 1939," *History of Education Quarterly* 37 (Spring 1997): 23. Cynthia Comacchio, "Inventing the Extracurriculum: High School Culture in Interwar Ontario," *Ontario History* XCIII (Spring 2001), 49. Patrick B. Miller, "To 'Bring the Race along Rapidly,' Sport, Student Culture, and Educational Mission at Historically Black Colleges during the Interwar Years," *History of Education Quarterly* 35 (Summer 1995): 111-133.

There was always been a spectrum of interpretation within works that deploy the idea of social control. For example, David Tyack's claimed that comprehensive schooling was instituted by "an interlocking directorate of urban elites" to minimize the conflicts of corporate capitalism by sorting children into vocationally determined tracks, "Americanize" youths to middle-class norms, and legitimate professional authority. In the writings of Tyack, Edward Krug, and Joel Spring this search for order through mass schooling was a project of control that also brought positive good. Others during these years, such as Edward Krug, Ivan Illich, Joel Spring, David Tyack, Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis more harshly criticized mass schooling. See Edward Krug, *Shaping of the American High School* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964 and 1971): vol. 1, pp. 391 and vol. 2, pp. 279-282; Ivan Illich, *DeSchooling Society* (New York: Harper Row, 1971); Joel Spring, *Education and the Rise of the Corporate State* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972); David Tyack, *The One-Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974): 111-148; Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America, Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life* (New York: Basic Books, 1976).

⁵For mid-century sociological criticism see Kenneth Keniston, *The Uncommitted: Alienated Youth in American Society* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1965). Psycho-social criticism of modern youth (e.g. Willard Waller, David Riesman, Paul Goodman, and Kenneth Keniston) helped framed later historical interpretations. See Christopher Lasch, *Haven in a Heartless World: The Family Besieged* (New York: Basic Books, 1977); idem., *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978); Joseph Kett, *Rites of Passage: Adolescence in America 1790-Present* (New York, 1977); William Graebner, "Outlawing Teenage Populism: The Campaign against Secret Societies in the American High School, 1900-1960," *Journal of American History* 74 (September 1987): 433. Also see Graebner's "The 'Containment' of Juvenile Delinquency: Social Engineering and American Youth Culture in the Postwar Era," *American Studies* 27 (1986): 81-97. On sexual repression see William Graebner, "Eating Together: The Sexual Politics of the School Lunchroom, 1890-1930," *Prospects* 26 (2001): 337-360.

The *social control thesis* on schooling and *cultural criticism* of modern youth have been attacked relentlessly over the last quarter-century for portraying students, women, and minorities as helpless victims of professionals or “the” system, and for being male-centered and elitist. This counterattack has been rooted as much as anything in the view that social institutions are a *contested-terrain* where the “powers of the weak,” can be seen if we look for parents and students challenging experts or using institutions in pursuit of their own desires and purposes. Jeffrey Moran has argued recently that the attempt to implement sex education in schools signaled not “the birth of expert hegemony” but “illuminates the origins of a cultural divide” that required groups to negotiate competing ideas. The idea that minority groups and women have used educational institutions to gain greater access to participation in American economic and political life was captured well in the title of Paula Fass’s *Outside In*. Public high schooling reinvigorated “the old common school ideal” and helped diverse groups become a “national community” in her view. In his study of Chicago, Thomas Gutowski claimed that the extra-curriculum “grew out of the give and take among students, faculties, and upper-level administrators, and the school board.” Contrary to Graebner, he concluded that the dismantling of student-led organizations was not “a means of socializing lower-class young people into middle-class values,” but given the “blatantly class-based cliquishness” of the students, professional control was required to “reestablish a sense of community.” For Reed Ueda, the “institutional culture [of high schooling] was an alternative passage for maturation that competed with the Victorian domestic culture of the middle-class and the ethnic kin-centered culture of the working-class... [young people] not their parents, controlled their actions in this setting.” *Contested-terrain* writers often have brought greater texture to the discussion of the cultural and political work of schools. These studies also tend to share Horace Mann’s belief in the competent individual and tend to defend public schooling as a movement of progress through the liberation of persons and groups.⁶

“Powers of the weak” is the title of chapter eight of Linda Gordon’s *Heroes of Their Own Lives: The Politics and History of Family Violence* (New York: Viking, 1988). Also see Jeffrey P. Moran, “‘Modernism Gone Mad’: Sex Education Comes to Chicago, 1913” *Journal of American History* 83 (September 1996): 481-513; Reed Ueda, “Second-Generation Civic America: Education, Citizenship, and the Children of Immigrants,” in *Patterns of Social Capital: Stability and Change in Historical Perspective* edited by Robert I. Rotberg (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001): 273-194; Reed Ueda, *Avenues to Adulthood: the Origins of the High School and Social Mobility in an American suburb* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 120; Paula Fass, *Outside In: Minorities and the Transformation of American Education* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 73-76-77, 111; Thomas W. Gutowski, “Student Initiative and the Origins of the High School Extracurriculum: Chicago, 1880-1915,” *History of Education Quarterly* 28 (Spring 1988), 49-72. Also see Julia Wrigley, *Class Politics and Public Schools: Chicago, 1900-1950* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1982); William J. Reese, *Power and the Promise of School Reform: Grassroots Movements During the Progressive Era* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986). For an especially subtle blending of rational actor theory

This essay contributes to the existing literature by drawing upon and challenging several elements from previous lines of thought. Following the *contested-terrain* literature, I have based my interpretation primarily on student writings at two Cleveland high schools between 1890 and 1918. To make claims about the cultural work of comprehensive high schooling, no substitute supercedes the recorded words of students. However, I have not found schools to be a particularly open terrain for cultural contest. To borrow Joan W. Scott's phrase, I have avoided trying to find agency as if it were a prediscursive "attribute or trait inhering in the will of autonomous individual subjects." Instead, this study seeks to understand how students constructed their participation and engagement in high schooling. How did their writings and practices contribute to and reflect the rise of high school life? My conclusions are largely consistent with the claims of previous *cultural critics* and some parts of the *social control thesis*. Student-writers repeatedly deployed major components of liberal individualism (self-made manhood and female domesticity in particular) in ways that served larger bodies of power such as the professions and the state. Formal student activities systematically ritualized the ideal of the strenuous competitor, while they ushered in practices of fanatical sports hero-worship. High schooling sponsored tightly gendered and sexualized student activities and linked these intimate desires to structures of mass violence. High school youths indeed became *heroes in their own minds*, but World War I exemplified that their lives were not their own.⁷

A final implication of this study is that American comprehensive high schools reproduced a complex constellation of liberal ideas and fashioned them to serve the dictates of the liberal corporate state. This is not to say that schooling for the extension of state power is in any way unique to the United States, but it may have developed distinctively liberal and resilient qualities there. These dynamics may be less visible to historians because the American empire is at its zenith or because the ideology and structure of American globalization is more acceptable to contemporary liberals than those of competing or previous empires. Whatever the case, the United States's increasingly brash exercise of its military prerogatives as it has emerged as an unchecked superpower over the last fifteen years makes it especially

with the ideas of school-choice as contested-terrain see, Ileen A. DeVault, *Sons and Daughters of Labor: Class and Clerical Work in Turn-of-the-Century Pittsburgh* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990). Reed Ueda uses similar resource maximization arguments effectively in Ueda, *Avenues to Adulthood*, 109-112.

