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THE PATH OF GOOD CITIZENSHIP: RACE, NATION, AND EMPIRE IN UNITED STATES EDUCATION, 1882-1924

by

DAVID CLIFTON STRATTON

Under the Direction of Christine Skwiot

ABSTRACT

The Path of Good Citizenship illuminates the role of public schools in attempts by white Americans to organize republican citizenship and labor along lines of race and ethnicity during a time of anxiety over immigration and the emergence of the U.S. as a global power. By considering U.S. schools as both national and imperial institutions, it presupposes that the formal education of children served as multi-

layered exchanges of power through which myriad actors constructed, debated, and contested parameters of citizenship and visions of belonging in the United States. Using the discursive narratives of American exceptionalism, scientific racialism, and patriotism, authors of school curricula imagined a uniform Americanness rooted in Anglo-Saxon institutions and racial character. Schools not only became mechanisms of the U.S. imperial state in order to control belonging and access supposedly afforded by citizenship, but simultaneously created opportunities for foreigners and "foreigners within" to shape their own relationships with the nation.

Ideological attempts to construct a nation that excluded and included on the basis of race and foreignness had very real implications. Using comparative case studies of Atlanta's African-Americans, San Francisco's Japanese, and New York's European immigrants, this dissertation shows how policies of segregation, exclusion, and Americanization both complicated and sustained designs for a national body of citizens and workers. Schools trained many of these students for citizenship that included subordinate labor roles, limited social mobility, and marginalized national identity rooted in racial difference. These localized analysis reveal the contested power dynamics that involved challenges from immigrant and non-white communities to a racial nationalism that often slotted them into subordinate economic and social categories. Taken together, curricula and policy reveal schools to be integral to the mutually sustaining projects of nation-building and empire-building.

INDEX WORDS: Schools, Education, Race relations, Immigration, Imperialism

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DAVID CLIFTON STRATTON

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

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in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2010

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David Clifton Stratton

2010

THE PATH OF GOOD CITIZENSHIP: RACE, NATION, AND EMPIRE IN UNITED STATES EDUCATION, 1882-1924

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DEDICATION

For my wife Kristen, whose love makes all of this possible.

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INTRODUCTION

"The aim of this book," wrote Waddy Thompson in 1913, "is to present the lives of great men in a way that will stimulate the child's ambition and serve to direct him to the path of good citizenship."[1] Thompson's words framed the preface of his *Primary History of the United States*, one of hundreds of schoolbooks published in the decades surrounding the turn of the twentieth century. His textbook recounted the lives and historical contributions of those figures in U.S. history most often invoked to stir patriotism and a deeper reverence for the nation's past and progress: explorers, generals, presidents, and inventors. These examples, argued one textbook editor, contributed to the "moral education" of children – "the object of keenest concern today."[2]

California State Normal School Superintendent James F. Chamberlain offered a similar sentiment in his 1909 report on the teaching of geography in elementary and secondary schools. Chamberlain argued that a firm knowledge of Europe and the United States translated into a "geographic consciousness" that was undoubtedly a "much-to-be-desired factor in good citizenship." Central to this project were the assumptions of both Thompson and Chamberlain that specific

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[1] Waddy Thompson, *Primary History of the United States* (New York: D.C. Heath, 1913), iii.
[2] W.A. Townsend, description of Fanny E. Coe, *Makers of the Nation*, April 17, 1914, American Book Company Collection, Box 3, Folder: (Ida) Fanny E. Coe: *Makers of the Nation*, Syracuse University Bird Library Special Collections, Syracuse, NY.

historical narratives and geographic knowledge were necessary to make "good" citizens. Such knowledge was often cast in the image of Theodore Roosevelt's *Winning of the West*, which celebrated the migration, settlement, and progress of the Anglo-Saxon and later 'American' race. Historical consciousness also served to mitigate fears among native-born whites over threats to the character of the nation from racial and cultural outsiders. As Michael Kammen has noted in his epic work on memory and American culture, "every conceivable mode of education was viewed as a potential contribution to solving the nation's pressing social problem of extreme heterogeneity." Schools became the central and standardized method of achieving the national goals of creating loyal citizens and workers, Americanizing European immigrants, and normalizing imperial projects at home and abroad.[3]

This dissertation analyzes the role schools played in attempts by whites (particularly native-born whites) to forge a national consensus about good citizenship and national belonging first, during a time of anxieties over immigration and race, and second as the United States augmented its global and imperial power. In reaction to the arrival of millions of immigrants from Asia and Europe, native-born whites raised questions about newcomers' racial character and capacity to participate in the republic. At the same time, the United States emerged as a world power, building an informal and commercial empire in Latin America, the

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[3]James F. Chamberlain, "Report of the Committee on Secondary School Geography," *Journal of Geography* 8,1 (Sept., 1909): 7; Theodore Roosevelt, *The Winning of the West*, 4 vols. (New York: G.P. Putnam & Sons, 1889-1896); Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York: Vintage, 1991), 244.

Caribbean, and the Pacific. These economic and cultural ventures into geographies believed to harbor backward races aroused public debate about the fitness for self-government of foreign peoples both at home and abroad. This confluence of immigration and empire raised one crucial question in particular: Could foreigners and those racial pariahs labeled as "foreigners within" the nation become Americans and fulfill the responsibilities of republican citizenship? In the quest for answers, the United States continued to uphold the 1790 Naturalization Law that reserved citizenship for immigrants to "free white persons" and passed restrictive measures, including the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and the 1924 Johnson-Reed Immigration Act that barred southern and eastern European immigrants from the U.S. Furthermore, the United States was slow to grant independent nationhood to its foreign possessions in Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and when it did, it reserved the right to intervene if it deemed politically or economically necessary.[4]

A second concern arose about how to manage "the distended society" that exploded from the islands of largely independent local communities at the end of the nineteenth century. By the end of Reconstruction, the Protestant, Anglo-Saxon order and autonomy of small towns and farm communities seemed threatened by cities, large corporations, and immigrants. While farmers and wage workers responded to these drastic changes in part through strikes and collective action, both local and urban elites attempted to harden the social and economic lines between themselves and the masses. Whites in both groups, however, sought

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[4] Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1996), 5.

exclusive access to jobs and wealth in the new national corporate economy. By excluding certain immigrants from becoming naturalized citizens and subordinating non-whites and immigrants of questionable whiteness, both elites and members of the expanding middle class participated in the re-organization of national belonging along racialized class lines.[5]

Immigration and empire gave immediacy to the bureaucratic revolution that, in the late nineteenth century, translated from big business to social institutions such as schools. This period was marked by what Alan Trachtenberg has called the "incorporation of America," at home and abroad – a time in which a society of largely "self-employed proprietors" transformed into one dominated by "large corporations run by salaried managers." The effects of this economic re-organization by emerging corporate models permeated politics, social institutions, and culture as well. Henry Ford's assembly line spurred not only a reorganization of the factory system but also created the need for an obedient and reliable workforce capable of both producing and consuming the goods that underpinned American economic and geo-political expansion. The forceful opening of Asian and Latin American markets for the extraction of raw materials and consumption of American goods animated movements to order American society along lines of race and class. As Martin Sklar has argued, the civilizing process became folded into the new corporatized structures and management of empire. By making co-terminus the existence of a wage-earning working class and large investment banking houses

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[5] Robert Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1917* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1967), 76-9.

with modern development, capitalism eroded traditionalist and religious modes of understanding and ordering society. Education helped define and reinforce the social, economic and political roles of all those who lived within the republic and its growing overseas empire, educate a new managerial class of white-collar workers, and channel millions of others into jobs on assembly lines and onto farms that were becoming increasing reliant on mechanization and emerging national supply chains headquartered in urban centers.[6]

Beyond preparing young people for the work force, education became both a driver and reflection of the mutually sustaining processes of nation building and empire building that intertwined the domestic and the foreign in myriad ways. Schools both reflected and became intimately involved in the ordering of society through hierarchies of race and class. Beyond preparing native-born whites for "good citizenship," schools provided conditional opportunities for and acculturation of millions of European immigrants children at a time when their fitness for republican government and, in the case of southern and eastern Europeans, their racial character and identity were subject to popular and scientific scrutiny. Segregation and schooling geared to manual labor for African-Americans and Native Americans and curricula supported by racial science naturalized social divisions at

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[6] Olivier Zunz, *Making America Corporate, 1970-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 1-4; Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2007[1982]), ix; Martin Sklar, *The Corporate Reconstruction of American Capitalism, 1890-1916: The Market, The Law, and Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 78-85. On markets, see Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2000), 13-97.

home and abroad. Historical narratives and geographical organization that celebrated the triumph of Anglo-Saxon civilization over degraded, non-white inferiors bolstered the desire among whites for separate schooling, restrictive immigration, and a carefully managed empire. Education helped build and maintain a flexible hierarchy in which certain foreigners could become Americans provided that they participate in the exclusion of those persons deemed to be threats to the nation. As America underwent dramatic changes in social order driven by immigrant exclusion, Jim Crow, the growth of industry and corporatization, and imperial expansion, schools conditioned whites and those of dubious whiteness for national belonging that was often denied to non-whites.[7]

In seeming contrast to the insular nature of segregation and immigration restriction that reflected white desires to maintain racial homogeneity, the expansion of industry and corporate capitalism advanced the United States' imperial visions at the turn of the twentieth century. Indeed, exclusion and expansion were two sides of the same coin. The scale of industrialization precipitated the confluence of labor migration and market expansion, and in response, white Americans' anxieties about the corrosion of national character collided with aspirations for corporate capitalist growth and international greatness. School curricula supported a new corporate imperial model through historical narratives of progress and celebrations of American capitalism justified through missionary-style uplift and education of backward races. Like colonial schools in the Philippines that

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[7] Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 2002), 3.

taught selected native elites to maintain the new class boundaries created by foreign industrial investment and re-organization of property ownership, U.S. schools supported emergent hierarchical social structures that were shaped by both corporate culture and the new imperialism that corporate capitalism afforded.[8]

Though no national body mandated specific course or schoolbooks for schools, local school boards embraced the national projects of racial exclusion and empire building. These threads ran throughout many public schools in large part because by the late nineteenth century, most urban school administrations had largely shifted to a corporate managerial model. The glue that held public schools together in common purpose was not the State, as it was in Europe, but faith the superiority of republican government and an embrace of a new corporate culture. The superintendent and the school board set policy, chose textbooks, and established a culture of loyal citizenship and patriotism for school children that emphasized hierarchies of race and nation. A handful of publishing companies in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia that included American Book, MacMillan, and Ginn produced the vast majority of textbooks distributed to schools through integrated national supply chains. School administrators, like their white-collar counterparts in corporations, considered themselves invested in the mission of

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[8] Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 3-9; Sklar, *The Corporate Reconstruction of American Capitalism*, 78-85; Paul Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 168-70, 201-3. Kramer reveals how American-run schools in the Philippines became the "defining metaphor" for the U.S. colonial state: "tutelary and assimilationist."

producing good citizens and maintaining the social structures that had afforded them jobs as managers, even if in the public sector.[9]

The ways in which exclusion and assimilation were woven into the fabric of American schools remained part of a larger dynamic national project. As Gary Gerstle has argued, the identity of the United States has always been marked by conflicting visions of American nationalism. Civic nationalism – a devout reverence for the distinctive freedom and liberal democracy enshrined in the nation's founding documents – has colored the ways in which the United States has projected itself as the model nation. Civic nationalism has both informed and challenged America's racial nationalism – a conception of the nation rooted in the desire of native-born whites to remain a nation of white people. This meant that African-Americans, Native Americans, Asians, non-white Latin Americans, and specific European ethnicities had to be "expelled, segregated, or subordinated."[10] As the United States became an industrial and global power, these groups grew in importance as laborers and settlers. But despite their unsung contributions to the economic and geo-political growth of the nation, inclusion remained a fleeting possibly. Public schools offered the possibility of civic nationalism rooted in liberty and self-government, but freedom was almost always tempered with racial exclusion.

As the United States grew in population, economy, and global presence in the decades surrounding the turn of the twentieth century, exclusion and segregation, in

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[9] Zunz, *Making America Corporate*, 4.
[10] Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 4-5.

both practice and law, both underpinned and undermined exceptionalist beliefs in and narratives of American republicanism. The years 1882 and 1924 serve as bookends for this project not for any landmark textbook publications or school board decisions, but rather because of the significance of the Chinese Exclusion and Johnson-Reed Immigration Acts in shaping the legal parameters of citizenship and the cultural framework of national belonging. This dissertation attempts to depart from the traditional dates of 1877 and 1917 that focus on national reunion, industrialization, and World War I without careful attention to the themes of racial nationalism and empire that helped define and shape the growth of modern America. Furthermore, historiography of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era has tended to focus on the transatlantic connections between the United States and Europe. Daniel Rodgers's important work on Progressive intellectual exchange ties American Progressivism to similar strains in European thought. Rodgers and others also recognize the dynamic role in which European immigrants shaped American Progressivism and foreign policy in the early twentieth century. Hence, 1917 is often the temporal focal point for Eurocentric treatments of Progressive politics and social reform. While immensely important to our understanding of U.S. nationalism, this historiography has largely ignored the ways in which the Pacific and Asian migration have shaped U.S. nationalism and empire building. By framing this project with the Chinese Exclusion Act and the National Origins Act, this project attempts to bring the traditional European focus of U.S. Progressivism into

conversation with the migrations, settlements, institutions, and social hierarchies of the Pacific coast that also shaped U.S. domestic social reform and foreign policy.[11]

These laws frame a historical period in which education became further entwined in debates about immigration and empire. Schools and curricula became vehicles of Americanization and the production of citizens – processes advocated and guided by an emerging class of business elites and education experts that attempted to wrestle control of schools from local authorities. They stripped immigrant communities and African-Americans of their ability to control curricula and set policy. In doing so, advocates of school centralization reinforced the precedents of exclusion set by the 1790 Naturalization Law, the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), and the 1924 Johnson-Reed Immigration Act. Just as these laws established racial and cultural criteria for inclusion in the national body of citizens and workers, schools normalized broader exclusionary policies as a means of organizing society and teaching potential citizens. Schools offered native-born whites solutions to anxieties over race, immigration, and empire. As they encountered and felt threatened by foreigners and non-whites at home and abroad, textbook authors made spectacle of racial and cultural difference to affirm the supposed superiority of white Americans and to question the fitness

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[11] Daniel Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1998); James T. Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1870-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); James R. Barrett, "Americanization from the Bottom Up: Immigration and the Remaking of the Working Class in the United States, 1880-1930," *Journal of American History* 79, 3 (Dec., 1992): 996-1020.

for citizenship of non-whites both foreign and native-born. Curricula and school policy created and bolstered specific societal roles along lines of race, ethnicity, and class to insure that cultural outsiders identified with the nation in acceptable ways, which often included subordinated labor, limited citizenship, and social separation.

This process of "learning to divide the world," so well articulated by John Willinsky, has continued to drive education in lots of settler societies. Following the first European ventures of conquest in the Americas, Asia, and Africa, British, Anglo-Saxon, English-speaking settler societies in the United States, Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and others have distinguished themselves as white men's countries.[12] In the United States, education became a readily accessible forum to perpetuate and normalize divisions of race and culture. But this project of differentiation and exclusion, no doubt an important aspect of the national character, contended with the need for the assimilation of millions of immigrants and the manual labor of non-whites in an expanding political economy. Educators, textbook authors, and those in control of school policy struggled with how to reconcile these two seemingly opposing projects.

As schools throughout the nation prepared to participate in Chicago's Columbian Exposition in 1893, schoolmen sought the opportunity to show the nation and world that public schools were "the Grandest American idea." School

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[12] John Willinsky, *Learning to Divide the World: Education at Empire's End* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998); Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

exhibits provided for its white patrons a contrast with Midway exhibitions that distinguished the progress of Western science, technology, and Enlightenment with the supposedly backwardness of non-white cultures. Just as African-American and Native American contingents appeared along side colonized people everywhere on the Chicago Midway, schools also provided for not only the physical separation of non-white students, but also employed a curriculum that reinforced exclusionary notions of American racial nationalism and normalized U.S. imperialism.[13]

The Path of Good Citizenship places U.S. schools and curricula more firmly within the rich historiography and braided discourses of race, nationalism, and imperialism between 1882 and 1924. It contextualizes the social science disciplines of geography, history, and civics and investigates attempts to forge a national consensus about whom could become citizens and how to make aliens, racial others, and colonial subjects identify with the nation in ways acceptable to the dominant class. It provides an integrated analysis of the most widely used schoolbooks with histories of the corporate restructuring of schools and of immigration, race, and the growth of the United States as a world power.

This project is comprised of two main parts that respectively address how curricula and the local particularities of race and immigration reveal how schools

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[13] Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to the Superintendents and Teachers of the Schools of California, July 20, 1892, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A: 11, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library, San Francisco, CA; Robert Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Robert Rydell, *World of Fairs: The Century-of-Progress Expositions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

collectively normalized exclusion and empire and shaped national belonging. First these two parts are preceded by an historical overview chapter that considers how the centralization of school reform and administration on the one hand and continental and overseas expansion on the other constituted integral components of the co-terminus projects of nation building and empire building. In chapter one, the imperial moments of Californian annexation in 1848 and Hawaiian annexation in 1898 frame the relationship among settler colonialism, westward expansion, and the growth of industrial and corporate capitalism and bureaucratization in the last fifty years of the nineteenth century. In particular, the establishment, management, and intended outcomes of public schooling in the borderlands of California and Hawaiʻi both reflected and informed the growing centrality of public schools taking place in the nation's rising urban and industrial centers. 1840s California and 1890s Hawaiʻi offer examples of the centrality of the settler colonial model as well as how Pacific migrations and the crucible of race shaped and were shaped by schools. In reaching back beyond 1882, chapter one illuminates how schools actuated and responded to both the new anxieties of American industrial, corporate society as well as the established currents of U.S. empire with roots in nineteenth-century continental expansion and settlement. Furthermore, it addresses the gradual shift from settler colonialism to an emerging form of empire that for Anglo-Americans was less clear in terms of race and belonging.

Part two begins a series of three chapters which focuses on the disciplines of geography, history, and civics to demonstrate how carefully crafted narratives undergirded not only an ideology of American exceptionalism but also of an

exclusivity of whiteness. That is, authors and the school boards that approved these textbooks for use cast the American national experience as one that had and would continue to be defined by one's race or ethnicity. Chapter two examines the role of geography textbook authors in promoting key themes in American racial thought. Through an analysis of schoolbooks such as William Morris Davis's *Elementary Physical Geography*, Mytton Maury's *Physical Geography*, and Tarbell's *Complete Geography*, chapter two contends that naturalizing scientific racism in younger children provided for the continuity of a perceived white superiority that operated not only on the domestic front but also abroad as the United States projected its imperial power in the Pacific, Caribbean, and Latin America. Chapter three provides an analysis of key themes and events covered in United States history books, including *Barnes' Primary History of the United States*, Edward Eggleston's *First Book in American History*, Lida Field's *Grammar School History of the United States*, and Albert Bushnell Hart's *Essentials in American History*. It demonstrates that history schoolbooks reified the Americanness of native-born whites, provided opportunities for the children of European immigrants to become suitably white Americans, and excluded non-whites from the United States' progressive historical narrative and thus from national belonging. Chapter four investigates the role of the civics course, corresponding textbooks, and extra-curricular patriotic exercises in meeting what many whites perceived to be a rising tide of foreign peoples and races whose moral character and mental capacity might not meet the responsibilities of republican citizenship. Texts such as Samuel Forman's *First Lessons in Civics*, Raymond Hughes's *Economic and Vocational Civics*, and Jasper O'Brien's *America First* as well

as the practices of patriotic singing, parading, and war commemoration supported the United States' imperial and capitalist ambitions. Civics offered the *potential* for non-whites and suspect whites to acquire reverence for Anglo-Saxon values and institutions and to become part of an exceptional nation, even if in roles subordinate to native whites. Through proper instruction, both native-born and foreign-born whites could become loyal Americans by recognizing affronts to American life and culture (socialism, European imperialism, foreigners) and internalizing their antitheticals (free market capitalism, the 'empire of liberty,' and national conformity). Taken together, geography, history, and civics curricula offer insight into how schooling manifested the joint projects of domestic homogenization and imperial expansion.

Part three brings into conversation three local approaches to the organization of the nation's school-age population. In Atlanta, the all-white school board attempted to maintain Jim Crow segregation and racial subordination as African-Americans organized to challenge the inadequacies of black schooling in the city. Atlanta's first black high school opened in 1924 in large part because of the persistent grassroots political efforts organized by the NAACP and Atlanta's leading black citizens. But black schooling remained legally separate and inherently unequal until *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. By considering blacks to be "foreigners within" the nation, white school administrations subjected them to the same kinds of discriminatory educational policies as San Francisco's Japanese

students: the subjects of chapter six.[14] In 1906, the San Francisco school board ordered the segregation of Japanese students from the city's grammar schools. The incident immediately became the subject of foreign policy debates between the administration of Theodore Roosevelt and the rising imperial power of Japan. Furthermore, San Francisco's school policies accentuated the blurriness of racial and national boundaries in the American West. That the Japanese could provide value labor for American capitalists but could not enjoy the privileges of American citizenship or education reflected the duality of the Japanese experience in the United States. Caught between the identities of worker colonizer/settler and alien/transient worker, the Japanese in America at once reinforced the Anglo settler colonial model and challenged its racial exclusivity.[15]

If Atlanta's African-Americans and San Francisco's Japanese encountered school systems that regarded their presence in the United States as politically marginal, economically necessary, and racially subordinate, the children of European immigrants to New York City entered a public school system similarly anxious over the city's racial heterogeneity. The racial "inbetweenness" of southern and eastern European immigrants, as David Roediger has stated, prompted native-born whites to vigorously pursue campaigns of Americanization. Schooling and

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[14] Lowe, *Immigrant Acts*, 5. I borrow the term "foreigner-within" from Lisa Lowe's groundbreaking critique of racial nationalism in the United States. Lowe shows that the identities of Asian Americans have frequently been shaped and defined by an Orientalist discourse that allows them to perform vital economic functions with the U.S.'s global economy but denies them cultural identification with the nation.
[15] Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

whitening became indistinguishable as school boards and superintendents attempted to remold foreign children in the image of republican Anglo-America. School authorities hoped to alleviate the threats of Bolshevism and anarchism that school authorities were sure lurked in the city's ethnic enclaves and alien homes.[16]

My decision to examine how schools engaged in nation and empire building in Atlanta, San Francisco, and New York City (rather than New Orleans, Los Angeles, or Chicago) was as much a choice of archival accessibility and richness as it is an attempt to reconnect Southern segregation, Asian exclusion, and European immigration through national discourses and practices of racism and imperial expansion. In its current form, this project could have included case studies of Mexican-American students in southern California, Arizona, or Texas or children of European immigrants in St. Louis, Chicago, or Milwaukee. The experiences of students, teachers, and administrators in these places likely reinforced the pervasiveness of racial nationalism and imperial ambition in ways similar to manual training for Southern blacks, Japanese school exclusion in San Francisco, and the de-radicalization of New York's European immigrants. While California and Georgia (and Georgia and New York) seem quite different today, schools and the task of making good citizens tied these people, places, and practices together in contradictory attempts to build both a white republic and an empire of liberty.

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[16] David Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 50-4.

For those setting school policy, crafting historical narratives, compartmentalizing geographic spaces, and defining "good living" and civic duty, schools and schoolchildren offered a chance to re-organize society along racial, economic, and cultural lines. Ultimately, this project reveals the interlocutions between education and the constant re-articulation of national character. It intends to demonstrate the pivotal role of schools in creating both opportunities and barriers depending upon one's proximity to whiteness and white citizenship during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. It offers examples of how historical narratives provide space for broader reflections on the relationship between education and the United States' constant reconciliation of the principles of equality, liberty, and pluralism with anxieties about foreignness, un-Americanism, and a growing U.S. international and imperial presence. Though board-mandated segregation is no longer the defining inadequacy in public education, school authorities and textbook authors continue to make choices informed by their own experiences – not those of their audiences. Other socio-economic and linguistic boundaries also contribute to the continuing inequity in an American educational system that is still in the business of making good citizens and workers.

At an even broader level, current debates over U.S. immigration policy appear, at least on the surface provided by the news media as abstract legal questions – matters of law and the Constitution and thus separate from the nation's charged history of exclusion along cultural and racial lines. U.S. global power is often taken as a given – a natural position for the nation founded as the model "city on a hill." Rather, the United States' rise to global hegemony also rests on notions of

progress, the triumph of civilization of savagery, imperial conquest, and of both assimilation into and exclusion from the republic millions of people deemed foreigners, racial pariahs, or both. These histories are largely ignored or distorted outside of academic circles and social justice movements. But to divorce immigration law and foreign policy from attempts to shape the national character through institutions such as schools hides the multifarious levels at which race and empire operate in the continual defining and re-defining of the term "American."

CHAPTER ONE

SCHOOL CENTRALIZATION AND IMPERIAL EXPANSIONS FROM WAR WITH MEXICO TO HAWAIIAN ANNEXATION

In February 1847, the Anglo-American residents of Monterey, California announced their intentions to construct an "English School" in the town. The *Californian* proclaimed "'idleness is the mother of vice,' and without a school, the children in a town are of necessity idle." The paper also printed the brief editorial and statement of purpose in Spanish in an effort to show the Mexican residents of Monterey the virtues of Anglo-Saxon institutions. In the minds of Anglo-Americans, schools were integral to sturdy foundations of republicanism – a form of self-government that they believed likely escaped Mexicans.[1]

Three days before January 1, 1848 - the year of the forceful cession of California to the United States - the citizens of nearby San Francisco could not tell one pillar of Anglo-Saxon civilization from another. "The new school house is now completed, but no one seems to know for what it is designed," the *Californian* reported rather light-heartedly. "Some citizens…possessing more than ordinary discernment concluded that it must certainly be either a school house, court house or church." Several residents decided to hold worship services, thereby "[discharging]…some of the more rational duties of civilized man." The daily found this misuse of the schoolhouse "all well," but pressed the town council to employ a teacher and "commence the work of moral reform, the organization of society." In

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[1] *The Californian*, February 20, 1847, issue 27, column A.

San Francisco too, the *Californian* reported "hundreds of little urchins…strolling about the streets in idleness, exposed to all the nefarious and contagious vices of the day." These included those presumably innate racial traits and proclivities among California's non-whites, including Mexicans, African-Americans, Native Americans, and Chinese. Schools served to alleviate the social ills of heterogeneity in the imperial spaces of the western frontier by instilling obedience to republican law and order in its youngest residents, both white and non-white.[2]

In 1848, the Pacific coast of North America and everything west of the Mississippi River constituted an object of imperial desire for the United States. Two years, earlier, General Zachary Taylor's army wrested Texas from Mexican control, and as the nation stood on the verge of its first massive wave of European immigration, President James K. Polk secured through military threat and treaty the territories of New Mexico, California, and Oregon. For Anglo-American settlers and policy makers, these imperial spaces represented new frontiers for settlement and the growth of both market capitalism and republican government. That the residents of Monterey and San Francisco erected schools even before formal separation from Mexico reveals how settler colonialism moved in advance of U.S. expansion in the American West at mid-nineteenth century. For Polk and his imperial designers, California provided deep-water Pacific ports that would connect the nation to the Pacific and Asian economies, or at least prevent Britain from doing

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[2] *The Californian,* December 29, 1847, issue 33, column B; Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire and the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 2002), 25.

so. But where capitalist ambition ventured, the United States sought equally the establishment of republican government and Protestant morality. The public school, an institution that would transform over the next seventy-five years from a local, rural, one-room building into an experiment in managerial efficiency and centralization, promoted all three. Whether on the verge of Californian statehood or Hawaiian annexation, the school came to represent republican self-government and progress amidst swift and uncontrollable social and economic change.[3]

This chapter considers how the processes of public school centralization and U.S. imperial expansion became entangled and interdependent as the United States' quest for new territories and markets augmented between 1848 and the annexation of Hawaiʻi and acquisition of the Philippines in 1898. It charts how schooling's purpose of making good citizens informed and was informed by shifting imperial policies and anxieties. At the end of the nineteenth century, the territorial system rooted in white settler colonialism gave way to a form of empire that lacked, in most cases, a white majority. As the United States' interest in new lands and resources shifted overseas to Hawaiʻi, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines, colonial schools were charged not with making good citizens but rather with making good subjects of a new informal commercial empire. The United States held these new

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[3] Thomas Hietala, *Manifest Design: Anxious Aggrandizement in Late Jacksonian America* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1985), 83-9.

possessions at arm's length as racialist fears over the degradation of republican government by inferior peoples permeated imperial political discourse.[4]

Hawai'i, however, presented an unusual case for U.S. imperialists and anti-imperialists alike. Its rather large white settler population, when compared to the United States' other overseas possessions, demanded the establishment of all of the necessary trappings of Anglo-Saxon government and order, even if the privileges of self-government were not extended to all native Hawaiians or Asian workers on the islands. In the words of Sanford Dole, the Republic of Hawai'i's first president, Hawai'i was poised as "the western outpost of Anglo Saxon civilization and a vantage ground of American commerce in the Pacific." For American capitalists and politicians, Hawai'i offered the United States a unique opportunity to subordinate Asian and European commercial and military powers in the Pacific and to ensure access to extraterritorial markets in Asia. Because Hawai'i's heterogeneous population sparked vigorous debate over annexation, with particular emphasis and the fitness for self-government of Asiatic and Pacific peoples, it provides remarkable insight into the ways in which the domestic and foreign became entwined in the rise and expansion of the modern American state.[5]

Chapter one begins by considering the place of schools and public education in the continental expansions following the War with Mexico. The hasty and

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[4] Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire*, 2-10; Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 234-44.
[5] Quoted in Rob Wilson, "Exporting Christian Transcendentalism, Importing Hawaiian Sugar: The Trans-Americanization of Hawai'i" *American Literature* 72, 3(Sept., 2000): 522; Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 234-7.

sometimes violent movement of soldiers, settlers, and slaves to Texas and the frontier borderlands of Spanish America facilitated the transfer of ideas and institutions that middle-class Americans believed could temper the social upheaval of expansion. In new borderlands, schools represented the stability of the republic as imagined in New England by Horace Mann, father of the common school movement. The first part of this chapter considers how Mann's common school became the model for public schooling in the domestic spaces of the eastern seaboard and in the foreign spaces of the trans-Mississippi West. Secondly, it weighs how the rise of industrialization, corporatization, and immigration in the 1870s, 80s, and 90s informed the ways in which schools further connected the domestic to the foreign. As the United States forced the opening of new markets in Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific and struggled to both exclude and assimilate immigrants along lines of race, schooling provided a sense and mechanism of organization at a time of disorder.

Mann's rural and semi-urban common schools gave way to bureaucratized urban school systems across the nation at a time when most Americans still lived in rural areas. In the three decades after the Civil War, school reformers responded to population growth, immigration, industrialization, and territorial expansion. This model served the ambitions of a rising class of corporate managers who relied on and influenced schools to channel many native-born and immigrant students into

manufacturing jobs.[6] Schools also served the purposes of empire. As the Anglo residents of Monterey noted, schools could shape the institutional and cultural life of borderland regions. The Anglicization of the former Spanish territory ensured the extension of Anglo-American forms of governance, economy, social structures, even if it could not whiten the populace. The chapter concludes with a venture further westward from Mann's New England by looking at the colonial relationship between the United States and Hawaiʻi in the few years before annexation. It examines the intentions of education among native Hawaiians by Anglo-American colonizers as the United States drew Hawaiʻi ever closer into its political and economic orbit. By bookending the rise of industrial capitalism, managerial organization, and social reform with the imperial moments of 1848 and 1898, I hope to show how the domestic project of schooling and public schools both informed and were shaped by the transnational geography of U.S. empire. Furthermore, a look at schooling in California and Hawaiʻi before statehood reveals the shifting definitions and understandings of *foreign* and *domestic* in the lexicon of U.S. empire.[7]

This dissertation claims to begin with the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and to address the interlocutions of education, immigration, and empire through the 1924 National Origins Act. Consequently, an introductory chapter that begins in 1848 seems beyond the scope of this study. I have chosen to reach back to the mid-nineteenth century for two reasons. First, a project that deals with public schooling

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[6] Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, 2-3, 9-10, 44; Zunz, *Making American Corporate*, 12-14; Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America*, 72-5.
[7] James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783-1939* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 9.

as an integral component of industrial capitalism, social organization, and empire at the turn of twentieth century must also address the origins of modern public schools and their correlation to the emergence and growth of other institutions, including a national economy, transportation networks, and corporatism. A look at how Horace Mann's common school movement permeated western borderlands and later U.S. overseas possessions reveals how schooling provided threads of continuity at a time of immense demographic and economic change. Secondly, the settlement of California, its annexation in 1848, and its admission to the union in 1850 provide both contrast and continuum to the United States' overseas empire of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While settler colonialism certainly differed from the corporate and political control established in the Pacific and Latin America, both rested on assumptions of Anglo-Saxon hegemony in economy, culture, and government. Many historical accounts argue this imperial spirit suddenly appeared in 1898 with the defeat of the Spanish at Manila Bay and the subsequent control of the Philippines, Cuba, and Puerto Rico. More accurate ones suggest that the United States was well on its way to becoming an imperial republic in the 1840s. As it wrested the American Southwest from Mexico, began constructing a transcontinental railroad to carry settlers, goods, and capital to Pacific ports, and supported the Christianization of Hawaiians, the United States' imperial culture permeated and bound together the domestic and foreign much earlier than 1898.[8]

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[8] For recent works that presuppose the United States' imperial culture by mid-nineteenth century, see Hietala, *Manifest Design*; Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire*; James T. Campbell, Matthew Pratt Guterl, and Robert G. Lee, eds., *Race, Nation, and*

Schools appear to represent an entirely domestic function: the education of the nation's youth in preparation for virtuous citizenship and self-government. As this dissertation argues, the systematic education of the school-age population became critical to the formation of national character and containment of foreign threats to the nation between the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the restrictive immigration legislation of 1924. However, the work of creating and imagining a homogeneous and distinctive American culture through public schooling became interdependent with the nation's chosen role as imperialist, civilizer, and capitalist. The past few decades of scholarship on U.S. expansion and empire have shed light on the connectedness of the domestic and the foreign. Amy Kaplan's contention that the "discourse of domesticity was intimately intertwined with the discourse of Manifest Destiny" and empire in antebellum America bears important weight on the project of schooling. Domesticity included not only the home and sphere of womanhood but also the tasks of rearing and teaching children for work and participation in the republic. Matthew Jacobson too has considered the links among overseas expansion, industrial capitalism, and immigration policy debate. Schools offered a way for the rising class of professional managers to produce and organize potential labor pools. Likewise, schooling provided a system for the Americanization of the nation's European immigrants who could potentially become white and fit for self-government. By considering the foreign and the domestic as inseparable spheres, this chapter seeks to further illuminate how public schooling

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Empire in American History (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Ronald Takaki, *Iron Cages: Race and Culture in Nineteenth Century America* (New York: Knopf, 1979).

became intertwined in the mutually sustaining processes of empire-building and nation-building.[9]

Antebellum Expansions and Horace Mann's Common School Movement

On January 24, 1850, school reformers gathered in Royalton, Vermont to deliberate the importance of New England's common schools to the growth of civil institutions and American nationalism. Reverend Robert Southgate of Woodstock, VT spoke to the audience about the perils and opportunities of westward expansion. The *Vermont Chronicle* reported his cautious optimism about the "greatness of the West." Southgate described a tide of ignorant foreign immigrants "pouring in" to the new territories of California, New Mexico, and Oregon tempered only by a trickle of whites from the U.S. North and "the exhibition of Yankee spirit." The *Chronicle* noted that Southgate "insisted that on [New England] depended the character of the West…and as the West was, so would our country be." The convention resolved to espouse the "useful instruction" of Reverend Southgate and exclaimed that "there is no investment of capital more sure of a speedy and ample return than the outlay of money in the support and improvement of common schools." In its resolutions, the Royalton convention bound together the projects of schooling, capitalist growth, and westward expansion in a mutually sustaining effort to forge a continental empire built of republican principles as they were imagined in New England.[10]

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[9] Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire*, 24; Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*.
[10] *Vermont Chronicle*, January 29, 1850, issue 5, p. 18, col. F.

The Royalton convention's resolve came on the heels of a pivotal decade for American nationalism and foreign policy. Thomas Hietala's seminal work on manifest design and continental expansion provides a crucial contrast in American cultural demographics along the temporal axis of the 1840s. He notes that in the census of 1840, the nation's population was largely untouched by the massive immigrations of the second half of the nineteenth century. The vast majority of its citizens (native-born, Anglo, and Protestant) and slaves lived in the eastern half of North America, and its economic institutions (factories and corporations) and communication technologies (telegraph, railroad, and war steamer) were novel concepts to most. While the young nation had engaged in international conflict and conquest in the early national and early Jacksonian periods, the magnitude and scale of imperial expansion had yet to reach the critical mass it would over the next fifty years. Empire thus offers vital insight into the ways in which the foreign and the domestic sustained each other from war with Mexico to the annexation of Hawai'i. While U.S. policy makers' anxieties over "domestic harmony and national security" informed much of the imperial agenda of the decade, mainstream America also expressed concern over perceived dangers to national character both at home and abroad.[11]

Like territorial expansion, schools also served to quell fears about social and economic changes. Both provided alternatives to "basic structural changes in American economics and politics." The processes of empire and schooling often

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[11] Hietala, *Manifest Design*, viii, x-xi

worked in tandem. War with Mexico in 1845-46, the acquisition of Pacific territories from the Gulf of California to Puget Sound, and the further removal of the Plains Indians from their living and hunting grounds were not simply decisions and victories of policy makers. Combinations of Anglo-, German-, and Scandinavian-descended pioneers began to settle these newly acquired possessions of the United States, and in doing so, transplanted the institutions of republicanism and Protestantism to lands and societies inhabited by "savage" Mexicans, Native Americans, and by 1850, Chinese workers. Among them were churches, courthouses, and schools.[12]

The school served as a civilizing institution – a tool of expansionists and settlers as well as a check against the perils empire and immigrants created. In the continental territories of North America, schools ensured the transference of what native-born whites considered stable Anglo-Saxon institutions and values to the mercurial spaces of the frontier. Coupled with the rhetoric of manifest destiny, the project of schooling helped to transform, in the words of Amy Kaplan, "imperial conquest into spiritual regeneration in order to efface internal conflict or external resistance in visions of geopolitical domination as global harmony." School reform and centralization efforts provided for both the ordering of the domestic populace and for the integration of the foreign into visions of national progress and growth.[13]

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[12] Hietala, *Manifest Design*, xi, 270.
[13] Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire*, 31.

Though the roots of the United States' public education system were planted in New England, by the 1840s, common schools permeated the U.S. territories and borderlands of the trans-Mississippi West. Emerging national economic and transportation networks facilitated the spread of settlers, institutions, and culture. Horace Mann's educational objectives aligned with his reverence for republican self-government: "Education must prepare our citizens to become municipal officers, intelligent jurors, honest witnesses, legislators, or competent judges of legislation, - in fine, to fill all the relations of life." Mann did not need to remind those who carried his common school model across the continent that the continuity and expansion of the republic hinged on the creation and practice of empire. Indeed, in the 1840s, "republic" and "empire" were inseparable. Reformers and educational policy makers wanted schools that produced "good citizens [of] high-minded character, a religiously derived morality, and industriousness oriented to social progress." Many, including Mann and his disciples, hoped that a wide-reaching system of schools would produce armies of loyal settler-citizens capable of transplanting republican government, capitalist development, and Protestant morality to the ends of the continent.[14]

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[14] *Life and Works of Horace Mann*, vol. 2 (Boston: Lee & Shepard, 1891), 143, quoted in John A. Nietz, "Horace Mann's Ideas on General Methods in Education," *Elementary School Journal* 37, 10 (June, 1937): 743; Robert Wiebe, "Social Functions of Public Education," *American Quarterly* 21, 2 (Summer, 1969): 147; Walter Nugent, *Habits of Empire: A History of American Expansion* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2008), xiv; Paula Fass*, Outside In: Minorities and the Transformation of American Education* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 13; Carl Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780-1860* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1983), 98.

Mann's common school movement was bound up with his abolitionism. "Slavery would abolish education, if it should invade a free state; education would abolish slavery, if it *could* invade a slave state," argued Mann in an 1848 speech to the U.S. House of Representatives on the necessity of restricting slavery from new U.S. territories. Mann recognized a fundamental flaw in U.S. expansion policy: Jefferson's 'empire of liberty' could not in fact become a continental project if the asterisk of slavery always followed. And while Mann believed the South to be in grave error in defending slavery, he also sought to erode the peculiar institution from within by extending public schooling to the South.[15]

Mann's model of universal education conflicted with the dominant Southern view that regarded slavery itself as a form of education. A. Newton of Clinton, Mississippi supported Mann's common school movement but detested Mann's affiliation with "the vilest enemies of our country, the ranking abolitionists of the north." Newton believed it possible for the South at once to develop universal education for all whites, rich and poor, and to maintain slavery. But where they differed on the issue of slavery, Newton agreed with Mann that public schooling was "necessary to good government, the preservation of liberty, and the happiness of mankind." Its extension into the slaveholding South and into territories of the trans-Mississippi West provided a chance at national cohesion at a time of sectional divide. Though the conflict over the spread of slavery to the West ultimately drowned out other efforts to find common cultural ground, schooling had already

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[15] Quoted in A. Newton, "The School Question in Hinds County, no. vii," *Hinds County Gazette*, February 1, 1850, issue 33, col. C.

become a vital tenet of national culture. When coupled with the integrative character of market capitalism, public education would continue to serve as an agent of nationalism. But schools also became the battleground on which political and cultural wars over immigration, race, and empire were fought, a local space in which national and transnational issues came to bear.[16]

If public schooling gained traction in the South only slowly and with much resistance from slave-holding elites, its westward expansion enjoyed the support of market capitalists and expansionist foreign policy-makers. By the time Californians instituted Mann's common school model in the late 1840s, the United States had begun a process of national integration through the growth of market capitalism. As Charles Sellers has stated, the market revolution that unfolded following the War of 1812 established "capitalist hegemony over economy, politics, and culture." The integration of the nation's economy meant that other barriers began to fall as well. Rural Americans who had previously remained largely isolated from national or even state affairs found themselves connected not only economically but through an increasingly pervasive set of distinctly American ideals that they perhaps had not even realized governed much of their own cultural existence. Among these cultural manifestations were the ways in which Protestant values and diligent economic pursuits could further not only individual prosperity but also the overall progress of the nation. Progress took a variety of forms. Spatial and temporal distances shrunk

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[16] A. Newton, "The School Question in Hinds County, no. vii," *Hinds County Gazette*, February 1, 1850, issue 33, col. C; A. Newton, "The School Question in Hinds County, no. viii," *Hinds County Gazette*, February 8, 1850, issue 34, col. D.

as railroads, telegraphs, roads, and canals connected the vast North American space that expansionists sought for American economic productivity. As communications and transportation technologies improved, previously isolated and new frontier communities became increasingly aware of national issues that perhaps, while maybe not affecting their daily lives, nevertheless sparked interest and attention throughout the national polity.[17]

Schools enjoyed growing social centrality in this new national infrastructure that began to unfold in the early Jacksonian period. Of particular importance to the school movement during the colonization, settlement, and incorporation of western lands were the colleagues of Horace Mann who carried the common school from New England to the frontiers of the growing empire. In 1853, New England transplant John Swett, obtained a job as a principal in San Francisco after several months in the California gold fields. His mentor, educator William Russell, charged his protégé with "[disseminating] the good New England influence which you have carried with you." Russell and Swett imagined a contiguous system of schooling that would combat the socio-economic fluctuations and racial pluralism of the imperial borderlands. "Living in a state where people have been gleaned from every other state in the Union, from France, Germany, Italy, England, Ireland, Australia, and China, new conditions have made new questions to be decided, and new issues to be met." Both Russell and Sweet drew their sense of purpose from faith in the

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[17] Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 3-33, 72; John L. Rury, *Education as Social Change* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005), 62.

orderliness of Anglo-Saxon institutions and culture in New England, where whites attempted to neatly order a heterogeneous society that consisted of Native-Americans, free blacks, mulattoes, Irish immigrants and other non-Anglos. Swett's brainchild, the California public school system, later sanctioned the exclusion of Chinese and Japanese students in a concerted effort to ameliorate the threats posed by these "new conditions."[18]

To common school advocates, the "time-honored" system of public schooling represented a central component of national culture, and they met resistance with contempt. In 1853, the *New Hampshire Statesman* noted that throughout the nation, Catholics were organizing against common schools. The *Statesman* attributed Catholic resistance to public education to its dogmatic vision, narrow view of the common good, and to the Catholic Church's grip on its followers. The anti-Catholic immigrant Know-Nothing Movement that peaked in the mid-1850s cast the authoritative structures and political associations with European monarchies as antithetical to American principles of individual liberty and republican self-government. Particularly within the context of the sectional politics of the 1850s, Know-Nothingism constituted a homogeneity movement at a time of national

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[18] William Russell to John Swett, quoted in Nicholas C. Polos, "A Yankee Patriot: John Swett, the Horace Mann of the Pacific" *History of Education Quarterly* 4, 1 (Mar., 1964): 18; Boston, *Proceedings of the National Education Association*, 1872, 74, quoted in Polos, "A Yankee Patriot," 19. On the complicated racial make-up of New England and Anglo attempts to order it, see Joan Pope Melish, "The Racial Vernacular: Contesting the Black/White Binary in Nineteenth-Century Rhode Island," in *Race, Nation and Empire in American History*, ed. James T. Campbell, Matthew Pratt Guterl, and Robert G. Lee (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 17-39.

conflict and crisis. The Know-Nothings identified a common enemy of both the free North and the slave-holding South: a despotic, dogmatic Pope and church hierarchy intent on infiltrating the United States with immigrant minions who would vote, take public office, and undermine the very essence of American culture and politics.[19]

Evidence of Catholic designs on the public schools in the 1850s is suspect and sparse. Sectional politics outweighed perceived threats from Rome, even if the anti-Catholicism of the nativist American Party offered opportunities for national unity against a common enemy – especially after the Civil War. Towards the end of Reconstruction, Catholic communities in the Northeast and Midwest engaged in concerted efforts to eliminate Bible-reading, a practice that represented the overpowering influence of Protestantism in public schools. In Deseret, Utah, for example, the township's settlers conflated the role of the church leadership as educators with the need for a common school. "Hence, we see the necessity of schools that we and our children may be prepared to perform all that the Lord requires of us," argued Elder P.P. Pratt of Deseret in 1854. Catholics also began to demand an apportionment of state public school funds for parochial schools. For white Protestant nationalists, these requests confirmed the political and cultural dangers posed by a religiously and racially heterogeneous America. In the coming decades of industrialization and mass immigration from southern and eastern

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[19] *New Hampshire Statesman*, April 2, 1853, issue 1662, col. D; John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 6-7.

Europe, exclusionist voices grew louder and nastier as Anglo-Americans attempted to police the boundaries of whiteness, Anglo-Saxonism, and Protestantism. European immigrants, many of them Catholic, posed similar cultural threats to those of Chinese migrant workers in the West and emancipated slaves in the South unless they learned how to become loyal Americans. However, unlike Chinese and African-Americans, Europeans enjoyed the possibility of becoming white at a time when American nationalism often hinged on whiteness.[20]

While Mann's efforts at streamlining U.S. schools did not translate into immediate institutional change, his organizational and pedagogical vision became significant in the years following the Civil War. Though sectional tensions and the dogged persistence of local autonomy as the true foundation of American democracy impeded a unified national school system or centralized curricula, the authority of the federal government grew immensely as the nation struggled to cope with a rapidly modernizing economy and the social consequences of full-scale industrial capitalism. With its initial roots in the market and transportation revolutions of the mid-nineteenth century, the national economy grew immensely in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era and permeated individual's lives in ways previously unimaginable. As the nation's urban centers, rural farmlands, and frontier wildernesses became increasingly interconnected and interdependent, population management became a priority for many social reformers who feared

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[20] *Deseret News*, January 12, 1854, issue 2, col. A; Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 28-9.

the results of unchecked corporate capitalism, territorial expansion, and immigration.[21]

Social Imperialism and the Centralization of Public Schooling

In the two decades following the Civil War and Reconstruction, schools gained centrality in social reform movements aimed at reigning in a perceived decay in national ethos and morality resulting from the confluence of industry, urbanization, and immigration. Education historian Michael Katz has identified five major problems that, according to advocates of school reform, prohibited the United States from reaching its fullest moral and social potential while increasing its industrial and agricultural production. First, the rate at which urban crime and poverty had grown during the mid-nineteenth century alarmed many reformers. Whether or not such urban problems stemmed from moderization itself or simply grew proportionally with the population remained unclear, but many elites and middle-class reformers deemed these shifts as threats to social order, Protestant morality, and industrious work habits. In particular, many leading mainstream white social reformers believed that impoverishment resulted not from misfortune but from negative social and familial environments in which lower-class children (often synonymous with immigrant children) were either neglected or taught to lead lives of deviance and crime. Less time in these types of social situations, argued

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[21] Robert Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1967), xiii; Wayne Urban and Jennings Wagoner, eds., *American Education: A History* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2000), 162-3; William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991), xv-xvi.

elites, and more time spent in supervised, organized, and mandatory schools would slow the spread of urban pathologies in subsequent generations.[22]

Second, cultural heterogeneity, often a result of increased immigration particularly to northern urban centers of industry, provided social policy makers with additional anxiety. Massive immigration by Irish Catholics in the 1840s fueled anti-Catholic and anti-radical forms of nativism among Protestant reformers. They saw these new arrivals as alien, and thus inherently inferior, unintelligent, and in dire need of acculturation to prevailing Protestant and national values. Nativists called for stringent naturalization laws in order to keep foreigners from participating in American democratic processes.[23] Reformers argued that schools could provide the necessary substitute to familial and parish acculturation by replacing it with an alternative environment that taught discipline, industriousness, and Protestant morality. Thus, by the early 1880s, systematized urban schools had become "agents of cultural standardization" at a time of transnational interaction along the lines of immigration and empire.[24]

The last three points identified by Katz are closely interrelated and indicative of the growing concerns of an emerging professional and managerial class about the maintenance of their own social capital and family structures. First, control and

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[22] Michael Katz, "The Origins of Public Education: A Reassessment," in *The Social History of American Education*, edited by B. Edward McClellan and William J. Reese (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 102, 103.
[23] Katz, "Origins of Public Education," 103,104. For a succinct discussion of anti-radical and anti-Catholic nativism, see Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 4-9.
[24] Katz, "Origins of Public Education," 104.

supervision of the laboring classes became paramount. Reformers in northern urban centers feared the degradation of their own status if laborers remained, according to the respectable classes, irresponsible, undependable, and immoral. Schools not only became sites of intervention in cycles of poverty and crime but also guarded against the ascendency of lower-class values and norms up the social and economic ladder. Second, the need for discipline among a growing and increasingly foreign workforce became an important aspect of school reform – one that was closely connected to anxieties about moral and cultural decay among urban and immigrant populations. Reformers observed an increasingly lawless youth population roaming city streets with no proper adult supervision. Punctuality, restraint, and docility became the rudimentary lessons prescribed for workers and students both in manufacturing centers and in agrarian regions closely connected to cities by national transportation and communication networks.

