

"One Hundred Per Cent American":
Nationalism, Masculinity and American Legion Junior Baseball in the 1920s

by

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ABSTRACT
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“One Hundred Per Cent American’: Nationalism, Masculinity and American Legion Baseball in the 1920s,” provides a sociohistorical analysis of baseball and social attitudes and ideologies of the pre- and post-World War I period, specifically focusing on the joining of nationalism and masculinity through the playing of sport. My work explores amateur baseball in the context of the post-World War I period (1920-1930), focusing on the American Legion’s baseball program started during that same era. By incorporating the theorization of “hegemonic masculinity,” first popularized by sociologist R.W. Connell and a major theme in the sociology of sport, I argue that amateur baseball constituted a distinct form of nationalist American masculinity that figured prominently in both the status of the sport and the understanding of gender within post-war American culture. By focusing on the instruction of these amateur players, I demonstrate how nationalism and masculinity converged through the kinesthetic “play”ing of baseball by young American males.

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Introduction

“To enter upon a deliberate argument to prove that Base Ball is our National Game; that it has all the attributes of American origin, American character and unbounded public favor in America, seems a work of supererogation. It is to undertake the elucidation of a patent fact; the sober demonstration of an axiom; it is like a solemn declaration that two plus two equal four.”¹

- A. G. Spalding, 1911

The equation of baseball and America as supported by Spalding is often unquestioned by those that play, coach and watch the sport – the relationship between the United States and its “National Pastime” is thus perceived as natural and normal. My experience does not discount this perception; in my mind, Spalding’s statement triggers a particular image: a young American boy, not even three years old, stands in front of a television set. Though his eyes are focused on the screen, his body is turned, and in his hands is a rolled-up piece of laminate held by a rubber band. He is imitating the batter on the screen, using his makeshift bat to “swing” at the pitches being thrown by the pitcher in the televised game.

The knowledge being displayed by this boy is at least in part a result of the work of Spalding and other baseball historians. The establishing of “Base Ball” as a purely American game was in fact Spalding’s goal, and he is often cited as the leading perpetuator of the Abner Doubleday myth (the idea that Doubleday created baseball). Despite Spalding’s eloquent arguments otherwise, many scholars have argued that baseball was a hybrid of several older sports, and any claim to Doubleday as the “inventor” of the game is false. In 1907 Spalding was engaged in debate about the origins of the game with other writers, and he aided the publicly recognized Mills Commission in its assigned mission of finding the true beginnings of the sport. When the commission

¹ A.G. Spalding, *America’s National Game: Historic Facts Concerning the Beginning Evolution, Development and Popularity of Base Ball* (New York: American Sports Publishing Company, 1911), 3-4.

was able to weakly link the “first organized game,” in New York City in 1845, with an old baseball found outside Cooperstown, New York – the city in which Doubleday lived – it was enough evidence for Spalding, who promptly published *America’s National Game* in 1911.²

While numerous other baseball scholars have shed light on the Doubleday myth, there is a need to examine specific sociocultural and historical contexts in order to better identify how being “American” is tied to the sport of baseball. One such context readily available for examination is the state of amateur baseball in the 1920s. Professional baseball saw a surge in popularity during this time period, as the ‘20s and ‘30s have been called the “Golden Age of Sport,” and other writers have already produced research with a primary focus on how American nationalism, masculinity and the professional game can be linked.³ However, these works often describe the connection between the sport and nationalism *or* the sport and masculinity, there is no statement about how these concepts converge in the playing of baseball. Further, the focus on the professional leagues and those who played in them leaves out a great deal of the reality of baseball in the era – namely, the thousands of amateur players participating in both sanctioned and non-sanctioned competition. Below, I provide a theoretical framework for understanding the convergence of sport, nationalism, and masculinity, including a background of how these concepts have previously been connected.

² G. Edward White, *Creating the National Pastime: Baseball Transforms Itself, 1903-1953*. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 124. Spalding’s project to historically validate baseball as invented by an American is documented in other baseball histories; that this aspect of the “National Pastime” is not often part of the game’s past further evidences the success that this project had.