⁷My approach follows Joan W. Scott's criticism of Linda Gordon's Boston study of child-saving and the implications of Scott's work for the *contested terrain* approach more generally. See the exchange between Joan W. Scott and Linda Gordon in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 15 (Summer 1990): 848-860. On the connection between liberal reform and internal discipline for mass structures see Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1979): 170-228.

urgent for historians of American education to consider the role played by the country's signature institution in the projection of United States power.⁸

Documenting the origins of high school student activities is difficult because they had informal beginnings. We can say that before the organized play movement had articulated a well-reasoned justification for extra-curriculum and school playgrounds, before the 1918 National Education Association report "Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education" hailed the school's role in creating "social solidarity," and before progressive theorists such as John Dewey had called for more socially relevant schools, college and high school students had been organizing their own baseball or football teams, and literary or debating societies, for decades. By the 1870s in Cleveland and in other cities, athletic contests seem to have been typically set through letters of challenge between high school students themselves. Cleveland's most important grudge match emerged by the 1890s as a rugby-style football game between the public Central High and University School, a nearby private academy. The players were hardly what people would later call a "school team," and they had no coaches or reserve players for practices: "anyone came out and played." No formal infrastructure existed: no rulebooks, officials, uniforms, time clocks, or stadiums. The only adult involvement was the tradition of dragging a "young and husky" teacher to join the scrum on game-day. In the early years, the only onlookers were gangs of boys who reportedly delighted in sounding, "yells, horns, revolvers, [and] rattles." Some early high school athletic rivalries required long-distance trips. At Central High School, the boys hosted a team from Detroit in 1891, and the Detroit boys reciprocated the next year. Before the school had a basketball court, the students created a team and played their own schedule against freshmen at nearby Western Reserve University and private teams organized under the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). Thus, student-run activities at Cleveland's Central High School in the late nineteenth century were not formally subject to school authorities, but they were not disassociated

⁸On Great Britain and Europe see the Frank Cass Publishers series, *Sport in Global Society* edited by J.A. Mangan; Stephen L. Harp, *Learning to be Loyal: Primary Schooling as Nation Building in Alsace and Lorraine, 1840-1940* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1998); Larry E. Holmes, *Stalin's School: Moscow's Model School No. 25, 1931-1937* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999). If Pierre Bourdieu's analysis of nationalism is correct, we can take the invisibility of it, its assumption in the ways we see and measure things, to be an indicator of its power. Pierre Bourdieu, "Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field," in *State/Culture: State Formation after the Cultural Turn* edited by George Steinmetz (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999): 53-75. The literature on American sports, nationalism, and modernity is advancing impressively, but most of the studies do not focus on schooling. See Steven W. Pope *Patriotic Games: Sporting Traditions in the American Imagination, 1876-1926* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Steven W. Pope ed., *The New American Sports History: Recent Approaches and Perspectives* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997).

from adults and voluntary organizations in the area. Students drew on school ties and used social activities to extend their associations beyond the limits of high schools that were not yet socially comprehensive.⁹

The transformation of student-led activities into a formal program occurred as more and more late nineteenth-century educators began to think about youth life as a topic of inquiry and concern. When the annual University-Central game rivaled Class Day and commencement for the most attended school event of the year, Cleveland's Central High School authorities recognized the game and started to work toward administering it. As part of a national trend, between 1892 and 1906 Cleveland's Central formalized a slate of extracurricular activities. These included a monthly news and literary magazine, four debating and literary societies, Latin, Greek, German, and French clubs, a drama troupe, an orchestra, and a glee club in addition to student government and numerous committees for dances, gymnasium policing, and various types of monitoring. Linking the governance of athletic teams to the emerging school system became the capstone in this decade of organizing high school life. To accomplish this, the Board of Education established an interscholastic athletic association, the Cleveland High School Senate, in 1899. The Senate created and enforced rules of eligibility and conduct over the following years. The private University School's administrators refused to submit their boys to public regulation, and so the era of the annual University-Central game came to an end with the new Senate.

The response of Central's student editor to athletic regulation tells us something about how students understood the broader purposes of the games. Central's magazine called University School's refusal to join the athletic Senate, "plain snobbishness." The editor warned that elitism would leave the academy's

⁹Luther Gulick, *A Philosophy of Play* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1920), 254-261. Willis Rudy, *Schools in an Age of Mass Culture: An Exploration of Selected Themes in the History of Twentieth-Century American Education* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1965): 107; Dominick Cavallo, *Muscles and Morals: Organized Playground and Urban Reform, 1880-1920* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), and Joel Spring, "Mass Culture and School Sports" *History of Education Quarterly* 14 (Winter 1974): 483-499. Also see Henry S. Curtis, *The Play Movement and Its Significance* (New York: Macmillan, 1917); John Dewey, *The School and Society and the Child and the Curriculum* introduced by Philip W. Jackson (University of Chicago Press, 1990); National Education Association, Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, *Cardinal Principals of Secondary Education*, U.S. Bureau of Education Bulletin no. 35 (Washington D.C., 1918).

All student writings were found in the libraries of today's Central Middle School and East Technical High School in Cleveland, Ohio. William Schafer, "A History of Central High School Athletics," *The Central* (1905): 74-75. Kett's, Graebner's, Gutowski's, Ueda's, Mirel's studies outline the student-led origins of extra-curriculum for a number of cities. Jeffery Mirel, "From Student Control to Institutional Control of High School Athletics: Three Michigan Cities, 1883-1905," *Journal of Social History* 16 (1982): 87. A Carnegie Foundation study conducted in the late 1920s placed the origins of organized school athletics between the years 1886-1906. See Howard J. Savage et al., *American College Athletics* (New York: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1929).

boys to face only “effete” opponents of the “east” on the field of play and would produce young men unprepared for the “real” world. The idea that healthy masculinity depended on vigorous physical competition was reinforced through other parts of school discourse. In the first years of the century, before Central had a gymnasium, school authorities encouraged all boys to join the YMCA so they could exercise indoors during poor weather. At the same time Cleveland’s YMCA began hiring full-time staff to organize youth recreational programs. The YMCA’s advertisement in the student *Monthly* told the boys that, “the time to build is in the spring; then you are ready for winter. The time to establish health and muscular power is before twenty years of age; then you are ready for manhood.” The Western Reserve Trust Company joined the chorus when they told student readers of the magazine, “the young men in your class who will make the greatest success in business will be those who have saved a little Capital during their school days... START WHILE YOU ARE YOUNG.” The messages overlapped: the bulwark of American progress, the self-made man, would survive only so long as the next generation did not become sterile, decadent, unproductive, overly civilized, or to use the student’s word, “effete,” by modern progress. Central’s principal used similar arguments to get the school board to approve \$100,000 for the construction of a gymnasium in 1904. This equipped Central to meet the challenge of an over-civilized modern man. Senior Charles Stilwell told his fellow students that the new facility would create the “all-around man” who was “adequate to a complex and strenuous life” needed to keep modern society moving forward. The formalization of the extracurriculum certainly transferred power between groups (from students to educational professionals), but to say this does not highlight what is most important. The creation of formal student activities revolved around the tension between self-made manhood and female domesticity that lives at the center of middle-class ideology in America. Before we can delve into this point and the interplay among gender, sex, spectatorship, school spirit, and their implications for the formation of American nationalism, we must take note of the school-level consequences of the rising educational bureaucracy.¹⁰

As in other cities, Cleveland’s high schools underwent a series of improvements that culminated in comprehensive programs and modern administration just prior to World War I. When the city’s first high school—later named “Central”—

¹⁰On masculinity, self-discipline, self-control, and sports in late nineteenth-century middle-class culture see Elliott J. Gorn, *The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986): 140–202. For the cult of strenuousness see T.J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and American Culture, 1880–1920* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981): 91–92. *Central High School Monthly* [hereafter cited as *CHSM*] v. 2, no. 2 (November 1900): 13–14; *CHSM* v. 5, no. 4 (January 1904): 25–27; *CHSM* v. 1, no. 1 (March 1900): 28–29; *CHSM* v. 1, no. 1 (March 1900): 28–29; *CHSM-Commencement Number* v. 1, no. 4 (June 1900): 36–38; *CHSM* v. 4, no. 1 (October 1902): 2; Charles J. Stilwell, “The New Building,” *The Central* (1905): 70–73. For more details on challenges to the inter-scholastic athletic associations see Mario George Gerhardt, “A Study of State High School Associations and Challenges to Their Authority to Control Interscholastic Athletic Participation” (Ph.D. diss., Kent State University, 1986).

opened in 1846, classes met in the basement of a Baptist church until the construction of a wooden structure in 1852. A stone building was erected four years later, but as of 1875 the “principal teacher” led a small faculty of ten. In 1878 a much larger building was opened on Willson Avenue, but according to student publications, the school did not institute comprehensive class-year scheduling or age-grading until the early 1890s with the addition of new buildings. Before the 1890s students studied independently for a significant part of the day in a large hall. The “principal teacher” took care of administrative matters in his classroom until 1900 when a separate office was built for “the Principal.”¹¹

When the Principal’s office opened, the new student magazine and student athletic association became headquartered there under his supervision. The school’s new student monthly described that office as the “vortex of our school activities.” The student editor of *The Monthly* named his editorial page the “Belfry Owl” after the school’s giant clock that he imagined was towering over the students, seeing and hearing all from the belfry. Two former students, John D. Rockefeller and Laura Spelman Rockefeller, donated the panoptical clock. The “Belfry Owl” spoke to readers as if it had the ability to swoop into teacher’s meetings and eavesdrop upon the thoughts of students. And as a rule, the “Owl” used an omnipresent point-of-view to support the administration’s position. But to do so effectively, it had to give air to student criticism. Early on one student strongly criticized the school’s new “modern machine methods,” including the clock itself, for undermining the “closer personal contact” among students and teachers. The “Owl” responded in defense of time discipline and to thank the Rockefellers because their gift would “urge [young people] to hasten in accepting [present] advantages, and it will show the passing time does not lessen the loyalty of sons and daughters of old Central who have gone forth to the world’s work.”¹² The student *Monthly* allowed students to publish dissent, but in the process it gave the faculty a forum to engage a few select students (the editor and club leaders) in the task of editing and framing that discourse. Certainly this fit well with early twentieth-century thought on moral development that, across the spectrum of debate, encouraged educators to value student participation and activity. The student editors, made popular in part by their extracurricular offices, typically repeated the official position on school matters and could not hold office without the approval of teachers and administrators. In this situation, the *Monthly* continued its defense of the increasingly bureaucratic nature of the school by telling the students that only smaller schools could have “free communication and unobstructed intercourse among [their] members.” Unity could be found in the school’s official motto, “Trouthe

¹¹See *The Central* (1905): 61–62, 66–68. William J. Reese, *Origins of the American High School* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995): 129–131.