Finally, the emerging middle class of professionals and entrepreneurs expressed anxiety over the socialization of their own children. In the early nineteenth century, it would have been customary for a family with sufficient means to send adolescents to private boarding schools for education. These children were often socialized without the influence of their families. But as industrialization created new economic realities, the new middle class began to take ownership of their children's socialization. In doing so, they also became invested in a public education system that served not only to Americanize immigrants but also to socialize native-born children. These processes, though sometimes occurring in the same physical space, were often not intended to blur the lines between socio-

economic or cultural groups. Rather, the same educational system meant to preserve and strengthen the values and status of native-born children instead erased cultural and linguistic traditions for foreign and non-white children.[25]

The Rising Significance of Immigration

By the 1880s, the United States had solidified in the minds of journalists and observers as a "nation" – no longer a patchwork collection of communities, states, and territories. The continent had, according to both popular and scholarly voices, been conquered and settled (despite the most explosive growth coming after the "closing of the frontier"). Native Americans had been driven off of lands in order to make space for both small- and large-scale agriculture and for thousands of miles of railroad track. Local and regional market economies too were being quickly subsumed by urban-industrial capitalism. Older urban centers in the Northeast expanded and newer ones in the Midwest and West developed out of overgrown towns or through connective transportation lines between previously separate towns of close proximity. But the expansion of communication, technology, and economy did not signal the willing demise of localism. As Robert Wiebe has observed, most people who experienced the swift changes in American society – national, industrial, mechanical, and urban – also experienced corresponding reactions of "dislocation and bewilderment." These feelings, conjured up in part because the United States lacked the managerial authority to govern the creation of new transportation systems, cities, or industries, reflected a deep-seated reverence

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[25] Katz, "Origins of Public Education," 108-9.

for life rooted in small towns and urban neighborhoods where family and church remained the bedrock social structures. In essence, industrialization, urbanization, and mechanization were, in many eyes, destroying the relative peace and prosperity of local political, economic, and social structures.[26]

Add to the social upheaval wrought by changes in economic and social structures the prospect of dramatic population increase through immigration. Of the population increase between 1860 and 1900, immigrants counted for one-third – the same proportion stood among industrial workers from 1870 to 1920. As Alan Trachtenberg has observed, "increasing ethnic diversity and the making of a new industrial working class constituted a single process." Foreign persons tended to congregate in urban enclaves – seemingly sheltered from Americanization programs that would - after the turn of the twentieth century – attempt to draw many of them out of familiar ethnic and linguistic traditions and into an acculturated life of hard work, Protestant values, temperance, uniform education, and national loyalty.[27]

Though the United States remained demographically a rural nation until the 1920s, reformers grappled with the perceived problems associated with the rise of the factory system, the rapid influx of foreign persons, mostly from Europe, but also from Asia, and a host of issues associated with increased urbanization, including overcrowding, poverty, and child labor. In a broad sense, early Progressive reformers attempted to provide cultural assimilation for the throngs of immigrants

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[26] Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, 11-16.
[27] Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America*, 88, 93.

that arrived, settled, and sought both western agricultural lands and industrial employment in cities such as New York, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, St. Louis, Cincinnati, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Chicago. In doing so, they both protected immigrants from exploitation but also attempted to produce orderly, non-radical workers who would contribute to the growth of corporate industrial capitalism.

If capitalism, according to industrialists, corporate managers, and many politicians, was paramount within the American democratic system, labor unrest, strikes, and unions stood as the antithesis of American values. Though collective action against those who controlled the means of production did not emanate solely from immigrant neighborhoods, the popular image of radical, striking workers took on increasingly foreign features. Often portrayed as unskilled, unreliable, and unwilling to conform to the American ethos of hard work and individual achievement, immigrant workers received the added burden of suspicion of the intent to organize strikes and to use violence to disrupt the American industrial machine. For school reformers, the immigrant industrial worker may have been a lost cause, but his and her children provided the opportunity for Progressives to inculcate American values into future generations of workers, voters, and citizens. However, as many who shaped curricula and school policy were well aware, the Americanization of foreign persons involved the careful organization of values, ideas, and of course students along lines of class, ethnicity, and race. [28]

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[28] Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America*, 89-93;

The idea that the United States has stood as the most democratic, opportunistic, and industrious nation since its founding has converged with its image as a nation of immigrants – a place where others can prosper through hard work and live as republican citizens through virtuous participation in the national economy. Yet as Donna Gabaccia points out, the immigrant paradigm of United States history is highly problematic when one takes into account its exclusionary racial practices.[29] In 1882, Congress granted white Californians their wish for a more homogeneous population by denying the entrance of Chinese labors for ten years. In 1884, the Exclusion Act was extended to include all Chinese and was subsequently revised to suspend such immigration indefinitely.[30]

Chinese exclusion and subsequent limitations on Japanese and 'new' European immigrants reflected not only the expansion of racial science and politics, but also attempts by native-born Americans to control the movement of people that resulted from territorial expansion and the growth of corporate and industrial capitalism. Shifts in supply and demand across time and geography meant that for immigrants, mobility constituted a better alternative to assimilation. Characterized by native-born Anglo-Americans as transient, immigrants brought even more fluidity to a society undergoing dramatic shifts in economy and social organization.

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[29] Donna Gabaccia, "Is Everywhere Nowhere?" Nomads, Nations, and the Paradigm of United States History," *Journal of American History* 86,3 (Dec. 1999): 1115, 1128. Also see Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).
[30] Ian Haney-Lopez, *White By Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 37-8; Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 17-45.

This made them easy scapegoats for nationalists who regarded exclusion or assimilation as the only viable approaches to immigration policy.[31]

In order to quell these perceived threats to an ordered society and national interests, schoolmen and women taught both immigrant and non-white children lessons in "cleanliness, subordination and order."[32] During the 1880s, public schools became as much sites of acculturation for minority children as they were places where students learned the necessary geographic, historical, and civic lessons thought to create a stable and patriotic citizenry. But programs of Americanization (discussed in chapter four) of both native-born and foreign-born children needed, in addition to public funding, a uniform system of instruction and strong leadership committed to imparting cultural norms to children. Prior to the Gilded Age, the term "school system" would have been a misnomer. Schools were often autonomous institutions that, despite sharing some fundamental American ideals, operated independently of any centralized authority. The "Little Red Schoolhouse" – long the institutional model of agrarian, Protestant, republican America – became a symbolic continuance of a process of Americanization that now took place in racially and culturally heterogeneous urban school systems. Its image as a pillar of Anglo-Saxon republican government gave it cultural staying power even if its practicality faded. By the turn of the twentieth century, the rural schoolhouse was

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[31] Jackson Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 109.
[32] Raymond A. Mohl, *Poverty in New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 183, quoted in Selma Berrol, "Public Schools and Immigrants: The New York City Experience," in Bernard J. Weiss, *American Education and the European Immigrant, 1840-1940* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 31.

ill-equipped to deal with the challenges of educating children in an industrialized and heterogeneous society.[33]

School Centralization as Urbanization

Though traditional rural and small town behaviors and values did not disappear as the United States experienced a fury of urbanization as it approached the twentieth century, these folkways and norms were often blended with and at times masked by new urban cultures of mass production and consumption, community anonymity, and bureaucratization. Urbanization has often been closely linked to dramatic increases in industrial capitalism. Sociologists have characterized this process not simply as a phenomenon in which city populations grew significantly faster than rural populations, but rather as a process through which these two spaces were integrated on economic, political, social, and cultural levels. The urban school system was both a consequence and mechanism of urbanization. By no means a constant, even, or linear progression, urban schools and the corporate-style bureaucratic structure employed therein dwarfed and eventually replaced the "rural school problem" that many advocates of more organized, hierarchical, and specific modes of schooling regarded as a detriment to students' prospects for productive citizenship in an urbanizing society.[34]

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[33] John J. Appel and Selma Appel, "The Huddled Masses and the Little Red Schoolhouse," in Weiss, *American Education and the European Immigrant*, 17-30.
[34] David Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 1974), 21.

School reformers advocated shifts from one-room schools to age-appropriate or graded curriculum, uniform scheduling, and the professionalization of teaching and administrative positions. As education historian David Tyack has noted, "the division of labor in the factory, the punctuality of the railroad, the chain of command and coordination in modern businesses – these aroused the sense of wonder and excitement in men and women seeking to systematize the schools." Thus, formal schooling became not only an exercise in developing patriotic citizens out of both native-born and immigrant children, but also a process of naturalizing urbanization and industry. At school, children practiced following rules, obeying authority figures, observing time clocks, and practicing "proper" conduct. The school began to function much like a factory: students performed certain tasks at specific times and did so under the supervision of a teacher – the equivalent of a manager or supervisor.[35]

Efforts to create centralized administrative oversight for schools became a crucial aspect of civic and demographic management. However, federal and even state involvement in schools remained meager. Rather, it was the combined efforts of local business elites and new school administrative experts who drove

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[35] Tyack, *The One Best System,* 14-15, 28. On urbanization, see Wiebe, *The Search for Order*, 12-15; Oscar Handlin, "The Modern city as a Field of Historical Study," in John Burchard and Oscar Handlin, eds., *The Historian and the City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1963), 1-26; Hope Tisdale, "The Process of Urbanization," *Social Forces* 20, 3 (Mar., 1942): 311-16; Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *American Journal of Sociology* 44 (July, 1938), 1-24. On urban anonymity, detachment from community, and the demise of rural and small town consciousness and place, see Louis Wirth, *Louis Wirth on Cities and Social Life: Selected Papers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964).

centralization. In 1867, the new U.S. Department of Education mandated that the occupied South provide free public education for all children, but it did not oversee the implementation of southern educational policy. Rather, it was largely responsible for collecting information and data on schools. Local governments and - by the end of the nineteenth century - business interests assumed the majority of policy-making in both urban and rural school systems.

School reformers took measures to pass attendance laws as a first step in demonstrating the need for uniform standards and centralized school authority. Compulsory attendance laws provided a mechanism of control and legislative oversight in an era in which the United States' population grew exponentially as a result of industrialization, urbanization, immigration, and expansion. By 1890, twenty-seven states had passed compulsory attendance laws and by 1918, all forty-eight states required minimum school attendance. California boasted of its nationally recognized compulsory education laws, arguing that in "the age of specialization," educated men and women would be the leading candidates for jobs in the industrialized economy. Though enforcement proved difficult because underpaid and overburdened school officials could not attend to an added task and because many families needed children to contribute economically, attendance did increase during this period. From 1860 to 1890, enrollment for children between

ages five and nineteen rose from 49 percent to 64 percent, and illiteracy declined from 20% to 13% during the same period.[36]

Cities became the centers of school centralization efforts. To school superintendents and other officials such as New York's Andrew S. Draper and John D. Philbrick, a uniform system schools and curriculum represented a vehicle of the progress of both urban growth and of the ideals of the American republic. As Philbrick remarked in 1885, "the future of our cities will be largely what education makes it and the future of our country will be largely what the cities make it. What but education is to settle the question how far self government is to be practicable in our populous cities?"[37] His statement expressed anxiety about the transformative nature of urbanization in the United States. Philbrick and other advocates of school centralization saw an opportunity to make a clean break from the moral decay and weakened ethos of industriousness they believed stemmed from innate immorality among the nation's lower classes, comprised mostly of immigrant families. If allowed to continue, the middle class, they believed, could also be infected by immorality. By teaching children and young adults the necessary skills to become both productive workers and virtuous citizens, reformers hoped that schools could build a cultural divide – particularly between first and second-generation immigrants.

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[36] Urban and Wagoner, *American Education*, 172-3; *San Francisco Globe*, October 20, 1908.
[37] John D. Philbrick, *City School Systems in the United States*: *U.S. Bureau of Education, Circular of Information no. 1* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1885), 10-11, quoted in Tyack, *The One Best System*, 40.

But this project of socialization was not intended to provide upward social mobility for the laboring classes. Rather, school structures, rules, and curricula reinforced a culture of corporate organization for American society – one in which racial, ethnic, and class-based groups served specific and necessary functions. As Katz remarked, "the school system as a whole became an object lesson in the organization of modern society, a force, as its promoters were fond of point out, which would radiate its influence outward through entire communities." It was not simply the repetitious acts required of students meant to instill punctuality, industriousness, patriotism, and morality – acts such as adherence to specific schedules, deference to authority, or recitation of the pledge of allegiance. Curricula too provided an avenue through which educators and administrators could implement social organizational strategies desirable to professional and elite classes. As I demonstrate in chapters two through four, the selection and use of specific narratives of human and national progress focused on the necessity of social roles. That is, students supposedly needed to acquire knowledge of the necessary geographic, historical, and civic structures that informed their own places in society. For Anglos, this meant superiority. For non-Anglos, it meant deference and subordination.[38]

Schedule, organizational structure, and hierarchy became paramount in the centralization movement in urban school districts during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. Though mid-nineteenth century consolidation efforts brought

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[38] Katz, "Origins of Public Education," in McClellan and Reese, *Social History of American Education*," 105.

many schools under ward board systems, advocates of the superintendent model in which one overarching office formulated and dictated policy regarded prior structures as parochial, corrupt, and ultimately unprepared to deal with the demographic and cultural shifts of an urbanizing America. "Administrative progressives," as historian David Tyack has termed supporters of centralization, were often businessmen, professional elites, and university people who attempted to fundamentally transform the decision-making process in American schools. As a factory owner would employ managers to carry out his ultimate decisions, so too would the superintendent rely on a loyal staff to implement policy. Ward boards of education had frequently left policy to individual schools and even teachers – a system that administrative progressives saw as disorganized, inefficient, and incapable of effecting strong consensus policies applicable across broad ranges of teachers and students. Furthermore, immigrant and ethnic groups often congregated in certain neighborhoods within cities. They attended their own schools and elected their own school board members. Administrative progressives were quite skeptical of the ability and willingness of ward school board members to provide a curriculum conducive to the assimilation of immigrant children. By centralizing city schools and eradicating ward school boards, assimilation would be, they felt, in the safe and capable hands of Anglo-Saxon professional managers.[39]

The centralization movement proved quite formidable, and by 1913, the number of central school board members in the twenty-eight largest American cities

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[39] Tyack, *The One Best System*, 126-7, 132.

had dropped to 264 from 603 in 1893. In 1896, for example, a Committee of 100 successfully pushed a centralization bill through the New York legislature, thus destroying the decentralized ward board system. As the ward system declined in urban centers throughout the nation and as school board membership was consolidated, the power of the superintendent expanded so that his agenda met little resistance from board sub-committees. Curriculum and policy often left the superintendent's office in the form of daily circulars to principals and sometimes teachers. These circulars reveal a concerted effort on the part of superintendents' offices to control curriculum, set extra-curricular agendas, and to embrace a general program of industriousness, Americanization, and patriotism – a function of which schools had become as integral as military service.[40]

The school centralization movement, part of a much larger progressive attempt to eradicate corrupt and inefficient municipal government, was not the product of the lower or even the middle classes. Though the middle class would embrace Progressive projects within and beyond education during this period, the initial attempts and successes at school centralization were the fruits of labor of the elite classes – "leading citizens" in business and professional roles who, through political connections and economic clout, could force such sweeping structural shifts in school administration. In this sense, business elites frequently muddled the distinctions between "public" and "private" as they aspired to create organization out of perceived social chaos. Across the country, business and professional men

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[40] Tyack, *The One Best System*, 149.

applied the successful managerial tactics they and their class employed in the private sector to public policy – to engage in a kind of philanthropic governance.[41]

The mismanagement of schools, advocates of the corporate model argued, continued in large part because of the confluence of corrupt politics and foreign culture that characterized many of the nation's urban centers. Elite reformers believed that in order for schools to provide the greatest good, they had to be wrestled from the grips of political machines like Tammany Hall in New York or Democratic control in San Francisco, Philadelphia, or St. Louis. They saw these political institutions as riddled with foreign influences that cared little about the progress of the nation. A paramount concern of these elite reformers was the supposed degraded moral character of racial and cultural groups who did not share an Anglo-Saxon heritage and who accordingly should not be denied full participation in school management. Trends toward providing instruction in the necessary cultural skills to make up for a perceived lack of racial and ethnic pedigree paralleled both national and state efforts at passing restrictive immigration laws.

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[41] Sam Bass Warner, *The Private City: Philadelphia in Three Periods of Its Growth* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968), 214-15; Tyack, *The One Best System*, 128, 130, 154; John Meyer, David Tyack, Joane Nagel, and Audri Gordon, "Public Education as Nation-Building in America: Enrollments and Bureaucratization in the American States, 1870-1930," *American Journal of Sociology* 85,3 (Nov., 1979): 593.

Full Circle: New Englanders and Schools In the Colonial Space of Hawai'i

"It is doubtful if the public schools of the United States, even, though their praise is in all ends of the earth, are doing more effective work today than the schools of Hawaii, private as well as public, in refining out the pure gold of humanity from the crudest of raw materials." In the year before Hawaiian annexation and with U.S. corporate interest in Pacific markets rising, the *Hawaiian Gazette* commented on the state of public schooling in the Hawaiian Islands. In comparing Hawai'i's school-age population to that of the United States, the *Gazette* condemned native Hawaiians as "the crudest" form of humanity – a race in dire need of moral uplift and training in manual labor. The *Gazette* viewed the school system as an integral part of the U.S. colonial project in the islands but also an operation of an entirely different magnitude. The *Gazette* assumed that schools in the United States involved the simple task of educating likeminded, naturally intelligent, native-born Anglo-American children in order to prepare them for citizenship. On the other hand, teaching Hawaiian students required more effort because of their presumed racial inferiority. "The word educate means to 'draw out,' but with the Hawaiian child, we find little or nothing to draw until we have first put something in," noted the *Gazette* in its report on the meeting of the Honolulu Teachers' Association. That the daily considered the schooling of native Hawaiians laborious yet vital to U.S.

interests reveals the mutual centrality of both empire and education to U.S. culture at the end of the nineteenth century.[42]

The *Gazette*'s editors recalled the evolution of the Republic of Hawai'i's education system from its introduction in "the civilized government of the Hawaiian Islands as the outgrowth of schools established by the American missionaries" beginning in the 1820s. Among these missionaries were the members of the Armstrong family, whose patriarch has been deemed the "father of American education" in Hawai'i by one historical account.[43] Richard Armstrong began his educational work among Hawaiians in the 1830s as chief administrator of schools in which Armstrong preached manual labor training and homemaking. His son Samuel Chapman Armstrong founded the Hampton Norman and Agricultural Institute in Virginia in 1868 after commanding an African-American regiment for the Union Army. Like his father Richard and mother Clarissa, Samuel viewed both native Hawaiians and his black students at Hampton as "undeveloped [races]." His childhood among the mission schools in O'ahu and his familiarity with the Hilo Boarding School for Boys had prepared Armstrong for a career as an educator of the "weak tropical races" of the American South. Armstrong's ties to both Hawai'i and Virginia represent the broader nexuses of American schooling and U.S. colonialism.

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[42] "School Matters: To What Extent is Education Progressing," *Hawaiian Gazette*, February 12, 1897, issue 13, p. 7, col. A; "School Matters: Meeting at High School Last Night," *Hawaiian Gazette*, February 2, 1897, issue 49, p. 6, col. B.
[43] "School Matters: To What Extent is Education Progressing," *Hawaiian Gazette*, February 12, 1897, issue 13, p. 7, col. A; Benjamin O. Wist, *A Century of Public Education in Hawaii, 1850-1940* (Honolulu: Hawaii Education Review, 1940), 59, quoted in Gary Okihiro, *Island World: A History of Hawai'i and the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 103.

Both schools in the continental United States and those in the Republic of Hawaiʻi served as organizing mechanisms of industry and racial hierarchy as U.S. capitalism expanded both at home and abroad.[44]

Hawaiʻi constituted part of the ambiguous geography of U.S. empire. Approximately eighty percent of the islands' population was non-white, and through the imperial gaze of white America appeared a foreign, savage population unfit for self-government and in need of civilizing. But the U.S. also considered Hawaiʻi crucial to its economic foray into the Pacific and to the protection of its native inhabitants from the effeminate effects of European imperialism. For American interests in the islands, Hawaiʻi and her schools represented places of interlocution between East and West, institutions where non-whites could receive training in English, industriousness, Protestant morality, and "subservience." By 1897, school attendance had reached "between 11,000 and 12,000 children of Hawaiian and European nationalities – or the races entitled to the electoral franchise." Not included under such provisions were Chinese and Japanese workers, whose children also attended Hawaiʻi's public schools in smaller but no less significant numbers. Of the schooling of Asian children, the *Gazette* argued that "the more near an Asiatic is brought to Western ways, the less dangerous a competitor will he be in labor or business…The remarkably growing thirst of Asiatics here for an English education speaks volumes for the potency of Hawaiian civilizing influences." Through the careful education of young non-whites in Hawaiʻi, the U.S. could uplift savage races,

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[44] Quoted in Okihiro, *Island World*, 117.

secure economic stability in the constantly fluctuating economy of the imperial borderlands, and assert its own form of empire in opposition to the monarchical influence of European colonialism.[45]

But perhaps most importantly, schools could be used to sort out the ambiguity of the mixed-racial and cultural demography of the islands. That Hawai'i's exoticism and foreignness were both objects of American desire and intrigue and demarcations of barbarism and savagery meant that the islands' schools were necessary to inject Anglo-American culture and values into what would become a formal U.S. territory by 1900. As Gary Okihiro describes the transference of educational models, "the ideas of native education and servile labor for the ostensible uplift of subject races migrated between island and continent." Island schooling for native Hawaiians, industrial education for African-Americans and American Indians, and the Americanization projects of public schools throughout the nation intimately tied the United States to Hawai'i. White America mapped its quest to alleviate social tensions at home onto the imperial geography of the Pacific.[46]

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[45] "School Matters: To What Extent is Education Progressing," *Hawaiian Gazette*, February 12, 1897, issue 13, p. 7, col. A. Instruction in both Hawaiian and English gradually gave way to compulsory English-only schools by 1896. Though a school for instruction in Japanese was begun in 1896 in Honolulu for the 400 or so Japanese children of Hawai'i, its proprietors did so with the intention that these children would eventually migrate to the Japanese homeland. The *Gazette* praised the school's establishment because of its goal of voluntary removal of Japanese from Hawai'i. See *Hawaiian Gazette*, April 21, 1896, issue 32, p. 6, col. B.
[46]Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire*, 63-4; Okihiro, *Island World*, 134.

Schools exemplified the interdependence of nation-building and empire-building from the annexation of California in 1848 to that of Hawai'i fifty years later. Through schooling, U.S. empire transmuted from an act of violent conquest to a "narrative of progress." Three years before Hawaiian annexation, Honolulu Board of Education procured through purchase the Bishop Mansion for use as Honolulu High School. The building's original designers, the *Gazette* reported, had succeeded in recreating the ornate architecture of New England's normal schools on Emma Street in Honolulu. Once the residence of prominent American missionaries, the mansion would now serve a related function of the colonial project. As the white residents of San Francisco had noted the multi-functionality of their new building for the progress of republicanism and Protestantism, so too could Honolulu's Anglo-Americans gaze upon the physical manifestation of their visions for their appropriated homeland. Two years after the forced dissolution of the Hawai'ian monarchy, the converted high school would continue to re-imagine and re-configure U.S. empire as a benevolent, enlightening project, much as schools had at mid-century in the imperial borderlands of the continental frontier.[47]

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[47]"High School of Honolulu: Plans for Construction taken from a New England Building," *Hawaiian Gazette*, October 1, 1895, issue 73, p. 3, col. A.

PART II

DISCURSIVE FRAMEWORKS

CURRICULUM OF THE ASCENDANT WHITE REPUBLIC

At the 1900 Universal Exposition in Paris, the New York City department of education submitted a report of the weekly progress in fourth and fifth grade arithmetic, geography, and history. The collection included the transcription work of school children. Thirteen-year-old Charles Digennaro of Public School 26 was among those whose geography work was selected. Digennaro reported that "the most important [country of North America] is the United States…it has temperate climate…It is just the kind of place for people to work in." He went on to compare the moderate U.S. climate to the frigid temperatures of Canada and to the heat of Mexico and Central America, "where it is so warm, the people are lazy." Digennaro's geography lessons set up the distinctions that courses in history and civics would also make: "The people of the United States have made more progress than any other nation in the world."[1]

In late nineteenth and early twentieth century schools, the collective force of world geography, American history, and civics curricula commanded an understanding of the United States as an exceptional nation. American exceptionalism drew its power from the mutually sustaining projects of republican

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[1] Paris Exposition of 1900, Board of Education exhibition, 1900, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 235, NYC Department of Records/Municipal Archives, New York, NY.

government, racial nationalism, and empire building both at home and abroad. Its ideological strength came from a deep-seated belief in the righteousness of American democracy and a decisive neglect of its shortcomings, which often manifested along lines of race. Thus the "people of the United States" to whom Digennaro attributed progress referred to whites – a category that became increasingly synonymous with "American." While non-whites were in a very real sense integral to the project of nation building, schoolbook authors selectively omitted their contributions to American history and civilization in order to fit the nation's historical narrative more neatly into broader Western concepts of progress and modernization.

Digennaro continued: "[Americans] are mostly people who came from Europe. Every year there are thousands of people who come in from all the countries in the world. Most of the inhabitants are white, but there are also Chinese, Negroes, and Indians." The fifth-grader's choice of words revealed the obstacle to what many whites perceived as the realization of a perfect republic: the presence of inferior races who were unfit for the responsibilities of self-government. Two years after the annexation of Hawaiʻi and invasion of the Philippines, the anxieties among whites about a racially heterogeneous imperial republic escalated as the nation's connections to the non-Anglo world grew both at home and abroad.

Many of those involved in the project of public schooling found ways to articulate, convey, and reconcile these anxieties through geography, history, and civics lessons. These disciplines quickly became the basis of Americanization and

nationalism in schools as they collectively presented white children and immigrant children of questionable whiteness with claims to national belonging based on the supposed superiority of Western culture and Anglo-Saxon self-government. Chapter two reveals how world geography lessons taught children how to divide the world into white and non-white. San Francisco's 1881 sixth grade geography examination offers clues as to the ways in which students were suppose to organize humanity: "To what race do the Egyptians and the people living on the northern coast of Africa belong?" The answer required qualification. Westerners regarded ancient Egypt as a highly civilized society. Some nineteenth-century scholars suggested that Aryans and Asians were the true masterminds behind the architectural feats of ancient Egypt and that sub-Saharan Africans could not have possibly contributed to the pre-modern engineering of the pyramids or the Sphinx. But more recent connections to Islam and sub-Saharan Africa as well as Britain's successful conquest of Egypt in the mid-nineteenth century meant that Egyptians were inferior to Europeans and European-Americans. Acceptable answers to the question thus included "Muslim," "brown," or even "black." But however students responded, "white" constituted an incorrect answer.[2]

World geography, American history, and civics lessons often reinforced each other along lines of race. A progressive national narrative (the subject of chapter three) insulated white American culture from perceived threats from non-whites

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[2] Examinations, 1876-1904, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 1A: 6, San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library, San Francisco, CA; Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Western Dominance* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989), 158.

both within and outside of the nation. In the preface to his 1919 *History of the United States*, Waddy Thompson claimed that his book would make its young readers "proud of an American heritage." National pride required the mis-remembrance of the United States racial and imperial past. Thompson's narrative presented slavery as a vital economic component of national progress and an institution that provided blacks with structure and work ethic. Upon emancipation, "many who had been faithful slaves were fast becoming paupers and criminals."[3] For Thompson, the anarchy of postemancipation had been calmed first through the reassertion of white Southern supremacy and Jim Crow law, and secondly through the nationally unifying experience of overseas expansion. The generous extension of republican government to peoples colonized and mis-governed by dogmatic European monarchs masked the forceful entry of U.S. corporate capitalism into the Philippines. Thompson was particularly interested in sectional reconciliation, a process he deemed completed in 1898. "The patriotism exhibited in the war with Spain- patriotism that recognized no point of the compass – showed that the last vestige of sectionalism has passed away."[4] Through empire building, the nation united in common purpose to extend its markets and system of government beyond its borders while simultaneously re-asserting hierarchies of race at home.

Empire building abroad and a massive influx of "new immigrants" from Europe and workers from Asia provoked the construction of racialized social hierarchies and the incorporation of millions of Europeans into the national body of

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[3] Waddy Thompson, *History of the United States* (Boston: D.C. Heath, 1919), 420.
[4] Thompson, *History of the United States*, v.

citizens and workers. As chapter four demonstrates, schools used civics, along with American history, to create loyal citizens and deferential workers. Civics emphasized allegiance to the government and support of its military actions abroad, particularly in places where the United States sought to expand its markets under the guise of republicanism. Civics also stressed industriousness and hard work and pitted capitalism against the radicalism of the Bolshevik Revolution. After the United States' entrance into World War I, a war to make the world "safe for democracy," the Americanization of European immigrants of suspect whiteness became increasingly coercive. Civics lessons imposed greater political and ideological conformity in an effort to dissolve the threats of collective organization that Anglo-Americans perceived as prone among non-whites and immigrants of dubious whiteness. The American "melting pot" of races of the early twentieth century gave way to hardened racial lines and emphasis on cultural homogeneity.

Taken together, geography, history, and civics created a grand narrative of a nation regenerated after civil war, ascendant in its global presence, and endowed with a civic and racial superiority that necessitated both imperial missions abroad and the protection of the meaning and boundaries of citizenship and national belonging at home. Curricula contributed to an "organic nationalism, wrapping the government and the citizenry in the sacred garment of the nation," as Jackson Lears has stated. A common story and an increasing awareness of the differences

between the United States and the rest of the world naturalized the reciprocal enterprises and nation building and empire building.[5]

[5] Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 18.

CHAPTER 2

MAPPING RACE: EVOLUTIONISM, CIVILIZING MISSIONS AND EXCEPTIONALISMS IN WORLD GEOGRAPHIES

"Have you ever seen a negro? An Indian? A Chinaman? These are people of different races…The Caucasian or white race is the most intelligent and most powerful of all the races."[1] This passage opens the section entitled "Races of Mankind" in Horace and Martha Tarbell's *Complete Geography*, a primary school textbook published by the American Book Company in 1899. The Tarbell's use of the interrogative reveals several assumptions about audience. That students may have yet to lay eyes on a "negro" or an "Indian" or a "Chinaman" in their own lives suggests that schoolchildren were overwhelmingly white. Thus, other races provided imperial spectacle for inquisitive, curious schoolchildren. While schools were in fact much more racially heterogeneous than the Tarbell's assumed, their own ignorance of non-whites in public schools helped to shape visions of the United States as a white nation. As Jackson Lears has recently remarked, "being an American increasingly came to mean being a Caucasian." Geography books and lessons contributed to efforts within public education to make synonymous the terms *white* and *American*.[2]

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[1] Horace Tarbell and Ida Tarbell, *Complete Geography* (New York: American Book Company, 1899), 17.
[2] Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 94.

The Tarbell's use of the major racial divisions of black, white, brown, yellow, and red diminished the perceived differences between old stock, Anglo-Americans and the new immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. "Geography teaching [should] serve as preparation for citizenship," remarked several other textbook authors in 1912.[3] Recent scholarship reveals that whiteness fractured as millions of southern and eastern Europeans came ashore beginning in the 1880s. I too argue in chapter seven that New York public schools' Americanization project revealed that assimilation also involved becoming white during a period of variegated whiteness. Progressive advocates of the Americanization movement impressed upon new arrivals the imperatives of national loyalty, linguistic and cultural conformity, and 'American' values. Those redeemable values included racial segregation based on the "grand divisions" and not on variations of whiteness. In 1924, the United States successfully barred suspect whites from continuing to emigrate and thus began a process of Americanizing and whitening those who had already settled in the United States. But the Johnson-Reed Act also bolstered the broad 1790 Naturalization Law that limited naturalized citizenship to "free white persons." By policing the boundaries of the grand divisions of race, the nation could in fact further whiten itself. By dividing along lines of race, whether through learning or legislation, the United States could live up to its self-fashioned image as the exceptional nation.[4]

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[3] Rollin D. Salisbury, Harlan H. Barrows, and Walter S. Tower, *The Elements of Geography* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1912), v.
[4] Recent historiography on fractured whiteness includes Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 1998); David Roediger, *Working*

Geography provided more than lessons in citizenship or a path to whiteness. The study of the earth, its divisions, and the racial varieties of its human inhabitants became the intellectual foundations and justifications for U.S. empire. In his work on education in the British Commonwealth, historian John Willinsky describes geography and cartography as "great stained-glass windows illuminating the annunciation of empire, the return to Eden, and the crossing into promised lands." Willinsky suggests that since the age of European exploration, the art and science of recording the surface of the Earth has served as a critical tool for "navigating and managing the world" in the European mind. In schools in Britain, Willinsky's Canada, and the United States, geography's mark became the incorporation of non-Western peoples – "less fortunate, less civilized, less educated" – into students' intellectual framework and purview. Given the Tarbell's uncertainty over children's personal knowledge of and encounters with non-Western people, one might argue that geography textbooks were many students' first experiences with the racialized geography of empire.[5]

This chapter demonstrates how geography textbook authors (and the schools that used these texts) promoted and institutionalized several key themes in American racial and imperial thought. First, geographers overwhelmingly preached Spencerian evolutionism. Textbooks spelled out in plain terms the stages of human development and taught students that contemporary non-white races represented

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Towards Whiteness: How American's Immigrants Became White (New York: Basic Books, 2005); Gary Gerstle, "Liberty, Coercion, and the Making of Americans" *Journal of American History* 84,2 (Sept, 1997), 524-558.

[5] Willinsky, *Learning to Divide the World*, 137-158.

living examples of the evolutionary stages of savagery and barbarism, while whites had progressed to the highest stages of civilization. Authors drew upon Darwinian theories of natural selection and on the science of climatology to explain that environment played a crucial role in the physical and mental development of races. I argue that teaching scientifically-constructed and geographically-supported racial hierarchies to younger children provided for the continuity of a perceived white superiority. This racialization operated not only on the domestic front as new immigrants and non-whites complicated aspirations for a white nation, but also abroad as the United States extended continental imperialism into transnational spaces. Thus, the study of geography served the ends of both domestic exclusion and imperial extension as it functioned as scientific evidence of racial hierarchy and American exceptionalism.

Second, some authors blended evolutionism and Christianity in their descriptions and analysis of primitive cultures. According to such arguments, the "unenlightened" were not only stuck in the earliest historical stages of human development but remained in such states through a combination of racial inferiority and idolatry. This conflation demonstrates how race transcended its rationalization in the biological and social sciences and permeated the non-academic and the cultural. The same people who sought to classify non-whites as savages and barbarians also promoted and in some cases attempted to deliver them from the heathenism that contributed to their inferiority. Using the missionary career and textbook work of Reverend Mytton F. Maury as a case study, I show that the relationship between science and religion was in fact not dichotomous but often

much more variegated. Attempts to both catalogue racial bodies and deliver heathen souls suggested and reinforced difference on many fronts – not just racial, but religious, national, and cultural as well. Not until the trial of Thomas Scopes in 1925 and the resurgence of fundamentalism did science and Christianity part ways.

Lastly, geography textbooks afforded academics the space to convey the uniqueness of the white-American experience. Authors often precariously argued that geographic determinism, the idea that human progress was contingent on natural forces such as climate, somehow did not apply to white Americans. However, despite the contention of scholars who argue that the physical geography of the United States comprised the overwhelming majority of textbook content, the most widely used geography books emphasized comparative global and racial frameworks. As geographer Richard Dodge argued in 1900, teaching geography in an effort to create a more patriotic citizenry only resonated and delivered results if textbooks situated the geography of the United States – both physical and cultural – within a more global context. Dodge was unclear whether lessons in evolutionism, race, and climatology were the most informative ways to convey American uniqueness, but as I argue, the majority of geography textbooks published at the time employed these theories.[6]

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[6] For examples of these historiographical countercurrents, see Tim Unwin, *The Place of Geography* (New York: Longman Scientific and Technical, 1992), 5-11; Helena Michie and Ronald R. Thomas, eds., *Nineteenth Century Geographies: The Transformation of Space from the Victorian Era to the American Century* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 10; Richard Dodge, "A Course in School Geography," *Journal of Geography* 4,4 (Apr., 1900), 121-7.

The Place of Physical Geography in the School Curriculum

Thanks in large part to the work of Jedidiah Morse, descriptive geography represented an integral part of school curricula throughout the nineteenth century. Morse's *American Geographies*, published first in 1789 and later in 1793, laid the foundation for the study of geography by both adults and children.[7] In fact, some historians have illuminated the overwhelming and even "overdetermined" role of local and global geographies in the nineteenth century. The professionalization of geography as well as the geographer as researcher and scholar were both nineteenth-century creations. But in many ways they also represented the culmination of a flurry of geographical inquiry dating back centuries as explorers, surveyors, cartographers, and seafaring merchants and adventurers recorded, synthesized, and shared personal experiences and knowledge about cartography, climate, and commercial and agricultural prospects. But geographic knowledge and practice extended well beyond mapmaking and descriptions of landforms into other representations of space. In many geography textbooks, biology, anthropology, archaeology, and ethnography formed the intellectual basis on which scholars represented humans in spatial terms.[8]

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[7] Gary L. Gaile and Cort J. Willmott, eds., *Geography in America* (Columbus, OH, Merrill Publishing Company, 1989), 2; Ralph H. Brown, "The American Geographies of Jedidiah Morse," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 31,3 (Sept. 1941): 147.

[8] Helen Michie and Ronald R. Thomas, editors, *Nineteenth-Century Geographies: The Transformation of Space from the Victorian Era to the American Century* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 2-3.

Even as American history established itself as the dominant social studies field in upper grades as early as the 1820s, geography remained a core component of elementary curriculum well into the twentieth century. As a specific sub-field, physical geography gained popularity and replaced merely descriptive geography in the 1870s with the publication of Guyot's *Physical Geography*, the precursor to a long list of physical geography publications bound for schoolrooms through the 1940s. The National Education Association's Committee of Ten reinforced this content shift when in 1892, it recommended that physical geography serve as the bulwark for general science reading. Physical geography differed from Morse's descriptive geographies of the early nineteenth century not just in scope but also in its derivation from transformations in scientific and sociological thought in the mid-nineteenth century. The impact of Darwin and Spencer experienced throughout western intellectual circles had profound implications for how geography would be studied, understood, and taught to younger generations. Harvard professor of geology and geography William Morris Davis himself provided the theoretical glue that bound Darwin, Spencer, and the implementation of sociological, political, and evolutionary principles in the geographic texts produced for academic consumption. His insistence on teaching physical geography despite his training as a geologist had in fact won him an appointment to Harvard in 1878.[9]

Many educators and geographers expressed satisfaction with the NEA's recommendation that physical geography represent the core of general science

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[9] Unwin, *The Place of Geography*, 95-7; Gaile and Willmott, *Geography in America*, 3.

curriculum in elementary and secondary schools. For example, University of Chicago Professor of Education Zonia Baber argued that since the study of geography is in fact the examination of causal relations, its scholarly undertaking by even the youngest American minds challenged previous educational theories about the development of the young mind: "With the progress of child-study has come a change in the attitude toward [children]. It has been found that even young children are interested in causal relations…they wish to know the relation of things in this great world about them. It is in the intelligent conception of causal relation that we find the superiority of the civilized men over the untutored savage."[10]

In 1908, physical geography was replaced, at least at the high school level, with economic, commercial, and vocational geographies in response to the growing need for factory and manufacturing workers, but it remained the anchor in elementary classrooms. In 1916, however, geographers led a countermovement to the National Education Association's social studies initiative. They argued that geography did not in fact fit into social studies curriculum, then comprised of history, civics, and geography. This left many non-geographers and quite often historians to create much of the content used in geography courses. Despite this scholarly fallout during World War I, a rift that initiated deep divisions within the geographic community, geography textbooks continued to cast the human experience as one both dependent upon geographic circumstances and contingent upon evolutionary forces of biology that had, over time and space, created

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[10] Zonia Baber, "The Scope of Geography," *The Elementary School Teacher* 4,5 (Jan., 1904): 260.

distinctive characteristics among the human race.[11] Throughout the period under review, geography textbooks, still the dominant pedagogical tools in American classrooms, emphasized human evolutionism and the "grand divisions" of race. This emphasis on race and progress served to both harden the social, legal, and cultural fissures of Jim Crow, Chinese exclusion, Indian removal and to provide intellectual and cultural foundations for the incorporation of the millions of European immigrant children whom some native whites believed could assimilate into the dominant culture.[12]

Geography as Anthropology Lesson:
Evolutionism and the Grand Divisions of Race

"It is not too much to say…that whoever stops to study man's rise from the dead level of the commonplace in racial type and intellectual quality alike will find that geography is the explanation of the most of it."[13]

Evolutionism taught Anglo-American students (and those immigrant children who were in the process of becoming white) that the construction of their racial superiority in American society and in an increasingly globalizing world was no arbitrary consequence of history, but a biologically substantiated fact. Through the study of geography, racial superiority could be calculated, measured, and of course observed. Beginning in the 1870s, race and human evolutionism stood at the

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[11] Gaile and Willmott, *Geography in America*, 2-4.
[12] On the "grand divisions" of races and the racialization of ethnicity, see Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness*; Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*; James R. Barrett and David Roediger, "Inbetween Peoples: Race, Nationality, and the 'New Immigrant' Working Class,'" *Journal of American Ethnic History* 16 (Spring 1997): 3-44; Higham, *Strangers in the Land*; David A.J. Richards, *Italian American: The Racializing of an Ethnic Identity* (New York: New York University Press, 1999).
[13] George J. Schulz, "Geography and Man," *Official Publication of Maryland State College* 16, 2 (June 1919), 8.

forefront of the theoretical underpinnings of school geographies at both the primary and secondary levels. As Margaret Keiver Smith argued at the 6th Annual Conference of the New York State Science Teachers Association in 1901, geography textbooks were inadequate unless they provided students with the necessary connections between man and the natural world, such as in the distribution of races or the effect of environment on man's industrial and mental capabilities.[14]

Herbert Spencer's own "survival of the fittest" came to embody both physical and mental competition between races. Like Spencer, those who borrowed, adapted, challenged, and at times distorted Darwin's concept of species mutability argued that mental capability and inheritance provided the biological tools for the realization of the perfect man within several generations. Such was the mission of the eugenics projects of the 1920s and 1930s that utilized controlled breeding to produce a racially pure and perfect Aryan human specimen. Other sociologists like William Graham Sumner offered uniquely Spencerian critiques of socialist and progressive policies that sought, in their minds, to disrupt the natural economic and evolutionary laws that govern human existence.[15]

Along with the typical lessons on topography, climate, landforms, the authors of numerous geography readers conveyed the necessary scientific and psychological theories of evolutionism and human hierarchy that suggested an immutability of

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[14] Margaret Keiver Smith, "Textbooks in Geography," *Proceedings of the 6th Annual Conference of the New York State Science Teachers Association* (New York: University of the State of New York, 1901), 600.
[15] Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1955), 39, 48, 51.

racial traits. Sections often titled "Races of Mankind" or "Man's Relation to Man" provided students with fundamental lessons in evolutionism – a biological and sociological science that dominated late-nineteenth century Anglo-American thought about the progression of humanity and culture. Chief among the reinforcing agents of evolutionism were the travel-writers and missionaries of nineteenth-century Europe and the United States, who both employed and informed evolutionary theory. As Matthew Jacobson notes: "evolutionism had become naturalized; the proposition drew authority from its own repetition."[16]

Most geography readers published around the turn of the twentieth century included explicit explanations of the three stages of human development for children and then gave vivid examples in order for students to situate themselves linearly along this developmental line. Authors drew on the findings and theories set forth first by Jean-Baptiste Lamarck in *The Philosophy of Zoology* (1809), Robert Chambers's *Vestiges of the National History of Creation* (1844), and at mid-century by Charles Darwin in *On the Origin and Species* (1854) and *The Descent of Man* (1871).[17] Through geography curriculum, savagery, barbarism, and civilization became terms all too common to even the youngest students. To the racial and cultural groups of people these categories were conspicuously assigned, these texts represented scientific racism in its most basic form. Evolutionism no longer only represented a scientific explanation of human history progress, but offered a rigid

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[16] Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 140-2.
[17] H. James Birx, Introduction to *The Descent of Man*, by Charles Darwin (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1998), xi.

classification system based on contemporary constructions of race. Take the Tarbell's "Progress of Mankind" in their 1899 elementary *Complete Geography*:

> There are three chief stages of culture and development among the peoples of the earth: first, that of savage life; second, that of barbarous life; third, that of civilized life…Man in his savage condition obtains his food mainly by hunting and fishing and by gathering wild fruits and roots. He lives in a cave or in a rude temporary hut…when man domesticates animals like the horse, cow, and sheep, and makes them useful to him, when he begins to raise crops from the soil, he has advanced from the savage to the barbarous state. Barbarous people are joined into tribes under a ruling chief. Like the Arabs in Asia, they wander from place to place in search of pasture…When men have learned the art of writing and begin study, to use machines and manufacture articles for use and comfort, we call them civilized. Civilized life is characterized by fixed homes. It is the life of intelligent, prosperous, and cultivated people…History tells us that the progress of peoples has been through the lower stages to the highest one. The people now the most rude and ignorant have not as yet left the first stage, but are still savages.[18]

If the Tarbells did not specify which races constituted savagery, their introductory statements indicate that whites stood atop the schematic hierarchy of race. Other texts were clearer. *Harper's Introductory Geography* contrasted America's native "savage creatures" with the "civilized white man."[19] Developmental stages provided scientific justification for the sentiment and structures of American racialism. Armed with these three degrees of development, white children could then make their own observations about living habits, shelter, education, agricultural, or industrial endeavors in order to distinguish themselves from seemingly lesser-evolved humans.

Mytton Maury's careful attention to ethnographic aspects of the geographies that he authored throughout the 1890s and early 1900s led him to author some of the most staunchly evolutionary accounts of human development. His geography textbooks, originally drafted by his late cousin Matthew Fontaine Maury, conveyed

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[18] Tarbell and Tarbell, *Complete Geography*, 18.
[19] *Harper's Introductory Geography* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1883), 33.

cultural intrigue and Christian paternalism on one hand and cold, scientific contempt for the world's non-white population on the other. He, like many other geographers and anthropologists of his era, attempted to explain racial difference and inheritance as an evolutionary process that was linked to the physical environment and climate. As Darwin himself noted in "Extinction of Races," "when civilized nations come into contact with barbarians, the struggle is short, except where a deadly climate gives it aid to the native race."[20]

Maury initially presented human habitation as limitless in terms of geographic extremes – thus separating humans from their animal counterparts: "[Man] can protect himself from the severity of the winter's cold…and…the fierceness of inter-tropical heat."[21] He argued that all humans possess biological and intellectual cohesiveness: "Where ever man is found, he presents the same essential features of body and mind…the human family is one blood." Maury then complicated his assertion about biological sameness by delineating human hierarchies centered on racial categories. Maury understood human difference to be directly related to physical surroundings. Temperature, diet, and topography constitute the core of those natural circumstances that, over time, directly impact and differentiate a person's "bodily and intellectual organization." Thus, students learned that the physical environment has an impact not only the color of a person's skin but in "mental and moral peculiarities, industrial habits, social and

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[20] Darwin, *Descent of Man*, 191.
[21] Matthew Fontaine Maury and Mytton Maury, *Maury's Physical Geography, Revised Edition* (New York: University Publishing Company, 1893); 116.

governmental institutions."[22] Geography became an intellectual instrument through which students could conceptualize, locate, and internalize racial type and hierarchy.