³ See Richard C. Crepeau, *Baseball: America's Diamond Mind 1919-1941* (Orlando: University Presses of Florida, 1980).; Steven A. Reiss, *Touching Base: Professional Baseball and American Culture in the Progressive Era* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999).

Sporting Nationalism

Sport is not necessarily always political in an explicit sense, but it does often serve as a cultural site for possible political meanings, ideas and representations. An example of sport as explicitly political would be the 1938 boxing match between American Joe Louis and German Max Schmeling. When the two fighters had met two years earlier, there was little pre-fight hype, at least in regards to international political implications. Yet when Schmeling knocked out the previously undefeated Louis in this first fight, the German returned to his country hailed as a hero by Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels. Thus the second fight in 1938 was perceived as a battle between not only two athletes, but between American democratic values and German Nazism. The political aspect of the fight was central to understanding the event; sport historian David Margolick argues that “No single sporting event...had ever borne such worldwide weight. The fight implicated both the future of race relations and the prestige of two powerful nations. Each fighter was bearing on his shoulders more than any athlete ever had.”⁴ While the Louis-Schmeling fight evidences a direct connection between sport and politics, often this link is more subtle and less easily recognized. The political content involved in sport becomes more recognizable when taking into account the “major polarities” which are seen in both sport and the political: “amateurism versus professionalism, individualism versus collectivism, male supremacy versus feminism,” etc.⁵ The nature of these polarities results in a connection to themes, debates, discussions and struggles that may be present and active in the society beyond the boundaries of the

⁴ David Margolick, *Beyond Glory: Joe Louis Vs. Max Schmeling and a World on the Brink* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 2005), 6.

⁵ John M. Hoberman, *Sport and Political Ideology* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984), 20.

playing field. In particular, the tying together of ideology, politics and sport has been apparent when these themes are fixed to a nation-state community, a concept known as *nationalism*. When writing a history of this idea, critical historian Eric Hobsbawm makes a distinction between nationalism as it existed pre-1918 and nationalism post-1918. In his view, the events of the First World War changed not only the geographic, economic and social realities of many of the countries involved; it also changed the way many people thought of, and identified with, the nation they resided in. Whereas before the mass conflict, the idea of self-identity tied to the nation-state of residence had gained cultural and social traction, it was the process and events of World War I that proved to give the concept social confidence and momentum. Hobsbawm cites the mass media as one factor in this shift, as “by these means popular ideologies could be both standardized, homogenized and transformed, as well as, obviously, exploited for the purposes of deliberate propaganda.” Yet while the implications of mass media can not be ignored, this thesis is more concerned with his assessment of a second factor: “The gap between private and public worlds was also bridged by *sport*” (original emphasis):

Between the wars sport as a mass spectacle was transformed into the unending succession of gladiatorial contests between persons and teams symbolizing state-nations, which today is part of global life...international sport became, as George Orwell soon recognized, an expression of national struggle, and sportsmen representing their nation or state, primary expressions of their imagined communities. What has made sport so uniquely effective a medium for inculcating feelings, at all events for males, is the ease with which even the least political or public individuals can identify with the nation as symbolized by young persons excelling at what practically every man wants, or at one time in life has wanted, to be good at. The individual, even the one who only cheers, becomes a symbol of his nation himself.⁶

⁶ Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 143.

Nationalism is defined here as a sense of identity to a community that may be a nation, an ethnicity, a region, or other community. More importantly, any particular nationalism is distinctly dependent on historical and social context, meaning there are specific nationalisms, and each may or may not be similar to another. Each of these nationalisms is multi-faceted, and though nationalisms depend on context, the context does not depend on a specific nationalism – one might feel allegiance to both his/her ethnic group, or region, or nation-state, simultaneously. Each nationalism, then, is connected to identity, and how we identify both our selves and others. But what makes sport a possible site for this connection? For Mike Cronin and David Mayall, “Sport is a vehicle, in many different ways, for both the construction of individual, group and national identities.”⁷ Sports may be where we learn to become good citizens or subversives, men and women that fit into gender roles or those that do not, leaders or followers, or all of the above. Nationalism is thus embedded within particular sports across many different cultures and in many different forms, serving as a source of identity and interaction for those involved as both participants and spectators. The forms of these sporting nationalisms can vary:

[A] particular sport may have a specific resonance for a particular nation (for example, baseball for Americans), may encapsulate the spirit of a specific culture (for example, sumo wrestling for the Japanese) or may, through the style which an international game is played exhibit national characteristics which are real or imagined (for example, the natural flair of Brazilian soccer players).⁸

⁷ Mike Cronin and David Mayall, "Sport and Ethnicity: Some Introductory Remarks," in *Sporting Nationalisms: Identity, Ethnicity, Immigration and Assimilation*, ed. Mike Cronin and David Mayall (London: Frank Cass, 1998), 2.

⁸ Mike Cronin, "When the World Soccer Cup Is Played on Roller Skates: The Attempt to Make Gaelic Games International: The Meath-Australia Matches of 1967-68.," in *Sporting Nationalisms: Identity, Ethnicity, Immigration and Assimilation*, ed. Mike Cronin and David Mayall (London: Frank Cass, 1998), 171.

Yet the crucial point in each of these forms is that sport becomes a “benign” symbol of the nation, which “can only support the construction of a nation which has been imagined.”⁹ This concept of an interweaving between a particular sport and a contextual nationalism has been termed a *sporting nationalism*.

As a benign symbol, a particular sport is involved both indirectly and directly with the relations of power contained within nationalism. This includes, but is not limited to, the social marking of who is or is not a member of the community, as well as marking where members may rank in the community’s hierarchical system. Sports “cannot be comprehended without reference to relations of power: who attempts to control how a sport is to be organized and played, and by whom; how it is to be represented; how it is to be interpreted.”¹⁰ Thus to analyze sport without acknowledging, and even focusing, on these relations of power is to avoid an opportunity for social and cultural understanding. However, a particular sporting nationalism is not a rigid and static structure. Sport “does not ‘reveal’ underlying social values, it is a major mode of their expression...[sport] is an integral part of society,” not an entity apart from it.¹¹ The balance between emphasizing a focus on the relations of power and stressing the fluidity and complexity of these relations must be recognized as the first methodological hurdle encountered.

In one sense, it is undeniable that sport can be a primary arena of nationalist display, and can serve explicitly as a political and cultural tool. In the ethnic violence between Serbians and Croats during the 1990s, the Serbian leaders recognized the level of organization and communication of soccer fans involved with the Red Star

⁹ Cronin, "Sport and Ethnicity: Some Introductory Remarks," 4.

¹⁰ Jeremy MacClancy, "Sport, Identity and Ethnicity," in *Sport, Identity and Ethnicity*, ed. Jeremy MacClancy (Oxford, UK: Berg, 1996), 5.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

Belgrade professional team, and subsequently turned to these groups as paramilitary factions when the regular army lacked support for the nationalist cause.¹² The leader of the Italian center-right wing party Forza Italia and twice prime minister of Italy, Silvio Berlusconi, is also the chairman of A.C. Milan, one of the most popular and wealthy soccer clubs in the world. In these cases the links between sport and politics, sometimes in the form of nationalism, are readily identifiable. Thus examining the relations of power in such case studies is easily justified - lives are being changed and lost, political power is shifting. To study a sporting nationalism that does not exhibit such plain relationships between the playing grounds and the larger social contexts is a more difficult challenge. As other scholars have noted, seldom is the linkage of sport and national identity straightforward, and this means that we must address the need for a theoretical model that accounts for the nuances, both explicit and implicit, of any given sporting nationalism.

Sport and Masculinity

Boys who are good at sports have happily profited from this fact (Oriad, 1984) and often come to think of it as natural. Meanwhile, other boys – small or awkward boys, scholarly or artistic boys, boys who get turned off from sports (or who never develop any interest in sports) – have to come to their own terms with sport and find other ways to stake their claims to masculinity.¹³

While sports as an object of scholarly study is not a new idea, the recognition of the presence of gender and gender identity within sport is a more recent development. For many years, “sport” was considered masculine by default, and any threading between the two was seen as a given - this connection is readily apparent in Hobsbawm’s argument about nationalism and its particular appeal to “males.” More current studies seek to know

¹² Franklin Foer, *How Soccer Explains the World: An Unlikely Theory of Globalization* (New York: Harper, 2004), 21.