¹²On the name “Belfry Owl” see *The Central* (1905): 22. “A Gift for Central High” *CHSM* v. 1, no. 1 (March 1900): 26.



Figure 1. The cover of the 1908 commencement edition of Central's monthly magazine. A student is sad to leave straining to carry the garments and paraphernalia of the expanding social experiences of high school life. *The Central High School Monthly* vol. 9 no. 9 (June 1908): cover.

and honore, freedom and courtesie." The apology for bureaucratic control was immediately followed by the condemnation of a student officeholder who had questioned faculty supervision at and control over the location of class parties. The *Monthly* called his dissent "hasty action" that brought "much unfavorable comment ... upon our school and its worthy principal, to say nothing of the class itself. Steps have been taken to remedy this, so far as possible, and it is to be hoped that the like will not occur again." The editor repeated the administration's position by declaring, "the social functions given under the auspices of the class are beyond doubt highly enjoyed by all—despite any statements to the contrary—no such parties are needed to keep the class intact, and we insist that the class spirit would not be one whit less harmonious if these were discontinued."¹³

¹³On the progressive approach toward moral education see B. Edward McClellan, *Schools and the Shaping of Character: Moral Education in America, 1607-Present* (Eric Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education and the Social Development Center, Indiana University, 1992): 51-76. *The Central* (1905): 61-62, 66-68; "Senior Class," *CHSM* v. 1, no. 1 (March 1900): 24-25; *The Central* (1905): 78

The combination of denial and threat highlights the rising importance of controlling “school spirit” in the business of organizing high school life. When East Technical High School was established in 1908, it created the same social apparatus and similar tensions appeared. *The Scarab*, East Technical’s magazine, scolded the unruly 1911 class for lacking “school spirit” and told them to purchase the monthly magazine and tickets to athletic events and movies. Instead of rebelling against the school’s rules by “scratching up lockers or throwing paper or food in the halls The practical way to help [the school] is to boost Tech High and boost some more.” The faculty supported this call with concerned efforts. A teacher became Treasurer of the “student” athletic association funds at both East Technical and Central. At both schools, the student publications and athletic associations attracted hundreds of paying members each year. Profits from other activities, such as \$100 from a school play and another \$100 from the school magazine, were funneled to the athletic association at Central in support of boys’s sports. Central’s student athletic association deployed “room agents” for membership drives and sold photographs of a championship team to students for five cents. In support of the modernization of sport, Central’s student editor chided those boys who played sandlot games with “some little second-rate team and are ‘big toads in small puddles,’” yet neglected to try out for the school team and pay the association dues. At the same time, administrators gave official recognition to the school’s track team by hanging “Record tablets” in the main hall that displayed the names and times of the school’s fastest boys.¹⁴

Innovations proved necessary because the notion that schools should manage youth social activities and create “school spirit” had not yet become a part of the cultural landscape of the students. More than a decade after educators at Central had started the process, the students were not completely sold on the idea. So, in the third week of September the school hosted a boys-only assembly, and two teachers gave speeches encouraging the boys to try out for the teams even if they only made the practice squad because it would improve the school’s chances of competitive success. A few weeks

¹⁴Although East Technical had a more occupational focus, it was not a lesser high school for working-class youths during its early years. Judging from the yearbooks, photographs, and student writings in the three decades prior to 1920, both schools were populated by white youths carrying a notable proportion of Germanic names coming from households with employed fathers in business, the professions, and the skilled trades. In his memoir, Langston Hughes, who was a former student at Central High School, emphasized that just prior to 1920 a significant number of Catholic and Jewish youths of European-born parents had made their way into the school. Langston Hughes, *The Big Sea: An Autobiography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1940): 30. Yearbooks suggest that this trend did not redefine the student population at these schools until well into the twenties. *The Scarab* v. 2, no. 1 (May 1911): 1; “Athletics,” *The Scarab* v. 1, no. 1 (June 1909): 16-17; *CHSM* v. 1, no. 4 (June 1900): 32; *CHSM* v. 5, no. 3 (December 1903): 15; *CHSM* v. 2, no. 2 (November 1900): 21-24; *CHSM* v. 1, no. 2 (April 1900): 22-23.

later the principal and football coach turned a convocation meeting of juniors and seniors dedicated to artistic performance and public speaking into what appears to have been first pep rally held at the school. The school magazine ran a corresponding story describing the fun had by fifty students who made a road trip in a “special car” to an away game in Oberlin, Ohio. After the football team won the interscholastic championship that fall, “cheering and carrying of the players in the lower hall” followed a rally where school administrators praised the boys. The girls from homeroom seven played their roles by presenting each hero with a white chrysanthemum and the players donned blue and red sweaters with a large “C” on the front. This championship team cleared \$150 during the season after buying more equipment than in any previous year. Their fame was secured when the team’s portrait appeared in *Spalding’s Football Guide*. Central and East Technical’s development of athletic programming does not appear unusual. The principal of Los Angeles’ Lincoln High School, Ethel Percy Andrus, recounted similar efforts for the *National Education Association Journal* in 1917 when she found her school “in the cellar” in terms of athletics and school spirit. She responded by organizing and leading pep rallies and telling teachers to give athletes special academic attention.¹⁵

The increased intensity of high schooling took place as the number of high school students in America began doubling every decade over nearly a half century. With the effort and planning administrators put into directing school spirit, it grew increasingly difficult for larger and larger numbers of youths to meaningfully shape social engagement outside the purview of the school. According to John Modell and J. Trent Alexander, by 1939 in Abilene, Kansas, the number of high school seniors with no recorded affiliation with community organizations was ten times greater than the number of seniors unassociated with school clubs and teams. The growing insularity of youth life changed the context of their disputes with school authorities. East Technical exemplified this when ninety-nine students signed a petition declaring to, “hereby pledge to come to school on Thursday December 18, 1913, on time and with lessons prepared, under consideration that our formal dance is permitted to be held on Wednesday evening, December 17, 1913.” On one level that petition is evidence of student agency and a collective attempt to shape a work detail that mattered to them. It also suggests that students experienced a school-centered social life and assumed that extracurricular activities served as leisurely reward for academic labors. The collective pledge can be read as evidence of the “powers of the weak,” or as a demonstration

¹⁵CHSM v. 5, no. 1 (October 1903): 14-16; CHSM v. 5, no. 2 (November 1903): 15-19; CHSM v. 5, no. 2 (November 1903): 19-21; CHSM v. 5, no. 3 (December 1903): 17-20; CHSM v. 5, no. 4 (January 1904): 15-19. Mary Ellen Hanson, *Go! Fight! Win! Cheerleading in American Culture* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1995): 19-20.

of the hegemony students faced: the cultural dynamic where conflict affirms the governing cultural assumptions.¹⁶

The fate of secret societies at these and other schools during the era shows a similar trend. At Central, the Gamma Sigma and Sigma Delta fraternities became an accepted part of student life in 1900 even though they operated beyond school authority. The fraternities used the student magazine to dispel a rumor that they had been founded in “opposition to the Senior class organization,” in fact they claimed to be simply dedicated to “social enjoyment.” The organization of student social life outside the control of school authorities threatened the school’s extracurriculum. In the words of Chicago’s Board of Education in 1904, if left to their own devices, independent student organizations would “militate against the liberalizing influence that has made one people out of a multitude.” By World War I, evidence of sustained student-led organizations ceased to appear in the historical records of either school. If their demise followed national trends, they probably ceased to exist in the interwar period. Previous studies have found that students used fraternities and sororities to define themselves in terms of class, race, ethnicity, and religion, while educators wanted to define students as freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. The more traditional distinctions became an obstacle to governing the world in terms of professions, diplomas, and state certification.¹⁷