Evolutionism and developmental theory colored explanations of human progress in advanced geography textbooks as well. In *New Physical Geography,* Cornell geographers Ralph Tarr and Oscar Diedrich von Engeln contended not only that evolution provided the foundation for the study of human history prior to the production of written sources, but also that these early historical traits had survived among many non-white races. Tarr and von Engeln evoked tribalism – known to students to be form of governance employed in the stages of savagery and barbarism – to make clear that the vestiges of ancient history had survived in human form and could in fact be observed and studied:

> What sort of life man lived before any people were sufficiently enlightened to leave written accounts of their activities, we can judge only by the records of accomplishments as shown in mounds, monuments, drawings, utensils, weapons, and other relics, and by comparison with the life of uncivilized tribes of the present day...To-day, both in the Old and the New World, there are tribes of men that have not yet risen above savagery. But through the centuries various groups of mankind have in turn and, on the whole, steadily and progressively acquired useful knowledge from experience. As a result of effort, modern civilization enjoys many advantages, comforts, and conveniences over savage and semi-civilized people.[23]

Despite the conventional nature of many of these evolutionary lessons, which was to be expected in a general textbook, authors never left their readers without ample models of such differentiation. These examples conflated national progress with race development. Beginning in the 1920s, William Rabenort authored a

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[22] Maury, *Physical Geography*, 116.
[23] Ralph S. Tarr and Oscar Diedrich von Engeln, *New Physical Geography* (New York: Macmillan: 1926, 1904), 577.

series of continental geographies in which he employed social evolutionism to distinguish the peoples of each continent. In his treatment of Africa, Rabenort described those tribes living in the high grasslands as "nomad trappers who were once cannibals." His sketch of their culture emphasized gradations of human development: "Many of them gash their bodies, extract their teeth, wear copper wire and trinkets as ornaments, and practice other savage customs."[24] Similarly, Australian "blackfellows" and "barbaric Malay[s]" had, according to Rabenort, developed nothing in their cultures that resembled that of the advanced white races Europe or the United States:[25]

> There are still some 50,000 to 100,000 savages in Australia. When the first white people came, they found a native race of aborigines…these savages appear to be like no other native race on earth today…The blackfellows are now to be found chiefly on reservations or in the wildest, least-known corners of the continent.[26]

Similar descriptions in Tarbell's geographies further illustrated the presumed relationship between race and evolution and added a heavy dose of social Darwinism:

> The natives of Australia are oceanic negroes, the very lowest type of the human race. These native, who have their abodes in holes in the ground and live on roots and fish, are rapidly decreasing in number. They will soon disappear like the Indians on our own continent.[27]

The Tarbell's touched on a crucial tenant of human evolutionism: savage races could not compete with civilized races and thus were naturally subject to dispossession and gradual extinction. By such rationale, the eradication of Native Americans or

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[24] William Rabenort, *Africa, The Earth* (New York: American Book Company, 1934) 91.
[25] Rabenort, *Asia and Australia* (New York: American Book Company, 1933), 159, 226.
[26] Rabenort, *Asia and Australia*, 159.
[27] Tarbell, *Complete Geography*, 127-128.

aboriginal Australians occurred not because of malicious European imperialist policies, the proliferation of technological warfare, or American expansionism and forced removal, but through processes inherent in nature. As Ralph Tarr and William Phillips asserted, "the much higher civilization of Europeans enabled them to displace the savage occupants, not only of America, but of Australia and more the more attractive parts of Africa."[28] According to evolutionists, all races possessed specific physical, mental, and even cultural traits that could be altered only minimally through contact with other races, but ultimately restricted them to that stage of evolution into which they had been born. The argument then followed that innately inferior races would eventually reach extinction.

Maury provided perhaps the most blatant endorsement of Euro-American imperialism and racial genocide in his 1893 geography textbook: "Wherever the white man establishes himself he speedily becomes dominant; while the communities of other races into which he introduces himself are commonly subjected to a gradual process of extinction."[29] He suggested that genocide was an organic phenomenon tied directly to geographic origin. For Maury, contact between whites (civilized race) and non-whites (barbaric or savage races) yielded not amalgamation and degeneration of the higher type but rather the extinction of the lower. Maury touted the disappearance of inferior races as a natural process.

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[28] Ralph Tarr and William Phillips, *New Physical Geography* (New York: Macmillan, 1913), 381.
[29] Maury, *Physical Geography*, 116.

Maury's assertions about racial competition and extinction, though very much out of character with his active support of missionary work among "savage races," reflected certain tropes of late-nineteenth century political and intellectual discourses dominant in the United States. Some intellectuals feared the biological, mental, and social consequences of the racial hybridity that occurred in colonial societies and in the United States, to which people of many difference races flocked. Indeed many Americans perceived the mass migrations to the United States by foreign persons as threatening the stability of a nation that had to that point been able to at least manage its racial heterogeneity through projects of slave labor, exclusion, Indian war, and forced migrations. In order to maintain social and economic boundaries along the lines of race, whites confined the social and legal privileges of being Anglo-Saxonism to small groups of European immigrants. Despite these trepidations and attempts to regulate racial hybridity through legal exclusion and eugenic breeding programs, many, including Maury, sought comfort in the inevitability of natural selection and asserted that the assumed natural superiority of whites would gradually displace inferior races.[30]

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[30] Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 56-7, 155. On racial hybridity and white responses, see Robert J.C. Youngs, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture, and Race* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 5-20; Damon Salesa, "Samoa's Half-Castes and Some Frontiers of Comparison," in *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History*, edited by Ann Laura Stoler (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 71-93; Eric Love "White is the Color of Empire: The Annexation of Hawaii in 1898," in *Race, Nation and Empire in American History*, Campbell, Pratt, and Lee, eds., 75-102. On eugenics and early twentieth century support of, see Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 153-63; Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 221-2; Steven Selden, *Inheriting Shame: The Story of Eugenics and Racism in America* (New York: Teacher's College

Yet these same authors also advocated the extension of western cultural norms, supervised democratic self-government, and Christianity to presumed barbarous and savage races. Maury's text was latent with contradictions over natural selection and western acculturation. He praised the Japanese for their adoption of Western governmental institutions and the Chinese for the competitive motivations behind the civil service examinations – comparing both to Western institutions of progress, competition, and capitalism. Yet he completely ignored the deep tradition of Chinese bureaucracy that pre-dated similar European and American examples. These advances, according to Maury, were relatively recent phenomenon contingent on contact with European and American science and government: "[The Chinese] remained for the ages just where their ancestors had been." That is, "in the past, they have displayed the mental activity which marks the Mongolian in general." He recognized potential in the Chinese and Japanese because these respective contemporary Asian societies were in the process of establishing constitutional governments and, most importantly for Maury, adopting "many important features of European civilization [which] entitle[d] them to rank among the progressive nations of the world." Thus only through the institution of Western-

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Press of Columbia University, 1999); James Tynor, "The Geopolitics of Eugenics and the Exclusion of Philippine Immigration from the United States," *Geographical Review* 89,1 (Jan. 1999): 54-73; James A. Field, "The Progress of Eugenics," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 26,1 (Nov. 1911): 1-67; "Inborn Ability May Decide Race's Fate," *The Science News-Letter,* 8 June 1929, 15, 426, p. 350; "Danger in Race Mixture," *The Science News-Letter*, 24 September 1927, 12, 337, pgs. 205-6.

approved forms of government and economic activity could non-white societies inch closer to the high-mark of the Caucasian intellect.[31]

Of course all of this bore sharp contrast to how authors portrayed Caucasians. Maury's blatant praise of white intellectual capacity instilled in white students' minds a sense of their own perceived superiority:

> In intellect this race ranks first. With very few exceptions all the leading thinkers of the world have been Caucasian; and without any exception all the great discoveries of the recent times have been made by members of this family. It is the race to which has been assigned the office of civilizing and enlightening the world. Its social habits and its governmental institutions, its educational systems, and its religious views are those which most conduce to the elevation and happiness of mankind.[32]

Maury's words transcended national space and reified race as a defining marker of rank across national borders. His and other geography readers organized the world in racial terms and served to promote, institutionalize and harden racial policy. As Du Bois articulated in 1910, "'white folk' had suddenly 'become painfully conscious of their whiteness.'"[33] But even as the Anglo-world guarded its national borders against non-white transgressors, whiteness itself became contested and re-defined through immigration debates and policy. As the next section demonstrates, geographers faced questions about the biological and cultural boundaries of 'Caucasian.'

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[31] Maury, *Physical Geography*, 117.
[32] Maury, *Physical Geography*, 116.
[33] Quoted in Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, 247.

Cross-Currents in American Racialism:

Geographers Weather the Storm of Anglo-Saxonism

Not all authors believed Caucasian superiority and European immigration to the United States to be a process tolerable simply because the nation provided ample space in which private property ownership remained paramount. For some, the welcome had long since worn thin after the massive migrations of Germans, Irish, and Scandinavians in the 1840s and 1850s that took advantage of the federal government's policy of Indian displacement to clear room for white settlers on arable western lands. As Aristide Zolberg notes, even as the Statue of Liberty was inaugurated in 1886, discourses over European immigration restriction began to emerge in political, labor, and academic circles. Schools conveyed to students, many of whom were immigrants themselves, the paramount necessity of embracing American values – democracy, technological progress, and capitalistic growth in order to ward off societal degradation. Mid-nineteenth century migrants had often escaped the wrath of American nativism (the Irish are a glaring exception), owing largely to their identification with the "old stock."[34] But the whiteness, and thus the fitness for self-government and citizenship of the new European immigrants, many of whom emigrated from eastern and southern European countries, presented geography authors with an intellectual dilemma. What would be the place of American racial Anglo-Saxonism in the genre of school geography? Could it become

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[34] Aristide R. Zolberg, *A Nation by Design: Immigration Policy in the Fashioning of America* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 2006), 199; Higham, *Strangers in the Land*.

an integral sub-category of the major "Races of Mankind"? Or would the white/non-white binary withstand the strong currents of racialization crucial to the extreme wings of the Americanization movement? Authors William Mace and Edwin Tanner offered one possibility for the place of Anglo-Saxonism in geography texts:

> "If [the new immigrants] are of the stuff of which good Americans are made, the newcomers are welcome. But our country has no rewards for the idle. Before they are allowed to land, the immigrants are taken before officers who examine them carefully to see that their characters are good, and that they are not likely to become paupers. Often weak or vicious people are sent back to Europe. Harsh our law sometimes seems to such unfortunates, but America is not for them."[35]

Mace and Tanner's eugenic description of "weak" immigrants often carried with it racial identity as well. If a person's whiteness made them eligible to be an American, then the question remained: who and what determined a person's race and who could be included in the increasingly important category of "Caucasian?"

Recent scholars of race have demonstrated that race is a social construction and thus subject to malleability and not to the firmness of biological fact. Beginning particularly in the mid-nineteenth century, racialism within American intellectual thought and culture expanded to include differentiations between Anglo-Saxons and the hordes of European others who were increasingly subjected to classification outside of the racial category of *white*. Irish, Italians, Poles, Greeks, Slavs, Russians, and of course Jews encountered heightened resistance from America's native-born and old stock immigrants who resorted to redrawing and refining the racial

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[35] William H. Mace and Edwin P. Tanner, *Old Europe and Young America* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1915), 12.

demarcations laid out at mid-century by Richard Henry Dana, Arthur Compte de Gobineau, and Josiah Nott.[36]

Just as sociologists, anthropologists, and even public policymakers shaped the categorical boundaries of Caucasian, so too did textbook authors sometimes bend the hard and fast scientific categories laid out so vividly by Lewis Henry Morgan. This "racial reclassification," as Matthew Frye Jacobson has called it, represented not the emergence but rather the expansion of American racialism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[37] But the stark differences between white and black did not receive less attention despite the undisputed nature of black/white dichotomy in popular American discourse. So even as plurality within the white race began to capture the attention of those concerned with the cultural consequences of an Anglo-Saxon standard overrun by European immigrants who belonged to newly created sub-groups along a hierarchy of white persons, geography curricula failed to fully embrace fractured whiteness.

Though geography textbooks and evolutionism provided a forum for the racialization of European immigrants, few authors jumped at the opportunity. One explanation for this lack of attention to racial sub-categorization lies in the confluence of public education and the making of citizens. Whether Anglo-Saxon or not, educators, authors, and those who provided the prevailing scientific racial theory considered the "races" of Europe to be potential citizens in the self-governing

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[36] Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 40-2, 44-5.
[37] Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 3-5, 43; Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 146-7; Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 4-8; Haney-Lopez, *White By Law,* xiii, 10.

republic. If Russian Jews, Italians, and Romanians possessed inferior cultural traits, they could, through proper instruction, assimilate into American society and thus become white. To further compound this hesitation, the demand for a steady supply of industrial labor, the overseas expansion of markets, and formal and informal colonialism provided both outlets and distractions for native-born anxieties over the new European immigration.[38]

Maury provides a rather atypical example of this augmentation of racial thought when, in his 1893 *Physical Geography*, he conveyed to his readers the importance of "shades" within the white race. By situating gradations of whiteness within a larger discussion of the major racial categories, Maury argued for the recognition of similarities not within the Caucasian race, but rather between non-Caucasians and darker-skinned Caucasians. Maury delineated race as a biological distinction comprised of five major categories: Caucasian or white, Mongolian or yellow, Negro or black, Malay or brown, and Indian or red. He asserted that the Caucasian race, originally inhabitants of the Caucasus Mountains of Central Eurasia, had expanded to govern Europe, the Americas, most of Africa, Arabia, Persia, and the southern Himalayas.

Students were then given a quite favorable description of the white race, though it too had physical variations: "The Caucasians are the most symmetrical in figure, comely in person, and beautiful in feature, of all the branches of the human family." Maury noted the extremes of Caucasian physicality, offering the Germans,

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[38] Zolberg, *A Nation by Design*, 199-201.

with their "flaxen hair, blue eyes, and fair skin," as the most favorable appearance and the "Hindoos with raven locks, black eyes, and olive-brown or brownish, black skin" as the less-desirable in terms of physical features. Immediately, students were thus taught not only to be able to recognize and differentiate between different ethnicities within the Caucasian race, but also to establish a graduated scale of pleasing aesthetics based upon an ideal type: the German.

By the 1920s, social evolutionism had transgressed the grand divisions, and its proponents in the United States had begun dissecting the racial characteristics of European immigrants arriving from Italy, Poland, Russia, Greece, and other non-Anglo-Saxon or Teutonic nations. Thus, the whiteness and fitness for citizenship of these potential Americans came under scrutiny. But geography curricula largely failed to question the whiteness of millions of immigrant children. Rather, the racial color spectrum remained distinguishable and reinforced the already deepened divisions between white or almost white Euro-Americans and their black, Asian, Hawaiian, and Native American counterparts.

Saving the Savage from Extinction?: Christian Mission and Evolutionism

"Nearly all savages are pagans. Most of them belong to the black and the red races, but there are many savages in each of the other races."[39] Alex Everett Frye's statement, taken from his widely used geography readers of the 1890s, reinforced for students the perceived racial superiority of whites (or at least Anglos) over non-

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[39] Alex Everett Frye, *Complete Geography* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1895), 105.

whites central to social Darwinism and theories of development. But Frye also argued that Christianity afforded whites, as its original founders and missionaries, a position of moral superiority. According to social evolutionary theory, paganism and idolatry were markers of savagery. Prior to the enlightenment of man following the advent of monotheism and later Christianity, humans had practiced acceptable, but nonetheless rude forms of spirituality. Thus, any group of humans that continued to recognize multiple deities not only represented but also in fact constituted the very state of savagery from which white Protestants believed themselves to have evolved.

Popular perceptions of religion as somehow antithetical to science failed to garner overwhelming support from school authorities across the nation. Richard Hofstadter has demonstrated that at the turn of the twentieth century, a variety of responses to Darwin colored the American political landscape. Some evangelicals stood "blissfully ignorant" of the challenges that Darwin posed to Christianity. Fundamentalists generated what would later become known as the antievolution movement, one that represented the inconclusiveness of Darwin's "conquest." Hofstadter recognized the reconciliation of Darwinism and Christianity among many evangelicals, too. If fundamentalist Protestants regarded Darwin and other evolutionists as godless atheists, others almost immediately began to reconcile evolutionism and creationism. In many geography texts the two forces joined to create a meta-narrative of human progress along racial lines. As late Harvard president William Hutchison describes, "religion was to make its accommodation

with science, in the end, by enveloping it, by bringing every proven scientific finding with the total system of God's will."[40]

Ties between Christianity and science were born in post-Reconstruction American colleges, where the new American social scientists developed an intellectual framework of realism and moral philosophy. This combination provided a middle ground on which both Protestantism and evolutionism could flourish.[41] Protestant leaders too recognized the important link, but also felt slighted by a scientific community that failed to recognize the contributions of Christian missionary work to the fields of anthropology and ethnology: "The aid which exploration and the science of geography has received from Baptist missions has never been properly recognized," decried Reverend Edmund F. Merriam of the American Baptist Missionary Union in 1896. According to Merriam, Christian mission provided the scientific community not only with the initial inroads into places like Burma, Northern China, and the Congo basin, but also contributed to the gathering of information for all of the sciences, not the least of which was "ethnology and social life." It was in this context that Christian missions sought to transform foreign populations, not just through conversion, but also through education in the ways of civilization.[42]

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[40] Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought*, 24-5; William Hutchison, *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1992), 45.
[41] Ross, *Origins of American Social Science*, 37.
[42] Edmund F. Merriam, "The Debt of Civilization to American Baptist Missions," in *The Watchman* (Boston: American Baptist Missionary Union, 1896), 6 in Mytton

Despite Merriam's feelings of under-appreciation, many social scientists did in fact articulate the importance of religion in human development. Many evolutionists believed that religion had progressed through historical stages in tandem with human's biological and intellectual development. The historical and biological movement of man from savagery to civilization received thoughtful examination from scholars and theologians interested in the development of religious thought. Thus, Darwin and Spencer were applied to that which the Enlightenment and science had supposedly sought to discredit.[43] British anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor argued that given the task undertaken by primitive man of attempting to understand the world around them, belief in souls in fact proved quite rational. Yet as humans progressed from savagery to barbarism to civilization, so too did the complexity and sophistication of religion. From paganism to polytheism, and finally to monotheism, many social evolutionists recognized religion as a cultural marker of progress.[44]

Frye's approach to teaching religion as a racially distinct cultural trait represents much stronger connections between religion, education, and science – one embodied by the career of Reverend Mytton Maury, an active Baptist missionary and author of geography textbooks. Much of Maury's interest and influence in geography stemmed from the mentorship of his cousin Matthew

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Maury Papers, Box 3 Folder: Missions, Syracuse University Bird Library Special Collections. Syracuse University.

[43] Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought*, 24-30.

[44] Stephen K. Sanderson, *Evolution and its Critics: Deconstructing and Reconstruction an Evolutionary Interpretation of Human Society* (Boulder, C.O.: Paradigm Publishers, 2007), 16.

Fontaine Maury, who had served as the superintendent of the U.S. Naval Observatory in Washington D.C. from 1842 to 1861, commanded the Confederate naval effort during the Civil War, and provided much of the original research and manuscripts for what would become one of the most widely used elementary geographical series throughout the 1890s and early 1900s. Matthew Maury died in 1873, ten years before the original edition of *Maury's Physical Geography* reached publication. Mytton devoted much of his own career to editing, revising, and disseminating Matthew's texts to school-age children, first with University Publishing Company and later with American Book Company, the nation's preeminent textbook company in the early twentieth century.[45]

Throughout the 1890s, Maury edited, revised, and published several editions of *Maury's Physical Geography* and *Maury's Manual of Geography*, two elementary textbooks complete with explanations of human evolution, climatology, geographic determinism, and racial divisions by continent. Maury's particular brand of social evolutionism blended the two contentious theories of monogenism and polygenism to suggest, for example, that Africans and the Teutonic races of Europe, despite their common origins, had developed along such "wildly different divergent trajectories" that any similarities present at creation were now inconsequential and unrecognizable. Furthermore, these evolutionary differences were so severe, that

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[45] Mytton Maury Papers, Syracuse University Bird Library Special Collections. The original edition of *Maury's Physical Geography* was published in 1883. Revised editions followed in 1891, 1893, 1894. *Maury's Manual of Geography*, original published in 1880, was revised in 1892, 1894, and 1899.

even those of recent divergence were permanent.[46] But Maury's understanding of human evolution was also colored by his own personal religiosity. As a former minister and missionary advocate, Maury provides an example of how scientific inquiry and religious conviction often blended together to form more nuanced perspectives on the development of the human race than religion or science alone could offer.

Maury's epistemology was the result of the collision of natural theology with Darwinian evolution in the mid-nineteenth century. Though some pre-Darwinian advocates of design theory refused to integrate natural selection into their teleological frameworks, others blended science and religion almost seamlessly. Nathaniel Shaler, a mentor of William Morris Davis, and a powerful intellectual force within American geographic circles, argued in the 1880s and 1890s that environmentalism was the key determinant in social evolution under natural law and Providential design. Shaler, like Albert Perry Brigham, Ellsworth Huntington, and Mytton Maury, argued that environmental conditions had contributed, over time, to the development of the black race along completely different evolutionary trajectories. For Shaler and many of his contemporaries, the role of environment in human history and evolution was the result of both natural selection and design.[47]

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[46] Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 143-4.
[47] David N. Livingstone, "Natural Theology and Neo-Lamarckism: The Changing Context of Nineteenth Century Geography in the United States and Great Britain," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 74,1 (Mar., 1984): 19.

Maury remained, throughout his career as an educator and author of geography textbooks, both a clergyman and fervent proponent of Christian mission work in Africa, Asia, Oceania, and an active missionary among Native Americans. His papers reveal a scholar who, while editing and revising *Maury's Manual of Geography* and *Maury's Physical Geography*, poured over the publications and newspaper clippings devoted to missionary activity and western imperialism. As a member of the American Baptist Missionary Union, the American Oriental Society, and a certified correspondent of the National Geographic Society, Maury provides an unsurprising juxtaposition of western fascinations with seemingly primitive cultures and attempts to alter those same cultures because of their perceived deficiencies. Furthermore, the incorporation of Maury's evangelism in his geography readers provides evidence of the pervasiveness of evolutionism and race in American intellectual thought.[48]

Protestantism and science were often mutually reinforcing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as the United States extended its political, economic, and cultural reach beyond its national and racial borders. As private and government efforts to open foreign markets to U.S. capital and foreign populations to the ideals of democracy, the Christianization of non-whites, both at home and abroad, remained an integral component of these attempts at the cultural transmission of civilization. Maury advocated the export of both Protestant ideals

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[48] See *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 9 (New Haven: Tuttle, Morehouse, and Taylor Printers to Yale College, 1871), lvi; Mytton Maury Papers, Box 4, Folder: *Maury's Physical Geography*, general notes.

and the surplus of manufactured goods that embodied the success of U.S. capitalism and the progress of civilization.[49]

Scattered throughout Maury's papers are missionary accounts from all over the world, indicating his fervent attention to the pervasion of Western Christianity among foreign peoples, who, according to Maury, possessed the capacity for religious enlightenment with the careful direction from American and European Protestants. For many nineteenth-century missionaries, conversion to Christianity meant not only eternal life for former heathens, but also the introduction of western capitalism and 'civilized' cultural traditions to presumably savage non-westerners. Maury's religiosity made room for science – an intellectual and philosophical stance that has received scant attention in recent historiography. Herbert Schneider's contention in the mid-1940s that Darwin and Spencer were actually quite well received among many American Protestant intellectuals bares significant weight on an examination of the mutually reinforcing nature of the relationship between religion and science. Divine providence and natural selection were two sides of the same coin, contended Princeton's James McCosh, Harvard's Asa Gray, and other contemporaries of Maury. These Christian academics sought to understand natural selection and survival of the fittest in terms of Christian morality. This hybrid philosophy provided strong links among Christian missions, physical geographers, anthropologists, and perhaps even pious politicians, all of whom espoused forms of

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[49] Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 17; Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Routledge, 1992); Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men*.

the civilizing mission devote to the reform of racial others through processes of acculturation and Christianization.[50]

Maury's career as a geographer and textbook author overlapped with his lifelong involvement with the American Baptist Missionary Union. In the early 1890s, Maury undertook his own anthropological, quasi-missionary work at the Sioux reservation at Crow Creek, South Dakota, where he seems to have been more of a scholarly observer than an active participant in converting Native Americans to Christianity. Nevertheless, his correspondence and field notes suggest that his presence at Crow Creek laid the foundation for his treatment of Native Americans in his geography readers. "I regret not staying longer at Crow Creek," he told his children, "to see and hear more about the Indians and their progress from religious darkness into light and from savagery to civilization."[51]

Maury equated Native Americans' recognition of spirituality in all natural things as a pagan form of worship in dire need of correction – Maury's Baptist missionary colleagues eagerly made the necessary improvements. Likewise, he

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[50] On the negotiations among American evangelicals, social Darwinists, and American imperialists, see Herbert W. Schneider, "The Influence of Darwin and Spencer on American Philosophical Theology," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 6,1 (Jan., 1945): 3-18; Reginald W. Deitz, "Eastern Lutheranism in American Society and American Christianity, 1870-1914: Darwinism, Biblical Criticism, the Social Gospel," doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, June 1958; Charles A. Ellwood, "Social Evolution and Christianity," *Journal of Religion* 3,2 (Mar. 1923): 113-31; Kenneth M. MacKenzie, "American Methodism and Imperialism (1865-1900)," doctoral dissertation, New York University, 1957; James McCosh, *The Religious Aspect of Evolution* (New York, 1888); Asa Gray, *Natural Science and Religion* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1880).

[51] Letter from Maury to his Children, 12 December 1892. Mytton Maury Papers. Box 1. Folder: Correspondence, 1890-1895.

touted these efforts to educate the Sioux as ones sure to deliver them from savagery and to provide, through programs of acculturation, access to limited citizenship. As he noted in *Maury's Manual of Geography*, Caucasians "are rapidly colonizing, civilizing, and Christianizing the world."[52] For Maury, Christianizing and civilizing were mutually reinforcing processes – inextricably linked through the work of white Protestants devoted to providing religious instruction and to educating, under close supervision of course, about the responsibilities of self-government.[53]

An 'American' Race: Beyond Geographic Determinism?

If lessons in human evolutionism provided an assumed scientific basis for the inferiority of non-white races, geography textbooks took these biological explanations and applied them to the sociology and evolution of nations. It followed from Maury's correlation between Christianity and civilization that the physical, racial, and cultural geography of the United States occupied the highest position of civilization in these texts. Not unlike the American historical narrative that revered the United States as the model nation, geographies offered an interpretation of the American landscape rooted in the abundance of land and other natural resources, republican government, and the ability of whites to construct a civilized society capable of calling up its divinely and naturally bestowed talents to further the

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[52] Maury, *Maury's Manual of Geography* (New York: University Publishing Company, 1892), 16. This text, originally conceived of and drafted by Matthew Fontaine Maury, never saw publication during his lifetime. Mytton Maury prepared the textbook for original publication in 1880 and then edited the subsequent revised editions.
[53] Campbell, Guterl, and Lee, eds., *Race, Nation, and Empire in American History*, 4.

progress of humanity. These textbooks also provided a comparative framework along the axis of race in which students could normalize the expansion of the American empire to places inhabited by perceived racial inferiors. Africa, Asia, and the Pacific Islands became for students not only lessons in evolution but also sites of opportunity. The progress of civilization and the nation in American minds – depended not only on a robust domestic economy engineered by a supposedly superior race and powered by foreign labor, but also upon the extension of western technologies, government, education, and culture across geographic borders to foreign – and by default – inferior societies.

Historians of the twentieth-century United States have recognized the integral role that geography has played throughout the process of globalization that began with the War of 1898, continued with U.S. intervention in both world wars, and reemerged with post-Cold War invasions of the Middle East. In particular, geography has constituted what Neil Smith has characterized as an evasive role in U.S. foreign policy and cultural-political awareness. The geographic ignorance of President William McKinley upon learning of Admiral George Dewey's defeat of the Spanish navy in Manila Bay bares stark contrast to Oliver North's understanding and presentation of Sandinista threats to American democracy at the close of the Cold War. But as Smith has pointed out, the "imperial fumbling" of McKinley and the "geographic paranoia" of North does not indicate an evolution of geographic knowledge, use, and importance in American society. While McKinley's seemingly geographic illiteracy has often been regarded as characteristic of the emergence of the United States onto the global stage following European exodus from the western

hemisphere, the turn of the twentieth century actually represents a period of intense geographic inquiry, fascination, and recognition in both popular and intellectual circles.[54]

U.S. geography constituted for most a unique set of historical circumstances that married the natural openness and abundance of the American landscape with distinctly American achievements of civilization. Since white Americans were often descendants of Europeans and since Spencer, Morgan, and the host of geographers that proclaimed the white race the pinnacle of human evolution, it also stood to reason that American textbook authors believed that white Americans had themselves reached even higher stages of progress than had their European ancestors. Colgate University geologist Albert Perry Brigham's words, penned in 1903, captured the essence and importance of an empty North American continent in narratives of American progress:

> "When we look back upon the history of America, we see one fact of overshadowing importance…that a wide ocean separated an advanced civilization and a relatively dense population from a wide, rich, and almost unoccupied continent. This is the mainspring of American destiny. The discovery of the New world was coincident with conditions of discontent and internal pressure in the Old. There followed the unique transfer of a highly developed civilization, in a short time, to a far-distant and isolated land. New ideas needful for human progress had germinated and made a certain growth, as in the cramped spaces of a nursery…[We] see American social and political ideas growing and fruiting in a free field, maintaining continuity with the old through heredity and frequent reinforcement from ancient sources, but free from repression, and unfolding in the unsullied atmosphere of a 'reserved' continent."[55]

For many American geographers, the physical space that comprised the United States represented the natural catalyst for the development of what most

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[54] Neil Smith, *American Empire: Roosevelt's Geographer and the Prelude to Globalization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 1-4.
[55] Albert Perry Brigham, *Geography Influences in American History* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1903), 313-14.

authors taught students to be the pre-eminent model of human civilization. Brigham's description of the continuity of European civilization in the United States as "a unique transfer," a process dependent not only on Old World tradition but perhaps more crucially on a vast and untapped geography in which distinctly American institutions could foster human progress. Brigham and other academics believed that the social ills wrought by European modernization would be forestalled by the abundance of land and resources and favorable climate in North America. Others though, took into consideration the logical problems that would inevitably rise in the minds of young students who would struggle to reconcile the myth of the open continent with what their history textbooks told them about European encounters with Native Americans. Whenever confusion arose over the role of geographic determinism in human history, authors inevitably evoked Darwin and Spencer to explain that while favorable geography contributed to the advancement of certain societies, the ingenuity and historical advancement of Europeans and their progeny often trumped natural forces.

Consider Frederick Jackson Turner's impact at the end of the nineteenth century. His frontier thesis, presented to the American Historical Association in 1893 located the growth and Americanization of economy and demography both spatially and metaphysically in the hinterlands. As European migrations, first from the settlement at Jamestown to the War for Independence then later as potential citizens in the empire of liberty, continued to push frontier boundaries further west, European characteristics gave way to distinctly American forms. Consequently, the West, while undergoing continuous geographic shifts, quickly constituted a

distinctive spatial section within the American landscape and a crucial tenant of American progress and liberty. Free land, despite its very real occupation by Native Americans, Mexicans, and lingering European colonial powers comprised the economic, political, and cultural realization of American development.[56] And while Turner's thesis failed to account for the actual frontier movements based not on uni-directional westward migration but on multi-directional shifts based on population density and the corresponding economic sophistication, he succeeded in capturing the mythology of the frontier's importance in American history and its future progress.[57]

For Americans, geography and the ability – and increasingly, the right - to move across and control physical space remained of utmost importance as the nineteenth century came to an end. Never mind that Turner announced the closure of the frontier in the mid-1890s. His contention that Americans had conquered, settled, and made prosperous all available and profitable lands stretching to the Pacific as embodied by cities such as San Francisco, Denver, Seattle, and Portland

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[56] Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," chapter in *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920), 3-7.

[57] Robert E. Lang, Deborah Epstein Popper, and Frank J. Popper, "'Progress of the Nation': The Settlement History of the Enduring American Frontier," *Western Historical Quarterly* 26,3 (Autumn, 1995): 289-92. Lang, Popper, and Popper contend that the addendum to the 1890 U.S. Census entitled "Progress of the Nation" reveals that the frontier, though often attributed to westward movement, frequently retracted to include lands lying east of western settlements. Thus, frontier status rested upon low population density, lack of urbanization, and corresponding economic activity and not strictly on geographic orientation. The authors contend that Turner, while relying heavily on "Progress of the Nation," missed this point when he announced the frontier closed.

and the transcontinental railroads that linked these western urban islands to the rest of the nation constituted the realization of American progress. The close of the frontier did not in fact occur in the 1890s, but rather extended beyond the continental bounds of the United States. Economic and cultural frontiers both abroad and among immigrant populations at home offered for imperialists and progressives alike further opportunities for the extension of American democracy, capitalist production and markets, and culture. As renowned American geographer Isaiah Bowman remarked in his 1924 *Desert Trails of Atacama*, "It is undoubtedly an achievement to fill in a blank space on the map; but discovery has not ended when the blank spaces are filled."[58] The United States continued to push its own continental borders, and in doing so, came into contact with foreign persons who quickly became both objectives of and impediments to the extension of U.S. markets and American liberty. For many American scholars, imperialists, and entrepreneurs, geography and discovery constituted only a means to the achievement of anthropologic understanding and classification, strategic economic and military positioning, and national greatness.

Frontier mythology did not emerge in the American mind only as Turner announced the West closed. Rather, Turner's popularity and subsequent challenges via imperialism and international extension of American markets represented continuity in the idea of the frontier as a physical and psychological space in which civilization overtakes savagery. Perhaps nowhere is this extension more apparent

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[58] Isaiah Bowman, *Desert Trails of Atacama* (New York: American Geographical Society Special Publication No. 5, 1924), 1-2, quoted in Smith, *American Empire*, 54.

than in the ways in which school-age children were prompted to conceive of the spatial and developmental edges of American civilization. Laurence Hauptman has accounted for the pervasiveness of frontier mythology in a wide variety of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century schoolbooks including readers, spellers, histories, and geographies: "The frontier was generally presented to Americans as Xanadu, a mind-expanding experience as well as a semi-magical place symbolizing opportunity, civilization over savagery, predestination, material progress and freedom." After the perceived close of the West, new trans-continental frontiers emerged cloaked in Darwinian ideas of race and progress.[59]

The geography of the American landscape was, for many authors, the physical manifestation and nursery of liberty and progress that had been cast as the cornerstone of the American experience since European explorations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Its mountains, rivers, valleys, harbors, and climate represented objects of civilized man's conquest. As Brigham argued in his 1903 *Geographic Influences in American History*, the land that comprised the United States had been destined for the control and use of European immigrants turned Americans. Brigham's work reads more like a manual for the advance of white civilization than one meant to inform his students and colleagues about the geographical conditions of the nation. American history consisted of the progressive westward movement of highly individualistic, entrepreneurial, and

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[59] Laurence M. Hauptman, "Mythologizing Westward Expansion: Schoolbooks and the Image of the American Frontier before Turner," *Western Historical Quarterly* 8,3 (July, 1977): 271.

motivated Americans that injected western lands with energy: "To wait, to weigh, to hesitate and do nothing – these are qualities or habits that seem to have been lost in crossing the Mississippi River," wrote Brigham. The settlement of New York by the French, Dutch, and English ended a period of occupation by the Iroquois, a tribe described by Brigham as being in a "comparatively advanced state" to other Native American tribes. Despite their "considerable industrial skill," "[eloquence] in public counsel," and "prowess in war," the Iroquois, according to Brigham, "were still savages, delighting in torture and given to occasional cannibalism."[60] Likewise, Brigham cast California's natural beauty, wealth, and strategic maritime position as facts quite apparent to the American eye yet undeveloped by its original European occupants – the Spanish: "No permanent institutions grew up, the wealth of the land was not found, and no influence was exerted upon the future. Spanish occupation only gave sentimental background to Californian history." For Brigham, progress mean the extraction and use of natural resources, the establishment of government, education, and commercial institutions, and the conscious progress of civilization – tasks clearly not achievable by "the lazy and incompetent Spanish-American," who had made California "an outlying and neglected Mexican province."[61]

Brigham's interpretation of American history and the place of geography in shaping civilization taught students that race, above geography, provided the most fundamental determining factors in the progress of the nation. Not only did the white race represent the apex of human evolution, more specifically Anglo-Saxons

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[60] Brigham, *Geographic Influences in American History*, 10-11.
[61] Brigham, *Geographic Influences in American History*, 296-7.

were the forbearers of civilization. Others followed suit, including William Morris Davis. In his 1903 *Elementary Physical Geography*, Davis argued "the progress of mankind from the savage toward the civilized state has been largely made by taking advantage of favorable geographic conditions."[62] He cast the growth of the United States as a natural phenomenon - one dependent upon fertile soil for cultivation, navigable rivers and open plains for exploration, settlement, and commerce, and relatively small topographic relief for the development railroads. In a moment of geographic over-determinism, counter-historical logic, and staunch racism, Davis even regarded the narrowness of the Atlantic relative to the Pacific as the primary natural geographic factor in determining which race would discover and inhabit the New World – "emigrants from the leading races in the western part of Europe," or "from the less advanced peoples of eastern Asia."[63] Davis wanted his readers to feel comfort and relief that the vast Pacific had prevented the Chinese from colonizing the Americas, especially at a time when the Pacific was seen as a site for future capitalist expansion. Other textbooks also placed strong importance on the relationship between oceanic geographies and human progress. *Harper's Introductory Geography*, published in 1883, touted the Atlantic as "the most important ocean" because "the most civilized nations have lived on or near its

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[62] William Morris Davis, *Elementary Physical Geography* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1903), 332.
[63] Davis, *Elementary Physical Geography*, 367.

borders" and those nations (read: Europe and the United States) had cultivated a commercial culture supposedly rivaled by none.[64]

It was the confluence of geography and race in which most textbook authors sought to develop both national and human hierarchies in young minds. Davis taught his readers that race, as much as geography had influenced U.S. history: "the aboriginal inhabitants of this great land were savages who did not know how to develop its riches."[65] Yet even in this clash of savage and civilization, Europeans – the 'original discoverers' – represented still only a stage in the progression of civilization. Not Europeans, but rather their descendants in the United States possessed the racial fortitude and heritage appropriate for and capable of establishing themselves as the pre-eminent examples of human civilization. Davis provided his readers with three factors – favorable geography, racial superiority, and liberal government – that gave to the "young nation a giant's strength."[66] Geography texts extolled the virtues of the American experience and taught students that through perseverance and innate racial strength, European descendents had not only subdued the dangers posed by savage Indians, but had transformed the open spaces of the New World into a productive society in which "thousands of the poor and oppressed of Europe sought homes."[67]

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[64] Harper & Bros., *Harper's Introductory Geography*, 23.
[65] Davis, *Elementary Physical Geography*, 371.
[66] Davis, *Elementary Physical Geography*, 372.
[67] Harper & Bros., *Harper's Introductory Geography*, 37; Ralph Tarr and Frank McMurry, *Home Geography and the Earth as a Whole* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1901), 179.

The racial inferiority and inability of Native Americans to reap the benefits of North American geography did not comprise the whole of the comparative histories of white Americans and racial others. Physical, human, and economic geographies all contributed to U.S. students' understanding of their place of supposed superiority – as a nation *above* other nations. Once again, race and evolutionism formed the crux of the argument and within this discourse of national progress, authors employed government institutions and technology as cultural symbols of the superiority of Western, and more specifically, American culture. In most physical geography textbooks, authors used government as means of delineating national hierarchies: "our form of government makes us free and equal, [but] people are by no means free and equal in all countries," explained Ralph Tarr and Frank McMurry in their *Home Geography*. In fact, many authors cast nations such as Spain, Turkey, and China as "despotic" and antithetical to American liberty. Authors attributed in part, the ignorance and poverty of these nations to their leaders' refusal to protect individual liberty and property. Authors cited the numerous rebellions of the late Ottoman period as "proof" that the Turkish sultan, for example, was despotic. Perhaps in an appeal to the desire among adolescents to gain certain amounts of freedom from their parents, Tarr and McMurry equated the despotic governments of Europe and Asia with the parent-child dynamic that assumes the parent possesses ultimately authority and extends limited autonomy only at their discretion. Absolute monarchy presented a particularly wicked affront to liberty,

but England, because of its presumed racial link to white America, usually received a pass as a limited monarchy that allowed "a very considerable freedom."[68]

Republicanism and despotism, topics that to us might seem better situated in civics or political science lessons, were integral to discussions about man's relationship to the natural world in geography texts. The distinctly American notion that its vast geography, republican institutions, and liberal economy are mutually reinforcing and cannot be distinguished from each other offer the key to understanding this relationship. As Dorothy Ross has so eloquently stated, "what sealed this reconciliation of republican and liberal ideals were the exceptional conditions of the American continent." In defiance of Malthusian warnings about the tipping point of industrial development, the nation's founders, historians, and even its geographers took comfort in the sheer size of the United States. This vast continent would cause the social ills of industrial capitalism to simply dissipate, thus allowing the United States to absorb European immigrant populations and to expand its own industrial output.[69]

But contrary to the founding generation, those composing textbooks at the turn of the twentieth century experienced firsthand the rapid development of American industrial capitalism and its associated social disruptions. Despite this dramatic increase in scale, one that would have no doubt appalled late eighteenth

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[68] Tarr and McMurry, *Home Geography and the Earth as a Whole*, 98, 225. On the economic and racial connections between Britain and the United States, see Belich, *Replenishing the Earth*.
[69] Ross, *Origins of American Social Science*, 27.

century Americans steeped in agrarian and artisan tradition, geographers continued to assert that the American landscape afforded the kind of industrial and demographic growth that was propelling the nation to, in their eyes, the pinnacle of human achievement. Once a European frontier – The American race, to borrow from Theodore Roosevelt, continued the advancement of European (white) civilization in distinctly American forms.[70]

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[70] Roosevelt, *Winning of the West*, vol. 1, 1; Hauptman, "Mythologizing Westward Expansion," 279; Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 178-84.

CHAPTER THREE
RACE, EMPIRE, AND ASCENDANT NATIONALISM IN U.S. HISTORY NARRATIVES

In response to the 1898 U.S. military action in Cuba, Harvard professor of history Albert Bushnell Hart commented on the role of historians in the "up-building of the nation" and on the condition of historical study in the United States. He remarked that Americans possessed a profound reverence and interest in current events and took great care to record the minutia of events and conflicts such as the war with Spain. Yet when it came to the recollection and application of America's past to current events, Americans – including academics, policymakers, and citizens - were indeed quite ignorant. Hart referred specifically to the popular notion that the insurrection in Cuba existed in isolation from the history of America's foreign policy, that it somehow appeared at the end of a relatively "quiet and uneventful decade" to awaken the United States to its task of policing the western hemisphere. Hart placed most of the blame for America's collective historical disregard on historians themselves - particularly those who failed to convey to their students the important sequence of American foreign policy.[1]

Hart felt that the task of instilling in students a strong connection between America's past and present was best achieved through a comprehensive general history of the United States that would leave no relevant subject untouched. While

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[1] Albert Bushnell Hart, "The Historical Opportunity in America," *American Historical Review* 4,1 (Oct. 1898): 2.

he respected the intellectual stamina such an undertaking required, he castigated previous historians like George Bancroft for excluding recent history from their narratives.[2] In his own textbooks, Hart include detailed information about the Spanish-American War and subsequent interactions with and transgressions against Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Philippines, and Panama.

Hart was an intellectual conflicted about the United States' role in world politics and diplomacy. His textbooks reflected a deep-seated reverence for American exceptionalism – the idea that the United States was a unique nation-state with a history and government that served as models for the rest of humanity. In a section entitled "What America Has Done For the World," Hart argued in his *Essentials in American History* (1905) that the history of the United States could not be thought of as anything but "the story of the progress of great ideals and principles."[3] He regarded the mixture of races and nationalities, domestic and foreign territorial expansion, and the rise of corporate capitalism as crucial factors in the extension of basic principles of liberty and property. Yet Hart struggled with U.S. overseas imperialism. In particular, he critiqued the colonial status given to the Philippines and the subsequent denial of political and economic autonomy to Filipinos. However, Hart also applauded the U.S. government for extending "moderate self-government" to Hawai'i and Puerto Rico.

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[2] Hart, "The Historical Opportunity In America," 13.
[3] Hart, *Essentials in American History* (New York: American Book Company, 1905), 565.

Hart's career as an historian revealed contradictions between what he the intellectual espoused in writings intended for his colleagues, and what he the teacher included in his numerous textbooks. Hart offers but one example of how history textbooks published during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reflected strong reverence for what many authors referred to as the "progress of American civilization." For these authors, the history of the United States was often a pre-determined march toward a perfected society – one descended from classical Greece and Rome and from the European Enlightenment, nurtured in the religious freedom of the British-American colonies, and realized through a moderate political revolution in the late eighteenth century. In the early national period, national founders, history writers, and their successors celebrated the peculiar marriage of agrarian republicanism and commercial development. Land, of course, was the key element in the successful union of these two contrasting economic modes, and rapid westward expansion during the nineteenth century enabled Americans to create what Thomas Jefferson called an "empire of liberty." By the late nineteenth century, the union of republican government and liberal capitalism stood on shaky ground. Industrialization, labor strikes, segregation, the extension of the U.S. corporate capitalism into Central and South America and Asia, and increasing encounters with foreign cultures created tensions and uneasiness in the minds of many intellectuals in American society. Through the U.S. history narrative, the nation's elite (intellectuals, politicians, and a new class of

managers) instructed students about their role in the United States' burgeoning imperialist and capitalist society.[4]

This chapter analyzes key topics and events covered in the some of the most commonly used history textbooks published between the Chinese Exclusion and the National Origins Acts. Encounters with first peoples, the Monroe Doctrine and early U.S. diplomacy, manifest destiny, Radical Reconstruction, and the Spanish-American War collectively constituted a narrative of national progress through nation building and empire building. Interpretive differences of course emerged. History books often reflected anxieties over threats by foreigners and racial outsiders to national progress. While authors carefully constructed narratives of the American melting pot, its contents seldom included African-Americans, Mexicans, Native Americans, and Asian immigrants. Rather, national character hinged on the inclusion of Europeans of both Anglo-Saxon heritage and dubious whiteness in the melting pot. Historical narratives affirmed the relationship between race and national belonging.

Recent critical historiography on American history textbooks bears significant weight on my analysis of a singular narrative created within the context of transnational interaction. Historians including Kyle Ward, Dana Lindaman, James Loewen, and John Wills have provided crucial insight into what academics deemed as essential historical knowledge for millions of young Americans. This knowledge reified the Americanness of native-born whites, provided opportunities for the

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[4] Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science*, 25; Bernard Bailyn, "Contagion of Liberty," in *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 1967), 230-320.

children of European immigrants to become white and American, and denied national belonging to non-whites by excluding them from the national story.[5] Narratives rooted in progress through territorial and economic expansion naturalized both domestic and overseas imperialism for students. The themes and intended lessons contained within schoolbooks historicized and justified the socio-economic and racial hierarchies created through imperial expansion. I first examine how textbook authors articulated the relationship of Native Americans to the national narrative. This involved the construction of civilized/savage dichotomies. The story almost always involved violence - clashes between ancient, unenlightened, but sometimes noble savages and the progressive, civilized march of American liberty. Rather than disappear from the progressive historical narrative altogether, Native Americans represented the barbarism that European-Americans had long since left behind on their evolutionary path. Students were taught to admire Native Americans as historical figures – ancient relics from the nation's colonial origins - but also as savages whose subjugation, removal, and extermination were integral to national progress.

Next, authors presented the Monroe Doctrine and its subsequent applications under the McKinley administration as the providentially endowed

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[5] Kyle Ward, *History in the Making: An Absorbing Look at How American History Has Changed in the Telling over the Last 200 Years* (New York: New Press, 2006), xvi; Kyle Ward and Dana Lindaman, *History Lessons: How Textbooks from Around the World Portray U.S. History* (New York: New Press, 2004), xv, xvii-xviii; John S. Wills, "Who Needs Multicultural Education? White Students, U.S. History and the Construction of a Usable Past," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 27, 3 (Sept 1996): 367-8.

responsibility to protect democracy in the western hemisphere from monarchical tyranny and European domination. John Quincy Adams's 1823 declaration provided "a powerful veneer of international legitimacy" to U.S. foreign military interventions and to the histories that celebrated ascendant U.S. nationalism through empire building. The Monroe Doctrine represented the benevolence and neighborliness of the United States to struggling republics in the western hemisphere – republics that produced promising markets for U.S. corporate capitalism. It became an integral component of a national narrative that hinged on nation building both at home and abroad.[6]

Third, through slavery, the Civil War, and Reconstruction, textbook authors addressed the entangled issues of race, republicanism, and morality – three integral components of the national character. Most authors constructed narratives conducive to sectional healing. Slavery became an economic institution, political chasm, and hindrance to western expansion. The Civil War appeared as a glorious battle between two valorous armies, and Reconstruction failed not freedmen but white Southerners. Authors employed the science of race to recast black slavery as a natural social arrangement, even if it was problematic for freedom and liberty. African-American voices, like those of Native Americans, were entirely absent from even the most socially inclusive historical narratives. These omissions helped teach students that America was and should remain a nation reserved for whites.