¹³ David Whitson, "Sport in the Social Construction of Masculinity," in *Sport, Men, and the Gender Order*, ed. Michael A. and Donald F. Sabo Messner (Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics Books, 1990), 19.

how masculinity is constructed in society, how manliness has achieved and maintained a privileged position in Western societies, and how important a role sport has played in these processes. The theorizing of masculinity in contemporary sport studies has made problematic any simple and reductive notions of masculinity, and revealed ruptures, continuities and discontinuities in gender roles and gender identities. A basic assumption in these arguments is the need to acknowledge a multiplicity of masculinities in a given context, rather than a single masculinity, because different cultures and historical periods construct gender differently. R.W. Connell has suggested that while masculinity often refers to the male body, it is not determined by biology, meaning it is just as appropriate to speak of masculinity in relationship to women and the female body. Further, the male body is not the source of masculinity: “Men’s bodies do not determine the patterns of masculinity...Men’s bodies are addressed, defined and disciplined, and given outlets and pleasures, by the gender order of society.”¹⁴

Instead, masculinities, when understood as a configuration of gender practices, are necessarily a social construction. Following Connell, I argue that this construction takes place in social interaction. “Masculinities are neither programmed in our genes, nor fixed by social structure, prior to social interaction. They come into existence as people act. They are actively produced, using the resources and strategies available in a given social setting.”¹⁵ This means that any masculine ideal present in a given social context – the “manliest man” – is distinct to that context, and is the construction of the social interaction of both actors and cultural resources. Masculinity might be evident in an

¹⁴ R.W. Connell, "Debates About Men, New Research on Masculinities," in *Gender and Sport: A Reader*, ed. Sheila and Anne Flintoff Scraton (London: Routledge, 2002), 163. Connell is often recognized as a primary scholar of sport and masculinity – this thesis attempts to build on these concepts and arguments.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 164.

individual's actions, if these actions are defined socially and culturally as masculine, but these individual actions are only one part of a larger collective definition of masculinity that is sustained through institutions. Whether in the classroom, the office, or the playing field, masculinities are being constructed, defined, and transgressed.

However, even when such constructions are being developed, it is important to note that masculinities are constantly changing and adapting according to the culture and institutions in which they are embedded. Research on masculinities often reveals “contradictory desires and conduct,” because no masculinity is a fixed, homogeneous and simple state of being. This means that within any given institution, “there will be different ways of enacting manhood, different ways of learning to be a man, different conceptions of the self and different ways of using a male body.”¹⁶ Masculinities are rarely stable; instead, “masculinity and men's bodies (symbolically conceived as unitary) are contested sites, fraught with contradictions.”¹⁷ Two points of this contestation should be emphasized: the competition between differing masculinities within the context of sport, and the role of inclusion and exclusion as one means of defining and transgressing masculinity. The idea that differing masculinities are in competition assumes that sport has traditionally been constructed as masculine: “Although men have created a sporting culture that sharply distinguishes between masculine and feminine, they also express different and frequently competing masculinities through sports.”¹⁸ This means that while participation in sport always-already serves as a marker of masculinity – the boys (and

¹⁶ Ibid., 162.

¹⁷ Toby Miller, *Sportsex* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001), 49.

¹⁸ Bruce Kidd, "The Men's Cultural Centre: Sports and the Dynamic of Women's Oppression/Men's Repression," in *Sport, Men, and the Gender Order*, ed. Michael A. and Donald F. Sabo Messner (Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics Books, 1990), 37.

girls) involved in sport have staked their masculine claim – there are also different and possibly competing masculinities present in the sporting context.