Age-graded coursework, and the class-year designations that fit with it, became some of the most important devices for insuring that student activities turned away from traditional hierarchies in favor of bureaucratic ones. Take the novel, but standardized, construction of a class “yearbook” which emerged with early twentieth-century American high schools. East Technical’s *June Bug* listed the names of seniors in capital letters next to their photographs. Only the juniors who were class officers had their pictures printed, and neither they nor the sophomores had their names capitalized or nicknames provided. It indicated freshmen in small point type, all lowercase letters, tight line spacing, and without any space between the first and last name. So, Senior Victor Lister was printed “VICTOR LISTER,” while Freshman Edna Fay’s name was printed “ednafay.” The yearbook’s depiction of the student body through student photographs is striking. The pages of

¹⁶Krug sets the growth in the last decade of the nineteenth century from two to five hundred thousand students and from 2,526 to 6,005 high schools. Krug, *The Shaping of the American High School, 1880-1920* (1964): 169. The United States Census offers figures doubling by decade until 1930, with nearly this rate during the thirties, and then a plateau in the forties. *CHSM* v. 1, no. 1 (March 1900): 26-27. See “Athletic Association Notes,” *CHSM* v. 1, n. 3 (May 1900): 24; *CHSM* v. 2, no. 1 (October 1900): 16. Modell and Alexander, “High School in Transition,” 12. *CHSM* v. 2, no. 1 (October 1900): 16; *The June Bug* (1914): 103; *The June Bug* (1911): 194.

¹⁷Quote is from Gutowski, “Student Initiative,” 55. *CHSM* v. 1, no. 1 (March 1900): 24-25; *CHSM* v. 2, no. 2 (November 1900): 16-20.

student pictures give us high schools as a grid of cells occupied by single individuals. This cast the school for remembrance as a matrix of persons in fixed posture purportedly given “personality” by listing extra-curricular affiliations and clichéd one-liners next to their names. So too, the poems and jokes that filled the student newspapers and yearbooks patterned personality development upon the institutionally controlled hierarchy of class promotion. These publications repeatedly described freshmen who nervously found a seat at lunch, brought awkward lunch pails, and grew thin from too much study. The sophomores acted wise and felt important, but upperclassmates belittled them. The juniors neglected their studies, rolled up their pants, and chit-chatted with “maidens so shy.” The seniors “ran the whole school” and could not wait for “real” life.¹⁸

The way the administration gained control of student clubs further demonstrates the importance of class-year distinctions for the rise of high school life. The boys’ Philomatheon club, a literary and debating society founded in 1890, became the first club to appear in Central’s records. Little can be learned about the early life of that club, except that the boys founded it themselves, learned Robert’s Rules of Order, and debated public issues such as monetary policy and the problems of monopolies. In 1894, the girls created a female counterpart called the Girls’ Literary Society. The same year another group of boys challenged the Philomatheon by founding the Psi Omega debating society. In response, educators at Central utilized class-year membership to deflate this intraschool rivalry. In 1897 the principal gave the Philomatheon a room in the school where the club laid a rug, arranged furniture, hung photographs, and kept its gavel. He also vested the members the Philomatheon and Girl’s Literary Society with the power to induct into their clubs the most popular juniors from the Psi Omega and created a corresponding junior girls’ Beta Kappa Society. In 1900 all the boys selected to speak at the commencement ceremonies were Philomatheons, and they were overrepresented in the other years as well. These initiatives forced the Psi Omega to capitulate, and this further supported the rise of class-year in the landscape of the school. The Girls’ Literary Society reported in their “Gossip” column of the *Monthly* in 1900 that the Junior inductees “had but little opportunity to show their ability... [yet] At our reception to the Alumnae of the society...they proved themselves very efficient waiters, and we hope that in time they will be just as good debaters.” In another ritual

¹⁸*The June Bug* (1911): 189. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, U.S. high schools and colleges introduced this term first in the early twentieth century. Whether they originated with them, they are certainly indicative of this type of schooling. Yearbooks from the period generally have a class poem or history that emphasized the development of students by class promotion. A poem written by an unknown student repeated the theme in *CHSM, Commencement Number* (May 1916): 52-54. “TO THE SENIORS; What were you first?; *An infant sweet!*; What were you once?; *A flatlet meek!*; What were you next?; *A sophomore smart!*; What were you then?; *A junior sharp!*; What were you last?; *A senior tall!*; What will you be?; *Nothing at all!*” Also see *CHSM* (June 1909): 22-23; *The June Bug* (1913): 11-67.

of class-year subordination, two Philomatheon Junior inductees of 1904 sold two-week old newspapers at the school doors in their pajamas one morning. The boys traded wearing a soldier's cap made of newspaper in a silly routine that allowed them to display their social success in terms ratified by the school and under the guise of wacky youth transgression of boundaries. As a distinction controlled by the administration, classyear reinforced the narrow bureaucratic hierarchy of the school rather than the wider social distinctions in the city.¹⁹

After the debating and literary societies at Central had been reorganized according to the logic of class-year promotion, both schools applied the same techniques to all clubs by setting rules of membership and requiring faculty advisors. At the same time the clubs were being assessed in terms of "school spirit" and "boosted" in the student press. The *Monthly* editor explained in 1900 that the subordination of the Psi Omega debating society to the Philomatheon society was motivated by a need to prevent clubs from dividing the school's debating talent in competition with other schools. The student editor declared that the "heartly support of the whole school, just as is given our baseball or football teams," was due the debate team because, "our honor is just as much at stake, and the opportunity to display 'school-spirit' should not be lost." This proved to be a hard sell and it proved difficult to use debate clubs as a platform for launching school spirit, but the system demanded it. You see, the construction of gymnasiums, fields, and stadiums did more than expand the facilities for developing "strenuous" habits among young men. They also developed the image of a fanatical loyalist defined in opposition to independent thought—"the fan"—who came to embody school spirit. Soon after the formalization of extracurricular activity a thousand fans could be found cheering high school football games in Cleveland. Spectatorship encouraged the student press to ply stories about self-made manhood into ones about sports-heroes. The emphasis on masculine individuality merged with a new one on "school spirit." During this transition in the organization and promotion of the debating societies Central's football fans recorded the first cheer in 1895 when senior William Downie jumped up and hollered, "Slip!, slam!, bazoo." Planned yelling or cheerleading, caught on wildly. By 1900, a chorus of "Rah! Rah! Rah!" four times followed by "Tiger! Central! Sis-boom-bah!" became a standard for many years. The tension between developing students as sports fans to cheer other students being developed as competitive athletes was partially resolved over the next half-century by gendering cheerleading as female and sexualizing the rewards of sports-hero worship. But, this did nothing to help the orderly "gavel clubs," as the literary and debating societies were called. You could not attend their meetings as

¹⁹The subordination of the Psi Omega took three full years. See the *Central Monthly - Commencement Number* v. 1, no. 4 (June 1900): 17-19, 20-31. *Class of '04 — Central High School: Its Book*, 26-41; *CHSM* v. 1, no. 1 (March 1900): 23; *CHSM* v. 5, no. 7 (April 1904): 16.

a “fan.” You could not become part of the debate by shouting nonsense like “Slip!, slam!, bazoo!,” without disrupting the event.²⁰

The literary and debating clubs never recovered from being judged according to the standards of spectator sports. In the name of sports, educators accomplished major projects, like funding stadiums, and they encouraged small ones, like the school magazine column “Our Athletes Away From Central” that glorified the collegiate athletic exploits of alumnae. Not surprisingly, from the turn-of-the-century to World War II, a dramatic shift occurred in student participation: from groups defined by the pursuit of knowledge and language to ones defined by law, order, and “spirit.” Drawing on yearbooks from 1904, 1914, 1922, 1927, 1939, and 1945 at East Technical and Central, we find that as time passed fewer proportions of students joined groups devoted to humanities, sciences, rhetoric, and language such as Greek and Latin Societies, debating and literary societies, French, German, or Spanish clubs, African-American culture or history clubs, art clubs, the naturalist club, and the physical science club. Participation in these clubs declined from 44 to 13 percent at Central, and from 25 to 6 percent at East Technical. While membership in athletic associations, freshman sponsor clubs, civics clubs, booster clubs, victory clubs, lettermen clubs, homeroom clubs, Hi-Y clubs, student governments, and guards and monitors rose from 7 to 92 percent at Central and from 4 to 30 percent at East Technical. Among the arts, those most conducive to mass spectatorship, such as marching bands or large choirs, thrived while a veritable army of guards and monitors were stationed in the library, gymnasium, lunchroom, hallways, and at the school’s numerous spectator events.²¹

In opposition to the new emphasis on spectator sports in 1903, the year Central’s principal transformed the student rhetorical into pep rallies, the Girls’ Literary Society held a debate asking whether football was detrimental to schoolwork. Those against the sport reportedly scored an easy victory by emphasizing the academic purposes of high schooling. The student press countered the girls’ rotten eggs with a steady stream of short stories that defended the school’s turn toward spectator sports. The reporter explained that “ignorant spectators would say” that athletes displayed “wildly” uncontrolled aggression, whereas the “boys in the stands” understood it as a “scientific use of muscle for the glory and name of the school, that glory for which the man under the heap struggled, regardless of any danger to himself.” In his column, the editor explained that the debate had swung on the “the English

²⁰On the gradual feminization of cheerleading see Hanson, *Go! Fight! Win!; Class of '04 — Central High School: Its Book*, 43–44; *CHSM* v. 1, no. 3 (May 1900): 17. *CHSM* v. 5, no. 1 (October 1903): 14–16. *CHSM* v. 1, no. 1 (March 1900): 22. Ruby P. Brown, “Central High School Yells,” *The Central* (1905): 76–77.