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[6] Alfred W. McCoy, Francisco A Scarano, and Courtney Johnson, "On the Tropic of Cancer: Transitions and Transformations in the U.S. Imperial State," in Alfred McCoy and Francisco Scarano, eds., *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 26.

I conclude with the influence of American exceptionalism on the work of historian and schoolbook author Albert Bushnell Hart. A comparison of Hart's textbooks with his other scholarly publications, reveal a historian who struggled with the inconsistencies in the United States' claim as the empire of liberty, but one who fell short of conveying this critique to his young readership. Instead, Hart opted for the grand narrative of progress that his fellow schoolbook authors used. Collectively, these authors created a message that absolved the United States of its violent and non-violent transgressions against non-whites, foreigners, and the sovereignty of other nations.

History Schoolbooks: Essential Knowledge and the National Narrative

It is perhaps commonplace to assume that history textbooks reflected more about the time in which they were authored than the actual history that they contained. This point, espoused by history education historians, bears heavily on a study of the principles and ideologies of American exceptionalism as represented in U.S. history textbooks. At a time of U.S. empire building in Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Hawai'i, authors and schoolmen engaged in nation building. The two projects connected the foreign and the domestic and created the anxieties over the balance between global interaction and the maintenance of cultural and national distinctiveness.[7] The recent observations of Thomas Bender illustrate the implications of global connections in the U.S. national narrative: "we must

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[7] Kaplan, *Anarchy of Empire*, 170.

understand every aspect of American life as entangled in other histories. Other histories are implicated in American history, and the United States is implicated in other histories."[8] Authors created a singular national narrative not at a time of insularity but rather at a moment when the United States' interactions with the outside world escalated and consequently frightened many white Americans. Immigration and empire, along with urbanization and the rise of corporate capitalism jeopardized the imagined homogeneity of the agrarian republic. History schoolbooks countered the prospects of a multiracial republic at home with emphatic celebrations of white founders, white pioneers, and westward expansion.

At the heart of American imperialism lay national progress. Imperialists viewed favorable Asian market conditions as the extension of nineteenth-century continental westward expansion and the fulfillment of democratic capitalism. They saw that same westward momentum as essential to the extension of republicanism and liberty into geographies previously mis-governed by lawlessness and tribalism. But overseas empire posed significant threats to visions of the United States' domestic racial character. As long as foreign peoples occupied separate physical spaces, they – according to imperialists – could become civilized without degrading the racial and moral character of white Americans at home.[9]

Part of the difficulty in reconstructing and assessing the social impact of an entire genre of academic literature stems from the lack of a uniform nationwide

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[8] Thomas Bender, *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 6.
[9] Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*.

textbook selection policy. The United States has never employed a national curriculum. But while states and local communities selected textbooks, national production and distribution networks allowed a singular national narrative to cut across state and regional borders. Textbooks were often the only tangible and constant source of historical information for many students. Not until the 1920s did publishing companies commission "developed" textbooks, or books authored by several credible historians and professional educators. Rather, companies commissioned single authors who were seldom held to any professional standards.[10]

Kyle Ward's recent studies of how the American historical record has been re-represented and reinterpreted in textbooks has shown that because of the sheer volume of history textbooks published in the United States, the possibility of compiling a comprehensive record is both impossible and perhaps unnecessary. Ward convincingly argues that history textbooks instead constitute cultural representations and snapshots of the society in which they were produced.[11] From a sample set of primary and secondary school histories of the United States, this chapter demonstrates how American histories written in the four decades surrounding the Spanish-American War contributed to the mutual projects of nation and empire building.

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[10] Urban and Wagoner, *American Education*, 97-8, 106-8. For example, the Atlanta Public School Board offered its "unqualified condemnation" of a resolution for a statewide textbook policy. See Meeting Minutes of the Atlantic Public School Board, June 19, 1897, Atlanta Public School Museum and Archives, Atlanta, GA.
[11] Ward, *History in the Making*, xiii-xiv.

History textbooks represented American society as "practical, industrious, democratic, civic-minded, and generally homogeneous," to borrow from Francis Fitzgerald's critique of American history in the 1950s.[12] Textbooks recalled the lives of dead white men in order to elucidate the superiority of Anglo-Saxon government and American capitalism. Take for example the introductory statements from Edward Eggleston's *First Book in American History* (1899). Eggleston argued that because so few children who attended elementary school in the 1890s continued with more in-depth historical studies in high school, that a history textbook should, above all, provide students with "an acquaintance with the careers of the great men of this country." His table of contents reflects this educational agenda: Christopher Columbus, John Smith, John Cabot, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Robert Fulton, Andrew Jackson, Daniel Boone, Samuel Morse, and Abraham Lincoln. European explorers, American presidents, frontiersmen, and inventors filled the pages of most American history textbooks during this period. The biographies included in Eggleston's work and others reflected the historical tropes that authors and educators deemed most necessary for the education of young Americans: European explorers conquering empty and abundant lands in North America, white American patriots crafting a republican government and extending liberty through further conquest and colonization of the continent, and

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[12] Francis Fitzgerald, *America Revised: History Schoolbooks in the Twentieth Century* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1979), 18.

ingenious American minds developing industrial technologies that both symbolized and fueled progress.[13]

Though other authors often opted for the linear progressive narrative rather than the biographical approach, Eggleston's account resonated with others who espoused the national ideology of "consensus exceptionalism," or the merits of "the symbiotic relationship between the liberal market economy and republican political institutions."[14] Absent or at best misrepresented in many school histories were the shortcomings of this extension of liberty. Eggleston portrayed Andrew Jackson as a gentleman of "strong will and fierce passion," a man "exceedingly kind to his slaves," and, as evident in Eggleston's account of the surrender of Chief Red Eagle (or Weathersford) to Jackson, a general who respected and admired the bravery of Native American warriors.[15] Nowhere does Eggleston note Jackson's Indian Removal policy Act of 1830. Rather, for students reading this account, Jackson represented the rugged individual, the frontiersman, the representative of the common man, and even a white man sympathetic to the struggles of Native Americans as white settlement further encroached upon their land. These lessons proved useful to young white Americans who would presumably inherit the role of

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[13] Edward Eggleston, *A First Book in American History*: *With Special Reference to the Lives and Deeds of Great Americans* (New York: American Book Company, 1899), iv, vii. For another example of the "great men" biographical approach, see Thompson, *Primary History of the United States*.
[14] Ross, *Origins of American Social Science*, 28-9. Albert Bushnell Hart also included sections in his histories on "Great Men," a tactic praised by his editors at American Book Company. See Louise K. Green to George Benton, American Book Company Records, Box 11, Folder: Albert Bushnell Hart's Histories (1 of 2), Syracuse University Bird Library Special Collections
[15] Eggleston, *A First Book in American History*, 156, 157, 160.

benevolent imperialist in the United States' new markets in Latin America and the Pacific. Eggleston's account of Andrew Jackson acted as model for dealing with the childlike races of the growing American empire.

Native Americans: "A Child as well as a Man"[16]

"White people first came to this country from Europe. Vast forests covered the land. There were not cities, towns, or pleasant farms, such as we see [today]. The only people they found living here were a wild race of men whom they called Indians. Perhaps you may have seen some of these people. They are of a reddish or copper color, and dress in a strange way."[17] T.F. Donnelly's opening statement in *Barnes' Primary History of the United States* immediately emphasized innate, cultural, and spatial difference between British colonizers and Native Americans. The juxtaposition of nomadism with the settled, urbanized American republic situated Native Americans in a progressive narrative of U.S. history as ancient relics. Donnelly's supposition that students had likely never encountered a real live Indian reinforced Native American's outdated, primitive, archaic existence – a concept rooted not only in the history of U.S.-Indian relations but in the progressive historical narrative born in the European Enlightenment and transferred and adapted to American westward expansion during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

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[16] Henry William Elson, *School History of the United States* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1912), 25.
[17] T.F. Donnelly, *Barnes' Primary History of the United States* (New York: American Book Company, 1899), 12.

These histories used stark comparisons between Indians and Euro-Americans – distinctions that originated in eighteenth-century European thought. The authors of these accounts recognized human history as a series of stages in which European man has descended from *savagery* to *civilization*. Native Americans represented the earliest and lowest state of human existence - *savagery* - while white Europeans had arrived at the latest and highest stage of *civilization*.[18] Donnelly's description also evoked a number of cultural assumptions about Native Americans to produce an image and narrative that erased the violence of Indian removal and instead revered first peoples as romantic and nostalgic figures of America's past.[19] As Philip Deloria has shown, these social constructions could be quite varied: the solemn, stoic elder chief; the swift, fierce, and brave yet savage warrior; the benevolent tribes graciously willing to share their provisions with settlers at Plymouth. Visions of Indians in the white mind provided multiple contexts through which children could understand Native Americans and their relationship to the United States. "The 'kill or be killed' hatred of the frontiersman, the scientific racism of the intellectual, the evangelical demand of the missionary, the sympathetic disdain of the reformer, the justified expediency of the politician" – any of these gazes could be found in any number of history texts. Yet all of these portrayals were intrinsically tied to specific historical notions about the progress of American civilization. In the wake Turner's frontier thesis, Indians were folded into

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[18] Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 44-9.
[19] Karen M. Morin, "British Women Travellers and Constructions of Racial Difference Across the Nineteenth-Century American West," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series* 23, 3 (1998): 316.

the myriad mythologies about white pioneers in the Great West. As Jackson Lears notes, "the closing the frontier meant that there were no more Indians to displace, no more indigenous 'barbarian virtues' to emulate, and no more 'perennial rebirth.'" Textbooks lent academic credibility to popularized nostalgic visions of the North American wilderness and of primitive first peoples. They were at once part of the national narrative and outside the scope of national progress.[20]

Native Americans played the role of the antithetical racial outsider in most history textbooks. Authors engaged in scientific history popularized among academics during the 1880s and 1890s that involved categorizing and institutionalizing historical knowledge as means to arrive at a consensus national history.[21] Historians borrowed from anthropological discourses about the cultural character of races in an effort to show distinction between the achievements of "civilized" Anglo-Americans and their "savage" indigenous continental counterparts. Historians' reliance on white interpretations of non-white oral traditions reinforced the idea that indigenous history remained empirically connected to European/United States' expansion. The lack of a written history based on a unified national character prompted most to disregard indigenous interpretations, a practice among historians of the American West that continued well into the

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[20] Philip Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2004), 8-9; Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 40-1.
[21] Ian Tyrrell, "Making Nations/Making States: American Historians in the Context of Empire," *Journal of American History* 86,3 (Dec. 1999): 1021.

twentieth century.[22] School histories of the United States operated in this fashion when dealing with Native Americans: "It is needless to give our space to the many conjectures as to the origin of the race," remarked Henry William Elson in his *School History of the United States*.[23] Elson argued that Native Americans did not have a history beyond their role in the history of U.S. expansion.

This historiographic trope persisted in both secondary and university histories and manifested most clearly in descriptions of Indian life and racial characteristics. Textbook authors measured Native Americans in terms of their technological innovation, settlement patterns, and racial demeanor. Technology provided historians and anthropologists with tangible evidence of the evolutionary disparity between whites and Native Americans. Illustrations of bows, quivers, tomahawks, wigwams, peace pipes, moccasins, and headdresses invoked the primitiveness of first peoples, particularly when juxtaposed with maxim guns, railroads, and skyscrapers.[24] Authors' rudimentary drawings conveyed notions of semi-civilized weaponry and implements, of course paling in comparison to

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[22] W. David Baird, "Reflections of a Historian of Native American History," *Western Historical Quarterly* 30,4 (Winter 1999): 441-4. Baird regrets that as a graduate student of the history of the American West in the late 1960s, the "no documents, no history" approach espoused by his professors caused him to "be suspicious of oral sources and to devalue the social sciences…as a method of analysis." The discrediting of oral traditions as a way of constructing history began as Euro-American settlers sought to justify encroachment on and removal of indigenous peoples.

[23] Elson, *School History of the United States*, 25.

[24] Examples of such illustrations can be found in Elson, *School History of the United States*, 24-6, 27-30; L. A. Field, *A Grammar School History of the United States* (New York: American Book Company, 1897), 22-3; Hart, *Essentials in American History*, 22-6; John Bach McMaster, *A School History of the United States* (New York: American Book Company, 1897); 66-9.

European firearms and dwellings. Western evaluations of non-western technology have persisted since early modern European expansion that brought missionaries, explorers, conquistadors, and settlers into contact with unique scientific cultures. Europeans and later Americans became increasingly obsessed with their own technological superiority as a paramount marker of their own evolution.[25] Edwin Layton has argued that the United States experienced a "scientific revolution of technology" during the nineteenth century, in which professionalized and increasingly institutionalized science supplanted the world of artisans and craftsmanship as the predominant form of technological advancement.[26] This shift in the role of science left little space for an appreciation of indigenous scientific and technological knowledge.

Westerners associated their own innovation with the rise of commercial and agricultural production rooted in land-based wealth. The logic followed that since Native Americans relied primarily on hunting and fishing instead of small-scale and/or commercial farming, not only were their methods of food cultivation less advanced, but the technology required to do so was also inferior. For these authors, there existed a deficiency not only in the technologies of indigenous peoples, but also in the scientific knowledge required to develop low-tech weapons and implements. Textbook authors valued Native American technology not for its practicality, but rather devalued it as outdated and unable to compete with Western

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[25] Michael Adas, *Machines as the Measure of Men*, 6.
[26] Edwin Layton, "Mirror-Image Twins: The Communities of Science and Technology in 19th Century America," *Technology and Culture* 12,4 (Oct. 1971): 562.

technological advancement. This rationale prompted whites to regard the supposed inferior technology of Native Americans as a sign of cultural, intellectual, and racial deficiency. For example, Albert Hart described the dugout canoe as "one of the best inventions of any savage race."[27] Likewise, the Cherokee tomahawk and the bow and arrow – both beneficial implements for Native Americans – were deemed relics from prior stages of evolution. "They used the bow and arrow, but had not learned the use of firearms," remarked Elson in his comparison of indigenous weaponry to those of European settlers. Never mind that Native Americans had quickly and adopted and adapted firearms to their unique and effective style of warfare shortly after European settlement in the Americas. For Elson and others, Native Americans were to remain separate from the narrative of white progress contingent upon technological superiority.

As Elson elaborated, he touched on a crucial evolutionary distinction made by Westerners about land use: "It requires a vastly greater land area to support a people from the natural products of the forest and the stream than to support a people who till the soil."[28] Chief among nineteenth century American notions of progress were property ownership, fencing, and land cultivation. These Western ideas accompanied white settlements in Australia, British India, and the Americas. In the United States, clashes occurred between government initiatives to control land use and ownership and notions of endless western frontier lands. However, the idea of land improvement bound both the U.S. government and western settlers

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[27] Hart, *Essentials in American History*, 23.
[28] Elson, *School History of the United States,* 24.

into a relationship that quickly denied indigenous claims and uses of land.[29] These economic tenets of civilization manifested in the appropriation of western frontier space from Native Americans as well as the perceived need to teach inferior races about proper land use. The stereotypes of nomadic Indians roaming the plains and forests ignored the rich agricultural and sedentary histories of many indigenous peoples.

Federal policies concerning Indian reservations attempted to codify and enforce U.S. jurisdiction over all aspects of Native American life and governance.[30] Just as Andrew Jackson's 1830 Indian Removal Act banished the Five Civilized Tribes to trans-Mississippi land - preceded of course by Thomas Jefferson's empty and failed philanthropic rhetoric of assimilation - white expansion continued to sequester and confine Native Americans into increasingly smaller communities where it was thought that they could learn the value of individual private property, commercial agriculture, and Christianity.[31] Despite Jefferson's promises, the early

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[29] John Weaver, *The Great Land Rush and Making of the Modern World* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), 48.
[30] George Bird Grinnell, "The Indian on the Reservation,"*Atlantic Monthly* LXXXIII (Feb., 1899): 256-260; Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 51-2; Walter L. Williams, "United States Indian Policy and the Debate over Philippine Annexation: Implications for the Origins of American Imperialism," *Journal of American History* 66, 4 (March 1980): 813.
[31] Christian B. Keller, "Philanthropy Betrayed: Thomas Jefferson, the Louisiana Purchase, and the Origins of Federal Indian Removal Policy," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 144, 1 (March 2000): 39-66; Anthony Wallace, *Jefferson and the Indians: The Tragic Fate of the First Americans* (Cambridge, M.A.: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1999), 275, 327. Both Keller and Wallace trace the origins of federal Indian Removal policy to Thomas Jefferson's presidency, in which he established a precedent of voluntary removal to trans-Mississippi land coupled with forced migration for tribes that refused to "civilization" and/or were

republic never seriously considered assimilation of Native Americans as citizens, a policy reinforced by continued removal and placement of Native Americans on reservations where they were not subjected to the protection of federal law.

At the end of the nineteenth century, standard U.S. histories and public schools dismissed possibilities of Native American assimilation, even as some whites established and supported Indian schools modeled after the colonial missionary schools of Hawai'i. If Native Americans could not become white and thus citizens, whites could at least harness the labor potential of Native Americans. Indian schools like Richard Henry Pratt's Carlisle School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania drew its inspiration from Samuel Chapman Armstrong's Hampton Institute that taught African-Americans the value of citizenship through manual work.[32] Gone were the days when white settlers concerned themselves with Indian confrontations, and thus, the Indian's perceived barbarism became safe and indeed useful within the context of national expansion. While authors represented Indians as uncivilized, their supposed savagery was also revered, admired, and useful to an extent. C.L. Higham has shown that late nineteenth-century anthropologists relied on American missionary views of Native Americans to construct scientific

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hostile to the United States. Jefferson and his successors' policies of removal became increasingly involuntary with the acquisition of the Louisiana territory in 1803.

[32] For treatment of Native American education see Jacqueline Fear-Segal, *White Man's Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007); Sally Jenkins, *The Real All-Americans: The Team that Changed a Game, a People, a Nation* (New York: Doubleday, 2007); Okihiro, *Island World*, 98-134; Amy C. Schutt, "'What Will Become of Our Young People?': Goals for Indian Children in Moravian Schools," *History of Education Quarterly* 38,3 (Autumn, 1998): 268-86.

conclusions about the nature of the indigenous mind. According to missionary accounts, Native Americans possessed the necessary rationalism to become Christianized and civilized if provided the right moral environment.[33] The presumed savagery of Native Americans also became transferable to a cultural reinvigoration of the American nation – the character of which some turn-of-the-century intellectuals believed was in jeopardy of becoming effeminate. Post-Reconstruction American nationalists often incorporated barbarism and savagery into their reserve of traits deemed necessary for United States' expansion and confrontation with cultural and racial others.[34]

The noble savage rose to ascendancy again after the apparent close of the West to again underpin American exceptionalism. Yet unlike the nation's founders who revered Native Americans as models of emancipation from unjust law and of democracy in practice, science rendered Native Americans barbarous – inferior to civilized whites – and thus in need not of emulation but of either carefully monitored assimilation or destruction.[35] Chief among the portrayals of Native Americans as savages was their affinity for fierce warfare. Most authors surveyed in

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[33] C.L. Higham, "Saviors and Scientists: North American Protestant Missionaries and the Development of Anthropology," *Pacific Historical Review* 72,4 (Nov. 2003): 535.
[34] Gary Gerstle, "Theodore Roosevelt and the Divided Character of American Nationalism," *Journal of American History* 86,3 (Dec. 1999): 1280-1307; Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues,* 1-2; Rogers Smith, *Civil Ideals: Conflicting Visions of Citizenship in U.S. History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).
[35] For more on the role of the Noble Savage archetype in American political, social, and intellectual thought, see Tiya Miles, "'His Kingdom for a Kiss': Indians and Intimacy in the Narrative of John Marrant," in *Haunted By Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History*, edited by Ann Laura Stoler (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2006), 169-71; Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven, C.T.: Yale University Press), 1998.

this study did not regard white encroachment upon native lands as even a peripheral reason for the provocation of Native Americans violence against white settlers. Rather, Indian attacks against white advancement were for these authors the manifestation of the inherently and passionately brutal nature of Indian savages:

> "Courage and fortitude he possessed in the highest degree. Yet with his bravery were associated all the vices, all the dark and crooked ways, which are the resort of the cowardly and the weak. He was treacherous, revengeful, and cruel beyond description. Much as he loved war (and war was his chief occupation), the fair and open fight had no charm for him. To his mind it was madness to take the scalp of an enemy at the risk of his own, when he might waylay him in an ambush or shoot him with an arrow from behind a tree. He was never so happy as when, at the dead of night, he roused his sleeping victims with an unearthly yell and massacred them by the light of their burning home."[36]

McMaster's description contrasted the irrational violence of the nomadic warrior who destroyed private property with the rational, honorable, "fair and open" warfare of whites. McMaster's use of fear underpinned the need for whites to be cautious about assimilation of Native Americans. His historical account reinforced the desire of many whites to keep Indians at a safe distance and, through the use of reservations, to carefully manage their movements within and potentially against the nation.

Albert Hart also condemned Indians for their guerrilla-like tactics – arguing that the unwillingness to engage in battle under traditional European-style combat indicated that Native Americans did not possess the intellectual capacity for restraint from violence. Hart also found it disconcerting that whites adopted native "custom[s] of killing or enslaving men, women, and children alike," demonstrating

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[36] McMaster, *School History of the United States*, 69-70.

his disapproval of the infusion of barbarism into civilized warfare.[37] He conveyed a sense of relief, of the closing of an era of savagery on the western frontier and the unhindered, progressive march westward of American civilization when at last the Apaches, "the most ferocious of the hostile tribes, were finally subdued in 1886."[38] Others, such as Samuel Forman, regarded the 1887 Dawes Act as a "generous and humane Indian policy" that finally introduced Native Americans to the concept of private land ownership and republican citizenship. Furthermore, in order to protect Indians from "the injustice and rapacity of the white man," reservations were created along with "liberal appropriations for the education of Indian youths."[39] Forman perceived the final solution to the 'Indian problem' to be a contradictory policy of separation, education, protection, and instillation of white values, particularly those specific to the maintenance of private property. Forman argued to his readers in order for both assimilation and reservations to be successful, white stewards of progress needed to avoid treating Indians as equals but rather as children. He believed the United States could best eradicate indigenous culture through educational programs designed to strip Native American youths of their ancestral ties.

If authors embraced the racial separation provided by the Dawes Act as necessary for the continued westward progress of the American nation, their interpretation of interracial contact between Native Americans and white settlers

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[37] Hart, *Essentials in American History*, 27-8.
[38] Hart, *Essentials in American History*, 526.
[39] Samuel Eagle Forman, *Advanced American History* (New York: The Century Co., 1914), 533.

during the colonial period was quite complex and at times contradictory. In some histories produced at the end of the nineteenth century, Native Americans represented both pathways and obstacles to early European expansion and settlement of North America. Accounts of initial British settlements at Jamestown, Salem, and Plymouth portrayed Native Americans as essential to the survival of the settlers, though not without caveat. Authors of U.S. history texts represented moments of contact in the 1610s and 1620s between English/French settlers and Native Americans as a clash between civilization and barbarism. Furthermore, historians' downplay of the interaction and beneficial connections made between Native Americans and British settlers served as a means of distancing the United States' colonial past from its French and Hispanic influences and reinforcing the nation's Anglo-Saxon heritage.[40]

Authors presented Native Americans as reluctant to extend assistance to starving and diseased settlers. John McMaster interpreted the initial contact between the Jamestown settlers and Powhatan not as a natural benevolence on the part of Native Americans, but rather a cunning move by John Smith – an Englishman - who "persuaded the Indians to give them food."[41] John Smith's Englishness also played an important role in McMaster's treatment of European/Native American interaction. He created significant distinctions between French and English relationships with indigenous populations. The French, ruthless in their desires to profit from the fur trade, established what McMaster deemed to be friendly

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[40] Tyrrell, "Making Nations/Making States,"1030.
[41] McMaster, *A School History of the United States*, 31.

relationships with native tribes, largely attributable to intermarriage of French men and indigenous women. "Much was expected of this mingling of races. It was supposed that the Indian would be won over to civilization and Christianity," argued McMaster. However, he found that the opposite occurred and ultimately contributed to the inability of the French to maintain a North American empire: "…the Frenchmen were won over to the Indians…They lived in wigwams, wore Indian dress…and made their faces hideous with vermilion, ocher, and soot."[42] Depictions of the degeneration of French traders were indicative of the uneasiness with which textbook authors dealt with racial hybridity as the United States increasingly embarked upon economic and cultural missions beyond its continental borders at the end of the nineteenth century. McMaster's description of the *coureurs de bois* – "a class of half-civilized vagrants, who ranged the woods in true Indian style" – bore stark contrast to his account of English/Native American contact.[43] Because the English engaged in agricultural settlement and commerce – a defining mechanism and marker of civilization in the minds of white Americans – they remained free of entangling cultural alliances with Indian tribes and thus maintained racial purity.

These racial and cultural distinctions were essential to the historical narrative of exceptionalism born in the 1790s as a national ideology and infused with intellectual discourses and educational policies following radical Reconstruction. Joyce Appleby explains: "Most of what happened in the colonial

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[42] McMaster, *A School History of the United States*, 70.
[43] McMaster, *A School History of the United States*, 70.

period was ignored because it fit so ill with the narrative of exceptionalism…The exotic cultures of Africans and native Americans could not be incorporated into American history because those peoples' very claims to have culture would have subverted the story of progress."[44] The limited yet quite significant information on Native American culture provided in American historical accounts was a product not of the personal biases or shortsightedness of a handful of educators and historians but rather reflected a deep-seated tradition of using history to erase the interdependence of our nation's past. Only in the 1960s and 1970s with the emergence of social history did the American historical narrative undergo an unsettling shift away from the established exceptionalist discourse to one of multiple perspectives and histories – a stark contrast to the history produced and sold in American schools during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[45]

Exceptions to typical omissions or glosses of Native American cultures came from Hart who, in his 1918 *School History of the United States*, reserved a page and half specifically for a treatment of "Western Indians." While Hart's description was rather cursory, it was, unlike other historical narratives, not a condemnation of indigenous culture. Rather, Hart concluded his discussion with a telling statement: "The Indians had many good qualities, but they and most of the white people could

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[44] Joyce Appleby, "Recovering America's Historical Diversity: Beyond Exceptionalism," *Journal of American History* 79,2 (Sept. 1992): 425. Also see David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 54. Lowenthal argues that West Indian histories reveal similar avenues of forgetting the legacies and consequences of slavery and exploitation in the formation of Atlantic social and economic structures.
[45] Appleby, "The Power of History," *American Historical Review* 103,1 (Feb. 1998): 5.

never learn to live together in peace and friendship."[46] The historical narrative of contact between indigenous peoples and white settlers remained one of conflict and antithetical to the story of national progress.

The Monroe Doctrine: Progress Through Imperialism

The Monroe Doctrine explicitly warned European nations against attempting to recolonize the Americas. In 1823, James Monroe's Secretary of State John Quincy Adams declared that Spain's exit from Mexico, Venezuela, Peru, and Ecuador during the 1810s marked a point at which European colonial interests were no longer welcome in the Western Hemisphere.[47] Cloaked in anti-monarchical rhetoric and republican ideals, Adams and Monroe decided that even a treaty with England against Spain's return to the Americas left the United States entangled in an alliance in which they stood to gain very little economically. Thus, Monroe's 1823 Congressional address laid the political foundation for U.S. imperialism in the western hemisphere – a project at the forefront of economic, social, and cultural discussions as the United States engaged Spain in the War of 1898.[48]

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[46] Hart, *School History of the United States* (New York: American Book Company, 1918), 216-17.
[47] Credit for the Monroe Doctrine varied among history textbooks. Some authors found it easier to omit John Quincy Adams name from the narrative altogether and simply attribute its creation to James Monroe. Others included Adams as the primary author and informed students of Monroe's secondary role in its implementation. Still, others noted that Monroe himself really had very little to do with the doctrine at all and gave full credit to Adams.
[48] Thomas Bender, *A Nation Among Nations: America's Place in World History* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2006), 214-15.

U.S. statesmen from Thomas Jefferson to Theodore Roosevelt viewed European encroachments on American territories as a direct affront to the United States' right to westward and southern expansion. The Monroe Doctrine, according to American statesmen and businessmen, protected both New World governments from re-colonization by Old World powers and the economic ambitions of the United States.[49] However, as many textbook narratives indicated, this second element of protection more often than not meant that economic activity in Latin America and the Caribbean would be reserved for and not denied to the United States.

For those authors of U.S. history textbooks who devoted ample space to the Monroe Doctrine and its political and economic implications often treated the 1820s as a period in which the United States began to exercise, for the first time, its preordained right to preside over the Americas. In particular, authors stressed the right of and need for the United States to protect its own interests against the desires of European imperialists to retain or re-establish colonial ties to the New World. For many historians, the Monroe Doctrine also set a clear precedent for U.S. intervention in Latin America in 1898 and the first two decades of the twentieth century.

The convenient omission of the third tenet of the John Quincy Adams' Monroe Doctrine stating that the United States recognized the sovereignty of the

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[49] Thomas Schoonover, *Uncle Sam's War of 1898 and the Origins of Globalization* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2003), 7-8, 20.

newly independent Latin American republics allowed textbook authors to ignore and passively promote U.S. intervention in Spanish territories. L.A. Field, a former administrator in the Atlanta Public Schools and the Chair of the Latin and Literature at Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia interpreted Adams' message as an affront to monarchy, an isolationist policy in regards to European affairs, and a warning to European nations that may attempt to occupy or colonize any part of the Americas. Nowhere did Field note that the United States recognized Latin American independence as legitimate. Rather the Monroe Doctrine served an immediate purpose in turn-of-the-twentieth century foreign policy.[50] The United States became increasingly interested in the extension of its hegemony in the Americas, a position that would afford it the ability to establish profitable sites for economic production, transportation, and consumption not only in Latin America but also in the Pacific basin. These desires were reflected in Hart's *Essentials in American History* in which he took the liberty of re-crafting Adams' three tenets to emphasize the document's imperial agenda. Like Field, Hart completely dismissed Adams' recognition of Latin American independence and conveyed to his readers a sense that European intervention represented not a threat to Latin American independence but rather to the natural sovereignty of the United States in the western hemisphere. Hart characterized Adams' statement as "peaceful and harmonizing" and touted European intervention as "contrary to *our* interest."[51] For Hart the validity of the Monroe Doctrine as an international policy was never

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[50] Field, *Grammar School History of the United States*, 258.
[51] Hart, *Essentials in American History*, 308-9.

contentious. Hart described the success of Adams' diplomacy in driving European powers out of the Americas and in the victory of republicanism in the Americas. He characterized the fifteen years surrounding the Monroe Doctrine as a period that embodied a "new national spirit," or the mobilization of the nation for the growth and extension of liberty beyond its borders.[52]

In his interpretation, Hart did not criticize the Monroe Doctrine's implicit economic and territorial expansionist ambitions. Eleven years later, Hart defended the noble motives of Adams and Monroe when he argued that any suggestions that the Monroe Doctrine was intended to secure favorable trade in the Caribbean was unfounded.[53] Imperialism in Central America in particular intensified greatly during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, as foreign entrepreneurs, many from the United States, pressured Latin American governments into contracts that increased the transportation of goods, people, and capital to and from Asian markets. U.S. liberalism and maritime technological innovations provided imperialists a strong tandem with which to pursue favorable economic conditions in Latin America and the Caribbean.[54]

U.S. capitalists regarded Latin America as the home of non-white, savage persons who were misgoverned by European Catholic monarchies and needed to be

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[52] Hart, *Essentials in American History,* 303-15.
[53] Hart, *The Monroe Doctrine: An Interpretation* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1916), 78.
[54] Schoonover, *Uncle Sam's War of 1898*, 54.

taught lessons in orderly republican government.[55] In 1925, Leonard Packard and Charles Sinnott co-authored *Nations as Neighbors*, a geography textbook for junior high schools in which they presented the Monroe Doctrine as an exercise of neighborly protection: the benevolent United States "protected [its] southern neighbors from foreign invasion or colonization." Specifically, "Cuba was freed from cruel Spain through the help of the United States."[56] Hart argued that since 1821, when the last South American Spanish colony became independent, the new republics had neglected the opportunity of independence afforded them and protected by the United States: "While under Spain, none of these elements had ever had the chance to govern themselves, and in the hundred years that have since passed, few have learned that lesson."[57] These clear denials by Hart and others of any dubious activity on the part of the U.S. government placed the burden of the failure of republican government on Latin Americans themselves. Packard, Sinnott, and Hart supported Theodore Roosevelt's subversion of the Monroe Doctrine, which, in the words of Jackson Lears, "was designed to protect U.S. intervention from Latin American Revolution" rather than "protect Latin American revolution from European intervention."[58]

The Monroe Doctrine served as an official precursor to John O'Sullivan's *manifest destiny* (1845). This vision of expansion – an exceptional nation divinely

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[55] Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 38-40.
[56] Leonard Packard and Charles Sinnott, *Nations as Neighbors* (New York: Macmillan, 1925), 11, 12.
[57] Hart, *School History of the United States*, 239.
[58] Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 285.

appointed to spread the "empire of liberty" across the continent (and later beyond) – became synonymous with progress and civilization in the American experience. *Manifest destiny* served similar interests among white Americans who believed that foreigners in overseas markets, U.S. factories, and urban communities needed to undergo a process of Americanization in order to perform their specific functions as laborers, consumers, and - in the case of many European immigrants – citizens.

Interpreting Slavery, Sectional Conflict, and Reconstruction

"My chance to serve my country is to give it peace, to let sectional animosities die, to clear the way for new phases of national politics. I am the end of an era."[87] President Rutherford B. Hayes's statement provided Nathaniel Wright Stephenson with an appropriate transition from his tentative discussions of the causes and results of civil war to a rather lively account of the growth of the U.S. economy and involvement in world affairs beginning in the 1880s. The close of southern Reconstruction and the subsequent nationalistic projects that included industrialization, transportation development, and market and territorial expansion both bolstered and received support from consensus visions of a healed national body. With the exception of authors who openly sympathized with the Lost Cause ideology of the South and wrote corresponding histories for both black and white southern children, most viewed the institution of slavery as antithetical to the principles of republican government and free democracy upon which the United

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[87] Quoted in Nathaniel Wright Stephenson, *An American History* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1913), 491.

States was founded. But those who regarded slavery as a scar upon the Constitution were not necessarily as ardent in their ideological stance as staunch Lost Cause adherents. Many narratives written during the fifty or so years following Reconstruction embraced what David Blight has called the reconciliationist vision of the Civil War, its causes, and its aftermath: "the forces of reconciliation overwhelmed the emancipationist vision in the national culture…the inexorable drive for reunion both used and trumped race." As white America privileged reunion over justice, racial equality and basic political rights often became ancillary to the reconciliation of the dominant culture.[88]

One needs look no further than the indexes of many history textbooks published in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. "Negro," "Reconstruction," "Emancipation" – these terms had short subheadings and were associated with very few page numbers if they appeared at all. As a topic of discussion, slavery was often confined to discussions of the politics of expansion in the first half of the nineteenth century and was often characterized as an "agitation," a "complication," or a nuisance to expansionists who were caught in the political cross-fire of the "great debate" between abolitionists and Southern slaveholders.[89] Historians frequently dismissed the abolitionist cause as a hasty, dramatic, and

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[88] Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 2-3. For treatments of the role of Lost Cause ideologies and Southern vindication in post-Reconstruction politics and culture, see Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 37-8, 91; Jack Maddex, Jr. "Pollard's The Lost Cause Regained: A Mask for Southern Accommodation," *Journal of Southern History* 40, 4 (Nov. 1974): 595-612; Ulrich B. Phillips, "The Central Theme of Southern History," *American Historical Review* 34, 1 (Oct. 1928): 30-43.
[89] Stephenson, *An American History*, viii; Eggleston, *First Book of American History*, 179.

sometimes violent change that went against the grain of the orderliness of republican government. Instead they preferred to conjecture that slavery died out in the North because free labor proved more profitable than slave labor for northern industries – that economics and not morality prompted the demise of slavery.

These narratives further entangled democracy and capitalism. Southern slaveholders were also presented as a unified, calculating group of prominent, respectable, benevolent men who had exhausted all viable legal means for protecting their property and livelihood, and had gone to war not in defense of an immoral institution, but rather to defend southern economic interests and the rights of states under the federal system: "A great many of the leading men of the South had always held that the Union was not perpetual, but only a league or partnership among the States, and that any State had the right to withdraw from the Union whenever it chose to do so…[Therefore] believing that the election of Mr. Lincoln was a menace to slavery, now decided to secede and set up a government for themselves." For Donnelly, secession was not a defiant act of violence on the part of southern slaveholders, but rather a consistency in position. He argued that Southerners had the constitutional right to carry slaves into western territories, and he regarded the debate over slavery as a consequence of expansionist politics - not as one of ethics or prospects for black freedom.[90]

For some authors of the reconciliationist school, slaveholding represented a noble undertaking, particularly when it involved prominent revolutionary and

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[90] Donnelly, *Barnes' Primary History of the United States*, 166.

antebellum leaders. The hindsight visions of slavery in pre-Civil War America did not render its proponents immoral. Textbook authors presented slavery as a historical fact, and at times, a necessity to southern society and economy in light of scientific theories of race. For some, slavery was in fact a benevolent institution to which theories about universal liberty and equality did not necessarily apply. As Reginald Horsman has noted, "many Americans eagerly grasped at new racial theories which placed the onus of black slavery on the blacks themselves; they were slaves because their innate ability best fitted them to be slaves."[91]

Take Edward Eggleston's portrayal of Thomas Jefferson: "He had always been kind to the negroes on his plantation. When he got back [from France] they were so rejoiced that they took him out of his carriage and carried him into the house, some of them crying and other laughing with delight because 'massa come home again.'"[92] In this passage, Jefferson is not a hypocrite who is willing to deny the basic theoretical principles of natural law from which the founders supposedly drew inspiration. Rather, it was blacks' racial inferiority, unintelligent language, and loyalty in bondage that allowed and even required Jefferson to hold slaves in the new empire of liberty. According to Eggleston, Jefferson and his slaves had a symbiotic relationship of respect and benevolence that benefitted both master and slaves and, if anything, placed more of the burden on Jefferson as the caregiver than it did on his slaves.

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[91] Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 1981), 103.
[92] Eggleston, *First Book in American History*, 130-1.

Other textbook authors espoused similar views about the master-slave relationship: "Most of the people saw nothing wrong in the relation between master and slave, and thought it the best under which the two races could live together," remarked Lida Field.[93] Paternalism presented students with the sense that antebellum racial hierarchies were neither sinful nor outdated, but rather reflective of the natural hierarchical relationship between blacks and whites. Henry Alexander White offered an example of this sentiment in his *Beginner's History of the United States* (1919) by juxtaposing northern opposition to slavery with southern justifications in a way that gave southern sympathizers a moral victory. He presented the Republican Party as a political entity refusing to "yield obedience" to the Dred Scott decision of "the highest court in the land" – hypocritical in their defense of the Union and the Constitution. Contrarily, White regarded the pro-slavery argument as a "difficult matter": "We are doing our best for the welfare of the negro. We treat him kindly, we nurse him in sickness, we are teaching him better and higher things each day. The negro is like a child, however. He needs a stronger and wiser race to guide his footsteps."[94] This parent/child relationship reinforced for students prevailing social and racial hierarchies throughout the United States and demonstrated to them that de facto racial apartheid (and in fact de jure segregation in many locations) resonated with natural law and order.[95]

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[93] Field, *Grammar School History of the United States*, 256.
[94] Henry Alexander White, *Beginner's History of the United States* (New York: American Book Company, 1919), 217.
[95] Johnson, "Southern Paternalism toward Negroes after Emancipation," 483-509.

The development of biological and social sciences between the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries provided continuity between justifications for slavery and post-war interpretations of the institution. In particular, many authors employed theories about climatology and racial inheritance to explain the place of slavery in the Southern economy. Blacks were portrayed as essential for agricultural and later industrial endeavors such as coal mining and steel production in what geographers called the *torrid zone,* a name designated for the regions straddling the equator but quite often misapplied to the U.S. South to substantiate black bondage: "After a while, the people complained that they could not till their land in so warm a climate without slaves, and slavery was accordingly introduced [to Georgia] seven years after the first settlement."[96] *Barnes' Primary History of the United States* revealed the connections between historical narratives and social Darwinian theories about the effect of climate on the mental and physical energies of races. At the time of Georgia's founding, indentured servitude existed alongside black slavery, but Donnelly assumed that his readership understood the connection between warm climate and black labor. White Georgians and Southerners did not call for slaves of any race, but rather specifically for African chattel.

Donnelly's theory of racial climatology pervaded many academic disciplines during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including archaeology, geography, sociology, political science, and, despite geographer Ellsworth

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[96] Donnelly, *Barnes' Primary History of the United States*, 67.

Huntington's contentions, history as well.[97] Huntington, one of the foremost early twentieth-century proponents of climatology, pointed to a climatic handicap in the Southern United States as largely responsible for not only the unprogressive nature of the Southern economy – a thesis that met with some resistance from Southern intellectuals - but also the necessity of black slavery:

> Slavery failed to flourish in the North not because of any moral objection to it, for the most godly Puritans held slaves, but because the climate made it unprofitable. In a climate where the white man was tremendously energetic and where a living could be procured only by hard and unremitting work, it did not pay to keep slaves, for the labor of such incompetent people scarcely sufficed to provide even themselves with a living, and left little profit for their masters. In the South slavery was profitable because even the work of an inefficient negro more than sufficed to produce enough to support him. Moreover, the white man was not energetic, and his manual work was not of much more value than that of the negro.[98]

Huntington assumed, as did many of his contemporaries in the historical discipline, that certain immutable traits were also largely responsible for the levels of civilization experienced by different races, but he prompted his fellow academics to consider the possibility that a combination of inheritance and climate ultimately determined whether or not a population would reach the highest levels of culture. For some authors, this dual interpretation of "race and place" provided a seemingly easily understood and commonly accepted understanding of the role of slavery in the growth of the United States.[99] The striking absence of the moral arguments of abolitionists by authors and the acceptance of Huntington's contentions reinforced

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[97] Ellsworth Huntington, *Civilization and Climate* (New Haven, C.T.: Yale University Press, 1915, 1922,1924), 18. In the introduction to his third edition, Huntington contented that anthropologists, economists and historians were slow to recognize the important influence of climate on human history.
[98] Huntington, *Civilization and Climate*, 41.
[99] Huntington, *Civilization and Climate,* 55.

for students the economic, social, and biological necessity of black slavery in America's past.

The racialization of American society pervaded Reconstruction narratives as well and further contributed to miseducation of students about racial immutability. Many authors treated this period of American history as the redemption of the Southern defense of slavery - a time when the fears of white Southern gentility bore truth and one in which innate Negro traits - now unchecked by white supervision – sparked lawlessness and economic stagnation throughout the defeated South:

> The South had relied almost wholly upon negroes to till the fields, but the emancipated negro did not want to work in the field or anywhere else. For the slave thought that slavery meant toil, and after he was set free he supposed that freedom only meant idleness. Accordingly he was disposed to try out his freedom by refusing to work…vast numbers of them broke away only to roam about over the land in gangs, houseless and homeless, not knowing one day where food for the next day was to come from. Often it came by theft; there was no conscience to hold back the thievery, for in the days of bondage the slave thought it no sin to steal a pig or a chicken from a white man. In the early days of his freedom, therefore, the negroes was of little use to himself or his community. He was an economic liability rather than an asset.[100]

This passage from Samuel Eagle Forman's *Our Republic* (1924) illustrates how many students learned about America's racialized Reconstruction past. According to Forman, blacks were predisposed to idleness, and despite the noble intentions of slaveholders to instill in them a Christian morality and work ethic, blacks misunderstood this charity as one that forced them into "toil." Consequently, emancipation revealed the immutable racial traits of idleness and immorality.

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[100] Samuel Eagle Forman, *Our Republic: A Brief History of the American People* (New York: The Century Company, 1924), 535.

Furthermore, it devastated the Southern economy through the release of a workforce that, without the supervision of the white race, would not, through any natural instinct, seek active and gainful employment. Theft of white property occurred not from provocation or out of dire necessity, but through both a choice to remain jobless and a racial propensity for crime.

Forman was decidedly more critical of slavery than many of his contemporaries. His textbooks provided not only lengthy descriptions of the wretched conditions under which slaves lived but also of the formidable social, economic, and political obstacles imposed upon antebellum free blacks. He criticized pro-slavery advocates in his narratives and provided some of the very few descriptions of the brutality of slavery against African-Americans in U.S. history textbooks. However, the few authors who struggled with the morality of slavery still tended to divorce morals from the perceived biological truths of scientific racism and the problematic distinctions between races that, for example, caused blacks to steal from whites without conscience or regard for law and order.[101]

Hart too presented students with disconnect between the immorality of slavery and social and economic plight of African-Americans in post-Civil War America. When discussing the development of cotton mills and iron furnaces, Hart remarked that "[Negroes] did not seem to be adapted" to the specialized labor required in the cotton mill, but were "well adapted" for pig iron production, a

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[101] For examples, see Forman, *Our Republic*, 363-76; Forman, *Advanced American History*, 371-8.

sentiment shared by Southern industrialists, who believed black workers to be equipped with the necessary brute strength and tolerance for heat required to work in an Alabama blast furnace. Biological inheritance provided both employers and apparently those who recorded their histories with the science to both segregate work forces and to present that separation as natural.[102]

The language of scientific racism and natural law theory colored narratives about the politics of Reconstruction. Freedmen, "carpet-baggers," and "scalawags" constituted a class of politicians that disrupted organic Southern political structures: "Inasmuch as the Reconstruction Act disfranchised most of the natural leaders of the South, the effect of the law was to take authority from the intelligent and place it in the hands of the ignorant."[103] For Forman, the post-Civil War South represented a deviation from natural political harmony and order not because new leaders were forced upon the South, but because these leaders were inferior to those whom they presumed to govern. He viewed racial equality as unfounded, misguided, and a detriment to the socio-political character of the nation. A political coalition of Blacks and transplanted Northerners contributed, according to Forman, to "the spectacle of a society suddenly turned bottom-side up." South Carolina's legislature became "an orgy of extravagance" and Alabama's legislature consisted of blacks "so ignorant that they could only watch their white leaders – carpet-baggers

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[102] Hart, *School History of the United States*, 412; W. David Lewis, *Sloss Furnace and the Rise of the Birmingham District* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1994), 82-3, 210.
[103] Forman, *Advanced American History*, 484.

– and vote aye or no as they were told." [104] Only a restoration of the natural political hierarchies rooted both in race and nativist traditions would allow not only the South but allow the entire nation to emerge from the war and to reconstitute its pre-ordained status as a model for the world.

Forman, unwilling to break the mold of reconciliation, restored confidence in progress to his readers: "Of course this condition of affairs could not last; the pyramid could not continue to stand on its apex. As early as 1866 the native white people of the South began to protect themselves against the domination of the carpet-baggers and the negroes." While Forman did not condone Ku Klux Klan violence, he presented it as a necessary evil that initiated the process of political and social restoration. Forman brought closure to the Reconstruction Era through praise of the 1872 Amnesty Act that restored to "the best citizens of the South" their perceived natural right to public affairs.[105] Authors almost never portrayed Reconstruction as what historian Thomas Holt has called "an incomplete transition from what was conventional several decades ago."[106] Rather, Reconstruction was an interruption – a brief setback that, once resolved, faded into the past as the United States continued its progressive ascent.

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[104] Forman, *Our Republic*, 531.
[105] Forman, *Our Republic*, 531-3.
[106] Thomas C. Holt, "Reconstruction in United States History Textbooks," *Journal of American History* 81,4 (March 1995): 1641.

Hart's Time: American Nationalism in an Age of Progress and Imperialism

In 1906, Carl Russell Fish, professor of history at the University of Wisconsin, was quite sure that Hart's *Essentials in American History* was among the top "two or three" school textbooks published following the recommendations of the Committee of Seven appointed by the American Historical Association in the 1890s.[107] Hart's undisputed reputation as a professional historian and author of high school level U.S. History textbooks at the time afforded him the accolades heaped upon his latest edition to high school history classrooms. To date, he had written works on American foreign policy, the colonial period, early national period, U.S. education, an introductory work on the federal government, and a five volume American history series of which he was the chief editor and author.[108] Fisk commended Hart for placing national progress, or "the up-building of the nation," at the forefront of his narratives.[109]

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[107] Carl Russell Fish, Review of *Essentials in American History*, by A.B. Hart, *School Review* 14,6 (June 1906): 463.
[108] Hart's pre-1905 publications are *Introduction to the Study of the Federal Government* (Boston, Ginn & Co., 1890), *Formation of the Union, 1750-1829* (London: Longman's, Green & Co., 1892), *Studies in American Education* (New York: Longman's, Green, and Co., 1895), *American History told by Contemporaries* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1901), *Foundations of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1901), *The American Nation*, vol, I-V (New York: Harper & Bros., 1904-05).
[109] Fish, review of *Essentials in American History*, 463.

Hart and his reviewer both saw civic nationalism as essential to the progress of the nation. This nation-(re)building project rooted in reverence for a distinct set of political values – theoretically one in which all citizens could participate irrespective of race, religion, or other cultural markers – had been the stated goal of many Reconstructionists too.[110] But national unity was quite complex during this period of supposed reunion between North and South. Hart, like Forman and other contemporaries, attempted to paint the post-Reconstruction era as one of industrial, demographic, economic, and political advancement. Hart also struggled with how to locate imperialism in this progressive narrative.

His writings reflected a scholar caught up in national debates over empire and reconciliation. Hart marveled at the "surprising quickness" with which the United States "got rid of the disturbances of the Civil War" and embarked upon a "new period of advance." In *Essentials in American History*, Reconstruction accomplished the mutual goals of condemning secession and "[calling] attention to the right of every man, white or black, to make the best of himself." But as the regenerative power of emancipation slipped from the grasp of most freedmen by the end of Radical Reconstruction, whites in the North and South reunited along the color line. As Jackson Lears notes, "the ideology of reunion was millennial nationalism, celebrating blood sacrifice but adding a racial component of Anglo-Saxon supremacy." By 1905, every former Confederate state had in place Jim Crow laws that denied rather than "[called] attention" to the rights of African-Americans,

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[110] Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 44-80.

as Hart would have his readers believe.[111] Hart was unwilling, or at best hesitated to acknowledge the "problem of the color line" - an assertion made two years prior by his own Harvard graduate student W.E.B. Du Bois. For Hart, national progress required hierarchical frameworks.[112]

Hart also implicated race in the nation's economic progress. He described the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 as "the first important political victory for labor" and a necessity in preventing Chinese immigrant workers from "[bringing] about a race difficulty like the Negro question in the South."[113] Protection of American white labor interests fostered the kind of national regeneration that Hart described. Whether or not Hart agreed with segregation laws in the South, his characterization of African-Americans and Chinese immigrants as racial problems and societal ills impeding national progress conveyed to his young audience that the United States was to become a nation of white people.

Even as whiteness as a scientifically-constructed racial category became fractured in the mid-nineteenth century - as Anglo-Saxons cast eastern and southern Europeans as racial others - the Chinese became increasingly economically, socially, and legally marginalized.[114] Unions in the American West supported racial exclusion of Chinese, but quickly broadened their nativism to include all Asian immigrants. Many whites, both native-born and immigrant alike, considered Asians

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[111] Hart, *Essentials in American History*, 509.
[112] Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 21; Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 260; W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990, [1903]), 3.
[113] Hart, *Essentials in American History*, 518-19.
[114] Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 37, 39; Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 81.

both racially inferior and a threat to the wages of white workers. Consequently, anti-Chinese organizations such as California's Order of Caucasians mobilized white workers to participate in violent, racially charged campaigns across the American West that included atrocities at Tacoma, Washington and Rock Springs, Montana in 1885.[115] This violence, not covered by Hart, was the physical manifestation of the sentiment described by Hart as a social and political movement necessary to ward off racial infiltration and economic decay at the hands of Chinese immigrants. Hart regarded the subsequent Congressional action to "suspend" Chinese laborers' immigration for ten years as vital to national interests and to the containment of potentially explosive class conflict.[116] His sentiment, shared of course by exclusion's congressional supporters, conveyed to students the necessity of government action in protecting both the economic interests of American workers and the racial purity of the nation through border control. In 1884, Congress expanded the Exclusion Act to deny re-entry to Chinese who left the United States. In 1917, Congress excluded

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[115] Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 80-1; Madeline Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home: Transnationalism and Migration Between the United States and South China, 1882-1943* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2000); 58-60. Hsu recognizes that the violence leveled against Chinese immigrants coupled with legal restrictions and boycotts forced the majority of Chinese workers out of manufacturing, agricultural, mining, and railroad jobs and into privately owned, community-based, serviced-oriented businesses. This point resonates with Hart's characterization of the "Chinese problem" as a struggle over access to employment.
[116] Hart, *Essentials in American History*, 519.

all Asian immigrants through the legal construction of an "Asiatic barred zone," which Congress did not dismantle until 1965.[117]

The protection of the domestic space of the nation from racial outsiders mutually sustained the United States' imperial ambitions in Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. Hart, however, was conflicted over the nation's military actions abroad. Though he considered liberal capitalism and its expansion to be the responsibility of the nation, he recognized that the opening of new markets often meant jeopardizing the self-determination of fellow republics. He often reserved this inclination, however, for scholarly articles and lectures. Hart's school textbooks evinced an ascendant American nationalism and global presence bolstered by whiteness, empire, and a presumed superiority of Anglo-Saxon self-government.[118]

In a 1917 co-authored paper given to the Academy of Political Science, Hart welcomed the seemingly inevitable inclusion of Caribbean and Latin American protectorates into orbit of United States' growing global dominance. Hart considered the inclusion of a tropical empire as a natural desire inherent in "the temper of the American people," a vision that sustained the "empire of liberty" as

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[117] Haney-Lopez, *White By Law*, 37-8; Erika Lee, "Enforcing the Borders: Chinese Exclusion along the U.S. Borders with Canada and Mexico, 1882-1924," *Journal of American History* 89,1 (June 2002): 55.
[118] Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 4; Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire*, 1-22; Hunt, *The American Ascendancy*, 69-70.

conceived by and for free whites.[119] But he also noted that the project of extending liberty threatened the independence of Caribbean and Latin American republics:

> "In the first place, we must deny ourselves the use of some very agreeable terms, such as the 'the twenty-one American republics.' There are no longer twenty-one, because five of these so-called republics are dependencies of the United States. Cuba is no more independent than Long Island. The island of San Domingo, with its two Negro republics, is no more independent than the state of New York. Nicaragua and Panama are only nominal republics and nominal sovereignties. Every one of these five "powers' is as much a dependency of the United States, subject to its ultimate will and not to the desires of the people of the country concerned, as is Burmah, Hong Kong, or British South Africa, or the Cape Colony, to the will of Great Britain. There is no deceiving ourselves with words. If we are to have a Caribbean empire, we must get it by destroying the republican independence of the powers concerned."[120]

Hart further appealed to his colleagues' sense of ownership and pride in republican government when he questioned the sanctity of the Declaration of Independence in a nation that forcibly denied sovereignty to its American neighbors.

Hart questioned whether any Americans would actually reside on any of these Caribbean islands and "identify themselves with the region."[121] He struck at the heart of the perceived racial and cultural divides between the United States and Latin America. Repeated U.S. encroachment in Latin American politics and markets had jeopardized the region's image as a "frontier" since the 1820s, and the U.S. had always distinguished itself as an Anglo-Saxon nation, the culture of which lent itself to successful republican government.[122] Hart recognized that American

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[119] Albert Bushnell Hart and Cyrus F. Wicker, "The Caribbean Question: Discussion," *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science in the City of New York* 7, 2 (July 1917): 231.
[120] Hart and Wicker, "The Caribbean Question: Discussion," 231-2.
[121] Hart and Wicker, "The Caribbean Question: Discussion," 233.
[122] Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 38-40.

apprehensions about racial and cultural hybridity would ultimately prevent true integration in the western hemisphere: "How can other Latin American neighbors look up on this process without feeling that we are declaring the Anglo-Saxons the ruling force of the earth, and relegating the Latin Americans to an inferior place?"[123]

In the same discussion, Hart touted U.S. foreign policy as quite capable of benevolent relationships with less powerful nations. He uncritically applauded the establishment of Sunday schools in the Philippines, and thus in a sense believed imperialism to be justified so long as the goal was not economic greed but the civilization of savage nations through the diffusion of Anglo-Saxon Protestant values. Hart's ambivalent imperialism was most evident in his school textbook publications. Take for example Hart's passage about U.S.-Cuban relations:

> The United States [was] free to deal with Cuba according to its judgment, and the promise made by the Teller Resolution that Cuba should not be annexed, was honorably kept for the new republic. A small American army remained in the island until a permanent Cuban government could be formed. In 1902, the army was withdrawn and the Cubans were left with a government of their own…The United States . . . reserved the right to send troops back to Cuba if the native government could not keep order; and when a revolution seemed likely in 1906 troops were sent there and remained for three years. One of the advantages of these two occupations was that the officers and soldiers of the American army set up schools, cleaned the cities, and discovered that yellow fever was carried by a mosquito and could be stamped out by keeping the mosquito away from yellow-fever patients.[124]

Military occupation has its advantages, Hart told his young readers. In the above passage, Hart expressed none of the anti-imperialist sentiment that he conveyed to his colleagues just one year prior to the publication of his *School History of the United States*. Rather, Hart chose the civilizing mission as the predominant narrative for students: the United States army, while occupying Cuba with a *small*

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[123] Hart and Wicker, "The Caribbean Question: Discussion," 233.
[124] Hart, *School History of the United States*, 450-1.

force, brought education, sanitation, medical knowledge, and technology to a backward culture incapable of providing those things for themselves. Absent were Cuba's near defeat of Spain prior to the arrival of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders and the collapse of Cuban social and public services through decades of anti-imperial warfare. Nowhere did Hart express his discontent with the denial of self-government to Cubans. Rather, his narrative articulated what so many proponents of imperialism espoused: Cubans were "incapable of self-government to which revolution aspires."[125] According to this logic, Cuba was essentially unlike the United States in its capacity for republicanism. Furthermore, the United States was caught in a bind. It could remain out of Cuban affairs and allow counter-revolutions to destroy the spirit of democracy that the United States had so benevolently transplanted by ousting Spanish tyranny from the Caribbean. Or it could intervene, destroy that spirit itself, but preserve law and order on an island well positioned for American commercial interests. Hart somehow desired that the United States do both.[126]

The American occupation of the Philippines also proved a stumbling block for Hart. *Essentials in American History* (1905) bears stark contrast to Hart's thoughts on American-Filipino relations in 1915. In *Essentials*, Hart regarded the colonization of the Philippines by the U.S. government as antithetical to the American principle of self-government. He argued that if the United States did not

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[125] Kaplan, *Anarchy of Empire*, 117.
[126] On the "grand projects" of U.S. empire in Cuba and the Philippines, see Hunt, *The American Ascendancy*, 45-57.

grant the Philippines autonomy, then "we must give up the idea that 'governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.'"[127] Hart articulated what many anti-imperialists argued about the War of 1898: U.S. intervention in Latin American, the Caribbean, the Pacific and maintenance of a large foreign empire marked a disconnect in national traditions of liberty, independence, and individualism. By shirking these traditions, it was Americans, not Filipinos, Puerto Ricans, or Hawaiians, who suffered injustice from its own government and from the corporate capitalism that fueled U.S. expansion.

Such historical blindness, of course, not only failed to equate overseas expansion with that which displaced Mexicans and Native Americans throughout the course of the nineteenth century but also reoriented foreign occupation to the domestic front. Republican government, not foreign peoples, were the real victims of expansion.[128] Hart, after all, pointed out to his young readers that the population of the Philippines consisted of "about 1,000,000 uncivilized people, and 7,000,000 Christians of the Malay race."[129] By emphasizing racial and cultural difference and by casting much of the population as inferior or savage, Hart distanced Filipinos from the discourse of republicanism. While some Americans may have felt it a dire necessity to civilize the Filipino population, Hart argued, as he had with Reconstruction, that the betrayal of democracy at home stood as a more pressing matter.

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[127] Hart, *Essentials in American History*, 576.
[128] Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 231-2.
[129] Hart, *School History of the United States*, 451.

Hart's struggle with issues of foreign policy, universal liberty, and racial heterogeneity via U.S. expansion revealed what W.E.B. Du Bois called the "anarchy of empire" within Hart's own intellectual development. Though Du Bois referred to the violence and death experienced by non-white subjects struggling under imperialism, Hart too struggled with his nation's role in this process of chaotic destruction.[130] However, Hart seldom chose schoolbooks as a forum to convey his criticism of U.S. empire. American history schoolbooks remained vessels of concensus history and American exceptionalism. Though Hart argued for the denial of personal liberty and equality for Chinese, Native Americans, African Americans, and Filipinos, he also felt that United States' ability to fulfill its role as the model for all mankind meant extending liberty through national expansion.[131] According to Hart and many of his fellow textbook authors, "westward movement was in part an application of one of the greatest lessons which America has taught mankind, the right of personal liberty." Hart continued: "America has set for the world an example of toleration of both political and religious opinions."[132] But as chapter four demonstrates, personal liberty and loyalty to the growing imperial state were often irreconcilable. During a period in which empire, sectional reconciliation, and immigration shaped United States culture, United States history textbooks disguised

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[130] Kaplan, *Anarchy of Empire*, 12.
[131] Hart, *Essentials in American History*, 568. Hart lists four "classes of the American population these rights have not been freely given": tribal Indians not living on reservations, Chinese laborers (whom he had earlier regarded as presenting a "race problem"), Filipinos (a group with whom he felt the United States had dealt justly), and African-Americans – the other "race problem."
[132] Hart, *Essentials in American History*, 568-9.

these tensions by cloaking them in meta-narratives of Anglo-Saxon superiority, American exceptionalism, and national regeneration through empire.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNQUESTIONED LOYALTY:

SCHOOL CIVICS AND THE POLITICS OF PATRIOTISM

> What is patriotism? Is it love of one's birthplace, the place of childhood's recollections and hopes, dreams and aspirations? Is it the place where, in childlike naivety, we would watch the fleeting clouds, and wonder why we, too, could not run so swiftly? . . . Indeed conceit, arrogance and egoism are the essentials of patriotism. Patriotism assumes that our globe is divided into little spots, each one surrounded by an iron gate. Those who have had the fortune of being born on some particular spot, consider themselves better, nobler, grander, more intelligent that the living beings inhabiting another spot. It is therefore, the duty of everyone living on that chosen spot to fight, kill, and die in the attempt to impose his superiority upon all the others.[1]

School officials throughout the United States would have shuddered at Emma Goldman's words, which she fervently pronounced on a national lecture tour in the years before the First World War. Goldman, a self-proclaimed anarchist, argued that patriotism divided the world in unnatural and hierarchical ways. To support the decisions and actions of governments and military leaders, men and women who possess this misguided allegiance to the state then became willing to kill and die as a way to exercise and demonstrate this bond that they believed to be sacred. Goldman clearly distinguished between love of country and unquestioned loyalty to

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[1] Howard Zinn, "Forward," in *Pledging Allegiance: The Politics of Patriotism in America's Schools*, ed. Joel Westheimer (New York: Teachers College Press, 2007), xv. Howard Zinn uses Emma Goldman's words in his forward to illustrate the important distinction between steadfast support for the ideals of one's country and blind allegiance to one's government. The willingness of many Americans to support or at least leave unquestioned the Bush administration's military policies in the months and years following September 11th prompted the publication of several monographs dealing with the multifarious meanings and interpretations of patriotism. Also see, David Ricci, *Good Citizenship in America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Jonathan Hansen, *The Lost Promise of Patriotism: Debating American Identity, 1890-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Christopher Capozzola, *Uncle Sam Wants You: World War I and the Making of the Modern American Citizen* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

the state. The latter, she argued, allowed governments to engage in destructive wars, often with little consequence for its leaders, save political unpopularity.

Within education circles, Goldman's critiques were almost always suppressed and drowned out by calls for renewed loyalty among native-born Americans and the swift and seamless Americanization of the nation's ever-expanding immigrant population. "With the close of the World War we must not forget one fact which that conflict brought out – the vast number of people in the United States almost untouched by the spirit of American institutions," asserted Syracuse professor of history William H. Mace in the introduction to his 1921 edition of *A Beginner's History*. Mace articulated the primary motivation behind the Americanization movement in public schools: the rapidly increasing numbers of immigrants to the United States who retained ethnic, cultural, and national allegiances posed an eminent threat to the republic if left unchecked.

Schools took on the responsibility of training, molding, and gaining the loyalty of the millions of immigrant children. "The prime and vital service of amalgamating into one homogeneous body the children alike of those who are born here and of those who come here from so many different lands must be rendered this Republic by the school teachers of America," remarked Jasper McBrien, former Nebraska state superintendent and U.S. Bureau of Education school extension specialist. Both Mace and McBrien advocated the teaching not of a "mechanical patriotism," but a loyal understanding of American ideals. Late nineteenth and early twentieth century U.S. history authors were not only the chroniclers of the nation's

past but also integral to a much larger movement within public education to Americanize the youngest generations. The Americanization movement in public schools promoted unquestioned loyalty to the state – an allegiance that would serve as the basis for moral progress, economic power, and ascendant geopolitical expansion.[2]

This chapter examines the role of schools in attempts to bind the nation's youth to both the ideals and policies of the state from the last decades of the nineteenth century through the 1924 Johnson-Reed Immigration Act. It traces the evolution of civics instruction and school policy from what began as "mechanical patriotism"[3] and an emphasis on individual political activism through an institutional effort to Americanize along lines of race. Civics curricula diminished nineteenth-century notions of individual participation in the political process and condemned labor activism as un-American. Part of this project involved the controlled and often coercive assimilation of European immigrants. In public schools, children of foreign parentage were expected to abandon their native language, dress, politics, unionism, and religion and to "make themselves over into a

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[2] William H. Mace, *A Beginner's History* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1921); iv; Jasper L. McBrien, *America First: Patriotic Readings* (New York: American Book Company, 1916), 6. On Americanization and a sense of national mission, see Michael Hunt, *The American Ascendancy: How the United States Gained and Weilded Global Dominance* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 4-5; Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 54-6, 138-9; Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 194-233, 234-63; Kenneth B. O'Brien, Jr., "Education, Americanization and the Supreme Court: The 1920s," *American Quarterly* 13, 2 (Summer, 1961): 161-71.
[3] Mace, *A Beginner's History*, iv.

new breed of people – liberty loving, fiercely independent and proud, and increasingly prosperous."[4]

As the perceived threats of socialism and unionism pervaded American media and politics during World War I, Americanization grew increasingly militant. 100% Americanism demanded "universal conformity organized through total national loyalty." Individuals' identification with the state was to encompass, "permeate, and stabilize" his or her "thinking and behavior." Thus, 1917 constituted a decisive break with the more progressive Americanization of the early twentieth century. Schools supported a more totalizing nationalism that allowed little room for political dissent, union activism, or assertions of cultural pluralism.[5]

But schools' mission of Americanization, or the "[melting of] immigrants into a single race, culture, or nation," developed unevenly across the country. Local particularities contested, tempered, and transformed unquestioned loyalty desired by the state. Despite schools' blanket messages of Americanization, citizenship and belonging remained contingent on race, ethnicity, and linguistic and national origin. Jim Crow and Chinese exclusion lent the validity of law to the deepening cultural divide between white and non-white. Likewise, as immigration from southern and eastern Europe accelerated in the first two decades of the twentieth century, American social science provided sociological and racial evidence of the dangers of assimilation for Anglo America's national character. Emma Goldman's critique of

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[4] Gerstle, "Liberty, Coercion, and the Making of Americans," 525.
[5] Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 205.

Americanization and blind patriotism resonated with minority and ethnic groups who were often expected to assume subordinate roles within the nation. Throughout his intellectual career, W.E.B. Du Bois argued that the terms *American* and *white* were indistinguishable to those who enjoyed the privileges that the terms collectively bestowed. For those outside of this racialized national identity, allegiance to the state always carried with it the burden of marginalized belonging.[6] This chapter seeks to situate school civics and patriotism within the broader discourses of race and immigration.

The (Dis)Continuity of the Republican Citizen

In 1903, textbook author Samuel Eagle Forman expressed support for the continuity of the nineteenth-century republican citizen: "Let civics…be focused upon the citizenship of the polling-booth, and let its aim be to prepare for an intelligent and conscientious discharge of the political duties which devolve upon a citizen."[7] Seventeen years later, the American Political Science Association (APSA) agreed. At its annual meeting in 1920, the APSA appointed a committee to "define the scope and purposes of a high school course in Civics." The committee argued that civics had become too diffuse in its content and objectives. Courses across the nation attempted to cover too many topics, most of which fell outside the scope of "the basic subject of American government." Without the proper organization and

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[6] Gerstle, "Liberty, Coercion, and the Making of Americans," 525; Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 12.
[7] Samuel Eagle Forman, "The Aim and Scope of Civics," *The School Review* 11,4 (Apr., 1903): 289.

balance of themes, contexts, and institutions, civics would not only be unintelligible to most high school students, but would also devalue the understanding of an individual's relationship to local, state, and national government institutions.[8]

Forman and the APSA articulated nineteenth-century visions of citizenship and civic engagement rooted in "active participation in the public sphere."[9] For much of the nineteenth century, civics instruction included only a basic knowledge of the government's structure and one's relationship to it. Between 1882 and 1924, civics curricula took two distinct paths toward a common objective: the maintenance of racialized national belonging. First, the standard nineteenth-century civics narrative – one grounded in the assumption that one's civic duty could be fulfilled through the act of voting – persisted in many textbooks. Forman's idyllic political activist - the propertied, white male - continued to represent American republicanism in school curricula even as school reformers and other textbook authors addressed the realities of urban, industrial, and racially heterogeneous America.

Second, by the time the United States entered World War I, hosts of educators had already shifted to community civics – a course that took a much broader approach to public life than that which confined democratic participation to

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[8] American Political Science Association Committee on Instruction in Political Science, "The Study of Civics," *The American Political Science Review* 16,1 (Feb. 1922): 116.
[9] Julie Reuben, "Beyond Politics: Community Civics and the Redefinition of Citizenship in the Progressive Era," *History of Education Quarterly* 37,4 (Winter, 1997): 399.

voting. Advocates of this new civics curriculum stressed Anglo-Saxon values, Protestant morality, hard work, thrift, and of course fervent patriotism. More importantly, by diminishing the importance of individualism and direct participation in the democratic process, schools served as an important tool of governments and business and professional elites who desired not knowledgeable and critical citizens to whom they could be held accountable, but rather docile and loyal masses of workers, consumers, and soldiers who served the needs of the capitalist class and expansionist policy makers. At the very least, citizens were expected to acquiesce to the desires of the nations economic and political leadership.

In order to accomplish this task, civics reformers advocated a new project of Americanization. Americanization involved more than the cultural assimilation of millions of European immigrants and the development and training of future workers. Through their efforts to acculturate immigrant children, Americanizers engaged in the redefinition and articulation of the symbolic and rhetorical devices employed to give legitimacy to the American state. These cultural meanings, rooted in notions of nineteenth-century republicanism transformed to meet the challenges of early twentieth-century multiracial and multiethnic America, provided immigrants with proscribed American cultural values and norms, and reinforced the duties and meanings of American citizenship for native-born citizens. In turn, young native-born Americans were to act as examples for the millions of immigrant children with whom they shared classrooms. As Michael Olneck has argued, "not only did the content of the Americanizers' rhetoric, texts, and rituals symbolically

assign status to those adhering most closely to the culture of native-born Americans. The activity of Americanizing the immigrants also assigned to native-born Americans the roles of tutor, interpreter, and gatekeeper, while rendering immigrants the subjects of tutelage and judgment." In essence, the project of Americanization further reinforced the racial, ethnic, and class hierarchies already apparent in American society.[10]

Americanization frequently occurred along racial and ethnic lines. Those born of what Anglo Saxons deemed acceptable racial or ethnic pedigrees could eventually embody the popular image of the American citizen, provided that they engage in the exclusion of those deemed unfit for democratic participation. Nothing made clearer this paradox than the segregation of African-American, Mexican, and Asian students from white schools that embraced Americanization for European immigrants and worked tirelessly to incorporate native-born white children into the dominant social structures. While non-whites did undergo a process of Americanization within the nation's school systems, they were taught obedience, subordination, and manual labor. Thus, civics and lessons in citizenship varied depending on race, ethnicity, and one's status as a foreigner.

Civics education largely portrayed American identity as singular. Ethnic communities were not afforded symbolic meaning in the early twentieth century, as Americanizers sought a unified, homogeneous American culture devoid of groups

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[10] Michael Olneck, "Americanization and the Education of Immigrants, 1900-1925: An Analysis of Symbolic Action," *American Journal of Education* 97,4 (Aug., 1989): 400.

they held to be "divisive, isolating, and backward." President Woodrow Wilson warned against group identity and argued that the maintenance of foreign national identities in the United States constituted not only incomplete naturalization but also a fine line between loyalty and treason. Blacks, Asians, Mexicans, and other racialized groups that asserted their own cultural identities were rendered "foreigners within." As John Bodnar has argued, "the construction of ethnic culture was always fashioned from the tension that existed between people's desire both to honor and break their ancestral and familial ties of descent and to express their consent to a new culture of individualism and new political structures." This struggle fueled suspicions of disloyalty that became paramount to the immigrant question particularly after 1917. Many Americans believed that both military obligations to home countries and the Bolshevik Revolution drew the nation's immigrants into ideological alignments and binding allegiances with anti-American governments.[11] Taken together, racial nationalism, immigration, and a war meant to make the world "safe for democracy" necessitated less emphasis on individual rights and political participation and a sharper focus on national conformity and loyalty.

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[11] Olneck, "Americanization and the Education of Immigrants," 401, 402; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Naturalization. *Student Textbook* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918); John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), 42.

Community Civics and the Limits of Political Participation

The community civics course - usually taught in the eighth or ninth grade - emerged in the 1890s and gained widespread acceptance by the 1910s as the primary method for imparting lessons in civic duty. This new curricula, developed in part as a response to the dramatic social and economic transformations of the late nineteenth century, offered a cultural redefinition of citizenship. As originally conceived during the revolutionary and early national period, citizenship was bestowed upon those deemed able to make informed political decisions and choices. Such people fit a certain mold: native-born, adult, male, propertied, and white. Rational thought, often believed to be a trait possessed only by white men, also factored in. Thus, prevailing assumptions based on race, gender, and ethnicity played crucial parts in the exclusion of all others who did not fit the profile of the responsible voter. While citizenship was open to many of them, voting was not.

In light of the demographic changes that accompanied urbanization and industrialization, Progressives believed that active political individuals were unsafe given the social and cultural climate of America's urban centers. The children of southern and eastern European, Asian, and Mexican immigrants and blacks made up increasingly larger proportions of urban school populations during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Should these children who, according to prevailing scientific theories of human development and progress did not constitute the kind of democratic participants the founders had supposedly envisioned, strive for full inclusion in the American democratic process? Or, should civics instruction

open alternative spaces for these future workers and citizens to contribute to the progress of the nation?[12]

Community civics advocates tended to favor the latter. Rather than emphasize a partnership between individuals and the republic through voting, community civics stressed participation in a larger community of citizens and workers. The individual, reified as a hard working, loyal, obedient, and unquestionably patriotic, continued to enjoy symbolic meaning within civics education and within the broader Americanization movement. Rather than eradicate the individual's role in favor of mass loyalty to the state, the individual citizen simply became, in theory and symbol, the most ardent supporter and pillar of the national community of citizens.

This curriculum change was the result of two interrelated shifts undertaken during the Progressive Era. Reformers warned that defining civic duty as inherently political would open the door for democratic participation from individuals that lacked the racial and ethnic traits conducive to republican self-government. The first was aimed at restricting civic participation to those persons that white school reformers perceived as qualified. Those who possessed the necessary Anglo-Saxon

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[12] On the training of non-whites and the "new immigrant" for industrial and factory work, see Stephen Meyer, "Adapting the Immigrant to the Line: Americanization at the Ford Factory, 1914-1921," *Journal of Social History* 14,1 (Autumn, 1980): 67-82; Barrett, "Americanization from the Bottom-Up: Immigration and the Remaking of the Working Class in the United States, 1880-1930," *Journal of American History* 79,3 (Dec., 1992): 996-1020; Fears-Segal, *White Man's Club*; Donald Spivey, *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868-1915* (Westport, C.T.: Greenwood, 1978).

pedigree would, under this new model of community civics, become the leaders in an increasingly heterogeneous society.

Second, supporters of community civics courses also recognized a need for an expansion of state and federal government power. By teaching students that their role as citizens of both local and national communities was the most important aspect of their lives as individuals, educators hoped to gain support and acceptance of increased government activism, even among the nation's youngest generations. As one author proclaimed: "the common welfare depends upon the character and action of the individuals who make up the community…If the masses are selfish, vicious, or simply indifferent to the public welfare, it must necessary suffer; but if the people are patriotic…the republic will prosper." Under this new curriculum, the common welfare trumped individual rights, and students were taught to view themselves as part of larger national community rather than as autonomous actors. This particularly applied to individuals who entertained transnational identities based on race, ethnicity, or country of origin.[13]

Community civics courses became the staple of junior high and ninth grade social studies along with history during the first decade of the twentieth century. Though community civics did not completely deemphasize a general knowledge of American government and basic principles of democracy, it gave more attention to social and economic matters such as unionism, the factory workplace, and proper

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[13] Reuben, "Beyond Politics," 399-401; Thomas Morgan, *Patriotic Citizenship* (New York: American Book Company, 1895), 10; Olneck, "Americanization and the Education of Immigrants," 404.

neighborhood and home life. In particular, weight was given to the kinds of thoughts and actions that garnered, as one educator stated, "right living."[14]

"Right Living": Manners, Morality, and Americanization

Custodians of public schools saw themselves as the primary source of morality and manners training next to the home. "Apart from good home discipline, the educator has more to do in developing this healthy growth [in morals and manners] than anyone else. Since the foundation of the world, discipline has been the chief pillar on which progress and civilization have been based," remarked a spokesperson for the New York City Board of Education in 1880. However, as Progressive critiques and fears of immigrant and non-white home life crept into the administrative rhetoric and decisions of superintendents and principals, school officials took it upon themselves to preempt, suppress, and hopefully erase the vestiges of foreign political and cultural traditions.[15]

As civics transcended politics in the early twentieth century, it entered the realm of culture and morality. Writing in *The School Review*, the leading journal of pedagogy and curricula in the early twentieth century, Ross L. Finney of the University of Minnesota argued that the term "civics" itself could not sufficiently describe the task of socializing children in multiple societal relationships. "Every citizen is in reality very much more than a mere citizen; he is a socius," remarked

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[14] Homer H. Cooper, ed., *Right Living: Messages to Youth from Men Who Have Achieved* (Chicago: A.G. McClurg, 1914).
[15] Annual Report of the Board of Education, 1880, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 41, NYC Department of Records/Municipal Archives.

Finney, a term that "implies the individual's relations to *all* institutions and social processes."[16] Voluntary organizations, church, family life, and industry – all of these social and economic institutions should, according to Finney, have a place in civics curricula. He also believed that standards of morality should fall to the schools:

> "There is no cause to think that these young people would not be profoundly influenced by receiving definite information about the reasons for morality in general and certain types of behavior in particular. Indeed, why put it beyond the school to penetrate into the very depths of spiritual life and teach the young people what the ultimate values of life really are?"[17]

Even Forman, advocate of the traditional political citizenship model, agreed that civics instruction should possess elements of ethics and morality in addition to basic knowledge about American government: "To equip a lad with a knowledge of the working of government and the rights of citizens, without equipping him with a conscience that will constrain him to practice the virtues of citizenship, may be to prepare him for a more successful career as a public rogue."[18] Both Finney and Forman conceived of civics as a way of molding students into productive and loyal Americans – a means of instilling a strong sense of civic responsibility and nationalism within America's youth.

Civics instruction went well beyond textbook lessons conceived by Forman and others. Educational theorists and reformers such as pragmatist John Dewey and Chicago Normal School's Henry W. Thurston viewed the school as both a self-

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[16] Ross L. Finney, "What Do We Mean by 'Community Civics' and 'Problems of Democracy'?" *The School Review* 32,7 (Sept., 1924): 523.
[17] Finney, "What Do We Mean by 'Community Civics' and 'Problems of Democracy'?" 523.
[18] Samuel Eagle Forman, *First Lessons in Civics* (New York: American Book Company, 1898), 3-4.

contained community and an important component of the broader society that it served. The classroom, the schoolyard, and the auditorium existed as laboratories in which students would learn to think, speak, and act in ways that served the larger community and contributed to the progress of the nation. The school served as a frame of reference for students who, upon completion of a civics course and through participation in extra-curricular activities, would have a better of understanding of their own appropriate relationship to the nation – a relationship founded on loyalty and patriotism. School reformers, particularly those in major European immigrant centers like New York City or Chicago, believed public education was the solution to the nationalist disconnect between immigrants and the United States. Respect for proper social mores, responsible voting, and deference to superiors could all be instilled in both native-born and immigrant children to create a more homogeneous and safer populace within a generation.[19]

Many schoolmen argued that proper citizenship, based on Protestant morality, temperance, and deep-seated patriotism and loyalty to the nation, should characterize the entire school experience – not just an hour of instruction in American government. Lessons in civic duty and morality pervaded all aspects of school governance and daily activity and frequently contributed to the protection of the capitalist structures of American society. For example, administrators emphasized the role of private property and earnest thrift in the service to one's

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[19] Reuben, "Beyond Politics," 405-6. Selma Berrol, "Public Schools and Immigrants: The New York City Experience," in *American Education and the European Immigrant, 1840-1940*, edited by Bernard J. Weiss (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 35.

country with the goal of imparting to students a mutual respect for both political and corporate governance. San Francisco Superintendent Alfred Roncovieri decried the defacement of library books by students as a "blight against the principles of citizenship." San Francisco School Board President Thomas Bannerman likewise condemned forms of "juvenile patriotism" such as firecrackers as threats to private property. Similar remarks that equated respect for property with proper civic conduct echoed throughout the circulars of the New York City Superintendent's office, as the superintendent warned students of the social ills associated with "mutilation and destruction of public and private property." Schools taught children that good Americans valued the accumulation of capital.[20]

The connections among capital, citizenship, and the state strengthened during wartime. San Francisco board secretary M.R. Morris regarded public schools as training grounds for "life and citizenship," and argued that American taxpayers expected "the largest returns for their money."[21] During World War I, school boards asked students to write essays on the value of "thrift," not as part of an ideological conservation movement, but as a way to contribute to the war effort.[22] School

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[20] Circular 24, Alfred Roncovieri to Principals and Teachers, 7 February 1918, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 16; Circular 8, Thomas Bannerman to Principals and Teachers, 13 May 1910, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 13; Teachers' Council Committee on School Records and Statistics, *Digest of Matter of Current Value from Circulars issued by the City Superintendent of Schools, 1902-1915* (New York: Vocational School, 1915), p. 69, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 116.
[21] Circular 72, M.R. Norris to Principals, 4 February 1916, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3) 2A1: 17.
[22] Circular 111, M.R. Norris to Principals and Teachers, 4 May 1917, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 19.

children actively engaged in the nation's foreign military engagements, and school officials and U.S. policy makers hoped these lessons would create loyal adult citizens. Children attended scores of patriotic events, including Veterans and Memorial Day parades, expositions, and other municipal civic events. These collective experiences were intended to inculcate in young minds an automatic and unquestioned sense of admiration, responsibility, and loyalty to the state.

'I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it.'[23]

Among the list of qualities provided by Michael Hunt in his recent historical synthesis of American global ascendency during the twentieth century, nationalist ideas and a sense of mission figure second only behind wealth in factors that contribute to a nation's preeminence. A "widely shared vision" was and remains essential to the mobilization of both people and resources – a willingness of the vast majority of citizens to support the decisions of its leaders engaged in international discourse and conflict.[24] Training in nationalism started young, as schools provided a captive audience for the inculcation of American expansionist policy. Proper acts of patriotism constituted one of the most celebrated aims of schoolmen, educators, and politicians in the early twentieth century. "The doctrine of patriotism cannot be too strongly inculcated upon the growing impression of our children," remarked San

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[23] Special Circular No. 3, 29 September 1919, Records of the New York City Board of Education 512: 23.
[24] Hunt, *The American Ascendency,* 2.

Francisco School Board President Aaron Altmann in 1906.[25] Though patriotism was integral to common school instruction during the nineteenth century, its importance intensified as the United States asserted itself as a global power from the late 1890s through the early 1920s. By 1917, patriotism had become synonymous with Americanization in many schools that took on the responsibility of assimilating European immigrants. As war and fear of Bolshevik infiltration escalated in the years after the United States' entry into World War I, the liberal Americanization of the century's first decade gave way to more coercive, militant calls for patriotism. 100% Americanism quickly trumped claims to ethic or hyphenated identity.[26]

American nationalism, not unlike other nationalisms that bind people living within geo-political borders to a larger constructed cultural group, creates what Benedict Anderson has aptly termed "imagined communities." Inherent within nationalist sentiment is the definition of one's nation against other nations, which then presents the inevitable possibility of clashes between and among nations. In order to rally an entire national community to extra-national causes such as expansion, imperialism, and of course the military conflicts essential to each, the nation's leaders must employ strategies to garner the willing support of its populace. In the United States, schools provided one of the most impressionable and enduring sections of the population upon which to mark the expediency of patriotism. By the late nineteenth century, American public schools had gained

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[25] Circular No. 8, Part 4, Aaron Altmann to Principals and Teachers, 12 January 1906, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 12.
[26] Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 242-50.

widespread acceptance as one of the nation's most viable institution for the spread of patriotism and reverence for the idea of American democracy. But throughout the nation, educators faced the challenge of Americanizing an increasingly racially and ethnically heterogeneous population.[27]

Patriotism presented students with the most active form of nationalism available to quasi-citizens not yet, in the case of young boys, old enough to vote or enlist for military service. Commemorative events, moments of reflection, symbolic offerings of flowers, flag waving, performance of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and the singing of patriotic "hymns" were as integral to the school experience in the early twentieth century as the recitation of the pledge of allegiance. Schools increasingly advocated and orchestrated both lessons in civics and outward displays of patriotism in the wider civic community. Schoolmen both escalated and centralized their efforts at molding what they saw as the future of the nation: an obedient, loyal, and fervently patriotic body politic.[28]

One of the most common and public forms of patriotism was participation in national commemoratory celebrations, where patriotic sentiment transformed into active nationalism. Superintendents sent numerous circulars to cities' principals requesting their unified commitment to Memorial and Columbus Day events as well as other patriotic programs. For example, in October 1898, San Francisco school

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[27] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006 [1981]), 7.
[28] Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 242; Gerstle, "Liberty Coercion and the Making of Americans," 530.

board president Charles Barrington requested the presence of students and their families at a Drill Competition between three U.S. volunteer regiments – a benefit to "[obtain] funds for our boys in Manila."[29] The city held similar events on Memorial Day to commemorate those who died serving in the U.S. military – events that by 1903 included those who had died in America's wars of imperialism. The city's Memorial Day committee appealed to public school children:

> In your daily routine you salute the flag, and in that way show your love for the principles for which our Comrades fought and died. Annually we honor our dead Comrades by strewing flowers upon their graves…Will you not join with us in this beautiful tribute to heroic deed, and thus testify a gratitude to those who participated under God, in the maintenance of this glorious Union, now a leader of Nations?[30]

The committee's plea not only recognized schoolchildren as potential participants in national rituals, but also as a group upon which to impress the idea that the United States is an exceptional nation – one that fought just wars of liberation in order to extend freedom abroad while also serving as the unattainable model to other nations. While the brutal suppression of Emilio Aguinaldo's Philippine nationalists would suggest otherwise, schoolchildren were instead to concentrate their efforts on both honoring fallen American soldiers and glorifying death in military service. By providing space for the performance of these rituals outside of the classroom, the committee hoped that at young ages, students found value in national remembrance and in demonstrating patriotism, particularly during war. They supposedly developed strong faith in a government intent on expanding the United States'

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[29] Charles L. Barrington to Principals, 20 October 1898, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 11.
[30] Memorial Day Committee to the Children of the Public Schools, 19 May 1903, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 11.

influence abroad despite the sovereignty and desires of other nations and cultures. School children who recognized national "purity through fatality," as Benedict Anderson has so aptly described national military service, could be counted on as adults to actively support and serve in the nation's wars.[31]

By 1900, national days of mourning had become, as Michael Kammen has noted, celebrations of war and of victory. With the opening of overseas frontiers in Latin America and the Pacific, cities throughout the nation transformed Memorial Day from a holiday mourning the Civil War's military casualties into occasions for celebratory "music, merrymaking, and popular entertainments."[32] Patriotic rituals became weekly and even daily occurrences in schools throughout the United States. In April 1894, San Francisco Superintendent John Swett decided that the last Friday afternoon of each month "be set aside for the purpose of holding patriotic and general exercises," including "recitations of a patriotic character, singing patriotic hymns, and instruction by the teachers in the principles of our Government and the duties and dignities of American citizenship."[33] Swett made no mention of whether or not students at the Oriental school could or should participate. However, given that most California school authorities regarded Asian immigrants and their

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[31] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 144. On war commemoration, see Sean A. Forner, "War Commemoration and the Republic in Crisis: Weimar Germany and the Neue Wache," *Central European History* 35, 4 (2002): 513. On the U.S. war with the Philippines, see Paul Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).
[32] Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*, 255.
[33] Circular 32, John Swett to Principals, 16 April 1894, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 9; Circular 64, John Swett to Principals, January 2, 1895, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 9.

children inassimilable, it is likely that Swett did not mandate patriotic Fridays for the Oriental school.

However, the San Francisco press was certainly willing to castigate Asian students for failing to show their patriotism. In 1907, the *Chronicle* carried a story from Denver, CO of the refusal of Japanese students to salute the American flag. White Californians found the students' actions, possibly in protest of San Francisco's exclusion of Japanese children from the public schools, reprehensible and indicative of the immorality and anti-American sentiment they believed to be inherent among Japanese in the United States:

> Countless thousands are the stories of love and patriotism told of the flag. But once in a while, a snag is met, as in the case of the Japanese children who in Denver the other day refused to "salute" the flag, and left the classroom. This incident set all the girls and boys of America talking and they were immediately 'up in arms.' Their starry banner, that demands respect, had been disparaged… Some of the most exalted examples of heroism have been in defense of 'The Red, White and Blue.' Mothers have given their only sons, fathers their lives, to keep its fame immortal.[34]

Within the context of Japanese exclusion from San Francisco's public schools (discussed in chapter 5), white Californians expected from immigrants and native-born people of color both separation from and reverence for the national community of citizens. The double standard for racial others living within the bounds of the nation characterized as much the school experience and the instillation of patriotism as it did U.S. foreign wars. Non-whites were taught to learn, live, and later die in the line of duty separately, but also to suppress discontent for the nation's racial policies. Thus, while educators expected all school children to become patriots, the privileges of American nationalism service were

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[34] *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 3, 1907.

reserved for children of the right pedigree – native-born or foreign-born, but almost always white.[35]

Public national commemoration rituals increased in their importance and regularity in school experiences in the early twentieth century. In 1904, the San Francisco Memorial Day committee again called upon public school teachers to "urge upon [students] the necessity of a liberal response in the shape of contributions of flowers" to commemorate the nation's war dead. Pastors too were to use their Sunday pulpits to make sure that "the lessons of Patriotism [were] inculcated into the minds of the young."[36] In January 1906, the bicentenary birthday of Benjamin Franklin prompted the school board to impress upon students the necessity of deep-seated patriotism. In the same circular to principals and teachers that reminded them of the California code mandating the separate education of "Mongolian children," San Francisco board president Aaron Altmann proclaimed that "the doctrine of patriotism cannot be too strongly inculcated upon the growing impression of our children." Altmann argued that next to George Washington, "the memory of Franklin is one that the labors of our historians can not too greatly set forth." Authors of history textbooks agreed with Altmann's assessment for, as argued in chapter three, "Great Men" and "Great Deeds" were often the staples of history instruction throughout America's public schools. Altmann requested that

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[35] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 141-54; Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 81-3; Lowe, *Immigrant Acts*, 5.
[36] Memorial Day Committee to the Patriotic People of San Francisco and Vicinity, 16 May 1904, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 11.

San Francisco's teachers dedicate the afternoon of January 17th to the commemoration of Franklin and "other great revolutionary leaders."[37]

That the school board president, in a single document, reaffirmed the necessity of separate schools for Asian students while making space for national reflection on the lives of the leaders of the American Revolution demonstrates the paradox of American education. In theory, education was "transparently a social good [and]…everyone not only should be educated but was also capable of being educated." But in practice, schools reflected what Paula Fass calls the "basic paradox of American culture: American existence, expansion, and prosperity depend on the continuous infusion of outsiders, but outsiders threaten to dissolve the culture and its links to the past by their presence." Thus, schools attempted to develop young white nationalists who would defend the nation from "enemies" at home and abroad. While blacks, Asians, Latinos, and Native American could not be the same kinds of patriots as native-born Anglo-Americans, European immigrants sometimes bought into proscribed national historical narratives in order to attain the promises of American liberty and prosperity. Patriotism reflected both civic and racial nationalism – a reinforcement of citizenship and national belonging along the color line.[38]

San Francisco's city school board was particularly adamant that its students develop healthy and active patriotic values and lives. Through a variety of activities

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[37] Circular 8, School Board President Aaron Altmann to Principals and Teachers, 12 January 1906, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 12.
[38] Fass, *Outside In*, 15; Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 5.

both in the classroom and in conjunction with city events, the school board office worked hard to instill in the city's students a deep-seated nationalism rooted in the exceptionalism of the American experience and in the preservation of white civilization within and beyond the boundaries of the nation.[39] Singing was often promoted as one of the most fervent forms of nationalism among adolescents. Estelle Carpenter, music supervisor for San Francisco's public schools, regarded "patriotic hymns" as an integral part of a child's national experience. While Carpenter frequently chose what she considered to be a more cosmopolitan assortment of songs from other nations, she recognized the primacy and importance of songs of American patriotism: "Now is the time of all times to instill in the hearts of the children a love for 'Our Own United States' and 'California.' By means of the songs our boys and girls will become staunch and loyal citizens in future years. Much depends now upon the training given to the children, for it will shape the destiny of our City and our State."[40] Carpenter developed a choral curriculum for the public schools consisting of traditional patriotic music, including "My Own United States," "Dixie," "America," "Home Sweet Home," and the "Star Spangled Banner." While the "Star Spangled Banner" recounted the victory over the British navy in a war fought in defense of American capitalist expansion and the right to settle the Northwest Territory, "Dixie" lent nostalgic and national validity to

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[39] For comparative studies of music and nationalism, see H.E. Chehabi, "From Revolutionary Tasnif to Patriotic Surud: Music and Nation-Building in Pre-World War II Iran," *Iran* 37 (1999): 143-54; Guy P.C. Thomson, "Bulwarks of Patriotic Liberalism: The National Guard, Philharmonic Corps and Patriotic Juntas in Mexico, 1847-88," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 22, 1 (Feb., 1990): 31-68.
[40] Estelle Carpenter to Principals and Teachers, n.d., San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 12.

antebellum white southern paternalism. Collectively, her selections wove a nationalist narrative through military strength, the assertion of free-market capitalism, and white southern paternalism.[41]

Students frequently sung these selections not only in school but also in performances throughout the city. When President William Taft visited San Francisco in September 1909, board president Joseph O'Conner arranged a performance of no less than 800 students:

> The children should be arranged about four deep, with the smaller ones in front. The school flags may be used, and in keeping with the spirit of the occasion, each one should, so far as possible provide himself or herself with a small flag. Where it can be arranged, patriotic songs should be sung as the President comes within hearing distance. Adults will be asked to give way to the children…[42]

O'Conner saw an opportunity to display local patriotism and the civics instruction of the schools to a broader national audience. New York City's schools also paraded singing school groups around the city, singing patriotic songs such as "America the Beautiful," "America's Message," "Battle Hymn of the Republic," and "My Native Land," at Armistice celebrations in 1919. Superintendent William Ettinger directed teachers to accompany the celebrations with in-class discussions of the causes of war and the manner in which American troops fought: "Such discussions should be carried on in a spirit that will add additional significance to the following lines: 'I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support its constitution; to

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[41] Estelle Carpenter to Principals, n.d., San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 12. With the invention of the phonograph in 1877, schools began supplementing textbooks with recordings of patriotic music to teach American history and civics. See Jacob Henry Landman, "Phonograph Records as an Aid in the Teaching of American History," *The School Review* 35, 9 (Nov., 1927), 681-85.
[42] Circular 13, Joseph O'Conner to Principals and Teachers, 29 September 1909, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 12.

obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies.'"[43] Whether it was a visit from the president or an annual national day of commemoration, schoolchildren were often central to community's patriotic celebrations. These experiences were intended to build a sense of national pride, belonging, and civic responsibility and to bolster the ethos of American exceptionalism. Patriotic activities designed to create a generational cultural division were to erase foreign identities and allegiances of children of European immigrants.