²¹The participation and leadership figures are based on a sample of about 1,700 seniors at both schools between 1904 and 1945. See Patrick J. Ryan, “Shaping Modern Youth” (1998): 296–306.

used,” rather than on the truth of the matter. Even yearbook comics supported this theme. In a short entry entitled “Athletics vs. Grammar,” from a 1905 yearbook, the captain of the school’s State Championship basketball team (which went 19 and 1 by outscoring their opponents 636 to 347) said to a gymnasium full of fans, “You all know what the team done. I think we seen our duty and done it.” This anti-intellectual version of masculinity represented a humorous rebuke to those who criticized sports.²²

Given the investment made by the schools in the sport, the girls at the literary society found themselves in no position to seriously contest football. In fact, their position appeared weak relative to “the boys in the stands,” the boys on the teams, and the boys running the newspaper. Girls remained subordinate to boys in student government and mixed-sex societies. As historians have found in other cities, the students elected boys as presidents and vice-presidents at these schools, while girls tended to take on the roles of secretaries and treasurers with integrated activities. Although girls’ leadership was subordinate to boys, extracurricular positions were paired by sex so tightly that almost exactly the same proportions of boys and girls held offices (30.3 and 31.7 percent respectively). So too, the proportion of participating students was about four out of five for both sexes, but in only one exceptional case prior to 1945 did a girl win a class presidency. This single exception helped define the rule on complementary and unequal gender roles. In 1917 Central’s students elected a girl to become the president of the January graduation, while a boy held the position of the much larger June class of 1917. Once it became clear that mid-year graduating classes became a permanent way to manage student promotion, the presidency returned to an exclusively male province.²³

Something greater than club leadership and school infrastructure worked against the girls’ literary society at Central. As with all aspects of the extracurriculum, athletics were organized and understood in accord with the larger logic of middle-class gender ideals and the productive structure of the liberal order. In 1904 student Dorothy Smith explained in the school magazine that interscholastic competition between girls would cause “intense nervous strain” and that “too much publicity and too much excitement engender a sporty spirit entirely at variance with what we are accustomed to call a womanly character.” Smith described two athletic females: the “clumsy” and the “noisy” girl. The first “stands with arms outstretched to catch” the ball, but it rolls away and she “falls on her hands and knees and crawls after the ball. To say the least she is a spectacle.” The “noisy girl” yelled for the ball or cheered a teammate even though speaking represented a foul in girls’

²²*CHSM* v. 5, no. 2 (November 1903): 21; *The Central* (1905): 79; *CHSM* v. 1, no. 1 (March 1900): 29; Sutherland DeWitt, “A Significant Score,” *CHSM* v. 5, no. 2 (November 1903): 7-9.

²³See note 22. For other studies that show a similar gender division of class leadership see Ueda, *Avenues to Adulthood*, 121; Fass, *Outside In*, 73-111.

basketball. If girls played like the boys, only the best would get to play and this would lead to “overdo basket ball.” The girls would lose the ability to tell when “they have enough.” Competitive girls lacked the “perfect self-control” of body and mind that marked feminine virtue.²⁴

Under this definition of womanhood, interscholastic competition among girls would remain underdeveloped relative to that of boys throughout the century. Indeed, it did not appear at these schools during this period. The new facilities for boys did, nevertheless, expand participatory opportunities for girls in ways that worked within the structure of middle-class domesticity. At Central, in the first year of the new gymnasium (1904-05), over 750 girls attended physical education classes and intramural girls' competition increased in the following years. Student Christina Fitch informed the yearbook readers in 1913 that girls enjoyed sports and physical activity as much as the boys. Fitch carefully circumscribed her assertion with, “don't think the girls are rough, though, as we frequently hear of the boys being.” But she then finished the sentence with, “we don't get a chance to be.” The girls were forbidden to perform “stunts” on the gymnastic equipment, and the boys enjoyed more than their fair share of time. By 1915, according to students Martha Baldwin and Helen Heidtman, “the athletic girl [was] usually more popular than any other type.” Perhaps this was due to the domestication of the rules of girls' basketball. It was common for either the numbers of dribbles (or steps) a girl could take (or the part of the floor she could be in) to be limited as a way to structure more passing and team cooperation into individual performances. The accommodation of middle-class respectability within girls' athletics could be dramatically displayed even when formal rules did not apply. In a basketball game in Ontario in the 1920s a girl's bloomers began to slip down. To prevent her public exposure the players of both teams formed a closed circle around her while her uniform was properly repaired. Girls did not have to shun athletic activity to affirm domestic norms, and female athletes were not ignored at the schools.²⁵

²⁴The importance of female domesticity and self-made manhood to the advancement of capitalism has been well-established. See Mary P. Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle-Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1860* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Jeanne Boydston, *Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and Ideology in the Early Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Eileen Boris, *Home to Work: Motherhood and the politics of industrial homework in the United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Amy Dru Stanley, *From Bondage to Contract: Wage Labor, Marriage, and the Market in the Age of Slave Emancipation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Dorothy E. Smith, “A Word about Athletics for Girls,” *CHSM—Girls' Number*, vol. 5, no. 8 (May 1904): 10-11.

²⁵Comacchio, “Inventing the Extracurriculum,” 42. Christina Fitch, “The Girls' Gym Work,” *The June Bug* (1913): 116-117; Martha Baldwin and Helen Heidtman, “Girls' Athletics,” *CHSM, Commencement Number* (1915): 31, 66. On the gender dynamics of basketball for young women during the era, see Pamela Dean, “‘Dear Sisters’ and ‘Hated Rivals’: Athletics and Gender at Two New South Women's Colleges, 1893-1920,” *Journal of Sports History* 24 (Fall 1997): 341-357.

The depiction and organization of student bodies through athletic activity at Central and East Technical High Schools in Cleveland appears largely consistent with Mona Gleason's recent conclusions from her study of Canadian memoirs. Feminine bodies were circumscribed more than masculine ones; girls and boys learned to monitor female bodies as sexual threats; and female support and reward for male dominance in competition was normalized. Boys' interscholastic sports received greater funding and their contests were prominently reported in the newspapers rather than hidden within intramural activity. At Central and East Technical one of the most consistent messages in the student press was that boys should be competitive and aggressive players and girls should remain supportive helpmates on the sidelines. Although girl-centered cheerleading squads would not appear at these schools until around 1940, in 1924 the *Literary Digest* quoted an Ohio football coach reporting that a large number of high schools had "girl cheer-leaders" where "one-half dozen girls controlled high-school audiences better than boys [because they were] fine-looking, bobbed-haired, rhythmic, well-formed individuals. . . ." Long before female-led cheering became a fixture of American sports, girls were encouraged to support and reward the male athletes on ideologically similar terms. In 1900 Senior George Nathan wrote a poem entitled "A Game of Football" about a player with a "tackled" heart. He had tried to win favor with "plays to the grandstand," but this all failed and he pleaded,

So now, dear, please make me an opening,
That my side may be able to score.
I've used wedge plays, and mass plays, and end runs,
Till the hope, that poised high once, did fall —
I've tried rushes, long punts, and guard-back plays,
Yet the gains that I've made are but small.
Then, raising her fair, drooping lashes,
She replied, with a glance sweet and shy:
I don't like to claim all the honor,
So suppose that we make it—a tie.²⁶

Here the student writer drew a direct line between male athletic victory and male sexual victory, while using the marriage "tie" as a truce to fit competitive masculinity with feminine self-control, order, and cooperation. The sexual innuendo of Nathan's poem should have been no more radical than middle-class marriage for progressive educators. In fact, part of the concept of adolescence they espoused included sexually obsessed youth.