War mobilization joined war commemoration rituals as a primary vehicle of patriotism at the end of the nineteenth century. School officials attempted to transform schools into community centers to foster support for the nation's geo-political endeavors and to directly involve local communities in war efforts. Writing in the *Manufacturers' Record* in September 1898, editor Richard H. Edmonds regarded the war with Spain as an opportunity to bind the nation together: "The war has at least exerted an educational influence by starting the people of the South as well as of the North to thinking on broader lines, and by bringing to the latter a realizing sense of the final obliteration of sectional feeling and of the existence at the South of intense national patriotism." In particular, Edmonds pointed to a instinctual Anglo-Saxonism that through common defense, industry, and education, would not only bring economic prosperity to the South, but would also provide national cohesion where rift had previously resided. For Edmonds, American nationalism was a hereditary trait among Anglo-Americans, a quality that simply

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[43] Special Circular No. 3, 29 September 1919, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 512: 23.

needed reminding and refreshing. In particular, war reconnected and strengthened the bonds of the union through the pursuit of manliness. At the turn of the twentieth century, manliness became, in the words of Jackson Lears, "less a condition than a goal to be pursued." In particular, manliness served as a path for Anglo-Saxon males to assert what they believed to be there natural state of hegemony through therapeutic, revitalizing militarism.[44]

Wars of imperialism, which demanded virulent nationalism, had the power to re-join North and South in the common cause of democratic and capitalist expansion and global leadership. For those of questionable whiteness, patriotism should be taught, internalized, learned, and most of all performed. In 1917, the Georgia Board of Education declared "each school house should be a community center to teach patriotism and to give proper information as to the cause and real meaning of this War to every citizen." The board encouraged increased agricultural production, conservation, the purchase of Thrift Stamps, and envisioned the state's schools as the centers of activism. "It will not make [schools] less efficient but transform many a pale anemic institution into a throbbing center of life and learning

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[44] Richard H. Edmonds, "Survey of Southern Growth: Evidence that Hereditary Instincts are Reasserting Themselves" *Manufacturers' Record*, 29 July 1898, 3; Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 21. Also see, Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 190-2; Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 3-5; Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire*, 95-9. On Civil War veterans as masculine antidotes to urbanization, racial conflict, and corporatism, see Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 209.

as well as of patriotic activity." Teachers and students were to become the bearers of patriotic sentiment and activism to their communities.[45]

School officials hoped that calls for the support of national war efforts and the matrix of national youth patriotic organizations such as the Boy Scouts of America and the Young Men's Christian Association would provide tangible lived experiences with patriotism and national unity for the nation's school population. The relationship between schools and these character-building youth movements provided for many middle-class adults an affront to the corrupting influences of urbanization and immigrant family life. Many schoolmen supported both the inculcation of American values in working-class, foreign-born students and middle and upper class, native-born whites through nationalistic extra-curricular activities. Their dual agenda served the purpose of both controlling the nation's foreign population and strengthening a native-born male population that they believed had grown effete and over-civilized. As David MacLeod has observed, the demographic shift from agrarianism to industrial urbanism after the Civil War "spurred character builders to try to rebuild old strengths and virtues…Rural communities appeared innocent, homogeneous places to grow up, where as…cities and their immigrant slums were like metastasizing cancers."[46]

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[45] Georgia Department of Education, *Annual Report* (Atlanta: Department of Education, 1917), 19-20.
[46] David MacLeod, "Act Your Age: Boyhood, Adolescence, and the Rise of the Boy Scouts of America," *Journal of Social History* 16, 2 (Winter, 1982): 5. On the crisis of white American manliness from Reconstruction to World War I, see Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization.*

In October 1917, the New York Mayoral Committee on National Defense requested the assistance of the city's Boy Scouts in "the marshalling of the parade" for the Second Liberty Loan. Acting Superintendent Gustave Staubenmuller requested that all schools allow Boy Scout members to attend and participate in the "most impressive parade in a cause that appeals to all of us."[47] In June 1920, New York City School Superintendent William Ettinger solicited the aid of principals and teachers in enlisting schoolboys for the Boy Scouts: "Have mention made of the Scout Movement and the wonderful opportunities for citizenship it offers our coming manhood. Distribute pledge cards to each boy in your school with the request that he enlist his parents support in Scouting."[48] New York City schools had been preparing young boys for military service since the turn of the century by making sure that all "marching and facing" during assemblies or when changing classrooms be executed "in accordance with the United States Army regulations." The unofficial partnership among schools, the BSA, and the military tied young boys to the nation's war efforts as active patriots and future soldiers.[49]

Financial commitment to the U.S. war economy also formed part of the schools project of creating patriots. New York District Superintendent William O'Shea, who was in charge of War Service Work for the superintendent's office,

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[47] Special Circular No. 6, 19 October 1917, Records of the New York City Board of Education 512: 23.
[48] Special Circular No. 14, 20 June 1920, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 512: 23.
[49] Teachers' Council Committee on School Records and Statistics, *Digest of Matters of Current Value* (New York: Vocational School Printing, 1915), 91, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 511.

asked all principals to invite parents and any other adult relatives of the schools' students to a meeting regarding the logistics and benefits of buying U.S. war bonds. Earlier that year, the National War Savings Committee in Washington beseeched "every school teacher in the land" to organize "War-Savings societies" among students. This, they hoped would mobilize the nation's youth to educate their parents about active patriotism in the form of economic assistance.[50] "A very good way of advertising the Liberty Loan in the home is to get the school children to talk about it…by the assignment of compositions or by given them…questions…and asking them to bring their answers to school after they have conferred with their parents." In essence, O'Shea sought the direct participation of pupils in the nation's war efforts and the solicitation of bond purchases from parents – thereby connecting the interests of the school and the home in national military efforts. O'Shea hoped that by having children educate their own parents on the benefits of direct patriotic action, that both parent and pupil would develop and maintain vested interests in the nation's military and economic expansion.[51] Board President William Willcox appealed to principals and teachers to purchase Liberty Loans themselves. He argued that in doing so, school employees could help to "demonstrate the loyalty, patriotism, and interest of the personnel of the public

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[50] National War-Savings Committee to School Superintendents and Teachers of California, 15 April 1918, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 16.
[51] Special Circular No. 6, 8 October 1917, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 512: 23.

school system," further solidifying the role of public schools in the support of the state's geo-political endeavors.[52]

In September 1918, the superintendent's office circulated to teachers and principals a syllabus for instruction on the war. The circular included President Woodrow Wilson's call for the Fourth Liberty Loan in conjunction with a new Liberty Day to celebrate the discovery of America. "Every day the great principles for which we are fighting take fresh hold upon our thought and purpose . . . It grows clearer and clearer what supreme service it is to be America's privilege to render to the world," proclaimed Wilson. The year before, Wilson's newly created Committee on Public Information spread war propaganda across class, racial, and ethic lines. Wilson hoped that he could rally support by making the war a fight for America's civic principles of "liberty, democracy and self-determination." For both the President and Superintendent Ettinger, patriotism through ritual support and financial investment would allow school children and parents to contribute to the United States' global mission to spread liberty and democracy and would collectively bind the citizenry to its government's foreign policy.[53]

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[52] Special Circular No. 2, 25 September 1918, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 512: 23.
[53] Special Circular No. 2, 26 September 1918, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 512: 23; Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 89.

"What would your property be worth without an educated democracy?"[54]

In its annual report to the General Assembly, the Georgia school board argued that "Taxation for schools is just as much a part of the American scheme of government, just as much in accord with democratic principles, as taxation for courts, for police protection, for roads." Should the state's taxpayers neglect their duties to support education and thus protect the Republic, they "ought to move into the jungles of Africa where [they] would be called upon to pay no taxes, where [their] road would be a path through the wilderness, "zigzagged" by some denizen native to the wild." The board's chosen imagery was certainly befitting its white Southern audience, but threats posed by the "denizens" in the "jungles of Africa" to "American government" and "democratic principles" permeated white racial thinking throughout the nation. In its appeal, the school board bound together the projects of Southern economic growth, national expansion, and the preservation of the rights to liberty and property.[55]

At a special school bond election in November 1922, San Francisco School Superintendent Alfred Roncovieri and School Board President F. Dohrmann, Jr. echoed the Georgia school board's sentiment in an open letter to the citizens of San Francisco. The schoolmen appealed to taxpayers' sense of civic duty, patriotism, and economic self-interest:

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[54] Roncovieri and Dohrmann to Citizens of San Francisco, 16 November 1922, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 20.
[55] Georgia Department of Education, *Annual Report*, 1917, 33.

> Taxpayers – be generous – not only to the children of your city, but to yourselves in this matter. Fine schools enhance the value of your property. Let the taxpayers who would hesitate to provide for the children consider that school taxes are the insurance premiums they pay to protect their persons and their property against anarchy. Lack of proper education is the basic cause of the crimes being committed by the Reds and fanatics of Europe … What would your property be worth without an educated democracy? For your answer look to Mexico to Russia, to Turkey, to India and to all lands where dense ignorance prevails. We want all the boys and girls of San Francisco to grow into intelligent, capable, moral men and women who will protect your property and above all, this country from Bolshevism, I.W.W.'ism, Communism, and Anarchism.[56]

One might be hard pressed to find a more clearly stated connection among schools, capitalism, and the protection of the republic. First, Roncovieri and Dohrmann attempted to shock San Franciscans into thinking that the city's schools played pivotal roles in fighting back the tide of European socialism and that schools and democracy safeguarded a sacred American right to the accumulation of capital. By educating school children about the evils of socialism, labor unions, and anarchism, the nation could rest assured that the next generation of workers, teachers, professionals, and policy makers would in turn protect democratic capitalism. By drawing an ideological line between democratic capitalists and socialist despots, Roncovieri and Dohrmann also reminded the white citizenry of the racial dangers of immigration and socialist revolution. Their inclusion of Mexico, Turkey, and India, three decidedly non-white countries after 1923, rather than Russia or the anti-Weimar Bavarian Soviet, implied both ideological and racial dangers. While Germans and Russians might become white through Americanization, Indians, Mexicans, and Turks met social and legal resistance to their desires to naturalize.[57]

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[56] Roncovieri and Dohrmann to Citizens of San Francisco, 16 November 1922, San Francisco Unified School District Records (SFH 3), 2A1: 20.

[57] For both the legal and popular interpretations of whiteness for Mexicans, Turks, and Asian Indians in the United States, see discussions of *In re Rodriguez*, and *United*

The concerns of San Francisco's schoolmen were part of much broader anxieties about the degradation of American values and ideals by foreign peoples. At the 1918 meeting of the National Education Association, W.C. Bagley, professor of education at Columbia Teacher's College, expressed trepidation about the presence of foreigners within the nation and its institutions:

> We of the educational world are astounded to learn that there have been hundreds of communities in this country where boys and girls have grown to manhood and womanhood in utter ignorance of American ideals and institutions, ignorant of the very language of our country and even nurtured upon alien ideals brought them thru the medium of alien tongue. When we find entire contingents of our United States Army unable to understand commands given to them in the language of their country, unable in some cases to understand any language save that of our principal enemy, it is pretty clear that the doctrine of local autonomy in education needs some very radical modification.[58]

Bagley wished to accelerate the Americanization of the nation's immigrants by further school centralization. He viewed school as a process not simply of socialization within one's immediate community but as a process of national homogenization and erasure of foreign cultural mores and values.

With the United States' entrance into the First World War and the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, educators believed that their jobs had grown in importance to the preservation and well being of the nation. While schools had either employed or indirectly supported practices of segregation, nativism, and cultural conformity since the nineteenth century, foreign war (in which the United

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States v. Thind in Haney-Lopez, *White by Law*, 61, 79-109. On the potential whiteness of Russians and other eastern Europeans, see Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness*; Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*; Jacobson, *Roots Too: White Ethnic Revival in Post-Civil Rights America* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 2006).

[58] National Education Association, *Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the 56th Annual Meeting* (Ann Arbor, M.I.: National Education Association Secretary's Office, 1918), 55.

States sought to make the world "safe for democracy") and political radicalism crystallized and gave expediency to the defense of American values and the capitalist order. With hundreds of thousands of immigrants arriving each year, many from southern and eastern Europe, schools incorporated grave warnings of un-Americanism into civics lessons.

School boards took careful stock of the races and ethnicities present in each school district as they had done since the 1880s. The Chicago School Board reported that over 318,000 European men had returned to their home countries by March 1916 to take part in the military conflict. While the board lamented the loss of these men as a detriment to a cosmopolitan city like Chicago, other schoolmen remained more wary of the wavering national allegiance of the nation's immigrant population. Through diligent civic instruction and the careful monitoring of teachers, school officials hoped to stem what they perceived as a rising tide of anti-American sentiment and subversive activity at home and abroad. Schools would continue to serve as the first line of defense against the spread of Bolshevism, anarchism, and any other political stance perceived as opposed to American free-market liberalism and democracy – two institutions that continue to enjoy inseparability in the United States.[59]

Textbook authors remained steadfast in their commitment to instilling in readers the dangerous threat of radicalism as well. Though authors displayed anti-

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[59] Annual Report of the Board of Education 1885, 120, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 22; Board of Education of the City of Chicago, Meeting Minutes, 12 July 1916, Municipal Reference Collection, Chicago Public Library, Chicago, IL.

radical sentiment prior to World War I, the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution prompted the publication of new editions that warned of the dangers posed by communism to American democratic capitalism. In *Economic and Vocational Civics*, Raymond Hughes equated Bolshevism with a radical and direct affront to life and property: "To get power into their own hands they are willing to do anything…They speak of 'direct action,' by which they mean destruction of property, threatening or taking of life, or any other means that will scare or force people to let them have their way." He called attention to the Industrial Workers of the World as one of the most influential and dangerous radical organizations in the United States. The IWW, as represented by Hughes and other anti-radical authors, was an organization devoted to class struggle, the abolition of industrial wage labor, and the destruction of an American economic system rooted in free market and entrepreneurial capitalism. "It is hard to see how a right-thinking American can possibly indulge in such performances or hold such theories," Hughes commented, as he explained that "sabotage" was the primary means by which IWW members sought to undermine their employers. By equating unionism with radicalism, Hughes attempted to instill in his students not only a reverence for the personal accumulation of capital and property – in his eyes the very foundation of the U.S. economy – but also distrust and discrediting of collective organizations that were neither corporations, churches, nor political parties.[60]

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[60] Raymond Osgood Hughes, *Economic and Vocational Civics* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1921), 312.

Race and Radicalism, or Red Scare to Immigration Restriction

Throughout the wartime mobilization and propaganda of 1917-18, school authorities upheld a commitment to Progressive Americanization. Attempts to win over immigrant children to American ways and values were usually tempered by sympathy for abhorrent slum conditions. But with the outbreak of the Russian Revolution, Americanization became a totalizing, immediate, and coercive effort to cleanse the nation of foreignness and radicalism. Consequently, charges of anti-Americanism, Bolshevism, and radicalism bore racial implications. The Anglo-American politics of anti-radicalism set the stage for campaigns for immigration restriction in the early 1920s. As popular anxieties and fears about socialist takeover pervaded American social discourse, school authorities temporarily abandoned their liberal and civic Americanization responsibilities in favor of a more militant anti-radicalism and racial nationalism.[61]

In 1923, Boston Reverend John Cavanaugh characterized radicalism was decidedly a foreign occupation: "During the last few decades great swarms of immigrants have sought hospitality in America – among them a certain number of who have adopted the gloomy philosophy of anarchy and socialism."[62] With the passage of the 1917 immigration law that allowed for the deportation of suspected foreign radicals, school policies quickly fell in line. In order to ensure that the nation's youth, both native-born and foreign became staunch opponents of

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[61] Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 138-9
[62] *New York Times*, January 12, 1923, 10.

radicalism, school administrators kept watchful eyes on teachers and issued stern formal warnings. "Every member of the teaching and supervising staff is bound, as a matter of contractual and moral obligation, to carry into effect by example and by precept, those ideals of patriotism and civic responsibility," declared Superintendent William Ettinger in a circular to New York's teachers in February 1919. Ettinger argued, as had New York State Education Commissioner John Finley, that the personal convictions of teachers had no place in the classroom. Ettinger regarded any teacher who would not expound the ideals and institutions of the United States as unfit to instruct children. In particular, Ettinger made clear that teachers who either supported or did not vehemently condemn national change through "chaotic and destructive revolutions" were "ineligible" for further contract with the Board of Education.[63] Ettinger, not unlike the Republican leadership in Washington, had faith in "rationality, technical competence, and prosperity" as the strongest opponents of Bolshevism and unionism. But to observe un-American or treasonous acts and do nothing also constituted disloyalty.[64]

Ettinger's characterization of radicalism bore obvious racial implications as well. He emphasized the stark difference between the swift violence of the Bolshevik Revolution and what he saw as "the gradual and orderly changes that have always been characteristic of the development of Anglo-Saxon institutions." Ettinger appealed not only to the stability and inevitability of the progressive

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[63] Circular from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, 22 February 1919, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 512: 23.
[64] Hunt, *The American Ascendancy*, 93.

American historical narrative, but also implied that non-violent change was a trait inherent within the racial pedigree of Anglo-Americans. Institutions served as code for racial character. The steady, rational Anglo-American naturally employed democratic change and due process of law. On the other hand, certain European races (and certainly non-white races) lacked the cultural or intellectual capacity for self-government unless taught by superior Anglo-Saxons.

But if American schools were Anglo-Saxon institutions, many teachers were not and were thus suspect to espouse doctrines of subversion and anti-Americanism to students. In his comprehensive survey of radicalism, New York State Senator and head of the Joint Legislative Committee Investigating Seditious Activities Clayton Riley Lusk argued that no attempt by state legislatures or the federal government to keep radical teachers of foreign-born students out of public school classrooms and night schools were adequate unless "character" and "loyalty to the institutions of the State and Nation" were the paramount employment qualifications. Lusk reported that certain English teachers in New York schools used "radical and liberal magazines as guides for the discussion of current events," and in response, the Committee proposed a bill that required all schoolteachers to obtain a "certificate of good character and of loyalty to the State."[65]

The Committee's proposal aroused concern about the kind of oversight that the legislature or the school board might employ to enforce loyalty oaths. Ettinger

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[65] Clayton Riley Lusk, *Revolutionary Radicalism: Its History, Purpose and Tactics* (Albany, N.Y.: J.B. Lyon Company, 1920), 2340, 2343.

argued that although he did not favor "espionage or oppression," the Superintendent's office and the principals of all schools were required to make sure that teachers did not take advantage of "the privacy of the classroom and immaturity of his auditors." Lusk gave Ettinger the full support of the Committee: "In entering the public school system the teacher assumes certain obligations and must of necessity surrender some of his intellectual freedom."[66]

Lusk also supported less coercive measures of Americanization than the direct oversight of teachers of foreign-born students. These measures comprised a shift in the 100% Americanization campaign from incorporation at all costs to a more nuanced approach along racial lines. The eradication of radicalism remained the first priority, but now Americanizers began to question the necessity of 100% Americanism. Would not the exclusion of certain radically-prone European 'races' serve the same purpose? If Asian, black, and other distinctly non-white immigrants required subordination and expulsion, so too might certain European nationalities be threats to the nation. In *Revolutionary Radicalism*, Lusk included a detailed outline of steps for teachers of citizenship devised by the Young Men's Christian Association. In its instructions, the YMCA charged its Americanizers with becoming intimately knowledgeable of racial difference:

> "Fifty varieties! Don't be dismayed…Begin with one nation…Organize work along racial lines…Pass on to another race…Know the mind of a race…When you mix nations, learn which

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[66] Circular from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, 22 February 1919, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 512: 23; Lusk, *Revolutionary Radicalism*, 2343.

> will and which will not mix. Oil and water will not mix; no more will peoples who have racial antipathy and prejudice. A study of nationality avoids failure."[67]

While the YMCA intended its pamphlet as a "how-to" success manual for the would-be Americanizer, it also argued that certain European nationalities were inassimilable because of their racial character. Though Lusk was unspecific about which European nationalities were recalcitrant, his claims of "racial antipathy and prejudice" of immigrants towards one another absolved the Americanizer from racism. If European 'races' could not co-exist with each other, how could they possibility enrich the American "Melting Pot"?

By the early 1920s, civics education had shifted from an emphasis on voting to a process of Americanization to meet the perceived challenges of immigration, social revolution, and global military conflict. But despite the tireless efforts of school reformers, many still doubted the overall effectiveness of schools in Americanizing the nation's foreigners and regarded immigration restriction as a more definitive solution. In a 1924 *Foreign Affairs* article, Harvard professor Robert Ward lauded Washington Representative Albert Johnson's Immigration Act for its "definite numerical limitation" and in particular, its racial exclusivity. The Immigration Act of 1924, signed into law by President Calvin Coolidge on May 26, limited the overwhelming majority of future immigration to "the same racial stocks as those that originally settled the United States." Ward's article recounted what, in his opinion, amounted to important but ultimately ineffective attempts to stem the tide of unwanted and inassimilable aliens.

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[67] Lusk, *Revolutionary Radicalism*, 3027.

Ward blamed U.S. schools in part for perpetuating the myth of the American "Melting Pot": "It was believed that sending alien children to school, teaching them English, giving them flag drills, letting them recite the Gettysburg Address and read the Declaration of Independence, would make thorough-going Americans of them, similar in all respects to the native-born or the traditional type." Ward argued that the Melting Pot had become corrupted with inferior races and thus provided "no hope of producing a superior or even of maintaining a homogeneous [American] race."

The nation's schools had labored mightily since the outset of the "New Immigration" of the 1880s to assimilate the millions of children of foreign parentage but, according to Ward, "the public consciousness awakened to the realization that…education and environment do not fundamentally alter racial values [or] …offset the handicap of ancestry."[68] The nation's immigrants connected the United States to European war and radical revolution in ways that made many Anglo-Americans anxious about the prospects for cultural homogeneity, political stability, and American racial fortitude. For those like Ward, schools had and would continue to serve the crucial function of socialization. But after 1924, they would do so within the context of immigration restriction. The next two generations of Euro-American school children would learn that "nations" and "races" were not co-terminus. As Matthew Jacobson has noted, myriad European nationalities including Irish, Armenians, Italians, Greeks, Sicilians, and Poles who were naturalized as "free

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[68] Robert Ward, "Our New Immigration Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 3, 1 (Sep. 15, 1924): 99-100, 103.

white persons" became "Caucasians only over time." The transition in terminology from *white* to *Caucasian* was neither precipitous nor totalizing, and 1924 represented more of a high point of Anglo-Saxonism rather than an abrupt end to whiteness as a category or an identity. The term *Caucasian* lent the authority of science and anthropology to the process of freeing European immigrants from racial ambiguity and reforging Americanism along the lines of the major racial divisions: Caucasian, Mongolian, Malay, Australian, and Negro. From 1924 until the post-World War II Civil Rights Movement, *Caucasian* and *white* were often interchangeable. Though the division of humanity into white and non-white never disappeared in American society during the first decades of the twentieth century, the dubious whiteness of certain 'European' races had no doubt complicated its centrality in educational and popular discourse.[69]

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[69] Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 3-4, 90-2.

PART III

CASE STUDIES:

'THE SOUTH STANDS WITH THE WEST'[1]

In November 1906, California Representative Everis A. Hayes drafted a joint resolution requesting that President Roosevelt enter into a new treaty that required Japan "to recognize the right of the United States to deal with the question of immigration of the Japanese into this country as it deems fit." Two months earlier, the San Francisco school board had touched off a mounting and highly racialized campaign against Japanese immigration when it excluded Japanese children from the city's public schools. With the support of California's numerous Asian exclusion leagues, Hayes sought to augment the school board's resolution and nationalize anti-Japanese immigration policy. According to the *San Francisco Call*, Roosevelt sternly rebuked Hayes' resolution, citing its ill-timed nature and likelihood of "[inflaming] the Californian mind or [exciting] any further antipathy" from Japan. Hayes acquiesced to his Republican party leader, but in an interview following his meeting with Roosevelt, he stressed the urgency of Japanese exclusion from California: "The race problem on the Pacific Coast is rapidly taking on a character similar to the race problem in South Carolina and it will be only a course of a few years till the Japanese predominate in California."[2]

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[1] *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 6, 1906.
[2] *San Francisco Call*, December 2, 1906.

Hayes's statement revealed the consonance of national anxieties over race and immigration. By the turn of the twentieth century, the white South, through propaganda, violence, and the support of the Supreme Court, had solved "the race problem in South Carolina." Black disenfranchisement through literacy requirements and voter intimidation and the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision legalizing "separate but equal" rendered African-Americans "foreigners within" the nation. Hayes admired the persistence of the white South in reconstituting black subordination following Reconstruction. He and other Californians invoked states' rights as a platform against Roosevelt's attempts to maintain amicable diplomacy with Japan by allowing Japanese citizens to continue to immigrate to the United States. "We Californians are the guardians of the heritage of the white race… When the East understands it will be with us, too," exclaimed the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Though Hayes's language suggested that the "race problem" in the South had not reached total resolution, he never the less invited Jim Crow to California. In doing so, he reminded white America's about its fear of blackness and its threats to the racial integrity of the nation. Through whiteness, the nation could bind together to protect against threats from non-whites both at home and abroad. If California looked like the South, only with Japanese Negroes instead of African Negroes, then Southern racial policies could potentially serve as models for eliminating the threats of "Oriental invasion."[3]

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[3] *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 24, 1908.

The following comparative case studies collectively argue that Southern racial policies were not distinctly Southern. Instead, white Americans applied them in a myriad of local and racial contexts across the nation. In doing so, white supporters of school segregation and broader racialized restriction policies tied American identity to whiteness. School segregation in Atlanta, Georgia (the subject of chapter five) and elsewhere in the South mirrored the efforts of white Californians who routinely invoked Jim Crow for Asian immigrants. Inherent in racially exclusive educational policies were questions over the fitness for citizenship and self-government of non-whites. While the Fifteenth Amendment granted nominal citizenship to African-Americans, the 1790 Naturalization Law continued to reserve naturalized citizenship for "free white persons." While the children of Japanese immigrants born in the United States were citizens, race precluded them from enjoying the full privileges and benefits of American democracy such as equal public education. They too had separate schools that never promised to be equal.

San Francisco's exclusion of Japanese children from white public schools (the subject of chapter six) elucidated larger campaigns to restrict Asians from immigrating to the United States. As with African-Americans, citizenship and national belonging were not co-terminus. The power of racial nationalism rendered both groups' relationships to the nation highly problematic. Whites sought both black subordination and Asian exclusion. As one California newspaper editor asked of Japanese immigrants, "those are the savages whom the president recommends Congress admit…to American citizenship?" The "Yellow Peril" reminded white America of the narrowly averted but still possible disaster of the "Africanization of

America" espoused by Democrats on the eve of Lincoln's election. School segregation represented a step toward creating a republic for whites. Though the multiplicity of races in the United States continued to grow, so too did the increasing distinction between white and non-white.[4]

At the turn of the twentieth century however, the whites within the white republic did not resemble the community of Anglo settlers at Plymouth Rock. Beginning in the 1880s, new immigrants would force Anglo-Americans to figure out how to incorporate non-Anglo Europeans into the national historical narrative that privileged Anglo-Saxon origin. As Matthew Frye Jacobson has written of the post-Civil Rights ethnic revival in America, the "Ellis Island whiteness" of new immigrants reflected the persistence of the "longstanding white hegemony in U.S. political culture" even as it competed with the "Plymouth Rock whiteness" of native-born Anglo-Americans. In doing so, new immigrants became targets of Americanization that was at once Progressive and coercive.[5]

The whiteness of "aliens," or "new immigrants" from eastern and southern Europe, commanded popular and academic scrutiny. At the annual meeting of the National Education Association in 1918, William C. Bagley, Professor of Education at Columbia Teacher's College, asked how the communities of the United States could collectively allow millions of children to grow up "ignorant of the very language of

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[4] *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 5, 1906; Najia Aarim-Heriot, *Chinese Immigrants, African Americans, and Racial Anxiety in the United States, 1848-1882* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 65; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, 2-6.
[5] Jacobson, *Roots Too*, 7.

our country, and even nurtured upon alien ideals brought to them through the medium of alien tongue."[6] Bagley charged educators with Americanizing the millions of new immigrants from Europe in order to protect the sanctity of American liberty and democracy from foreign corruption. New York City's public schools (the subject of chapter seven) served to protect national character by incorporating the children of European immigrants into the national body of white citizens. Reformers were wary of the visibly darker and predominantly non-Protestant "new immigrants" from southern and eastern Europe that began arriving in the 1880s. Most reformers also believed that they would undoubtedly be more difficult to assimilate than their German, English, and Scandinavian counterparts of the mid-nineteenth century. But their incorporation into the republic was both possible and essential for the moral health of the nation.[7]

While Californians and Southerners resisted the respective inclusion of Asians and blacks in the republic, New York's school reformers believed that the millions of European immigrants must assimilate for the sake of the nation. The possibility of "new immigrants" becoming white precluded them from the kinds of racially exclusive school policies as those of Atlanta and San Francisco. Furthermore, as demonstrated in section two, school curricula allowed European immigrants to assert their whiteness by buying into the exclusion of non-whites. Consider a passage from the 1922 *Course of Study* for the New York City Evening

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[6] National Education Association, *Journal of the Proceedings and Addresses of the 56th Annual Meeting*, 55.
[7] Fass, *Outside In*, 16-17, 19, 22-3.

Elementary School's Naturalization class: "An anarchist, a polygamist, a person guilty of a crime or a member of a society which does not believe in organized government, cannot become a citizen. Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, and Hindus cannot become citizens." Immigrants learned through blunt statements like these that naturalized citizenship hinged on their reverence for republican government and on their whiteness. They could rest assured that while their economic conditions might be dire, ideological allegiance *and* racial privilege afforded them national inclusion, even as millions of potential immigrants from Europe were denied passage to the United States by 1924.[8]

Taken together, these three case studies reveal the connectedness of immigration, race, and national belonging - how transnational and trans-regional encounters were closely tied to local particularities. Schooling of non-whites and immigrants of questionable whiteness comprised an essential component of the dual projects of nation building and empire building. In the decades surrounding the turn of the twentieth-century, the United States sought both greater contact with the outside world through imperial conquest *and* protection of the domestic space of the nation from the perceived racial perils that empire and global leadership invited.

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[8] New York Department of Education, *Course of Study and Syllabus, Short Unit and Naturalization Course for the Evening Elementary Schools, The City of New York, 1922* (New York: Stillman Appellate Printing Co., 1922), 9.

CHAPTER 5

"THE BREAD NOW BEING CAST UPON THE WATERS": BLACK SCHOOLING IN ATLANTA

In 1872, William Finch had called a meeting of Atlanta's black parents to petition the school board for adequate facilities. Finch, a former slave, had been elected to the city council in 1870 but lost his re-election bid to a white man in 1871. While serving as councilman, Finch labored tirelessly to improve the quality of public education, particularly for those students who were inequitably underserved by the city's schools. The 1872 petition included, among other improvements, the request for a black public high school, but without justification, the council refused to grant any concessions to the city's black community. Finch then took the petition to the board of education, which buried the request under a pile of more pressing matters involving repairs and supplies for white schools. Black Atlanta would not have access to public secondary education for another fifty years. This attempt by Finch and black parents to secure or at least make possible the social mobility of their children through public education reflects the contestation and contingency of schooling along lines of race. Despite the aspirations of Henry Grady and others to transform Atlanta from a railroad junction into a modern city at the close of the

nineteenth century, its social institutions and racial hierarchies more closely resembled a continuity of the antebellum South.[1]

Twenty years later, Atlanta's white superintendent of schools William F. Slaton reported to the city council that black Atlantans had been much appreciative of the public educational opportunities for their children: "The city has given the Negroes substantial aid and assistance in the education of their children, and the thinking men and women of the race appreciate the favor. We have reason to hope that the bread now being cast upon the waters will be gathered up many days hence."[2] Slaton's 1892 statement illuminated two key elements of black public schooling in Atlanta in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. First, the all-white school board and city council collectively asserted that Negro education was not required of them by law. The establishment of blacks schools was above and beyond the call of duty; according to the city officials, blacks were satisfied with the schools provided for them. Second, the school board and other prominent school reformers in Atlanta regarded black schooling as an investment in the future economic growth of the city. Faced with overwhelming illiteracy rates among black

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[1] Charles Strickland, "The Rise of Public Schooling and the Attitude of Parents: The Case of Atlanta, 1872-1897," in *Schools in Cities: Consensus and Conflict in American Educational History*, ed. Ronald Goodenow and Diane Ravitch (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1983), 249-262; C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974). I do suggest that segregated schools in the New South represented a continuity of a segregated antebellum South. Rather, by creating separate black schools funded and controlled by a white school board, Atlanta and much of the nation in fact, upheld paternalistic ideologies about racial aptitude and responsibility.

[2] Atlanta Board of Education, *Annual Report* (Atlanta: Jas. P. Harrison & Co., 1892), 647.

Southerners, school men hoped to make inroads into the city's black population in order to promote order, rule of law, morality, and above all industriousness. Schools, Slaton argued, were the key to Atlanta's prosperity. By creating a subordinate black working class and preparing white Southern children for the responsibilities of republican citizenship, schools served both the economic and racial agendas of Atlanta's ruling class.

The school board's confidence in their generosity to African-Americans was nothing new in the 1890s. In their 1882 annual report to the Atlanta mayor's office and city council, board president Joseph E. Brown and superintendent Slaton patted themselves on the back for a job well done. In 1881, the school board completed construction of the Houston Street School. The new schoolhouse, described by Brown as "large and convenient" and by Slaton as "well lighted and well ventilated," became the third Negro grammar school in the city. More importantly though, the opening of the Houston Street School represented a step forward, in the eyes of white school board members, in the segregation of Atlanta's black population. "This building, suited in every respect for teaching purposes, is the pride of our colored people and an honor to the city. It is officered entirely by colored teachers, who have demonstrated the fact that they understand their own race, and can discipline and teach to the satisfaction of their patrons." Slaton proclaimed that the board had "found the key to the problem of the education of our colored population." The Atlanta school board, from its inception, remained steadfast in its attempts to provide minimal and separate public education to black Atlantans. As Louis Harlan

has argued, "the Negro schools occupied the zone between, being kept deliberately poor but not destroyed."[3]

The history of Atlanta's public schools is intrinsically intertwined with the experiences of slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and lynch law in the antebellum and post-bellum South. On one hand, black schooling was something new, as most Southern slave codes prohibited the education of slaves. On the other hand, the paternalism of the antebellum South was "neatly placed within the framework of emancipation."[4] Following a brief few years immediately after the Civil War in which black Southerners started and maintained their own schools, white Southern school boards increasingly took over the task of educating black children as radical Reconstruction gave way to reconciliation along the color line. By the 1890s, most Southern states used their constitutions to legalize the subordination and segregation of black Southerners. Whites "indomitably maintained," in the words of Ulrich B. Phillips, "that [the South] shall be and remain a white man's country."[5]

In the post-Reconstruction South, race and class collided as advocates of the New South sought ways to re-harness the labor power of former slaves. The rigid racial hierarchies crafted and codified under slavery were, in the late nineteenth

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[3] Atlanta Board of Education, *Annual Report* (Atlanta: Jas. P. Harrison & Co., 1882), 5, 8; Louis Harlan, *Separate and Unequal: Public School Campaigns and Racism in the Southern Seaboard States, 1901-1915* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1958), 8.
[4] Johnson, "Southern Paternalism toward Negroes after Emancipation," 483.
[5] Philips, "The Central Theme of Southern History," 31; Blight, *Race and Reunion*; Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 129-31; Also see *Hannah Rosen, Terror in the Heart of Freedom: Citizenship, Sexual Violence, and the Meaning of Race in the Postemancipation South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

century, grafted onto hosts of social, political and economic institutions only as the white South attempted to redeem itself through modern agricultural and industrial progress. Proponents of Southern development believed that only an educated working-class could serve the needs of the region's industrial investors, planters, and middle-class professionals. In an effort to garner support and funding from the state legislature for public education, Georgia Superintendent of Education R. L. Glenn argued that only public schools could produce a "peaceful, thrifty, and law-abiding" working class capable of turning the state's natural resources into material wealth.[6]

This New South vision also rested upon the reconstitution of antebellum racial hierarchies and on national reconciliation along the color line. W.E.B. Du Bois's declaration that the "problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line" articulated not a uniquely Southern experience but a national and even global struggle for racial equality. Segregated schools in the South were not an exception to the history of formal education in the United States – easy to dismiss as the vestiges of a backward region and a bygone era of forced labor. Rather, Atlanta's segregated schools constitute a crucial aspect of the United States' domestic imperial culture at the turn of the century. Superintendent Slaton's assurance that black Atlantans were satisfied with *their* educational facilitates precluded the national legalization of Jim Crow in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896). As Gary Okihiro argues, "the schools were powerful instruments in both the shackling and liberating

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[6] Georgia Department of Education, *Annual Report*, 1899, 6.

of students' minds, from one point of view, in the historical transition from the total institutional of slavery to the era of segregation." Jim Crow was not a Southern phenomenon. It was national policy backed by the authority of the United States Supreme Court.[7]

Du Bois was among the first to connect Southern black schools to the broader racial ideologies that both contradicted and defined American democracy and citizenship. At the *Sixth Annual Negro Conference* held in Atlanta in 1901, Du Bois and his colleagues charged the nation with "deliberately rearing millions of our citizens in ignorance and at the same time limiting the rights of citizenship by educational qualifications." While Du Bois and his fellow Negro Common School committee members certainly recognized that the scale of black illiteracy and inadequate schools in the South overshadowed similar national trends, they nevertheless implicated public schools throughout the nation in denying to African-Americans the right to quality free education. Du Bois' thoughts on race were far-reaching. He saw segregated education in the U.S South as a localized function of a much more totalizing "new religion of whiteness" that both justified imperialism and protected the borders of "white men's countries" from people of color.[8]

The attempt by Anglo-Americans to whiten national identity required the political and legal exclusion not only of foreigners from without but also of

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[7] Okihiro, *Island World*, 130; Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 37.
[8] W.E.B. Du Bois, E.J. Penney, and T.J. Bell, *Proceedings of the Sixth Atlanta Conference* (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1969 [1901]), ii; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, 247-9.

"foreigners within." African-Americans fit this mold. Whites regarded blacks not only as biologically inferior but also as inassimilable and unworthy of self-government. While blacks provided labor particularly crucial to the postemancipation South's agricultural and industrial aspirations, black education remained questionable and sometimes dangerous in white minds. Not until the 1930s and 1940s would black secondary education become a topic of national social reform, and only in the 1950s would black education enter the policy debate.[9]

The development of public schools in Atlanta reflected the mutually reinforced polarizations of race and class that informed political battles over municipal services available for the benefit of all citizens. Though the establishment of grammar schools met little resistance from the city's elites, wealthy Atlantans expressed ardent opposition to tax-supported high schools they regarded as unnecessary institutions. Since the city's establishment as Terminus in the 1830s, the upper class had employed private tutors or sent their children to one of the nineteen private academies in the city. In 1853, the Holland Free School, a public institution, opened for the children of whites who could not afford private school or tutor fees. But state codes against black education prevented even free children of color from attending Atlanta's only antebellum public school.[10]

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[9] Lowe, *Immigrant Acts*, 5; Fass, *Outside In*, 115-16.
[10] Philip Noel Racine, "Atlanta's Schools: A History of the Public School System, 1869-1955" (Ph.D. dissertation, Emory University, 1970), 2-3. Racine's dissertation remains the most comprehensive history of the development of Atlanta's public schools through the watershed *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision

Ex-slaves took the first initiatives at universal public education in the South immediately following the Civil War. "The educational and moral condition of the people will not be forgotten," Freedmen's Bureau General Superintendent of Schools J.W. Alford remarked in May 1865. Alford advocated not a usurpation of Northern religious and philanthropic efforts to educate black children, but rather the systematization and facilitation of established organizations under the auspices of local governments. These governments were not presided over by white Southerners, but rather by freedmen and white Northerners who succeeded in authorizing the creation of public schools for all children in most occupied states.[11]

In 1865, leaders of African-American communities throughout Georgia formed the Georgia Education Association to organize, regulate, and fund black schools. Much to the amazement of philanthropists, many black communities in Georgia and throughout the occupied South preferred to contribute what little money they could to these schools rather than take advantage of white-dominated "free schools" provided by Northern organizations. In doing so, ex-slaves challenged commonly held assumptions about their apathy toward and incapacity for education and demonstrated their collective existence as a "politically self-conscious social

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in 1954 mandating, with varying degrees of success, the integration of public schools throughout the United States.

[11] J.W. Alford, Circular No. 2, May 19, 1865, quoted in Du Bois, "The Negro Common School," 23, 37.

class" that saw literacy as both liberating and necessary for successful participation in a democratic society.[12]

The members of the *Sixth Annual Negro Conference* met at Atlanta University in 1901 to outline and address the grave disparities between white and black schools in the postemancipation South. Du Bois submitted to the conference a review of the state of Negro common schools at the turn of the century. In his report, Du Bois described black schools in the South as "woefully inadequate." Despite the demands of ex-slaves for adequate public education, illiteracy rates remained high. Du Bois reported that just under eighty percent of the nation's black population was illiterate in 1870, with Georgia topping the list at ninety-two percent. Du Bois attributed this culture of illiteracy not to black inferiority – as did many of his white counterparts – but to the abundance of antebellum laws prohibiting black education in the South. In Georgia, for example, a series of legal codes enacted in 1770, 1829, and 1833 criminalized black education or the employment of both free and enslaved persons in jobs that might require literacy. Other states maintained similar prohibitions on formal and informal black schooling. Violators could receive fines and jail sentences. Thus, after emancipation, southern blacks encountered the continuity of a planters' ideology that regarded state-supported education, particularly for blacks, as a threat to the economic and social arrangements that had characterized the antebellum South. For former slaveholders, economic prosperity could return in the wake of the Civil

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[12] James Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, *1860-1935* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 11-12, 15-17, 18.

War if they re-galvanized the structures of subordination and deference along racial lines. Black education undermined this post-bellum vision. Even rudimentary literacy, some believed, threatened white abilities to control and manage black workers.[13]

Industrial Education and Black Normal Schools

Rather than dismantle black schools, many white southerners embraced a unique education for African-Americans that would channel them into low-wage agricultural and industrial jobs. Black industrial schools like the Hampton and Tuskegee Normal and Agricultural Institutes operated on an ideology of uplift through accommodation. Samuel Chapman Armstrong, founder of the Hampton Institute, represented and served not the educational aspirations of ex-slaves, but rather the continuity of antebellum socio-economic relationships predicated on subservient black labor. Armstrong styled Hampton after the missionary schools of his native Hawai'i. His believe in the incapacity of non-white minds for higher learning necessitated their training as manual laborers and domestic workers. Until 1895, both Tuskegee and Hampton coached aspiring black teachers in espousing an ethic of hard work or the "dignity of labor" throughout the South's black common schools. This teacher training ensured for whites the continuity of a deferential,

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[13] W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Negro Common School," in *The Atlanta University Publications*, No. 6 (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1969 [1901]), 17-18; Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South,* 2.

accommodating, and above all hard-working black laboring class capable of driving both Southern agriculture and an emerging industrial sector.[14]

By the turn of the twentieth century the Georgia State Board of Education supported the Hampton method as a progressive political model for producing a continuous and dependable supply of both unskilled and semi-skilled laborers. The black industrial school at Fort Valley, Georgia, touted by many white southern progressives as an essential component of racialized economic progress, represented Armstrong's vision for black education in the United States. Fort Valley Industrial School and basic black education more broadly ensured a mutually beneficial Southern progress that, to many whites, reflected more amicable race relations than those of the North. "There is just as much responsibility in the North for the colored man's position as there is in the South," declared Colonel A. K. McClure at a Philadelphia meeting held to garner Northern support for the Fort Valley school. In completely ignoring the 296 lynchings that had occurred nationally since the turn of the twentieth century (the vast majority taking place in the South), McClure claimed that Southern white familiarity with black Southerners prevented the kind of "mob violence [and] adverse sentiment" prevalent among the North's working-class.[15]

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[14] Anderson, "The Hampton Model of Normal School Industrial Education, 1868-1915," in *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 33-78; Okihiro, "Schooling for Subservience," in *Island World*, 98-134.
[15] *Atlanta Constitution*, May 25, 1903; "Lynchings by year and race," http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/shipp/lynchingyear.html.

McClure suggested that the solution to "the menace of negro ignorance" required not only black industrial education in the South but also a more even demographic distribution of black labor across the nation. "When…the whites of the North are educated up to the point of industrial toleration for the Negro, we will witness…no undue crowding of sections of the South by the same race. Once the prejudice complained of is dispelled, we shall hear infinitely less about the Negro as a 'problem.'" By implicating national racism in the struggles for Southern economic and educational progress, McClure displaced and dispersed the burden of racial oppression in order to redeem the white South. In doing so, he conjoined the intentions of both North and South: to school the nation's black population for subordinate roles in agriculture and industry. In order to display this black-white coalition to Northern investors, McClure and the organizers of the Fort Valley school meeting at Philadelphia invited the Fort Valley Principal J. H. Torbert to speak, in large part because "he understands the value of an industrial training to his race." Torbert stated that "we have got to lift up these people or they will drag the white man down."[16]

State Superintendent Glenn's vision of economic progress through public education required not only the control and subordination of future black laborers but also a strong work ethic among working-class whites as well. Glenn advocated industrial and agricultural training and perhaps more importantly, a stronger connection between education and work. "The thought that has been steadily

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[16] *Atlanta Constitution*, May 25, 1903.

instilled into the minds of our children has been that if they can get an education they can escape hard work," lamented Glenn. In order to combat an increase in discontent among young workers with basic education, Glenn proposed that Georgia's teachers instruct children in a moral work ethic that emphasized character building through manual labor. Glenn's ideal public school graduates would leave with basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills and an appreciation for work: "The moral character of a man is fixed more by what he can do with his hands, than by what his eye can read out of books…it is not safe to turn a boy loose upon the world until his moral character as well as his mental habits have been fixed by the training for some useful industry that comes with his hands." If schools instructed the white working-class to be content with their social and economic positions, Georgia's agricultural and industrial owners were assured that public schools would increase the efficiency and productivity of the workforce and thereby wealth for the state's elite and professional classes.[17]

Public schooling and manual training for Georgia's black population, however, proved even more prudent for prosperity because it offered the state's elites the opportunity to reinstitute racial hierarchies they believed had worked so well during slavery. Glenn and the Board of Education drew new hierarchical distinctions between two types of Negroes in Georgia – those raised during slavery and those born since emancipation. According to Glenn, the education of blacks

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[17] Georgia State Board of Education, *Annual Report*, 1898, 13-14; Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 80.

since emancipation had lacked training in deference to authority, thrift, and obedience to the law:

> The Negro who was emancipated in 1865 was not wholly uneducated. Association with his white masters and training at hard labor during the early years of his life, gave him a mental discipline and formed habits of industry and thrift that have enabled this class to acquire about $13 million worth of property that is now shown on the tax digest. Everybody knows that this class of Negroes is peaceable, law-abiding, respected, and self-respecting. There is no friction of any kind between this property-holding class of Negroes and their white neighbors…The outrageous law-breaker does not come from this class.[18]

Glenn then contrasted ex-slaves with black Georgians born since emancipation:

> Most of them have attended public schools; a great majority can read and write; but something has been lacking in the education they have received . . . [It] appears to have unfitted them for the only kind of employment open to them here in the South. If the Negro could have had the right kind of manual training, and the right kind of moral training, along with the book learning he has received, my judgment is that the experiment would have resulted much more satisfactorily to all concerned.[19]

Glenn articulated a common inclination of postbellum white Northerners and Southerners to lament the transition from the loyal, obedient "darkie" to the presumptuous Negro whose education spawned insolence and an unwillingness to work within the established boundaries of racialized labor. The narrative followed that labor equality facilitated social parity followed by racial hybridity, and the degradation of Anglo-Saxon civilization.[20]

Other white Georgians, including Clark Howell, editor of the Atlanta *Constitution*, believed that black education, broadly conceived, created an imbalance of labor on Georgia's farms and contributed to the eventual disenfranchisement of white Georgians. Howell warned that new educational voting requirements

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[18] Georgia State Board of Education, *Annual Report*, 1898, 10.
[19] Georgia State Board of Education, *Annual Report,* 1898, 11-12.
[20] Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire*, 79-80.

designed to eliminate black voters would actually have the reverse effect. Many black Georgians, particularly those who resided in towns and cities such as Augusta, Savannah, or Atlanta, sent their children to public school in overwhelming numbers. Estimates from Atlanta suggest that as many as 3,000 black children were denied seats in the grammar schools because the buildings had reached capacity. Howell also commiserated that many young rural blacks were also vacating menial jobs on Georgia's farms in order to attend school. This dearth of black labor forced young white men to assume agricultural duties and thus "forfeit their educational opportunities." The demise of "practical disenfranchisement" (voter intimidation through threat of violence), Howell feared, would render "the black vote a controlling force in Georgia as in Reconstruction days." An anxious Howell argued that black education and enfranchisement threatened to bring about the demise of the white republic: "While the Negro becomes a full-fledged CITIZEN, the white man, native to the soil and intelligent though unlettered, remains to all intents and purposes an ALIEN."[21]

The solution for Howell and others who saw black public education as a serious threat to white sovereignty was the channeling of black students into industrial schools. Howell's *Constitution* re-printed a *Manufacturers' Record* article regarding the education and Christian moral uplift of Southern blacks. In the article, H. L. Keith, supervisor of black vocational schools in Nashville, argued that "every lover of the white race…should be eager to see the Negro race advanced morally and

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[21] Atlanta *Constitution*, January 28, 1906, A4; Atlanta *Constitution*, February 8, 1906, 6.

in the lines of education of the race for its work." Keith, Howell, Glenn and others believed that the white South stood to inherit an economic windfall if blacks received training in domestic, industrial, and agricultural service. "The South can be greatly benefited materially…by the proper training of the Negro race. The women are the cooks, the nurses, and housemaids of nearly every southern home able to have servants; the Negro men are employed in every occupation in the South," remarked Keith. If black education continued to stress book learning rather than occupational training, the white South would witness not only a shortage of reliable black labor, but also the disenfranchisement of many lower-class whites, forced to occupy jobs vacated by educated African-Americans.[22]

Atlanta's Negro Schools

Even if Glenn and Howell's vision of agricultural and industrial growth in the South rested on a well-trained, moral, and obedient black work force, Atlanta's schools were not preparing the city's black population for such a future. Atlanta's Board of Education had continued to provide underfunded, undersized, and understaffed schoolhouses for black students since its inception in the early 1870s. As Philip Racine has noted, "from the first day of classes in 1872, education for black Atlantans was inferior in every respect to that for whites." When the city council authorized public education at the request of tax-payers, it allotted funding for four white grammar schools, one white boys' high school, one white girls' high school, and two Negro grammar schools. Although school-aged blacks outnumbered their

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[22] Atlanta *Constitution*, September 26, 1917, 96.

white counterparts and despite the insistence of councilman Finch, the Board denied funding for a black high school. Black Atlantans had to pay tuition at Atlanta University if they wanted their children to receive secondary education. Such disparities found critics not only from black Atlanta but white school reformers and Southern industrialists as well, although their goals for Negro education varied considerably.[23]

For much of the late nineteenth century, the Atlanta school board considered its Negro grammar schools on par and in some cases even superior to the city's white schools. Superintendent William Slaton disagreed with the charges leveled by Finch and later by Du Bois that Negro schoolchildren continued to be underserved by Atlanta's public schools. Slaton, ever ready to sound more liberal in speech than to act in matters of policy, argued that black education was essential not only to economic progress but also to the integrity of American democracy: "Atlanta has been liberal to her colored population. These Negroes have the same rights before the law as you have, and if they are to have a voice and vote in making the laws of the land, they must be educated, or republican government will be endangered."[24] Two years later, Slaton conceded that despite the generosity of the school board towards Negro parents and children, an innate black inferiority prevented Atlanta's African-American community from ever fully understanding or appreciating the

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[23] Racine, "Atlanta's Schools," 33. According to the school census of 1882, Atlanta had 10,554 children of school age, 53% of whom were white and 47% of whom were black. Yet white grammar schools outnumbered those of blacks 6 to 3. See Atlanta Board of Education, *Annual Report*, 1885, 9.
[24] Atlanta Board of Education, *Annual Report*, 1891, 17.

privileges and rights of republicanism: "While we should not demand or expect the same skill in teaching ability, nor the same capacity to learn as is found in the white race,…their work is in most cases satisfactory." The superintendent then touted the board's generosity towards the city's African-Americans as unparalleled.[25]

Slaton's comments underscored the paradox of minority education in the United States. Faced with masses of illiterate blacks (or European or Asian immigrants), whites used education to assert social control by producing orderly and deferential and in this case, non-voting citizens acquiescent to the nation's socio-economic structures. The right kind of training meant loyal voters, productive workers, and fervent patriots. At the same time, white reformers questioned the capacity of non-whites and those of questionable whiteness for inclusion. In the case of blacks, reformers quested their capacity to learn. At the turn of the twentieth century, African-Americans' "highly problematic" relationship to the republic resulted in no small part from the assertions of racial scientists that black mental capabilities unfitted them for citizenship. While schoolmen believed that industrial black education was essential to the nation's labor needs, they were less sure of the possibility of black intellectual development.[26]

In December 1895, just five months before the United States Supreme Court sanctioned segregation in the 1896 landmark case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, Slaton expounded upon the apparent virtues of "separate but equal" for African-Americans.

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[25] Atlanta Board of Education, *Annual Report*, 1895, 17.
[26] Fass, *Outside In*, 13.

The key to the advancement of black Atlantans, argued Slaton, was the continued employment of black teachers in black schools that he considered equal to white schools: "Taught in separate houses, which in all cases are as good as those of the whites, with the same grading, the same class supplies, the same course of study, the Negro has no cause of complaint in this city on account of want of educational facilities." But as careful studies of Atlanta's tax records demonstrate, Slaton's definition of equal often strayed far from the realities of black schooling. Atlanta's status as an independent school district allowed it to levy property and business taxes in order to provide public schools that, for whites, were often vastly superior to those in rural Georgia. In 1908, for example, the city spent all of the $330,000 in local school taxes on white schools and provided Negro schools with only their pro rata share of the state's $65,000 contribution. Atlanta's black community had paid taxes on over one million dollars of property, only to see their money used to subsidize white schools.[27]

Overcrowding also proved detrimental to black students and teachers. The city council and board of education could not keep pace with Atlanta's exploding population, and beginning in the 1880s, the superintendent and board president complained of insufficient school house capacity in their annual reports. "Our city is rapidly increasing in population and yet nearly one thousand white children are without places in the schools. [We] now crowd sixty children into a single room,"

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[27] *Atlanta Constitution*, October 13, 1909, 6; Edgar A. Toppin, "Walter White and the Atlanta NAACP's Fight for Equal Schools, 1916-1917" *History of Education Quarterly* 7,1 (Spring, 1967): 7.

exclaimed board president Hoke Smith. Smith, whose support of black education stressed only rudimentary literacy and manual training, charged the city council with allowing Negro grammar schools to operate in a "more deplorable" condition. In 1900, the school board estimated that over one half of Atlanta's black school-age population remained without space in the city's five Negro grammar schools. "Can the City of Atlanta afford to allow the Negro children to grow up in ignorance? I do not urge the duty of furnishing higher education to these children, but primary instruction, coupled with manual training are essential," decried Smith. The future governor, whose racist campaign provided impetus for the 1906 Atlanta Race Riots, urged black education as a Progressive reform to prevent vice, crime, and immorality among the city's lower classes. Minimal education and low-paying but sustainable jobs, Smith hoped, would appease Atlanta's black community.[28]

The school board instituted double sessions in black grammar schools as a temporary solution to overcrowding. Teachers instructed one group of students in the morning and then another after lunch. The result was overworked and exhausted teachers as well as limited instruction time for students. At Gray Street School for example, nine black teachers instructed 674 students over two daily sessions. At Houston Street School 940 students received instruction from the same number of teachers. Black teachers received no additional compensation for the extra workload and their salaries remained roughly half the pay of white teachers. These inequities persisted throughout the first decades of the twentieth century

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[28] Atlanta Board of Education, *Annual Report*, 1899, 20.

with little attention from the city council budget appropriations committee. While the *Constitution* deemed overcrowding in white schools a "critical situation" that warranted front-page coverage, it made no mention of black double sessions. The school board annually recommended the cessation of double sessions, but the policy continued despite the addition of six more black grammar schools by 1912, and the city council continued to spend local tax money on white schools.[29]

Not until 1917, when overcrowding in white grammar schools reached a point at which school officials suggest double sessions did white opposition surface. Superintendent Joseph Wardlaw proposed a temporary measure at Tenth Street School for a one-year double session in three grades until the completion of a new white grammar school. Clark Howell's Atlanta *Constitution* decried the proposal a "reversion to a policy that is inhumane barbaric and wholly out of keeping with Atlanta's place and pride." Howell's editorial depicted innocent children trekking to school before dawn and others arriving home well past dark, and public pressure forced the board to rent temporary space rather than institute double sessions. As Edgar Toppin points out, Howell's editorial outraged Atlanta's black community. While they certainly sympathized with Howell's castigation of the policy, black Atlanta also received another reminder of their invisibility in many public affairs. Double sessions had been common in black schools since the 1880s, and white

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[29] Atlanta Board of Education, *Annual Report*, 1899, 32; Atlanta Board of Education, *Annual Report*, 1912, 20-22; Atlanta *Constitution*, November 22, 1914, 1.

school reformers and the city council had continuously failed to acknowledge the hardships endured by black students and teachers.[30]

The controversy over double sessions mobilized black Atlanta and the local NAACP chapter headed by Walter White. White and the NAACP committee on school reform challenged the board's decision to eliminate the seventh grade in black grammar schools. The decision effectively forced the city's Negro colleges to shoulder the burden of both seventh grade and high school curricula. But White and the NAACP protested the substitution of private schooling for the adequate public education supposedly afforded to all citizens of the city. After a highly politicized fight in which Mayor Asa Candler opposed equal educational opportunities for blacks, the school board acquiesced to the NAACP and dismissed the motion to abolish the seventh grade. In September 1917, the NAACP succeeded further in its drive for improved black schools. In a letter to Clark Howell, Walter White outlined the disparate history of black education in Atlanta and demanded the immediate abolition of double sessions. Howell printed the letter in an editorial, and public pressure forced the school board to admit the crippling effect that double sessions had on teaching and learning in black schools.[31]

While the school board's acknowledgement of injustice seemed to be a victory for black Atlantans, double sessions continued as the board then moved decidedly without haste to erect new school buildings. In response, the NAACP

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[30] Toppin, "Walter White and the Atlanta NAACP's Fight for Equal Schools," 12-13.
[31] Atlanta *Constitution*, September 28, 1917; Toppin, "Walter White and the Atlanta NAACP's Fight for Equal Schools," 9-10, 13-14.

successfully increased black voter registration from a meager 700 to 3,000 for the school bond elections in 1918 and 1919. School bonds required two-thirds of all registered voters, and the city's black voters could easily defeat bond issues by boycotting the polls. Faced with the inability to fund any schools, black or white, the school board and city council were forced to address the needs of black students. In 1921, black Atlantans supported a school bond that funded the construction of eighteen new schools, including four new Negro grammar schools and the first public black high school in the city. It opened in 1924.[32]

Public secondary education for African-Americans represented an important advance in the history of Atlanta's school reform. But separate and unequal schooling persisted and it would be another thirty years until federally mandated desegregation began. Desegregation, however, did not result in equality. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, black school reformers most often operated within the confines of separation - always adamant in their demands for equal funding - but rarely outside the bounds of Jim Crow etiquette and deference. As Toppin points out, the name of Atlanta's first black public secondary school, Booker T. Washington High School, flew in the face of Walter White and the NAACP, which had fought not only for equality but also against segregation.[33]

Atlanta's black students and parents continued to face persistent opposition to their demands for adequate public education. In 1921, white citizens of Atlanta's

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[32] Toppin, "Walter White and the Atlanta NAACP's Fight for Equal Schools," 15-16.
[33] Toppin, "Walter White and the Atlanta NAACP's Fight for Equal Schools," 16.

fourth ward protested mere consideration of a new black grammar school by the school board. A month later, white residents near Fraser Street grammar school demanded that the schoolhouse remain white despite the school board's plans to create a black grammar school. "We concede the right of Negroes to be provided with adequate school facilities, but we do insist that in locating such schools they should not be allowed in white communities," stated John Roan in a letter to the editor of the *Constitution*.[34] Other prominent public officials detested the board's apparent haste in providing a high school for African-Americans before addressing the needs of white schools. In the 1924 mayoral race, incumbent James L. Key fought attacks from his opponent Walter Sims that Key had given, in the words of city bond chairman Frank Inman, "royal treatment" to black Atlantans. Sims convinced many white voters that Mayor Key had forced through the construction of the Negro high school before a new white girls' high school could be completed. Despite the inaccuracy of these claims (the building contract for the Negro high school was signed before the board had selected the site for the girls' high school), Key lost his re-election bid.[35]

City council tax chairman W.B. Hartsfield also charged the school board with undue recklessness in privileging black education over Atlanta's white schools: "The fight I have tried to make is for the hundreds of innocent little grammar-school children and white girls who have been left in ramshackle, temporary buildings, and insanitary firetraps, while unknown to the great majority of people, a great modern

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[34] Atlanta *Constitution*, December 1, 1921, 7; Atlanta *Constitution*, January 11, 1922.
[35] Atlanta *Constitution*, September 18, 1924, 7.

four-story Negro high school was being rushed to completion."[36] By the time the Negro High School opened in September 1924, Atlanta's black students had endured over five decades of inadequate schooling that had prepared them only for basic literacy and low-wage employment. Segregation meant not simply separate but also substandard public schools. White Atlantans, either apathetic or outraged, defended the supremacy of white education over that of black children. In doing so, they placed Atlanta not only with in the context of the Jim Crow South, but also within national anxieties among whites over non-white social mobility, labor competition, and fitness for republican citizenship. The white South may have born the brunt of charges of inequality and racism from onlookers, but Jim Crow traveled far and wide. Ten years before Walter White began his drive for a black high school, San Francisco's school board expelled Japanese students from white grammar schools. Jim Crow not only traversed geography but also crossed racial boundaries. It did not matter that the Japanese were *not black*. Though not members of the Negro race, Japanese and other foreign persons were excluded from citizenship and public accommodations like schools because they were *not white*.[37]

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[36] Atlanta *Constitution*, March 2, 1924, 2; Atlanta *Constitution*, August 26, 1924, 3.
[37] Joan Pope Melish, "The Racial Vernacular: Contesting the Black/White Binary in Nineteenth-Century Rhode Island," in *Race*, *Nation and Empire in American History*, ed. Campbell, Guterl, and Lee, 17-39.

CHAPTER 6

MONGOL HORDES OR SAVIORS OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION?: JAPANESE STUDENTS IN SAN FRANCISCO

On November 1, 1906, the editor of the *San Francisco Bulletin* Fremont Older charged the federal government with meddling in local politics: "A good deal is being said about the exclusion of the little brown children from the public schools in San Francisco. Certain agitators are…trying to make an international issue out a local condition which has no significance…than that the Japanese children have been put in separate schoolhouses as a matter of expediency, owing to our overcrowded condition." Like in Atlanta, minority children were the first considered for exclusion or double sessions when overcrowding threatened schools' effectiveness. Older referred specifically to the attempt by President Theodore Roosevelt to mend strained diplomatic relations with Japan following the passage of a city ordinance that excluded Japanese children from San Francisco's public schools. Japan saw the segregation of its children in American schools as a direct affront to its citizens' rights to migrate, settle, and work – the very same afforded to citizens of Western nations. Many white San Franciscans on the other hand, the constituency for whom Older presumably spoke, saw school segregation as an important measure in defending California from a "yellow peril."[1]

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[1] San Francisco *Bulletin*, November 1, 1906; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, 175-6.

While Older vehemently denied that "heated race prejudice" motivated school exclusion in San Francisco, many of his fellow Californians made clear their intentions to guard against "Oriental invasion" and to protect jobs for white workers.[2] Japanese on both sides of the Pacific fought back in response to racist threats to both individual and national sovereignty. For Japanese, exclusion from schools illuminated the realities of racialized identity in the United States – a modern Western nation Japan tried hard to emulate. Taken within the myriad contexts of race, labor, transnational migration, and international diplomacy, school exclusion was anything but a "local condition." The experiences of ninety-three Japanese students raised questions about the right to work, transnational movement and national belonging, and the meanings and parameters of American citizenship.[3]

Nineteenth Century Origins

Since the mid-nineteenth century, schools had provided the crucible in which racial distinctions, mores, and hierarchies were forged in California. In 1859, San Francisco opened its first Chinese school in response to the demand of thirty Chinese parents for a primary school. The school provided for the separate education of Chinese children within the common school system. The parents' request for a separate school derived from an 1854 precedent creating a "colored school." In 1860, the California legislature codified San Francisco's action into law,

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[2] *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 24, 1908.
[3] *San Francisco Bulletin*, November 1, 1906.

establishing separate schools for all Chinese, Indian, and black children. The state threatened to withhold state funding from any school that allowed racial integration. White city officials somewhat proudly but mostly begrudgingly acknowledged the Chinese school as the first of its kind. As school superintendent James Denman remarked, "there is none other, having in its midst a heathen temple, established and used for the worship of idols, whose worshippers may also enjoy the blessings of the free Common Schools."[4] Denman appeared at once proud of his philanthropic gesture and disgusted with Chinese culture.

By 1874, black children had also endured roughly twenty years of school segregation in San Francisco and Sacramento. Throughout the 1850s, the state stalled efforts to provide public education to blacks and as in the Reconstruction South, blacks themselves took charge of the education of their children. When, in 1855, the city councils of San Francisco and Sacramento announced their intentions to provide public funding for black education, local school boards created single, ungraded Negro schools in which one teacher was expected to cover the full range of grammar and high school subjects. Despite the relatively high cost of maintaining these separate institutions for small numbers of students (only 247

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[4] Gary Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 159; Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1998), 102-103.

statewide in 1866), whites appeared willing to bear the financial burden in order to ensure that their children did not receive education alongside black children.[5]

Separate schools for Chinese, blacks, and Native Americans, and other non-whites (which sometimes included the children of Mexican immigrants) served critical social functions for whites, who believed and asserted that they protected against racial impurity and exemplified white benevolence to "infantile" minds.[6] But the establishment of separate schools did little to quell nativist sentiment in California, as many white citizens and elected officials railed against both integration and immigration. The state legislature enacted an anti-miscegenation law in 1880 forbidding the marriage between "whites and non-whites, 'Negro, mulatto, or Mongolian.'" Not unlike similar codes throughout the nation, the California law protected against the creation of "a hybrid of the most despicable, a mongrel of the most detestable that has ever afflicted the earth," according to one delegate at California's 1878 constitutional convention. By prohibiting intimate contact between whites and non-whites, whether as sexual partners or classmates, California contributed to the attempted growth of a singular American national identity rooted in whiteness.[7]

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[5] Irving G. Hendrick, *The Education of Non-Whites in California* (San Francisco: R & E Research Associates, Inc., 1977), 17-24.
[6] Okihiro, *Island World*, 116.
[7] Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams*, 51. On the relationship between race and nationalism, see Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (New York: Verso, 1991); Richard G. Fox, ed., *Nationalist Ideologies and the Production of National Cultures* (Washington, D.C.: American Anthropological Association, 1990). On American racial nationalism, see

Transnational Migrations and Exclusions

California's history of Asian migration, labor, and exclusion informed the debate over the segregation of Japanese students in San Francisco public schools. Beginning in the 1850s, Chinese migrants arrived on the United States' Pacific coast by the thousands. They and their white counterparts sought economic opportunities in farming, gold mining, and transportation. On the eve of California's admission to the union in 1850, relations between white and Chinese Californians remained rather sanguine. But shortly after the arrival of over 20,000 Chinese immigrants in 1852, white gold miners mobilized political support within the state assembly for restrictive taxation to end mining competition from "others dissimilar from [ourselves] in customs, language, and education." White workers also pressured employers in other industries to curb the use of Chinese contract labor. In 1867, Chinese laborers numbered 12,000 on the Central Pacific Railroad – 10% of the entire workforce. By the early 1870s, the Chinese represented forty-six percent of San Francisco's factory laborers; this in addition to the jobs occupied within the Chinese ethnic economy. However, employers often set Chinese wages well below white wages, and while this ensured continued employment and a steady stream of money to send home, the prohibitively high cost of living in the United States

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Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 14-43 ; Reynolds J. Scott-Childress, ed., *Race and the Production of Modern American Nationalism* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999).

compared to China kept most Chinese men from reuniting with their families on American soil.[8]

Low wages for Chinese laborers also sparked anti-Chinese sentiment among whites. Dennis Kearney's Workingmen's Party articulated their opposition to Chinese labor in 1878 with the slogan "The Chinese Must Go," but by no means initiated the movement towards exclusion. As early as 1855, the California state legislature made clear its intentions towards the Chinese: "We want the Chinese trade, but we do not want her surplus population." The interest in Chinese markets and distain for Asian culture would characterize much of U.S. relations with the Asian Pacific rim over roughly the next century.[9]

The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 forbid the entry of Chinese laborers into the United States for ten years and denied naturalization to those already here. It was renewed in 1892 and extended indefinitely in 1902. The Exclusion Act underscored the relationship between race and class. As Ronald Takaki has proposed, Chinese exclusion was less about cultural danger and more "symptomatic of a larger conflict between white labor and white capital." The capitalist class had,

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[8] Belich, *Replenishing the Earth*, 308, 320-1; Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home*, 29-30; Takaki, *Strangers From a Different Shore*, 81, 85, 87. The California state assembly passed a measure requiring foreign gold miners to pay a miners' license tax. A foreign miner could gain exempt from such tax should they "desire" to become a U.S. citizenship. Of course the 1790 Naturalization Law prohibited anyone but "free white persons" from naturalizing, and thus Chinese miners were stuck with a $3 monthly payment in order to operate in California's mining towns until the Civil Rights Act of 1870 voided the legislation.
[9] Hendrick, *The Education of Non-Whites in California*, 32; Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 75.

at opportune moments, used Chinese labor to break labor strikes and keep wages in check in order to maximize profit and productivity. When Congress stepped in to reconcile the rifts between these two white classes, the Chinese provided an outlet for white reconciliation in the form of outwardly-directed racialized violence.[10]

The Chinese were not the only Asian nationality at which white laborers and lawmakers channeled their cleansing efforts. After short and disappointing stints in the plantation economy of Hawaiʻi at the turn of the twentieth century, Koreans re-migrated to the U.S. west coast and mountain states. They were too few in number to establish viable ethnic enclaves, institutions, and economies like Chinese and Japanese counterparts. Instead many assimilated into the larger manufacturing, agricultural and service economies. However, white Americans tended to associate and confuse Koreans with Japanese and Chinese migrants. As a result, Koreans experienced similar nativist violence. In 1913, white California prohibited all Asian immigrants from owning land or maintaining extended leases Koreans with the passage of the Alien Land Act. The act hinged once again on naturalized citizenship, an impossibility under the 1790 law allowing naturalized citizenship for "free white persons." When Koreans did petition for citizenship, courts frequently cited membership in the Mongolian race as the disqualifier.[11]

Different motivations from their Chinese and Korean counterparts constituted Japanese migration to Hawaiʻi and the U.S. Pacific coast. Eiichiro Azuma

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[10] Takaki, *Strangers From a Different Shore*, 111-12.
[11] Takaki, *Strangers From a Different Shore*, 270-2.

has characterized the collective transnational movements of Japanese in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as a "blurring of the boundaries between emigration and colonization." Eager to garner credibility on par with the Western powers engaged in new forms of imperialism in Africa, Southeast Asia, and the islands of the Pacific, Japanese state officials and intellectuals imagined the transnational movement and subsequent settlement of its people as a critical component of state-building and security. Following the Meiji restoration of 1868, workers and settlers left Japan for Hokkaido, Okinawa, Taiwan, Hawai'i, British Columbia, California, Oregon, and Washington. For the Japanese state, this exodus served two purposes. In a similar conceptual framework proposed by Frederick Jackson Turner in 1893, Japanese elite argued that these new frontiers served as safety valves for an overpopulated Japan. Second, voluntary migration and colonization afforded the Japanese state the opportunity to realize its own ambitions for modern industrial capitalist expansion. Like the transoceanic Anglo connections forged by Great Britain and its settler societies, Meiji state officials supported entrepreneurial emigration. As James Belich has said of Great Britain, Japan too aspired to become a "transcontinental, transnational entity." From 1895 to 1908, over 130,000 Japanese immigrants (Issei) left Japan for Hawai'i and the western United States as both entrepreneurial laborers and state-supported colonialists.[12]

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[12] Azuma, *Between Two Empires*, 17-22; Akira Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement: Japanese and American Expansion, 1897-1911* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press,

The convolution of race and labor characterized the debate over the rights of Asian workers in the United States. For labor advocates, the effective exclusion of all Asian immigrants was paramount to the security of America's white workforce. "If these undesirable elements be allowed to come here in as great numbers as the Chinese did in our early history, there will surely be trouble between the laborers of this country and those of Japan and Korea," pronounced Coast Seamen's Union Chairman Walter Macarthur at a meeting of the Alameda Country Progress Club in Oakland in December 1906. The Progress Club had convened to propose a resolution to exclude Japanese students from public schools. However, unlike in San Francisco, no provision was made for a separate Asian school. Macarthur further predicted that continued immigration by Japanese and Korean workers would eventually lead to either war between the United States and Japan or that "we must expect to work for Oriental wages, and live as Orientals do to compete with them."

Nothing represented this danger for Macarthur better than Hawaiʻi. In true imperialist and ethnocentric fashion, he mourned the transformation of Hawaiʻi into a "Japanese colony" while overlooking attempts by U.S. capitalists, missionaries, and politicians to Christianize and Americanize Native Hawaiians. "The Japanese have driven out the white men until the only Americans left there are officeholders and landowners," explained Macarthur.[13] Hawaiʻi also served as a way station for thousands of Japanese immigrants en route to California:

1972), 131; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, 179-81; Belich, *Replenishing the Earth*, 49.

[13] *San Francisco Bulletin,* December 14, 1906.

> There is a constant stream of Japanese coming from the Hawaiian Islands who remain long enough to be in a measure Americanized before coming here. If these conditions are allowed to continue, the workmen of California and the Pacific Coast will have to contend with the same conditions that drove the white laborer from the Hawaiian Islands. We must either exclude this element or else give up the Pacific slope to the Oriental races.[14]

White California responded in similar ways to the influx of Japanese in the 1890s as they had to Chinese migrations in the 1850s and 1870s. Denis Kearney, E.A. Ross of Stanford University, and leading American labor voice Samuel Gompers reignited the anti-Asian movement born in response to Chinese workers and rechanneled their efforts towards Japanese exclusion. In the first years of the twentieth century, Gompers and the American Federation of Labor supported the renewal and expansion of the Chinese Exclusion Act, citing the endangerment of "American manhood" in the face of "Asiatic Coolieism." The anxieties of white workers in the United States in fact extended across the Anglo world in British Columbia, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. In 1905 for example, whites in Vancouver formed an Asiatic Exclusion League of comparable membership and parallel objectives to those already established in Seattle and San Francisco as well as industry-specific organizations designed to protect white wages and jobs.[15]

Anti-Japanese sentiment in California reached a fever pitch immediately following Japan's victory over Russia in 1905. That year, the California state legislature unanimously passed a resolution condemning the Japanese on grounds of racial inferiority, transience, and "impending danger to [the state's] welfare." The legislature pointed in particular to the unwillingness of the Japanese to become

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[14] *San Francisco Bulletin*, December 14, 1906.
[15] Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 82; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, 172-3.

proper settlers and their refusal to assimilate into American society. The resolution boosted Asiatic Exclusion League membership to 78,000 by 1907, sparked concerted boycotts of Japanese-owned businesses, and in 1906, prompted the San Francisco Board of Education to segregate the city's public schools. Japanese students were forced to join Chinese students at the Oriental school. Thus, the school crisis of 1906-7 revealed not only a high point of anti-Asian sentiment but also one with a longer history than the term *crisis* conveys. Rather, school segregation revealed the desires of white San Francisco to reserve the economic and social privileges of U.S. citizenship along lines of race. San Francisco's school board accentuated the undertones of California's nativist movement: the desire to become and remain a "white men's country."[16]

The San Francisco School Crisis

On October 11, 1906, the San Francisco school board passed a unanimous resolution barring Japanese children from attending the city's public schools and ordered them to attend the newly renamed Oriental school established for "Asiatic races" within four days. The secretary of the board notified all principals that "the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean children must be sent to the Oriental school. The transfers must be made before Monday, October 15." The resolution meant, from a logistical standpoint, the transfer of ninety-three Japanese students and a handful of Korean students from all over the city to a single schoolhouse established originally for Chinese children in less than a week. Proponents of the resolution initially

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[16] Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, 172-3.

pointed to overcrowding in the city's schools after the April earthquake as the immediate motivation for the resolution. Several schools had been destroyed in the earthquake and subsequent fires, and those left intact had absorbed more students than the buildings and staff could handle. The Chinese school had taken six months to rebuild.

However, solving overcrowding in the presumably white schools by creating overcrowding in the city's lone Oriental school required more than simple logistical arguments. School board members, city officials, state legislators, parents, and newspaper editors engaged in a legal and cultural struggle to rid San Francisco, California, and even the United States of what many described as the intrusion of degraded Asiatic Mongrel races.[17] San Francisco schoolmen were in fact legally permitted to pass a resolution forbidding co-education of whites and certain non-whites. The board's decision supposedly upheld Article 10, Section 1662 of the School Law of California (1880):

> "Trustees shall have the power to exclude children of filthy or vicious habits, or children suffering from contagious or infectious diseases, and also to establish separate schools for Indian children and for children of Mongolian or Chinese descent. When such separate schools are established, Indian, Chinese, or Mongolian children must not be admitted into any other school."[18]

Board President Altmann reminded people "the board is merely carrying out the State law. It provides that Asiatics and white children shall not attend the same

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[17] *San Francisco Examiner*, October 12, 1906; *San Francisco Call*, October 18, 1906.
[18] Quoted in Elihu Root, "The Real Question Under the Japanese Treaty and the San Francisco School Board Resolution: Address by the President of the American Society of International Law" *American Journal of International Law* 1, 2 (April, 1907): 275.

schools."[19] School administrators argued that the proximity of the Oriental school to the Japanese quarter did not place any hardships on Japanese students. But the absence of a "Japanese quarter" meant that they were interspersed throughout the city. The Oriental school was hardly accessible to a majority of Japanese students.

Not only did Japanese families face logistical dilemmas with forced segregation, but this was also the first case in which Japanese children were excluded from public schools because of their presumed Mongolian descent. The statute's opponents questioned whether or not Japanese were Mongolian (yellow) or instead whether they belonged to the "Brown race." Japanese intellectuals challenged the presumed scientific or cultural basis for white California's proclivity to organize Asians into one racial category. Rather, Japan heralded itself as racially distinct from China, Korea, and other continental Asian counterparts.[20]

Victor Metcalf, President Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of Commerce and Labor, argued that the school board likely misrepresented the Japanese as Mongolian because of "local prejudice," and thus, the question over whether or not the Japanese were "yellow" or "brown" "must be determined in Washington." Though the question posed by Metcalf concerned the identification of Japanese students as "children of Mongolian or Chinese descent" and not their citizenship, the controversy revealed the undercurrents of racialized belonging in the United States. The federal government had, since 1790, defined and subsequently interpreted the

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[19] *San Francisco Call*, October 18, 1906.
[20] *San Francisco Call*, October 23, 1906; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*.

boundaries of citizenship and whiteness. In the late nineteenth century, courts often used Johann Blumenbach's five-tiered racial schematic: "Caucasian," "Mongolian," Ethiopian," "American," and "Malay." Each racial category had a corresponding color: white, yellow, black, red, and brown. Exclusion based on membership in the "Mongolian" or "yellow" race had legal precedent in *In re Ah Yup* (1878), when a circuit court judge denied naturalization to a Chinese immigrant. The court argued that "Mongolians" were not white and thus could not naturalize under the revised naturalization code of 1870 that only granted naturalized citizenship to "free white persons" and "persons of African descent." Metcalf's assumption that the national government could determine race and thus define exclusion and inclusion sparked resentment from Californians who felt that the federal government was infringing upon their rights. But more importantly, it is representative of a complicated legal and cultural struggle to define the United States a white nation.[21]

Detractors of segregation delved deeper into the racial definitions inherent in the resolution, and were quick to point out the "scientific error" in categorizing Japanese as Mongolian. According to one Japanese lawyer, "it was the Japanese who crushed the tide of Mongol invasion and saved Europe by slaughtering 100,000 of them in 1281. It is still customary in Japan…to stop children from crying by telling them that the Mongolians will get them." The argument not only articulated a racial and cultural distinction and division between Japanese and Mongolians. It also

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[21] *San Francisco Examiner*, November 2, 1906; Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, 173-4; Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 227-9.

heralded Japan as the savior of Western civilization at the hands of Mongol invasion under Chengis Khan. By this historical logic, Section 1662 did not apply to Japanese children. Not only were the Japanese not Mongolian, but Japanese historical and cultural traditions held Mongols to be enemies of Japan, Europe, and by default, the United States – a nation that continued to define itself as the inheritors of Anglo-Saxon civilization. Furthermore, the attempt by many Issei to disassociate from other Asian immigrant communities in the United States indicated a perceived racial superiority on the part of the Japanese in America.[22]

Local Agitation and Transnational Politics

San Francisco's Japanese school segregation resolution stood at the center of what had become a transnational debate about Japanese belonging in the United States. Intellectuals and politicians on both sides of the Pacific engaged in rhetorical and legal struggles over American racism, Japanese immigration, and the collision of two imperial nations in the American West. For many Japanese and Issei, California, Oregon, Washington, and Hawai'i represented the possibility of a Japanese frontier in the Western Hemisphere, much in the same way the trans-Mississippi West and of course later the Pacific represented desirable and providentially endowed spaces in the American imperial geography. As Japanese immigrants traversed the Pacific and occupied lands only recently inhabited by white settlers, race became both the divisive force between the two nations and the connective strand that tied Issei

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[22] *San Francisco Call*, November 3, 1906; On Japanese and Issei notions of race and racial superiority both in Japan and United States, see Azuma, *Between Two Empires,* 83-4, 214.

communities together in the American West. When white California mobilized its political and economic bases for anti-immigration legislation, diverse communities of Japanese settlers throughout the West were transformed into a "racialized national minority" –alienated from the white majority and tangential to the imperial homeland of Japan. This process, in part, created *zaibei doho* or "the Japanese in America." Exclusion and anti-Japanese socio-political movements re-shaped the Japanese immigrant experience and ushered in a transcendence of class within Issei communities. Nativism also created a rupture with the Japanese homeland. Racialized identity in America galvanized and unified Japanese born in America, or *zaibei doho*, into a cohesive ethnic minority. Because they had not experienced emigration and settlement themselves, *zaibei doho* stood apart from those who had initially colonized Hawaiʻi and the American West as laboring ambassadors of imperial Japan in the closing decades of the nineteenth century.[23]

An unlikely supporter of the efforts of San Francisco's Japanese to send their children to public schools, President Theodore Roosevelt charged both the school board and the state of California with violating the 1894 treaty between the United States and Japan that, by default, protected the rights of Japanese immigrants to public education in the United States. Japanese ambassador Viscount Aoki conveyed to Secretary of State Elihu Root Japan's concern over school exclusion. Two weeks after the initial board resolution however, Root reported that pending a complete investigation by the State Department, "so long as Japanese school children, are

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[23] Azuma, *Between Two Empires*, 7-8, 61, 82-4.

accorded public instruction in San Francisco exactly as other children the matter of separate buildings and teachers is wholly with the jurisdiction of local authorities." Rather than discuss the finer points of the 1894 treaty with Ambassador Aoki or acknowledge the inherent racism of the legal code, Root invoked the reasoning of *Plessy vs. Ferguson* that permitted "separate but equal" public accommodations for African-Americans.[24] School officials also pled ignorant of the treaty's implications, arguing that they could not locate a copy of the treaty since the city fire of 1900.[25] Others attempted to downplay the significance of exclusion altogether. The editor of the *San Francisco Bulletin* argued that "agitators [are]…trying to make an international issue out of a local condition which has no significance whatever than that the Japanese children have been put in separate schoolhouses as a matter of expediency, owing to our overcrowding condition. There is not heated race prejudice in this matter, and no desire to violate the treaty which obtains between Japan and the United States."[26] At both local and national levels, officials attempted to deny exclusion and prejudice based on race or ethnicity.

Roosevelt persisted in his efforts to preserve diplomatic relations with Japan, and he took very seriously Ambassador Aoki's assertion that "the exclusion of Japanese children from the San Francisco schools was the chief cause of sharp criticism of the United States."[27] In doing so, Roosevelt temporarily distanced himself from the racial nationalism that had characterized much of his military,

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[24] *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 26, 1906.
[25] *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 27, 1906.
[26] *San Francisco Bulletin*, November 1, 1906.
[27] *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 26, 1906.

intellectual, and political career. As Gary Gerstle argues, "the Japanese . . . should have been near the bottom of Roosevelt's racial hierarchy: they were not white and they resided thousands of miles from the European peninsula, where all the great races had been born." But the Japanese defeat of the Russians in 1905 had impressed Roosevelt. In particular, he admired their implementation of Western military technology and even advocated the naturalization of Japanese immigrants – a staunch departure from his views on Chinese, Blacks, Indians and almost any other non-white group. However, Roosevelt lamented that animosity between Japan and the United States, while absent among the "educated classes," often persisted violently among America's laboring classes.[28]

But San Francisco's legislators, newspaper editors, and educators could hardly be considered working-class and consequently ignorant of the contributions of the Japanese to American society. These were the educated leaders and voices of communities. Throughout California, they argued that the exclusion of Japanese children from public schools was of economic and cultural necessity. The question of whether or not Japanese belonged to the racial category described in geography textbooks as yellow or Mongol mattered little to many white Californians. Asiatic traits, whether yellow or brown, represented immediate and serious threats to the character and progress of the nation. Whites pushed beyond the San Francisco school measure and advocated laws similar to the Chinese Exclusion Act that limited

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[28] Gerstle, *American Crucible*, 60-1; Jackson Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 2.

the immigration of coolie laborers. Thus, school exclusion became integral to defining the racial character of the nation and its working class.

White Californians regarded Japanese children - unlike their European counterparts in New York City, Cincinnati, or Chicago - as both unwilling and unfit for Americanization. For example, one editor argued: "while Japan has doubtless profited by the forcible introduction of Western civilization, we in California are of the opinion that we shall not profit by the introduction of Oriental civilization." The editor articulated what Amy Kaplan as called the "entanglement of the domestic and the foreign" in U.S. imperial culture. The logic suggested that as a non-Western, non-white nation, Japan stood to learn much from the United States but that it must do so on Japanese soil. It certainly could not take place in the domestic space of the United States, where whites might come into contact with "degraded Asiatics."[29] The *Sacramento Union* echoed this sentiment: "Our schools are our own…We have no thought of turning them into establishments for the Americanization of Orientals…we will provide for their education separate schools, but we will not consent that our little ones shall suffer infection in mind, in morals or in manner."[30] To many white Californians, schools were the first line of defense in what some believed to be the imposition of "Oriental civilization."[31] By maintaining clear racial lines during formative years, future generations of white Americans would, in theory, be less likely to integrate Asian values into the American polity.

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[29] *San Francisco Chronicle*, October 27, 1906; Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire*, 1.
[30] *San Francisco Call*, December 7, 1906, reprinted from *Sacramento Union.*
[31] *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 20, 1906.

No place was more off limits to Oriental "intrusion" than co-educational schools, where white boys and especially white girls would presumably sit beside and perhaps even play with Japanese children. The *San Francisco Call* opined: "We regard the public schools as part of the home, and we are not willing that our children should meet Asiatics in intimate association. That is 'race prejudice,' and we stand by it." In this sense, the "home" represented both the space of the family and the woman and the domestic space of the nation. Just as miscegenation statues policed the racial borders of sexual contact, schools also served, in the minds of whites, as places where white children could mature free from the abasement of inferior races.[32] William Richardson, editor and manager of the *Berkeley Daily Gazette* also adamantly opposed "the promiscuous association of [California's] children with Asiatics in the public schools." Richardson continued:

> Our public schools are for our own children and not for the scum of the earth…that wanders this way to enjoy the benefits of our educational institutions. It is mere courtesy on our part when we give them separate schools for their use and good and it is presumptuous of them to demand a full share of our facilities which are maintained on our own, especially when they demand recognition on parity with our young folks. Then, again, the moral code of Asiatics does not harmonize with our high standards and we have no idea of lowering ours to conform to theirs. Beggars should never be choosers.[33]

White San Franciscans expressed particular concern over encounters between Japanese boys and white girls. As in the postemancipation South, white womanhood represented a sacred bond of the nation against outsiders both foreign and domestic. Whites cast Japanese boys in popular racist images of freedmen whose animism prompted sexual violence against innocent white women. The age

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[32] *San Francisco Call*, December 1, 1906; Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire*, 23-50.
[33] *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, November 15, 1906; Aarim-Heriot, *Chinese Immigrants, African Americans, and Racial Anxiety in the United States*, 10, 60-2.

of some the Japanese boys attending San Francisco schools often served as a guise for cultural and racial prejudice. Richardson asked whether the influence of Japanese boys, apparently much older than their racial stature as "little folk" suggested, was "wholesome" for white girls. "They do not look up on our girls with the same eyes of purity and admiration that we do," warned Richardson. In doing so, he conjured up frightful racial images in the minds of whites of free blacks ravaging virtuous Southern white women – a crime often punishable by lynch mob. To be sure, the association of Asians and African-Americans in white discourse was nothing new in the early twentieth century. In 1862, for example, California physician Arthur B. Stout warned that just as the creation of inferior hybrids among Caucasians, Africans, and indigenous Americans threatened the purity of the white race, so too would the infusion of "Chinese, Japanese, Malays, and Mongolians" impose degraded racial types on the national community of citizens. For Stout, exclusionary law was the only answer. As white Americans had done to Chinese immigrants in the mid-nineteenth century, the Japanese became the subjects of "Negroization," further strengthening the bonds of white nationhood that had broken during the Civil War.[34]

Richardson's suggestive imagery meshed well with a story carried in the San Francisco press regarding the "insult" of a Japanese boy towards a white girl. One

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[34] *Berkeley Daily Gazette*, November 15, 1906; Aarim-Heriot, *Chinese Immigrants, African Americans, and Racial Anxiety in the United States*, 69. On white popularization of hyper-sexualized freedmen and their perceived threat to white womanhood, see Rosen, *Terror in the Heart of Freedom*, 172-3, 196-202; Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization*, 46-8, 142-3.

week after the San Francisco School Board and Mayor Eugene Schmitz struck an unofficial deal with Roosevelt's administration that re-admitted Japanese students under the age of sixteen in exchange for the exclusion of Japanese migrant laborers, the San Francisco press appealed to white parents' trepidation about re-integration. According to the *Call* and the *Examiner*, eighteen-year old Frank Mukai, a Japanese student at Mill Valley Grammar School, sent an "indecent letter" to fourteen-year-old classmate May Havlock. Following his arrest, the *Call* even printed a facsimile of the "vile" letter along with Mukai's picture: "I am young sport of Mill Valley and loving you very much, almost to make me sick, and so I hope you will come to see me soon. Your sweetheart, Frank Mukai." The letter served as a reminder to white parents of the moral and sexual dangers of integration. The *Examiner* exclaimed that the story "[emphasized] the evil of permitting the young men of the Oriental race, with their different standard of morals, free access to the public schools." Reintegration meant access to white girls for Japanese boys.[35]

The Mukai incident, seemingly isolated and insignificant in the much larger discussion about school integration, prolonged the battle between California and the federal government over the state's right to enforce racial borders in public schools. State officials, school board members, and editors decried the tyranny of the Roosevelt administration for continuing to meddle in state affairs. California Governor George Pardee agreed with the San Francisco school board that separate Oriental schools were "as good" and thus complied with the 1894 treaty. In a

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[35] *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 19, 1907; *San Francisco Call*, February 26, 1907; *San Francisco Examiner*, February 27, 1907.

statement reminiscent of Southern charges of Northern bullying, Pardee argued "if Californians decide to segregate the Japanese students it is nobody's business but ours, and we shall not be moved…by abusive language, based on ignorance" from the East.[36] The *Examiner*'s editor, in a direct political assault on the president, denounced Roosevelt as a tyrant: "Mr. Roosevelt will find out – to his surprise, perhaps – [that the people] are the real and the permanent custodians of authority in this country." According to the *Examiner,* Oriental exclusion "WILL BE DONE, long after Mr. Roosevelt shall have ceased lamenting the fact that the people retain power." By this logic, American democracy would not only be protected from federal abuses but also from non-whites. This included Asians, for whom, according to his opponents, Roosevelt advocated naturalization – a direct conflict with the 1790 Naturalization Law that reserved naturalized citizenship for "free white persons."[37]

Using the multiple political platforms of states' rights, white supremacy, and protection of (white) workers, white Californians were willing to challenge racial integration so long as Japanese immigration remained unchecked by the federal government. Thus, segregated schools became leverage in the political battle for the complete exclusion of Japanese labor from the United States. By, early 1907, Roosevelt, despite his desires for sanguine diplomatic relations with the Japanese government, no longer resisted the adamant voices of white Californians who called for strict immigration measures. Roosevelt and the San Francisco school board

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[36] *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 9, 1907; *San Francisco Call*, January 10, 1907.
[37] *San Francisco Examiner*, January 20, 1907.

reached a tentative agreement that would allow Japanese (not Korean or Chinese) students to attend public schools so long as Washington excluded all Asian laborers from the continental United States.[38]

But Californians' assertion of states' rights underscored issues of race and national sovereignty too. Whites characterized Asian immigration as an act of international aggression incomparable to European immigration. The *Examiner* invoked the Monroe Doctrine to distinguish Asian from European immigration: "Violation of the Monroe Doctrine would mean at most increased possession of territory by a FOREIGN NATION OF OUR OWN KIND." Implicit in this statement were the cultural and racial similarities between the United States and European nations. An act of war and forceful possession of territory in the western hemisphere by a European nation was not as detrimental to the moral health of the nation as immigration from Asia. The *Examiner* continued: "Far above the Monroe doctrine and the right to protect territory is the right of the people of this country to protect themselves from any association or influences that tend to lower the standard of living or the standard of national morals." The *Examiner*'s editors would rather white Europeans infringe on the United States' imperial ambitions abroad than incorporate Asians into the domestic space of the nation.[39]

Roosevelt had, in the interest of diplomacy and economic partnership, at least temporarily sympathized with the plight of San Francisco's Issei and their

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[38] *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 9, 1907.
[39] *San Francisco Examiner*, January 20, 1907.

desire to send their children to public schools. However, white Californians mobilized on behalf of San Francisco's school segregationists and quickly took drastic measures to reserve California for whites. The unofficial agreement reached between the White House and the school board did not satisfy California lawmakers. On March 8, 1907, the California state senate passed George Keane's resolution following the re-entry of Japanese children to San Francisco's public schools. The legislature sought restriction of all Asian immigration and thus the completion of the 1882 exclusion legislation that barred Chinese from the United States:

> Whereas, there are now in the United States 150,000 Japanese and 12,000 Coreans [sic], an undesirable class that are prejudicial to the laboring interests of this country; and, whereas, such immigration has been increasing in alarming proportion during the few years (14,000 Japanese immigrants having landed on this Coast in 1906) and threatens to affect the body politic of the entire Nation, both economically and ethnologically; and whereas, the President of the United States, has, in a recent message to Congress strongly urged the passage of a special act to naturalize Japanese, a race that cannot be assimilated by the Caucasian race; and whereas, instead of extending the elective franchise by adding a large and undesirable element to our voting population, our endeavor should be to thoroughly Americanize our already large foreign population and safeguard and elevate our citizenship by all reasonable restriction.[40]

Supporters of the resolution spoke of the apocalyptic and inevitable destruction of white America should Asian immigration remain unchecked. Andrew Furuseth, a Norwegian immigrant and head of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific, argued that "absolute exclusion" was the only course of action amenable to Californians: "All I know is that the Japanese are coming. Anything that temporizes this issue is wrong. California should accept nothing but absolute exclusion on the lines laid down in the Chinese act. Anything short of that will make California a yellow man's country." If debate still existed as to whether or not the Japanese belonged to the same racial

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[40] *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 9, 1907.

group as the Chinese (Mongols), Furuseth and others sought to make clear the sharp racial distinctions between whites and Asians.[41]

Formidable interest groups heightened their efforts in order to pressure Roosevelt and Congress to exclude Asian labor. The San Francisco Exclusion League, in light of calls for a cessation of "agitation" following Roosevelt's unofficial agreement with the school board, reaffirmed its dedication to the "exclusion movement," resolving that "until Congress passes an effective exclusion act excluding Japanese and Koreans, as well as Chinese," it would persist in its political efforts to reserve California for whites.[42] The Exclusion League enjoyed the support of organized labor advocates throughout the state and the nation. Following the initial school board resolution in October, 1906, debates over immigration and labor filled the pages of San Francisco's dailies. The *Bulletin* countered the supposed attacks of Roosevelt and other federal officials, who argued that school segregation was a begrudging attempt to bar hard-working and "efficient" Japanese laborers from competition with American workers: "The Japanese are not good workers. In point of intelligence, skill and industry they rank far below American workingmen. If the American workingman will descend to the Japanese plane of living he can meet the Japanese competition in the labor market."[43] The *Bulletin* appealed to Eastern critics of exclusion by arguing that just as tariffs protect American-made goods, so too would exclusion protect wages for white workers: "Why not an exclusion law to

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[41] *San Francisco Examiner*, March 10, 1907.
[42] *San Francisco Examiner*, March 10, 1907.
[43] *San Francisco Bulletin*, December 6, 1906.

protect our flesh and blood? Are men and women worth less than goods and chattels? Is not a mechanic's family worth protecting as well as a capitalist's factory?"[44]

Exclusive Compromise

School exclusion and immigration restriction epitomized the ubiquitous application of socially constructed hierarchies of race in the early twentieth century. White desires to preserve the privileges of republican citizenship and national belonging for themselves drew authority from racial science and energy from working-class fears of decreased wages. In late 1907, the members and racist voices of California's numerous Asiatic exclusion leagues got their wish in the form of the bilateral Gentlemen's Agreement between the United States and Japan. In exchange for the return of Japanese students to San Francisco's public schools, President Roosevelt supported the California state legislature's resolution to restrict Japanese immigration. The U.S. closed immigration entry points to Japanese laborers in Hawai'i and on the borders of Mexico and Canada. Japan further agreed to inspect all passport applications closely and to permit only "students, merchants, and tourists" to travel to the United States.[45]

While white California seemed to have won a local labor victory that would facilitate an ease of anti-Japanese sentiment, crusades against Oriental culture and assimilation weighed heavily on Issei communities. The United States government

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[44] *San Francisco Bulletin*, December 6, 1906.
[45] Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line*, 177-8; Azuma, *Between Two Empires*, 30-1.

continued to support a legal policy of racial exclusion against potential Asian immigrants. In 1917, Woodrow Wilson created the Asiatic "Barred Zone" that began to the east of the Caucasus Mountains and, in the words of Matthew Frye Jacobson, "united Japanese, Korean, and East Indian immigrants with the excluded Chinese as racial pariahs whose continued immigration was not to be countenanced."[46]

Exclusion also galvanized Japanese communities against white attempts to put social constructions into practice, to define Japanese immigrants in terms of race, and to deny them belonging within the nation. In response and as an adaptation of the original motivations for Japanese migration to the Pacific coast of North America, Issei intellectual and community leaders articulated and mobilized policies of moral reform. Unlike their Anglo Progressive counterparts, Issei reformers were less interested in assimilation. Rather, they sought to "turn ordinary residents into acceptable members of two nation-states, not just to Americanize them." Issei leaders envisioned their communities as model Asian immigrant minority communities that would both reform the immoral Chinese and Korean contingents and gain acceptance in a nation that defined as white. Through the reformist efforts that followed on the heels of the Gentlemen's Agreement, the Japanese in America reinforced Japan's imperial ambitions and its assertion of international equality with Western powers. But Issei would do so from the

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[46] Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 85.

disadvantaged position as non-white minorities in an America that simultaneously attempted to reinforce its Anglo-Saxon pedigree.[47]

Asian exclusion became the framework through which exclusion of the "new immigrants" from southern and eastern Europe would be carried out in the 1920s. The 1924 National Origins Act barred all potential Asian migrants and severely restricted access to southern and eastern Europeans. As David Roediger has noted, America's gatekeepers conjured up images of Oriental invasions to gain support for quotas on Italian, Greek, and Syrian immigration. Once again the pseudo-scientific restructuring of history would prove essential to this project as exclusionists told stories of the Mongol invasion and subsequent miscegenation between peoples of the eastern Mediterranean and of eastern Europe.[48] As chapter seven demonstrates, Anglo-Americans questioned the whiteness of many new European immigrants using strikingly similar racialized arguments as they employed in order to restrict Asian immigration. However, without segregated schools, the possibilities for cultural assimilation, national acceptance, and white identity afforded the children of European immigrants in New York City's public schools for example, proved far more pervasive and possible than those available Japanese students on the Pacific coast and in the intermountain West. The Progressive agenda of severing the cultural and linguistic ties of European immigrants seldom extended to the Japanese. As European immigrants became Americans, the Japanese remained

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[47] Azuma, *Between Two Empires*, 47-60.
[48] Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness*, 50-1. Also see Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 31-6.