²⁶See Mona Gleason, "Disciplining the Student Body: Schooling and the Construction of Canadian Children's Bodies, 1930-1960," *History of Education Quarterly* 41 (Summer 2001): 189-215. As quoted in Hansen, *Go! Fight! Win!*, 20. *The Central* (1906), no pagination; *CHSM* v. 10 (June 1909): 88-89. George Jean Nathan, "A Game of Football" *CHSM — Football Number*, vol. 2, no. 2 (November 1900): 6.

Educators also understood that the engagement with peers of both sexes in student activities played an integral part of what attracted increasing numbers of students to high schools. The inspectors of Ontario's high schools commented in 1920 that "the chance of getting a place" on teams and clubs gave boys "an entirely different view of the high school." At Central, in Francis McGrath's eyes intramural competitions put girls on display in athletic apparel that made fellow classmate, "Hazel Brand... more vivacious than ever." Norwood Ekers' 1913 short story recreated the sexual energy of a track meet by telling readers that as spectators, "pretty girls were in abundance with their usual attendants; flashing eyes and excited faces everywhere.... Excitement prevailed; the judges seemed the only sane persons." In sum, as a precursor to middle-class companionate marriage, formal student activities riveted heterosexual sexual desire into the institutional structure of high schools.²⁷

Just as high schools connected sex to the extracurriculum, they organized both to serve the modern state's most basic political function—its monopoly on violence. Football reigned supreme among sports for this task with its front lines and trenches. Student newspaper reporters at both schools wrote of sensational "stonewall" defensive stands and "smashing" offensive plays, a goal was "threatened"; an opponent "encountered and conquered." According to historian Steven Pope, similar imagery proved common in sports reporting at large during these years and it was often used to define the nation itself. In the 1903-04 schoolyear, Civil War General "Fighting Joe" Wheeler visited Central to tell the students that the war had been an opportunity for self-made men like him to go from rags to riches. Following Wheeler's speech, student Annie Koppel wrote "Central's Football Team," a song to the tune of "When Johnnie Comes Marching Home Again." As they sang Koppel's words, at least some students may have hummed in their minds the original refrain that "men will cheer," "boys will shout," and "ladies will all turn out." Student players and student fans practiced these roles through the games. When Earl Flood, the football captain and class president of East Technical in 1909, received a serious injury in a game, a group of girls collected money for flowers and presented them to him at the hospital. The year "Captain Flood" went down, East Technical's fight song "Technical For Aye" had students singing of "comrades," "battle cry is sounding," "heroes dashing," "conflict clashing," "colors flashing," and the school's symbol "proudly blazing."²⁸

²⁷As quoted in Comacchio, "Inventing the Extracurriculum," 38. Francis McGrath, "Girls' Athletics" *CHSM* (June 1917): 47; Norwood Ekers, "A Question of Morals" *The June Bug* (1913): 145-148. For more examples of sex and schooling see Patrick J. Ryan, "Shaping Modern Youth," 277-281; Moran, "Modernism Gone Mad"; Graebner, "Eating Together."

²⁸*CHSM* v. 5, no. 4 (January 1904): 15-19; *CHSM* v. 5, no. 2 (November 1903): 25; *The Central High School Annual* (1914): 104-109; *The Scarab* v. 1, no. 5 (November 1909): 14. The

When a major European war came, the distinction between the sports-hero and the war-hero proved so thin that the international conflict immediately became cast as a sporting event in the student press. In October of 1917 during a pep rally for East Technical's football team, a manager of the student athletic association and the sports editor of the school paper introduced a former football hero of the school who had recently enlisted in the Navy. The editor promised to a packed gymnasium, "if Badke [the sailor] would undertake to bring home the Kaiser, Tech would undertake to bring home the bacon from West Tech Saturday on the field of play." It would have been difficult to more concisely align school spirit and sports-hero worship with the male-breadwinner ideal ("bring home the bacon") and the Americanization of ethnicity (even Germans like "Badke") for the purpose of rallying students for the war. School authorities echoed the student editor. When the football team won the Senate Championship, the assistant superintendent attended the victory rally and explained to the students that "the war was not necessary to preserve the fundamental virtues—grit, skill, and self-control—and that the same qualities that go to make a successful soldier also make a football player."²⁹

The assistant superintendent's comments could be interpreted as a call for sports to replace (rather than prepare youths for) wars in modern societies. Prominent advocates of extracurriculum made this claim during the first half of the century. William James had suggested, in a 1906 essay "The Moral Equivalent of War," that youths be conscripted into the most demanding manual labor so their "innate pugnacity" might be properly channeled into useful pursuits. James drew on previous works from social scientists and reformers such as G. Stanley Hall and Luther Gulick in support of organized youth life. Building upon a similar set of ideas, Sigmund Freud took this question in a more radical direction. Writing in 1915, Freud argued that modern warfare threatened to repeal, rather than bolster, the ability of the superego to civilize base instincts because warfare showed that the "state has forbidden to the individual the practice of wrong-doing, not because it desired to abolish it, but because it desires to monopolize it, like salt or tobacco." For Freud it was the "dread of the community" which created the conscience, and this process would evaporate under total warfare because the "community has no rebuke to make." If this happened civilization's psycho-social foundation

military characterizations of sports by high school students echoed larger themes in the national news media. Steven Pope has called the 1908 Olympics a "nationalist orgy." Steven W. Pope, "Negotiating the 'Folk Highway' of the Nation: Sport, Public Culture, and American Identity, 1870-1940," *Journal of Social History* 27 (Winter 1993): 329; Steven W. Pope, "An Army of Athletes: Playing Fields, Battlefields, and the American Military Sporting Experience, 1890-1920," *Journal of Military History* 59 (July 1995): 435-456.

²⁹*The Scarab* v. 1, no. 6 (January 1910): 27. *The Weekly Scarab* v. 1, no. 4 (October 25, 1917): 1; *The Weekly Scarab* v. 1, no. 9 (November 29, 1917): 1.

would weaken, and disillusionment would thrive. Hall's, James', and Freud's work had at least two major implications for educators interested in student life. First, they raised the stakes of efforts to shape the consciences of students in general and to frame youths' understanding of modern warfare in particular. Second, they encouraged educators to understand these efforts in biological and therapeutic terms. Once one accepts the concept of "instinct" as the prediscursive base for being human, then schooling can be understood as a treatment for the problem.³⁰

Extracurricular activities proved well suited to respond to concerns about the civilization of the primitive during times of major conflict. In the fall of 1917, East Technical's *Weekly Scarab* declared that 175 seniors, "marched into the social life of the year." The students served hardtack at their first party under the theme of experiencing the war. Later that month, the *Scarab* printed a poem, "On the Field" praising the football team to the tune of "Over There." For their part, Central's Glee and Treble Clef clubs sang patriotic tunes at public engagements around the city. Girls' literary societies suspended debates so its members could devote time to the Red Cross; the school's Garden Club planted "Real War Gardens;" and the Board of Education helped by securing 400 acres of land around the city for other school garden clubs. As Central's first formal dance of the year concluded, the orchestra fell silent and all the students joined hands in a large circle to sing the "Star Spangled Banner." At both schools, teachers and students began organizing military training for the boys. The football coach led marching drills that dismissed students from class work. Final exams were canceled.³¹

At East Technical, the students constructed toy rifles and two hundred boys signed up for drill practice. Students collected books and constructed checkerboard tables for soldiers in camps. Twenty-three girls enrolled in a nighttime automobile construction class and one took telegraphy reportedly to meet war demands. The school asked boys over fifteen years of age to join the United States Boys' Working Reserve which distributed enrollment cards throughout the school's homerooms as it sought to increase seasonal labor supplies to farms. The boys earned wages and a series of badges that culminated in a service bar inscribed with "Honorable Service, 1918." East Technical's Assistant Principal organized a rally to "celebrate United States entry into the War." Students recited Woodrow Wilson's speech to Congress

³⁰William James, "The Moral Equivalent of War," [1906] in *American Issues*, edited by Merle Curti, Willard Thorp and Carlos Baker (Chicago: Lippincott, 1960): 108-125; Sigmund Freud, "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death," [1915] translated by E. Colburn Mayne in *The Major Works of Sigmund* edited by Robert Maynard Hutchins (Chicago: William Benton, 1952): 293-295.