"foreigners within." While we may understand race as a social construct, its use and implementation proved very real for non-whites and those of dubious whiteness as the United States sought to shape national identity and culture in terms of skin color.[49]

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[49] Lowe, *Immigrant Acts*, 5.

CHAPTER 7

"THE SON OF AN ITALIAN IMMIGRANT…WILL FIND ANCESTORS IN THE PILGRIM FATHERS": BECOMING WHITE, BECOMING AMERICAN IN NEW YORK CITY SCHOOLS[1]

In its 1919 annual report, the New York City school board declared that "no city in the country has gone further … in the direction of consciously motivated, systematic training for citizenship in its high schools." The board reassured itself and its administration that its efforts to train the school-age population in the ways of American citizenship remained essential to combating perceived perils to American national life and identity. "No city needs such training more, for this is no longer an American city, but rather a cosmopolitan city in process of being Americanized," the board continued. Its tone was one of fear and anxiety about an uncertain future in which the city and nation. The opposing forces, "ceaselessly at work," pervaded the city, the board warned: "the home with alien traditions, alien aspirations . . . organizations subversive of law and order, with their public meetings and their street speakers, even competing Sunday and night schools which announce their aim to be 'to offset the vicious teaching of the public school.'" The school board identified a commonality among these multiple threats: "aliens." But the board's statement also revealed a sense of opportunity and responsibility - a call

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[1] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 145.

to duty in the face of imminent national loss, cultural decay, and racial amalgamation. [2]

The experiences of non-white students in San Francisco and Atlanta offer cases indicative of a racially hierarchical American society of which schools were an integral part. New York City's ethnically and racially heterogeneous population would seem to offer another example of exclusion from public institutions. But school officials were in fact far less concerned with maintaining separate schools for non-whites than they were with the Americanization of new immigrants from Europe. As early as 1880, the school board reported rather inauspiciously that colored school attendance was down rather sharply, "doubtless due mainly to the fact that the doors of all the public schools of [the] city are by law open to the pupils without distinction of color." The board instead focused its energy on the rapid assimilation of an increasingly heterogeneous population of immigrants. Despite the silence on race throughout much of the school board's public and private correspondence, racial difference and categorization played crucial roles in the public schools Americanization efforts.

This chapter contends that the schooling of *aliens* or *foreigners* – in particular the "new immigrants" from Europe - involved two seemingly opposing yet often mutually sustaining processes. First, the school board's quest to Americanize the progeny of European immigrants involved assimilation – a kind of welcoming of

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[2] Department of Education, *Annual Report*, 1919, 25, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 401.

these outsiders into the American polity, labor force, and cultural mainstream. Educators recognized the reward in bolstering the American industrial workforce, in creating a semi-informed and obedient electorate, and remaking children of immigrant families in the image of white Americans. Assimilation of course frequently came at the expense of the new immigrants' linguistic, religious, and other cultural mores. Moreover, "culture" often provided a ready and softer substitute for "race." The school board's commitment to assimilation meant the remaking of race – of assigning whiteness to southern and eastern Europeans who, according to the prevailing science of the day, occupied a space of racial inbetweenness. As natives of Europe, they presumably belonged to the Caucasian race. But the experiences of immigration and racial segregation meant that whiteness in America developed under circumstances unique from other racial nationalisms in Europe. For example, in many central and southeastern European nations (the home countries of many of New York's immigrants), strong racial hygiene policies were markers of modern state building. While eugenics certainly gained traction as a tool of the state with the passage of the Johnson-Reed Act, American racial nationalism also allowed for assimilation of certain outsiders. For many European immigrants, acculturation meant becoming white. After all, the United States had continued, since its founding, to define itself both legally and culturally as a white nation. Any newcomers who presumably possessed questionable whiteness or appeared to Anglos to be what David Richards has called "nonvisibly black" would have to pass through the crucible of race in order to gain acceptance and claim belonging. At the turn of the twentieth century, the

confluence of immigration and empire rendered, in the words of Matthew Jacobson, "a [fabricated] system of 'difference' by which one might be both white *and* racially distinct from other whites.[3]

In 1890, Jacob Riis's *How the Other Have Lives* revealed the nature of the immigrant tenement and slum: overcrowded, run-down, dirty, and in dire need of cleansing and reform. That year, New York's foreign-born counted for 43% of the 1.5 million total population and citizens of foreign parentage reached a staggering 1.2 million. But rather than abandon hope that the city's adult immigrants might become proper liberty-loving citizens, the schools, in partnership with other Progressive and nationalistic organizations such as the Young Men's Christian Association and the Daughters of the American Revolution, extended their Americanization programs to include adults. Some educators feared that no amount of schooling for children would erase the foreignness and poverty of the home, and thus, the home itself had to become an object of education as well.

Method and approach proved as vital to Americanization as identification and categorization of foreignness and racial difference. This chapter examines the efforts of New York City's public schools to Americanize not only schoolchildren but also the city's entire foreign-born population. Through these attempts, public schools became more than places of learning for children. Schools came to

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[3] Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness*, 10; Richards, *Italian American,* 2; Matthew Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 6. On racial nationalism in Europe, see Marius Turda and Paul J. Weindling, eds., *Blood and Homeland: Eugenics and Racial Nationalism in Central and Southeast Europe, 1900-1940* (New York: Central European University Press, 2007;

represent and form the foundation for much broader Progressive Americanization effort aimed at foreigners. This process involved transforming schools into sites of Americanization for both children and adults. In particular, this took the form of English literacy night classes for adult immigrants. Just as manual labor training, advocates argued, would fuel American industrial capitalism and quell labor unrest by remaking "lazy" immigrants into semi-skilled, diligent workers, proponents of Americanization argued that English courses would more quickly win over newcomers to the ways of American industry and habits of culture.

Americanization also involved the inculcation of and adherence to the demands for loyalty that and ascendant U.S. nationalism required. While school civics courses were designed for a much broader geographic and ethnic spectrum of schoolchildren that often included non-white and native-born whites, New York administrators often tailored their civics and general curricula to meet the demands of Americanizing an increasingly foreign student body of European immigrants. Emphasis on conformity, loyalty, and Americanism increased with the United States' entry into World War I, and the Bolshevik Revolution fostered a culture of fear and campaign of absolute Americanism. In combining the traditional function of schools with community transformation and ideological conformity, schoolmen became more totalizing in their Americanization efforts. This meant the usurpation of traditional sources of learning for children of immigrant families. As the board acknowledged in 1919, the *alien home* represented one of the gravest threats to the health and moral character of the nation. Schools became the first line of defense in a rhetorical battle in which immigration often constituted invasion.

'Whiteness with Fitness for Self-Government'[4]

This chapter seeks to examine the ways in which New York City's schools understood and confronted this system in which race and culture became intertwined. School officials saw the continued alienation of New York's foreign population as far more dangerous than assimilation, even if its collective whiteness remained suspect. Assimilation, in this context, involved a process not only of becoming American but also of becoming white. Indeed, the two were inextricably linked in a period in which whiteness became fractured. With the arrival of Irish immigrants in the 1840s and subsequent migrations of eastern European and "Mediterranean" races beginning in the 1880s, whiteness underwent critical scrutiny. In particular, Anglo-Americans questioned the newcomers' fitness for self-government – a self-proclaimed trait that Anglos guarded with great caution. Not until the restrictive immigrant legislation of 1924 and the internal migrations of African-Americans out of the South in the 1930s and 1940s did whiteness undergo a re-consolidation under the heading "Caucasian." The emergent racial taxonomies between Chinese Exclusion and the Johnson-Reed Act suggest that New York schools became embroiled in a historical transformation far more complicated than Jim Crow segregation or Asian exclusion in California. The case of New York's public schools suggests that whiteness itself underwent a period of crisis when its defenders asserted race as a defining mark of Americanness and both its challengers

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[4] Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 38.

and aspirers navigated a complicated racialized social world that was at once fluid and rigid.[5]

The school board's assessment of New York's "cosmopolitan" character proved quite accurate by the end of World War I. 13.5 million immigrants from eastern, central, and southern Europe entered in the United States between 1886 and 1925. The vast majority of these "new immigrants" passed through Ellis Island, and many found residence in New York. Ethnic communities throughout the five boroughs engaged in both the maintenance of cultural traditions and in assimilation into Anglo-American society. The "new immigration" shook the foundations of the 1790 Naturalization Law that, despite its overt exclusion of non-whites, was decidedly inclusive within the category of white. This inclusiveness had made possible nineteenth-century migrations from Europe and until the numerical explosion of southern and eastern European migrants, had provided naturalization for almost any European applicant.[6]

By the end of the nineteenth century, the nation's increasing demand for cheap industrial labor combined with political and economic crises in Europe fueled the migration of Italians (peaking in 1907 at 285,731) and Russians (also peaking in 1907 at 258,943) as well as large contingencies of Poles, Greeks, Syrians, Armenians, and others that did not fall easily under the category of "white," much less the sub-category "Anglo-Saxon." From these migrations arose racially and

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[5] Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 7-9; Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation*, 94-5.
[6] Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 38.

economically motivated violence. Historians have pointed to the 1863 New York City draft riots involving Irish attacks on black, white, and Chinese victims, Italian prisoner lynchings in New Orleans in 1891, and the 1915 lynching of Jewish outsider Leo Frank in Atlanta as the most visible manifestations of variegated whiteness. But add to this internal racial struggle the persistence of the public language and practice of defining white against non-white. Civil War, Emancipation, national reunion along the color line, imperial expansion in the Pacific and Latin America, and anti-Asian nativism in the West complicated the breakdown of whiteness. The confluence of these historical processes made it possible for whiteness not only to strengthen as a cultural and national identity but also for it to fracture from within.[7]

"Inbetween" or variegated whiteness made its presence felt in many aspects of New York public education – including curricula. In 1900, the Department of Education submitted week-to-week progress reports for arithmetic, geography, and history to the Paris Exposition. The reports included copies of students' transcription work. In a geography transcription on the progress of mankind, thirteen-year-old Charles Digennaro of Public School 26 wrote that "thousands of the years ago, the white people of Europe were almost savages." This observation revealed that Europe was not a unified continent comprised solely of a single white race as many geography schoolbooks indicated. It not only employed the discourse of human evolution but also recognized that certain races or peoples of Europe had

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[7] Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color,* 43, 52-68; Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 13, 90-1, 185-6.

not yet reached the higher echelons of civilization. "The Russians were the last to become civilized. Turkey is not yet counted as a civilized nation," Digennaro concluded. History curricula also confirmed the absence of civilization among certain races of Europe. In her lesson outline on "New World Empires," teacher Mary Murphy claimed that by tracing the connections between the United States and Europe, "it was possible for the teacher, starting with the Aryan race, to show the westward progress of civilization into Persia, Greece, Rome, the formation of the English nation and the tendency to move still further westward by crossing the Atlantic to America." The selectivity of these trans-Atlantic migrations, whereby certain people transplanted "civilization" through Aryan lineage and others (new immigrants) did not, further reveals the unsettled nature of whiteness among Europeans in New York. According to the prevailing curricula, races retained certain characteristics. For example, Aryans possessed an affinity for civilization and liberty that was coded into their biology and that made them more suitable for self-government in the United States. Others, like Slavs, Italians, and Russian Jews had not been endowed with such traits, but with the right kind of training in American schools, could gain belonging within the white republic. As a precursor to the challenges to biological racial constructions that arose in the 1940s and 1950s, the inconclusive whiteness of certain immigrants could be made conclusive in the proper environment.[8]

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[8] Paris Exposition of 1900, Board of Education exhibition, 1900, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 235; Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 5.

Reforming the Alien Home:
Language Instruction as Americanization

In his 1921 pamphlet entitled *Immigration and Community Americanization*, University of Minnesota anthropologist Alonzo Grace asked that "if 750,000 negro slaves in 1795 could furnish us with a problem vital enough to lead to war…would not 10,000,000 illiterate and 'unable to speak English' immigrants amount to a problem more vital?" Grace provided his readers with what he hoped were alarming census patterns and statistics on the concentration of the "New Immigration" in urban industrial and commercial centers such as Chicago, Boston, and New York. His equation of new immigrants with black slaves speaks volumes about the discursive connections of race forged in the Anglo-American mind. Of particular importance to Grace's argument was the domineering presence of racial stocks and traits that manifested as cultural mores, linguistic traditions, religious practices, and varied identifications with certain political institutions. While Grace recognized a degraded and "changing physical type" resulting from "the ravage of ethnic amalgamation," he tempered his fixity of race with the possibility of revitalizing Theodore Roosevelt's "American race" through assimilation. Grace and his contemporaries, including University of Wisconsin political economist John Commons, recognized that in fact Americanization of immigrant children would prove essential in mitigating uncontrolled racial mixing. By this logic,

Americanization meant becoming white and consequently strengthening the bonds of whiteness against non-white outsiders.[9]

For New York Progressives, the Americanization of the city's large foreign population stood as the most vital civic and municipal task – one that could prove detrimental to the entire nation if unaddressed. Unlike Commons, who sometimes viewed adult immigrants as inassimilable, the Department of Education and the Office of the Superintendent regarded children of foreign parentage as the necessary catalyst for the Americanization of the entire foreign population. "Because many of the parents of our pupils have come from lands where the ideals for which this country stands are unknown, it is the duty of the teachers of America to become inspirers of active patriotism in both its emotional and intellectual aspects," exclaimed Superintendent William Ettinger in December 1919. While students themselves were still in need of Americanization, many of them were born in the United States and thus, according to school officials, were better positioned for responsible citizenship than their foreign parents. The board recognized that because of their daily interaction with native-born students, children of immigrants

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[9] Alonzo G. Grace, *Immigration and Community Americanization* (Minneapolis: Acme Printing & Publishing, Co., 1921), 9, 12; John R. Commons, *Races and Immigrants in America* (New York: Macmillan, 1915 [1907]), 208-10, 218-22; Robert A. Carlson, "Americanization as an Early Twentieth-Century Adult Education Movement," *History of Education Quarterly* 10,4 (Winter, 1970), 442.

could set examples for and impress upon their foreign-born parents and relatives the values and virtues of Americanism.[10]

But the sharp residential pattern divisions into ethnic communities often made this type of assimilation difficult, and cohesive immigrant neighborhoods meant that children's home and community education could weather the storm of Americanism in the public schools. For example, the 1885 school census showed that in the tenth ward, 6,903 of 8,966 total students were born in the United States. However, the number of students whose parents were native-born U.S. citizens only reached 603, or just under 9%. The tenth ward was home mostly to Polish and Russian immigrants, complemented by a sizable German population. While the Teutonic heritage of non-Jewish German immigrants often allowed them to become Americans without much scrutiny of their whiteness, Jews, Slavs, Italians and others from beyond the regions of northern and western Europe faced a dual transformation of both racial and national allegiance. Educators perceived these tasks as inseparable. Regardless of geographic origin or racial character, school officials sought to exploit this generational divide to distance students from their parents' cultural and linguistic traditions in order to make them presumably amenable to the celebrated tenets of American democracy – hard work, responsible

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[10] Circular No. 5, 15 December 1919, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 512: 23.

civic participation, and unquestioned loyalty to the state. In doing so, the children of immigrants could be remade in the image of the nation's original white settlers.[11]

Americanization, whether in schools or in industry, often began with lessons in basic English. Language instruction became what Michael Olneck and Clifford Gertz have argued constituted questions of "what cultural forms - what systems of meaningful symbols" would be used to construct and then reshape national identity. Public policy scholars T. Alexander Smith and Raymond Tatalovich have argued that in the context of immigration and national identity, language has often evoked emotive responses from native-born Americans (perhaps Anglo or otherwise) who perceive non-English speakers as threats to their cultural mores, rather than their economic capital. But I would argue that in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era United States, when modern industry, capitalism, and urbanism transformed the social foundations of the nation, economy and culture were inseparable. Proponents of Americanization feared the divisive affects that ethnic, non-English speaking groups would have on civic and national character, and they sought conformity of "language, customs, and ways." But capitalism always informed this drive for Americanism. As David Roediger points out, the "'inbetween' consciousness" of many new immigrant workers galvanized them against both native-born favoritism and black competition – often in the form of labor strikes. If these immigrants could be solidified as white, complete with a strong sense of

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[11] New York City Board of Education, *Annual Report*, 1885, Records of the New York City Board of Education 22.

American nationalism, they were less prone to collective action. Good patriots made good workers.[12]

English language education had Progressive roots in the 1880s, when some midwestern and eastern cities, New York included, opened night schools for adult immigrants. But working immigrants attended evening courses in low numbers, particularly if English was not necessary on the job or if they were not seeking naturalization. In 1880, New York's public schools boasted an enrollment of 18,472 in its evening schools. Though attendance only reached 7,676 that year, the board continued to stress its vitality in assimilating foreign-born adults into the industrial workforce. Beginning in 1906, the board of superintendents created three new grades in the elementary schools one of which served as a holding area for non-speakers of English. Immigrant children of all ages entered "Grade C" until they had sufficiently learned enough English to "take up the work of another grade." "Grade C" teachers were instructed to use the same instruction used in the adult evening schools. Educators sought a firm foundation in English before assimilating foreign-

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[12] Michael Olneck, "Americanization and the Education of Immigrants, 1900-1925," 400, 402; Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic, 1973), 243; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Naturalization, *Federal Textbook on Citizenship Training, Part III. Our Nation* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1926), 207; T. Alexander Smith, *The Comparative Policy Process* (Santa Barbara, CA: CLIO Press, 1975), 90; Raymond Tatalovich, *Nativism Reborn?: The Official English Language Movement and the American States* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1995), 2; Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness*, 122-30.

born students into regular classrooms where they would then receive lessons in civics and patriotism.[13]

Schools joined industry and a host of other agencies including the Bureau of Naturalization, the National Council of Defense, and the National Americanization Committee as primary advocates and sites of Americanization through language training. Industrial leaders also promoted English education among their workers. Henry Ford advanced an "English only" policy among his factory workers and provided the necessary educational forum to move toward "100 percent Americanism." In 1916, the vice-president of Packard Motor Company announced to the Committee for Immigrants in America that promotion in their Detroit plant would only be granted to American citizens. In short, the vice-president identified the "prerequisite of success [as] American patriotism and American nationalism." While the policy certainly had nativist implications, it at least left open the possibility of economic advancement through Americanization.[14]

Both children and parents received language instruction. In 1881, the school board recognized that English language instruction had, to date, not "been dealt with to the entire satisfaction of the commissioners of education." In particular, the

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[13] Teachers' Council Committee on School Records and Statistics, *Digest of Matter of Current Value from Circulars issued by the City Superintendent of Schools, 1902-1915* (New York: Boys' Vocational School, 1915), 88, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 511.

[14] Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 234-9, 244, 246-7; Annual Report, 1880, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 22; David Leviatin, "Introduction," in *How the Other Half Lives*, by Jacob Riis, ed. David Leviatin (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1996), 17; Editorial, "Americanization by Industry," *Immigrants in America Review*, April, 1916, 11.

board cited the shortcomings of the Compulsory Education Act, which only mandated attendance for children under the age of fourteen. "The number of people in this city totally ignorant of our language may become so large as to be an element of great danger to municipal prosperity," reported the board. It offered the large contingent of Italians as evidence "that this a real and not an imaginary danger," and pushed for increased Americanization through English language instruction for both children and adults. The board warned that if allowed to continue without immediate response from the schools, "there is nothing to hinder similar immigration on the part of other nations equally ignorant of our language, and equally strangers to our habits and customs."[15] By 1885, evening school attendance had in fact decreased to 6,628 total students, but average attendance among those enrolled rose above thirty percent. The inculcation of Americanism and English language remained in need of improvement.

Beginning in the first decade of the twentieth century, the school board and superintendent's office increased its emphasis on the connections between children's schooling and reforming the immigrant home. Through reformation of the immigrant's social environment, Progressives sought Americanization through conformity. As Commons argued, cultural and linguistic assimilation could ameliorate the persistence of racial stocks and traits: "Race and heredity may be beyond our organized control; but the instrument of common language is at hand for conscious improvement through education and social environment." In 1916,

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[15] New York City Board of Education, *Annual Report*, 1881, Records of the New York City Board of Education 22.

the U.S. Bureau of Naturalization issued a call to civic societies to put pressure on school authorities through the nation to continue and extend the availability of evening English and civics courses for adult immigrants. The Committee for Immigrants in America reported that of the United States' thirteen million foreign-born, roughly three million could not speak English, and only 38,000 nationwide were enrolled in evening schools. The Committee pointed not to refusal on the part of immigrants to learn English but rather to the missed obligation of Americans to assimilate foreigners. The New York Public School Superintendent's office responded with plans to advertise evening schools. Teachers were instructed to have students write letters to their parents, in the form of compositions, alerting them to the times, places, and course offerings of the evening schools. Students were then instructed to take the compositions home, read them to their parents, and obtain a signature. Superintendent William Ettinger praised the efforts of children and teachers in spreading Americanism beyond school grounds and regarded "the influence of the school children on their parents" as a crucial mechanism of the Americanization campaign.[16]

Still, educators sought even more direct oversight in the transformation the immigrant home. In 1914, New York school superintendent William H. Maxwell began employing "visiting teachers" who, under the direction of district

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[16] Commons, *Races and Immigrants*, 20; Editorial, "Keep the Schools Open," *Immigrants in America Review*, April, 1916, 8; Francis Kellor, "Straight America," *Immigrants in America Review*, July, 1916, 14; Circular No. 2, 15 September 1920, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 512: 23; Circular No. 4, 22 September 1921, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 512: 23.

superintendents, would serve as liaisons between the home and the school. The behaviors that the visiting teachers were supposed to correct frequently fit the Progressive's characterizations of children raised in immigrant homes: "unmanageable, nervous, dull, inattentive, over-worked, underfed, poorly clad." Visiting teachers, sometimes called *home teachers* or *visiting nurses*, engaged in "secular missionary work" – efforts to directly reshape the immigrant home through the inculcation of American standards of living and values. Progressives were quick to report the satisfactory results of home visits and other acts of "willed learning on the part of individuals" that resulted in a transference that Olneck has described as "individual regeneration resulting ultimately in collective transformation." For example, in 1916, Joseph Mayper, an editor for Frances Kellor's *Immigrants in American Review*, celebrated the reported success of home teachers in Barren Island, Jamaica Plains, New York City. "Except for the public school," lamented Mayper, "the [immigrant] community remains an isolated group…lacking definite aim or purpose." In a collaborative effort with the City Department of Health, public school authorities at Barren Island personally requested the attendance of immigrant men and women in English and civics courses, furnished English-language books, lectures and moving pictures on patriotism: "The house-to-house work was therefore utilized to arouse among the adults interest in a knowledge of the English language and preparation for American citizenship. Men and women were urged to attend the public evening school, addresses were made before foreign societies, colored posters were put up in various sections of the district, announcements were made by the priest and the co-operation of the employers was

secured." For Mayper and the Committee on Immigrants in America, New York City's large foreign population necessitated a concerted effort to reach the entire immigrant community and not simply school children. While the public schools played an integral role as the bedrock of the Americanization movement and provided places for teaching immigrants, they were more so part of a much broader Progressive reform movement that targeted all aspects of immigrant life including health, sanitation, childcare, labor, and recreation. Mayper declared that "the work [at Barren Island] has been constructive and far-reaching and will, no doubt, prove to be of permanent value to the residents and the community and cannot but promote a stable population and a high type of American citizenship."[17]

Along with the hope that the children of immigrants would use their influence to Americanize the city's first generation immigrants, adult education continued to play an integral role in the Americanization movement. During the years after the close of World War I, adult education took on an increasingly urgent tone. In 1918, the New York Board of Education unanimously adopted a resolution prohibiting the use of any language other than English in the public schools. Two years later board president Anning S. Prall proposed a compulsory Americanization bill aimed specifically at "adult aliens": "We are doing everything possible for children [of foreign born parents] to take back to their homes the story of Americanism. We teach them how to live, love of city, state, and nation. But we

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[17] Special Circular No. 13, 3 February 1914, Records of the New York City Board of Education Records, 512: 23; Olneck, *Americanization and the Education of Immigrants*, 409-10; Joseph Mayper, "Americanizing Immigrant Homes," *Immigrants in America Review* July, 1916, 54-6, 59-60.

must be able to reach the adult more directly." Prall hoped that requiring adults to attend evening classes at the public schools would instill what were in his mind distinctly American ideals: respect for authority and love of justice. Prall's efforts to make Americanization compulsory reflect the heightened suspicion of foreigners during the years leading up to the National Origins Act. Though Progressives' seemingly good-intentioned assimilation tactics continued to inform Americanization and immigration policy debates, political revolution, workers' strikes, and the science of eugenics would, by 1924, redirect the Americanization movement towards a combination of 100 percent Americanism and exclusion.[18]

'No One Has Kept the Pot Melting':
Loyalty and Whiteness in New York Schools during World War I

On the eve of the United State's entry into World War I, the *Immigration Journal* argued that new immigrants had not arrived without capacity or desire to assimilate into American life and culture. Rather the nation had ceased to stir the melting pot and thus it was hard to determine its capacity for further assimilation. Progressive Frances Kellor's *Immigrants in America Review* agreed: "America takes so little intelligent thought of using or developing this capacity [for Americanization] that the immigrant remains alien in heart and mind."[19] But entry into the war changed the character of Americanization. Robert Carlson has noted

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[18] *New York Times*, July 4, 1920.
[19] Editorial, "The Capacity of the Melting Pot," *Immigrants in America Review*, April, 1916, 14.

that war mobilization "injected an increased tone of suspicion, intolerance, and fear into the campaign." Furthermore, as Gary Gerstle notes, postwar race riots, the Red Scare, the resurfacing of the Ku Klux Klan, and finally the 1924 National Origins Act all "revealed that a nasty and coercive Americanism had triumphed." This newly revitalized politics of fear was not without its critics, including John Dewey, who struck back at the absolutist Americanization school and its desires for racial conformity, surveillance, and exclusion. Dewey espoused a doctrine of pluralism that defied the logic of Americanism rooted in Protestant, Anglo-Saxon traditions and challenged exclusionists and conformist voices emanating from such organizations as the National Security League, American Protective League, and the Federal Committee on Public Information.[20]

New York's public schools thus became further entangled in an Americanization movement with multiple agendas and trajectories during and immediately after World War I. To be sure, leading social scientists such as Edward Ross, Charles Ellwood, Ross Finney, and John Commons, influenced by the emergent science of eugenics, articulated anxious calls for conformity as early as 1900. Nativists regarded immigration as a destructive and erosive force acting against the progress of the nation, and foreign war and revolution only added greater immediacy to the Americanization movement. Carlson notes that "the goal of

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[20] Carlson, "Americanization as an Early Twentieth-Century Adult Education Movement," 453-4; Gerstle, "Liberty, Coercion, and the Making of Americans," 530-1.

national 'one-mindedness' replaced the original social service motivation" integral to earlier Americanization campaigns undertaken by many civic organizations.[21]

Exclusionist and nativist campaigns further complicated the school's efforts to maintain both humanitarian and conformist platforms. Historians Otis Graham Jr. and Elizabeth Koed argued that the U.S. entry into World War I "decisively tilted Americanization toward the nativist impulse" but that this did not mean the "end of the liberal agenda." New York's public schools became sites of both genuine social reform and watchful investigation of the supposed radicalism of immigrants. On one hand, the school board and superintendent's office augmented its efforts to inculcate Americanism among immigrant students and their families and continued to engage New York's foreign population as future patriots and citizens capable of understanding and fulfilling the principles of Anglo-Saxon self-government. On the other hand, charges of anti-Americanism and Bolshevism against New York's immigrants as well as calls for exclusion emanated from civic societies as well as local, state, and federal government offices. By the close of the war, Americanization had been transformed into a campaign both for and against immigration to the United States. Advocates and detractors of continued immigration from southern and eastern Europe, where Bolshevism and "un-Americanism" had presumably put down their strongest roots, reinforced and recast race in the image of foreignness and alien culture. "Our schools must solve social problems which arise from the complex nature of our population, which includes children and adults of nearly

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[21] Carlson, "Americanization as an Early Twentieth-Century Adult Education Movement," 446-8.

every race," reported the school board. Solving social problems, or eradicating radical un-Americanism, involved not simply political reorientation but also the whitening of one's politics so as to replace all other racially engrained impulses with the Anglo-Saxon values of liberty and free-market capitalism.[22]

As the questionable whiteness of "new immigrants" gained momentum in popular discourse, protection against anarchism and socialism became central to Americanization in the schools. In particular, teachers stood at the forefront of this ideological defensive line. "The teachers of our schools are the guardians of those ideals and traditions which constitute Americanism," exclaimed superintendent Ettinger. He called on "patriotic men and women…to counteract the sinister radicalism" emanating from Europe and likely from immigrant communities in New York City. "The Americanism of the mass of teachers cannot be [a] question," Ettinger continued, as he made clear his intentions to cleanse the teaching profession of "vociferous agitators." When reports of "radical teaching" surfaced, an Americanization Committee headed by prominent leaders of over thirty organizations, including the Law and Order League, Tammany Hall, and Sons of the Revolution, the committee pressed the Board of Education to install stenographers in classrooms to provide evidence of Bolshevist and anarchist propaganda. In true Palmer fashion, principal committee speaker Henry Wood Wise "declared that all efforts to suppress radicalism are handicapped by the fact that sixty percent of…the

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[22] Otis L. Graham Jr. and Elizabeth Koed, "Americanizing the Immigrant, Past and Future: History and Implications of a Social Movement" *The Public Historian* 15, 4 (Autumn, 1993): 30; New York City Superintendent of Schools, *Annual Report*, 1925, 41, Records of the New York City Department of Education, 401.

State Department are Socialists and that President Wilson is the most exalted instigator of social revolt in the world." In 1921, the New York State Commissioner of Education required all supervisors and teachers to take loyalty oaths and obtain loyalty cards or "certification as to moral character." No teacher was allowed to continue teaching after December 31, 1921 without a loyalty certificate. Whether of foreign or native origin, New York's teachers were expected to profess to students - and by extension, their families - the dire necessity of conformity to Anglo-Saxon cultural and political institutions.[23]

Publicly and officially pronounced allegiance to the United States constituted the ultimate act of patriotism for the children of new immigrants, according to school authorities. In order to assess whether or not Bolshevism had in fact infiltrated the minds and ideals of the city's school children, the superintendent's office issued a "War Facts" test. Ettinger assured teachers that the board was not investigating allegations of subversive teaching, and rather that the test would reveal that "a limited number of pupils are in contact with Bolshevism" – likely through the political propaganda available through the foreign language press and less formal institutions in immigrant communities. Taken together, tests of loyalty for both students and teachers and charges of subversive teaching reveal the parallel tracks of the public school's purge of radicalism and the federal government's socialist witch-hunt spearheaded by Attorney General Mitchell Palmer and a young J. Edgar Hoover. Americanization efforts reached fever pitch during the

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[23] Circular No. 8, 19 November 1921, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 512: 23; *New York Times*, April 29, 1920.

Red Scare, as authorities charged the nation's immigrants with un-American, subversive activism.[24]

Exclusion as a Path to Whiteness

By 1924, the Americanization movement had become one of both conformist assimilation and exclusion, of reviving Roosevelt's American race and guarding the sanctity of whiteness through legal statute. Its proponents had worked to erase the 'foreignness' of immigrants and replace it with a more familiar, more 'American' narrative. For some this involved remaking immigrants in the image of the American settler, citizen, and worker. On May 17, 1924, descendants of Manhattan's original Dutch settlers celebrated the 300th anniversary of the settlement of New Amsterdam. The *Times* described a process of racial assimilation that unfolded in New York once the Dutch intermarried with successive waves of settlers: "In time the different racial strains were blended, Dutch mixing with Walloon, French and English, and later with the Germans. The common experiences served to strengthen the bonds between them, and made them share a kinship which they did not feel toward their relatives in Europe." The *Times* identified racial assimilation as an essential component of the "epic of America" – wilderness cleared by frontier settlers and then gradually replaced by civilization "with its schools and churches and industries."[25]

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[24] Circular No. 33, 25 June 1919, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 512: 23; Carlson, "Americanization as an Early Twentieth-Century Adult Education Movement," 454-5.
[25] *New York Times*, May 18, 1924; *New York Times*, November 10, 1924.

The *Times* called for a renewed commitment to national progress modeled on the experiences of Manhattan's first European settlers who "pushed the frontier across the continent from Wall Street to the Golden Gate and laid the foundations of an empire." The daily at once celebrated the role of immigrants in forging the American nation and restricted such historical acts to those of unquestionable whiteness. The editorial also forecasted the trajectories of whiteness following coercive Americanization and immigration restriction. In 1924, even as the national origins system of restriction excluded the vast majority of potential immigrants from southern and eastern Europe – what John Higham has described as the "direct implementation of racial nationalism" – those excluded European 'races' who already resided in the United States began a process of becoming white. As Matthew Jacobson notes, the Johnson-Reed Act represented the "high-water mark of Anglo-Saxon or Nordic supremacy" but also created conditions for the "re-drawing of racial lines" and the ascendency of "monolithic whiteness."[26]

Despite the transformation of the Americanization movement into a crusade against political radicalism, multilingualism, and foreign culture that effectively alienated many of the people it sought to subsume into the American polity and workforce, New York's public schools sustained their efforts to integrate the city's immigrant children and their families. By the time the Johnson-Reed Act was signed into law, New York boasted 2 million foreign-born, 2.3 million native-born of foreign parents, and a meager 1.5 million native-born of native parents. Even as the

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[26] *New York Times*, May 18, 1924; Higham, *Strangers in the Land*, 323; Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 93; Jacobson, *Roots Too,* 36-42.

legislation established national origins quotas and placed severe restriction on immigration from southern and eastern Europe, school authorities continued to press an agenda of assimilation. "Instruction for naturalization and training in citizenship is a logical part of the public school responsibility," said the Council on Immigrant Education, as it expressed its gratitude for quota restriction that would "give the public schools a much greater opportunity to teach aliens than in the days when they came here in floods." This was a process by which the 'races' of Europe who had, according to the council, swamped New York over the last thirty years could at last become 'Caucasian' through public education.[27]

Beginning in the 1920s and accelerating through the experiences of the Great Depression and World War II, Blumenbach's "grand" racial taxonomies of black, white, brown, yellow, and red, regained their nineteenth-century precedence over the "minor" racial divisions between Euro-Americans. The school board's 1925 annual report revealed the juxtaposition of the persistence of European 'racial' divisions and their initial erosion through schooling: "Everybody looks to the public school system for help in solving the social and moral…problems of society…In this city the situation is rendered more complex by…the fact that our schools must solve special problems which arise from [a] population, which includes children and adults of nearly every race. However, these conditions are not causes for complaint and over-conservatism. Rather are they causes for gratification and progress." The *Times* again invoked America's racial history: "In a short time racial consciousness

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[27] *New York Times*, July 14, 1924.

had disappeared. Today the descendants of these early pioneers, though proud of their origin, are utterly unconscious of being anything but Americans." Though it would take the better part of three decades for the popular historical narrative to reflect the contributions of "new immigrants," they too came to share in building of and belief in American democracy. In doing so, they became not only Americans but also whites, and they were consequently given access to republican citizenship and national belonging often denied to non-white immigrants and Americans alike.[28]

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[28] New York City Superintendent of Schools, *Annual Report*, 1925, 41, Records of the New York City Board of Education, 401; Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 92; *New York Times*, May 18, 1924.

CONCLUSION

THE CHINESE IN MISSISSIPPI: THE GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS OF LOCAL PARTICULARLITY

On May 11, 1925, the Mississippi State Supreme Court barred Chinese children from attending the states' white public schools. The court reversed the October 1924 Bolivar County Circuit Court decision of *Gong Lum et al v. Rice* in which Martha Lum, a native-born American citizen of Chinese descent successfully petitioned to attend the all-white Rosedale Consolidated High School. The lower court compelled the state superintendent of education and the trustees of Bolivar County public schools to admit Lum, but the Mississippi State Supreme Court sided with the superintendent. It cited section 207 of the state constitution that "provides that separate schools must be maintained for the white and colored races." Lum's struggle for a place in a white school in the Deep South revealed the ambiguous identities of people who were neither black nor white in a social system that did not accommodate anything but. Moreover, it illuminated the wide-reaching effects of the transnational discourses of race, immigration, and U.S. empire on local communities. Forty-three years after the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act, Martha Lum's challenge to Jim Crow proved that the color line and parameters of national belonging and citizenship were hardening but never quite fixed. The collective force of republican citizenship, racialized exclusion, and a growing imperial agenda offers insight as to why national belonging was never extended to Martha Lum.

The *Lum* case provides a lens through which to see the convergence of Jim Crow, Chinese exclusion, and the strengthening of whiteness as a prerequisite for national belonging at a time of expanding U.S. imperial presence. To be sure, Southern racial mores were integral to the court's decision to deny her adequate public education. But in barring Chinese from white schools, Mississippi applied Jim Crow broadly across the lexicon of race and in doing so, further extended and simplified exclusionary policy to include not just blacks, but all non-whites. White Southerners originally used Jim Crow laws to deny freed slaves and their descendants certain rights of republican citizenship and access to both public and private social institutions. Whites appealed to the protection of white womanhood and the principles of self-government in order to justify and reinforce racialized second-class citizenship for blacks. White Californians employed similar arguments to exclude Chinese, Koreans, and Japanese from jobs, private institutions, and schools and to protect white civilization from a perceived Asian despotism. The *Lum* decision brought Chinese children further under the umbrella of the non-white subordinate citizen. The Mississippi State Supreme Court responded to local calls for exclusion and drew upon four decades of national exclusionary policy that rendered people of Asian descent perpetual foreigners in the United States.[1]

Lum's case hinged on the meaning of "colored." In 1920, Mississippi Chinese numbered 322 in a state with 83,200 whites and a black population that comprised

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[1] *Atlanta Constitution*, May 12, 1925; Vivian Wu Wong, "Somewhere Between White and Black: The Chinese in Mississippi," *Magazine of History* 10, 4 (Summer, 1996): 33-6.

an overwhelming 310,700 of the 394,200 total population. Chinese communities in Mississippi struggled to gain respectability and acceptance in a hierarchical society that organized in terms of black and white. The state's "colored" schools received little or no funding and like those of Atlanta, were separate but far from equal. Chinese parents tried to evade the "colored" label so that their children could receive basic education. In doing so, many attempted to navigate Jim Crow social relations in ways pleasing to whites. For example, sexual relationships that produced what one observer called "Chinese-Negro half-breeds" made most whites hesitant to admit Chinese children into white schools. Thus, Chinese could potentially benefit from social distance from African-Americans. However, Lum's denial from Rosedale suggested that attempts to conform to the racial mores of the Mississippi Delta and to distinguish themselves from African-Americans did not allow Chinese to escape "colored" identity.[2]

The State Supreme Court explained that as it was written in the 1890 Mississippi Constitution, "colored" was a pervasive term that included anyone who could not prove membership in the "white" or "Caucasian" race. Just like the Japanese in San Francisco, Mississippi's Chinese belonged to the "yellow" race and were thus ineligible to attend white schools. The court's decision contributed to the consolidation of whiteness under the heading "Caucasian" and deepened the division of the nation and the world into "white" and "non-white." In Lum's appeal

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[2] Sieglinde Lim de Sánchez, "Crafting a Delta Chinese Community: Education and Acculturation in Twentieth-Century Southern Baptist Mission Schools," *History of Education Quarterly* 43, 1 (Spring, 2003): 77-80.

to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1927, Chief Justice and former president William Howard Taft re-affirmed the court's decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* to legalize racial segregation in public facilities and to ignore the economic discrimination of many non-whites who could not afford private education for their children: "If the plaintiff desires, she may attend the colored public schools of her district, or, if she does not desire, she may go to a private school."[3]

By the time Congress passed the National Origins Act of 1924, schools were at the forefront of efforts to acculturate the nation's youth while organizing society and national belonging in terms of race and foreignness. Curricula and policy together nurtured a social structure that drew currency from the science of race, corporate capitalism, and an American culture imbued with visions of imperial expansion. The *Lum* decision revealed the interconnectedness of schooling, national identity, and U.S. empire. That mainly whites had access to sufficient public educational opportunities meant that the historical narrative of progress and the calls to patriotism did not apply to non-whites. Instead, non-white citizens and aliens served economic functions as subordinate laborers in a rapidly expanding transnational U.S. capitalist economy dependent on industrialization, corporatization, consumerism, and new imperial markets.[4] Martha Lum was born in the United States and was thus a U.S. citizen. But as members of "colored" races, Lum and other non-whites were not identified as Americans. Her Chinese heritage

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[3] *Gong Lum v. Rice*, 275 U.S. 78 (1927), http://supreme.justia.com/us/275/78/case.html.
[4] Lake and Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Color Line*, 330.

meant that under the dominant social structures of white America, she remained a "foreigner within." As public school administrations worked tirelessly to Americanize European immigrants of both apparent and questionable whiteness, curricula and policy naturalized the exclusion and subservience of racial outsiders.

The *Lum* decision coupled with restrictive immigration legislation also highlighted the ways in which schooling shaped and was shaped by racial science in the 1920s. Columbia University sociologist David Snedden's *Sociology for Teachers* (1924) stressed the imperative for racial purity and progress following the massive influx of foreigners during the first two decades of the twentieth century. In his monograph, Snedden grappled with many of the same questions as the Mississippi Supreme Court: What are appropriate roles for non-whites like Lum in a nation that imagines itself as white? How can the nation reconcile its claims to liberty and self-government with both a sizable non-white population of citizens and an affinity for the expansion of capitalism through military action? Snedden's anxieties about immigration and empire further implicated education in the reciprocal projects of nation-building and empire-building.

Snedden articulated a need for fastidious attention to the maintenance of biological purity and concerted efforts to teach children about proper social relationships. Snedden also expressed anxious concern over the prospect of extending the responsibilities of self-government to non-whites throughout the world: "Can the tropical peoples overcome their present handicaps and join the march of civilization? Or can white workers colonize and develop the rich food-

producing resources of the Congo and Amazon? Can children be so reared in the tropics as to possess in adult years the moral and physical fibers required in citizens of a complex social order?" Snedden's unresolved questions about the fixity of inheritance and geographic determinism reinforced the racial science prevalent in the eugenics movement and in Chinese exclusion laws even as it left open the possibilities for self-government and civilization afforded by schools. "It is doubtful whether a genuine republic has ever flourished among tropical peoples," conjectured Snedden, but with the right guidance from whites, self-rule might become a learned trait among non-whites.[5]

Mississippi's decision to exclude Martha Lum and other Asian students from white public schools juxtaposed with eugenic science and immigration restriction also revealed the janus-faced nature of nationhood and empire in the United States. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Western imperialism underwent dramatic changes in organization. The old European empires grounded in political domination, territorial possession, and colonial subjectivity gave way to the language of citizenship and sovereignty and to the emergence of international migration laws. Imperialists and anti-imperialists alike adopted the nation-state as the preferred organizational tool in an emerging global social order. In the United States and in the British dominions (taken together, the wider Anglo world), the nation-state conferred territorial sovereignty and self-government to homogeneous

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[5] David Snedden, *Sociology for Teachers* (New York: The Century Co., 1924), 175; Nancy Ordover, *American Eugenics: Race, Queer Anatomy, and the Science of Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

communities that held the common values of egalitarianism and democracy. But white nationalism also co-opted the rhetoric of "civilization" in order to reserve open migration and self-government for people of certain races. This discourse often masked the omnipresence of race and attempted to diminish its centrality by painting race as a local problem or peculiarity. The U.S. South was an obvious target for claims of localized racial agitation. While Mississippi's decision to reserve the privileges of republic citizenship for whites was quite apparent, the United States often appealed to protection of wages, workers, and standards of living when barring the Chinese, other non-whites, or persons of dubious whiteness and radical politics from immigrating or gaining acceptance in the national community of citizens.[6]

The counterpart of exclusion and racial nationalism in the 1920s was the extension of a new kind of imperial order by the United States. While William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt certainly aspired to some form of "Old World" colonialism in Latin America and the Pacific at the turn of the twentieth century, World War I and the Paris Peace Conference ushered in dramatic transformations in the U.S. imperial order. Woodrow Wilson, his successors in the White House, and U.S. corporate elites sought geographic stability (not territorial possession) as a means of advancing a "new diplomacy" of liberal corporate capitalist expansion backed by a strong U.S. military presence and economic assistance. This new kind of imperial order and U.S. hegemony certainly had precedent in the extraterritoriality

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[6] On U.S. "informal" empire as an extension of British "formal" imperialism, see Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 17-18.

treaties that the U.S. and Great Britain, among others, successfully forced on other seemingly sovereign nations such as China and Japan. But in the aftermath of World War I, territorial settlements became, in the words of Neil Smith, "vehicles for, rather than the destination of, that peace" that Wilson coveted for the expansion of liberal democratic capitalism. Wilsonian internationalism departed from the new imperialism of the late nineteenth century by promoting cooperation, peace, and national sovereignty, even as it pressed for economic dominance and the regulation of the movement of individuals across national boundaries. Geography remained paramount even as globalization via liberal capitalism sometimes undermined its centrality to international discourse. As the U.S. sought to open new markets and expand existing ones, it pushed for tighter restriction on the movement of peoples across its own borders.[7]

Martha Lum's denial of equal public schooling in Mississippi was intertwined with the growing international discourse on expanding global borders. While the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 remains the chosen beginning point for this study, its augmentation and persistence beyond 1924 as well as restrictions against Chinese migration to other white settler nations around the Pacific suggest that empire continued to complement racial nationalism, even as internationalism began to undermine it. But internationalism cut both ways. Transnational actors including Mohandas Gandhi and W.E.B. Du Bois challenged the exclusion of white men's countries while their leaders used the same language of internationalism to define

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[7] Smith, *American Empire,* 13-14, 140-3; McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, 150-7.

and protect borders. Martha Lum's case revealed the continuity of the relationship between race and national belonging even at a time when the internationalist discourse of globalization seemed to dominate geopolitics in the decades after World War I.

Lum's historical moment was also contingent on the experiences of the first Chinese settlers in California in 1848. The confrontations between Anglo and Asian settlers on the West Coast helped create the conditions of Lum's exclusion in the 1920s U.S. South alongside Jim Crow. Mississippi's extension of the Jim Crow social order to include U.S. citizens of Asian descent like Martha Lum demonstrated the ways in which immigrants were often maligned as uncivilized cultural outsiders (alongside African-Americans and Native Americans) at the same time the United States espoused a rhetoric of democracy, free trade, and freedom of movement abroad. Gong Lum's contestation of his daughter's exclusion from schools represented a narrative that, in the words of Adam McKeown, "[reinforced] the very principles upon which the United States makes it claim to both universality and exceptional power." In this context, schools served both as mechanisms of an American exceptionalism latent with contradictions of race and imperial ambition and as institutions where reverence for universal freedom and democracy advanced individual claims to these ideals.[8]

As was true at the turn of the twentieth century, schools are charged with the job of creating citizens who will hold faith in the secular religion of American

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[8] McKeown, *Melancholy Order*, 290.

democracy and who will contribute in various ways to the maintenance of the American "way of life." These lessons include, but are not limited to, the support of American military presence abroad in the name of international peace and stability, the growth and success of both corporate and entrepreneurial capitalism, and a historical consciousness that is fundamentally exceptionalist its articulation. Today, the racial nationalism of 1882 and 1924 underscores immigration "reform" and "English only" (no one seriously entertains building a fence along the Canadian border). Likewise, U.S. global economic interests and military occupation in the Middle East parallel early twentieth-century nation-building projects in the Pacific and Latin America. In light of these parallels, it is worth remembering that schools remain integral to the production, maintenance, and conditioning of social norms, national identity, and global relationships.

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