³¹*CHSM, June* (June 1917): 26-27; *CHSM, June* (June 1917): 20; *The Weekly Scarab* v. 1, no. 27 (April 25, 1918): 1-2.

recommending a war declaration, and a patriotic pageant displayed the “national and characteristic dances” of each allied state.³²

The pep rally for the war reached its peak when Central dedicated a new American flag. One afternoon the students assembled in the lower hall while the Glee Club serenaded them with “A Soldier’s Dream,” a song that recited the story of the American people who “have never unsheathed the sword, save for liberty’s sake.” As the lines of this phallic defense of lady liberty’s virtue finished in chorus, the orchestra segued into the “Star Spangled Banner.” The students sang along as an enormous flag floated down the stairway, hovered above them, and slowly engulfed their bodies in a harmonious assumption into the womb of the nation. Student reporter George Grossman wrote that as the folds of the flag covered them, he entered a transcendent state of oneness:

I pictured myself the sunny fields of the southland. I saw the white, fluffy cotton bowls ripening in the warm sunshine. I beheld these plants picked by negroes, their very fibers absorbing the traditions of the South, with its songs of home, love and freedom. Now came the bailing, shipping, and lastly the weaving of the cloth by New England workers with cheery faces. Truly, I thought, this flag is American to the last thread; for have not North and South, black man and white toiled alike to make this emblem? And as I gazed upon our emblem, I realized that under it, north and south, east and west, peoples of all creeds and nationalities are united. Under it they would live and die; yes sacrifice their last ounce of energy that Old Glory may float forever. Then as I looked about me, I read from the faces of those whom I saw, that they, too, felt the same way toward the Star Spangled Banner.³³

Ideologically and physically wrapped in the flag the students became part of something bigger than themselves. At East Technical in his valedictorian address, Howard Ambrose told the February class of 1918 that the “nation’s soul [was being] purged by the war.” Americans had worshiped the “almighty dollar” before, but now they rejected the golden calf to follow “almighty God.” In France, formerly “irreligious” soldiers “speak constantly of God and praying is part of their daily lives.” The line between the nation-state and a retributive, but sanctifying God grew increasingly thin. Two months later, the school paper commanded students to buy Liberty Bonds by deifying the bonds as a means to infinite justice; “I am powerful! I have the might of Right behind my back. I symbolize the wrath of a nation wronged. Though my duty is to create havoc and desolation in the ranks of the foe,—yet I am the defender of the weak, of the unprotected, of the oppressed.” Less comprehensive schools could not have carried this off nearly so well. The

³²*The Weekly Scarab*: v. 1, no. 3 (October 18, 1917): 1; v. 1, no. 4 (October 25, 1917): 2; v. 1, no. 2 (October 11, 1917): 2; v. 1, no. 1 (October 4, 1917): 1; v. 1, no. 22 (March 21, 1918): 1; v. 1, no. 23 (March 28, 1918): 1.

³³*CHSM*, June (June 1917): 44.

facilities, musical groups, clubs, dances, public performances, and the student press created over the previous three decades allowed the high school to mobilize a sense of national unity and a heavenly image of manifest destiny in the hearts of American youth and to link these ideas to the students most intimate identification with sex, birth, and death.³⁴

For the few students who resisted the progressive marriage of God and state, police power was at the ready. In the summer of 1918 the Supreme Court of Ohio affirmed a lower court that had fined and then jailed for a month a German Mennonite named Ora Troyer whose daughter Ruth refused to say the "Pledge of Allegiance" and salute the flag. The court ruled that Ora had violated Ohio's compulsory education law even though he sent Ruth to school because he instructed her to abstain from nationalistic activities. The justices wrote that, "There is no instinct in the heart of the native-born American child to show disrespect, disloyalty and rebellion against the beautiful banner which symbolizes American independence, its free institutions and the glory of this great nation." To give such instructions, "...in the time of war, at a time when the rich blood of the free men is being shed, that our nation may remain free and its institutions may be preserved; and to manifest this spirit of rebellion, the child was deprived of its right to attend school and receive proper instruction and education." The justices proceeded to rule that Troyer's objection could not be conscientious because, "all true Americans are conscientiously opposed to war, but when war is upon us, we will fight and fight until the victory over our enemy is won."³⁵

The power of the state to punish those dissenting from patriotic programming was particularly significant in the Cleveland of World War I, given the German heritage of many of the city's high schoolers. *Der Deutsche Verein*, Central high school's German culture society, the oldest language club in the school, included the children and grandchildren of German immigrants who had established a strong ethnic community in Cleveland. That city's Germans had celebrated hardily their victory in the Franco-Prussian war a generation before, but international alignments had shifted. In step with other schools, colleges, and universities during the war, Cleveland's public schools instituted a loyalty oath for the teachers. The district's superintendent recommended firing any teacher "whose sympathies are proved to be with our country's enemies" even if the disloyalty could not be shown in the suspect's words because teachers influenced students by the "conviction and fundamental desires of ... the heart." At East Technical a French Army Chaplain addressed nearly 2,000 area teachers with the message, "teach your children that we are not in this war for plunder or conquest but for justice, liberty and free government." The district program in Cleveland

³⁴*The Weekly Scarab*: v. 1, no. 15 (January 31, 1918): 1, 4; v. 1, no. 24 (April 4, 1918): 1.

³⁵*Troyer v. State, Ohio State Reports*, decided June 1918.

remained within the mainstream of administrative progressives during these years. Faculty unsupportive of the war were attacked and removed from several universities. The University of Michigan dismantled its German Department. California and Minnesota passed laws mandating English language instruction, and Nebraska prohibited teaching foreign languages in the elementary years. The 1919 Federal Survey of Education sent progressive educational leaders to coordinate activities with district authorities so that "children of all the people may be prepared for national life." In Hawai'i the survey spurred legislation that suppressed Japanese language and culture, and placed teachers and curriculum under special oversight in an attempt to Americanize 163 schools and over 20,000 American students of Japanese heritage on the islands.³⁶

The students and teachers at East Technical and Central went beyond the district-wide loyalty oaths to deride things German. The student publication ran cartoons such as "Hang the Kaiser? Sure I'll help!" and poems such as Grace Mullett's "The Kaiser Starts A Fight." Displaying a sturdy American rejection of aristocracy, Mullett indicted the German monarchy and explained the war as a personally irresponsible act of Kaiser Wilhelm, who "tired of social life, Didn't know what to do." A Cleveland school board member supported these ideas when he told assembled students at East Technical that, "the world can progress only on principles of sacrifice and American justice and fair play instead of German Kulture." To survive, Central's *Der Deutsche Verein* first changed its name to the less provocative "German Club" and then switched to English for their meetings and publications. Next, the club suspended meetings so its members could volunteer for war charities. As the body count mounted, these steps proved insufficient; by the end of the war, the German Club disbanded without comment in the student press. But, the French Club blossomed even though few students claimed a French heritage and no French community to speak of existed in the city. School administrators brought guest speakers from France to address the student body and French language classes grew. Clevelanders born in Germany outnumbered ones born in France a hundred to one. Yet, with over 30,000 German-born Clevelanders, the district abolished the German bilingual program that it had established in 1872. Nothing like the *Der Deutsche Verein* ever reappeared at Central. Local and ethnic communities declined as a basis for the high schools' cultural programs. National and international political alignments held greater sway.³⁷

³⁶Tyack, *The One Best System*, 234. *The Weekly Scarab* v. 1, no. 27 (April 25, 1918): 1, 3. Clifford Wilcox, "World War I and the Attack on Professors of German at the University of Michigan," *History of Education Quarterly* 33 (Spring 1993): 59-84. Noriko Asato, "Mandating Americanization: Japanese Language and the Federal Survey of Education in Hawai'i, 1916-1920," *History of Education Quarterly* 43 (Spring 2003): 11-12.

³⁷*CHSM, June* (June 1918): 42, 44, 46; *CHSM, June* (1917): 26-27; *CHSM, June* (1918): 15-41; *The Weekly Scarab* v. 1, no. 25 (April 11, 1918): 4.

Langston Hughes, a member of Central's class of 1920, recalled Catholic and Jewish classmates of eastern European heritage lending him copies of the *Liberator* and the *Socialist Call* during the war years. He wrote that "none of us wanted Eugene Debs locked up," and reported a near "celebration" among students at the news of the Russian Revolution. School officials closely monitored and managed these activities and attitudes. Hughes and his friends were called into the principal's office and "questioned about [their] belief in Americanism." Policemen visited the homes of leftist students and seized their radical books and papers. The principal hurriedly organized an "Americanism Club" and persuaded Hughes to sit as its president. When Hughes and his classmates tried to include the ideas of Americans such as Debs into the boundaries of Americanism, faculty support for the club wilted and the club died. These were schools of the state, not of ethnic or religious communities, and certainly not ones that could tolerate democratic dissent from corporate capital. Looking back in 1940, Hughes hopefully imagined that when the Russian Revolution succeeded, "something happened in the slums of Woodlawn that the teachers couldn't tell us about, and that our principal didn't want us to know." Some students, like Hughes, undoubtedly discovered such ideas even against the institutional grain of the high school. Subsequent American political history suggests that most Americans would not.³⁸

The nationalistic vigor of the schools during World War I should not be dismissed as an ordinary reaction of a nation to war because one must first explain the emergence of the dominant meanings that have come to define American nationalism, particularly given the country's vast cultural diversity and divided government. This study suggests that the experiences of both world wars and the rise of mass schooling have helped create the imperial nationalism of present-day Americans and the great difficulty they have opposing any war, or any effort that can be called a "war." Once armed with a technology for managing school spirit, the high school experience produced mass conformity, supported the totality of modern warfare, and advanced the American empire. The fit became possible because school spirit became the teenaged equivalent of patriotism. Modern patriotism and school spirit demand allegiance without room for debate, and they evoke emotions of attachment without traditional generational reciprocity. Instead, they are consistent with an increasingly peer-centered lifecourse and institutionalized cultural reproduction under professional auspices on behalf of the state. The Liberty Bond drive of 1917-18 at East Technical offers us a final view into this new complex. The school newspaper asked students to buy bonds and told them: "You have always wanted to do something big—something that

³⁸Hughes, *The Big Sea*, 31-33.

would make you sweat blood. You have thought: If the opportunity would only come! You have felt that—no matter what the cost—you would instantly respond. You would do anything to save our government from bitter defeat.” Cleveland’s students and teachers invested thousands of dollars in the war. The appeal worked not only because serving hard tack at a party, or making toy rifles, or cheering a football team was not enough to make one feel part of the war, but precisely because these extracurricular activities helped redefine a youth life that was (as never before) both liberated from the economic responsibilities of kinship and increasingly divorced from ethnic and religious institutions. High schools, like Central and East Technical, helped reorder group identification by linking selfhood, gender, sex, and violence in ways that served corporate capital and the liberal state better than traditional paternalistic ethnicity could.³⁹

This case study partially confirms what Joseph Kett wrote a quarter-century ago in *Rites of Passage*: he portrayed extra-curricular programs as part of the transition of school discipline from the “mailed fist” of the nineteenth-century master to the “sweet reasonableness” of the twentieth-century professional. This was no tale of progress, according to Kett, because it helped secure the pacification of America’s youth. He cautiously suggested that some youths turned to “the despair behind dope addiction” in the face of the professional power that monopolized entry into the occupational hierarchy and “transformed [high school] into a total environment for teenagers.” This may have been the consequence for some, but this study suggests that the “total environment” of high schooling fostered student engagement for many. The individual is not only an ideological construct used to justify differentials of power, but in Michel Foucault’s words it is “also a reality fabricated by this specific technology of power... called ‘discipline.’” With the creation of individuals through modern disciplinary institutions there is a spectrum of “fabricated reality” from engaged expression to disengaged anomie, but at no point is the individual liberated from the problems of power. From this perspective, children and youths, patients, madmen, and others labeled incompetent are both the primary targets of disciplinary institutions and are “more strongly individualized” by the exercise of disciplinary power. In the United States, progressive educators made the great discovery along with their peers in psychology, psychiatry, and social work that encouraging participation proved more effective than the older

³⁹For more on the transformation to modern see John Modell, *Into One’s Own: From Youth to Adulthood In the United States, 1920-1975* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); Kett, *Rites of Passage*; Oscar Handlin and Mary Flug Handlin, *Facing Life: Youth and Family Life in American History* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971). *The Weekly Scarab* v. 1, no. 3 (October 18, 1917): 1.

means of recitation, memorization, and the “mailed fist.” In John Dewey’s words, educators needed to “psychologize” the curriculum and shape the “living motivation” within the student. This approach to schooling rejected obedience through passive silence or mere recital of any “formal” content. High schools encouraged youth participation through a comprehensive list of programs and activities that disciplined student agency to the larger structures of the corporate liberal state. Active students embraced the opportunity, and the cultural force of schooling increased dramatically.⁴⁰

High schools certainly were not all that the American state needed to mobilize and organize massive violence; ideas are not bombs or prisons. But high schooling became one of the indispensable technologies that helped reorder the relationships between the self and society. The rise of student life through comprehensive high schooling complimented the successful attacks by administrative progressives against ward-based schooling in favor of large city districts. Like district consolidation, school spirit aligned against particularistic ethnic or religious communities and traditional paternalism in favor of American nationalism and middle-class professional leadership. The creation of high school life allowed schools to socialize youth to modern bureaucracy and connected their most intimate identifications to the power of the state. If this allowed students to imagine that they were part of a “national community,” it did so by normalizing speech and conduct approved by adult, middle-class professionals in ways that prepared them for global conflict on an unprecedented scale.⁴¹

If the rise of public high school life helped loosen the grip of local, religious, ethnic, and racial communities on the experience of growing-up in America, it greatly increased the hold of the helping professions and the state. As other scholars have suggested, this gave birth to a new national

⁴⁰Kett, *Rites of Passage*, 183-187. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 193-194. Dewey, *The School and Society and the Child and the Curriculum*, 199-207. Also see Rudy, *Schools in an Age of Mass Culture*, 106-142; Spring, “Mass Culture and School Sports,” 483-499.

⁴¹For Reed Ueda, school spirit was the analog to town “boosterism.” The spirit aroused through student activities imbued an individualistic peer-centered youth culture with a sense of community, and high schooling was an instrument for “increasing [immigrant] inclusion in politics and other spheres of public life.” Paula Fass called extracurriculum a way to build a sense of “national community” while retaining distinctive ethnic-racial identities. Extracurricular activities were another way to fulfill the “old common-school ideal” of social harmony. Ueda, *Avenues to Adulthood*, 120-139; Ueda, “Second Generation Civic Education,” 274; Fass, *Outside In*, 73-111.

For a summary of the attack on ward schools see David Nasaw, *Schooled to Order: A Social History of Public Schooling in the United States* (New York, 1979): 80-158. The seminal works on school centralization are by Michael B. Katz, *The Irony of Early School Reform* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968); idem., *Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools* (New York: Praeger, 1971). On the contemporary difficulties of returning democratic localism to schools within the context of urban districts see Patrick J. Ryan “Can’t Let Go: The Call for Community and the Resurrection of Bureaucracy in Cleveland Public Schools,” *Education Next: A Journal of Opinion and Research* 1 (Winter 2001): 36-41.

community. If one distrusts local, ethnic, racial, and religious solidarity, and if one imagines liberation in terms of escaping such ties, this may be viewed as progress. Certainly there are good reasons to fear antagonism between and oppression within these types of communities. Unfortunately there are a number of problems with celebrating the rise of a national solidarity in support of the state as we look upon the twentieth-century. For one, shifting the dynamics of kinship, race, and ethnicity through nationalism in mass schools has not created individuals freed from prejudice and hatred or from dependence on social hierarchy. Quite to the contrary, modern institutions exercise greater social control through their facility with and ability to advance the liberal ideals of freedom, choice, and self-improvement. Take the success of the United States Army's three-decade campaign to build an *all*-volunteer force. You can "be all you can be," and—more recently—become "an army of one." And yet, the force itself is engaged in ongoing imperialistic ventures, the latest in Iraq, instrumental to the struggle of international corporate capitalism against communist empires and violent world-wide Islamic reaction. The promise of freedom and progress through comprehensive schooling has had a long list of detractors. Given the contemporary push to globalize liberal institutions, continued questioning of their cultural consequences has never been more necessary.⁴²

⁴²High schooling was only one of a far larger set of institutions that helped create the global reconfiguration of ethnicity, religion, and race into a nationalistic framework. On the idea of nations as "imagined communities," see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* revised edition (New York: Verso, 1995). For essays that examine schooling within the context of nation and empire building see J.A. Mangan ed., *The Imperial Curriculum: Racial Images and Education in the British Colonial Experience* (New York: Routledge, 1993). In the United States, see J.L. Kincheloe, "American Indian Education as Cultural Imperialism: Analyzing the Validity of the Colonial Model," in *Education and Imperialism: Four Case Studies* edited by J.A. Mangan (Institute of Education University of Hull, 1989): 74-103; Bruce Curtis, "State of the Nation or Community of Spirit? Schooling for Civic and Ethnic-Religious Nationalism in Insurrectionary Canada," *History of Education Quarterly* 43 (Fall 2003): 324-349.