The process of inclusion and exclusion has been invoked by other authors in describing how masculinity is defined and constructed within sport. In short, this idea suggests that sport serves as an arena for representing masculinity, and that a system of inclusion and exclusion regulates who is capable of representation, thereby attempting to maintain the boundaries of the masculinity itself. While the inclusion/exclusion methods relate to issues of race and ethnicity, it is also applied to differences in gender: “A proving ground for masculinity can only be preserved as such by the exclusion of women from the activity.”¹⁹ Eduardo P. Archetti, in his study of Argentinean forms of masculinity in the separate contexts of football (soccer), polo, and tango, addresses this issue directly in regards to sport. Discussing the place of masculinity in Argentine soccer, he suggests that the “style” of play exhibited by some Argentine players (the “Criollo” style) is at once a marker of both masculinity and nationalism – because only Argentine players can play in this fashion – and a “mechanism for exclusion and inclusion,” whereby women and others are deemed not capable of achieving the style and thus not capable of being masculine, at least in the context of sport.²⁰

The relations of power within sport have often resulted in a particular form of masculinity assuming the dominant role in the competition between masculinities; this form has been termed *hegemonic masculinity*. Sociologists of sport refer to this concept “as a state or condition of ideology, [which] helps frame understandings of how particular ways of performing maleness seem natural and normal, yet at the same time act to sustain

¹⁹ Whitson, "Sport in the Social Construction of Masculinity," 24.

²⁰ Eduardo P. Archetti, *Masculinities: Football, Polo and the Tango in Argentina* (New York: Oxford, 1999), 70.

problematic relations of dominance within an assumed structure or *order* of gender.”²¹ Connell describes hegemonic masculinity as the “most honoured or desired in a particular context.” As such, this form of masculinity serves as “the configuration of gender practices which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women.”²² While the dominant status of hegemonic masculinity serves as evidence of the competition between masculinities referred to above, the reification of gender roles implicit in this form also provides further support for the necessity and utilization of inclusion and exclusion. By upholding one form of masculinity as dominant, and regulating who is available to attempt and represent this masculinity, a masculine ideal is constructed and simplified – even while the gender roles and identities surrounding it are in a constant state of flux.

In the chapters that follow, I aim to demonstrate the interconnectivity of postwar American nationalism and masculinity, focusing on amateur baseball and the organizations and players involved. The first chapter, “One Hundred Per Cent American – The American Legion and Youth Baseball,” is a sociohistorical analysis of sport in relation to youth programs and the American military in the pre- and postwar era. In particular, this analysis focuses on the cultural and social ideas that informed youth sport programs, including American Legion Junior Baseball. As the postwar association of American veterans, the Legion provides a context that directly connects the relationship

²¹ Richard & Pirkko Markula Pringle, "No Pain Is Sane after All: A Foucauldian Analysis of Masculinities and Men's Experiences in Rugby," *Sociology of Sport Journal* 22 (2005): 473.

²² R.W. Connell, *Masculinities* (St. Leonards, Australia: Allen and Unwin, 1995).; Connell, "Debates About Men, New Research on Masculinities."

between military sport and youth sport programs. Moreover, this analysis evidences the constructed linkage between baseball, masculinity and American nationalism.

The second chapter, “Are Ballplayers Born or Made? - Sport and Discipline,” will interrogate cultural texts that contain the knowledge and methods of instruction of 1920s baseball, in the form of baseball training and coaching guides from that era. Incorporating Foucault’s theorization of discipline and power, these guides will be critically examined to recognize a disciplinary structure to sport, or a *discipline* of baseball. As such, the sport in this context is characterized by the involvement of a process of subjection, whereby subjective identities are created. Further, this thesis seeks to analyze not only the linguistic discourse of knowledge surrounding the sport as discipline, but to identify a *kinesthetic discourse* of baseball as discipline. In this mode, the kinesthetic actions that comprise the sport can be analyzed, allowing for connections between baseball, masculinity and nationalism that are otherwise not readily available. Thus I argue that the kinesthetic playing of the sport, when developed alongside a discourse of a specific American masculinity, served to create a subjective identity for the individuals active in the discipline: namely, the identity of the “ballplayer.” My analysis supports the assertion that this identity, when understood as inextricable from the discourse of masculinity and American nationalism involved in its creation, is necessarily gendered and political - the implications of this identity are then explored. By incorporating the theorization of “hegemonic masculinity,” first popularized by sociologist R.W. Connell and subsequently a major theme in the sociology of sport, I argue that amateur baseball constituted a distinct form of nationalist masculinity that figured prominently in both the status of the sport and the status of gender roles within post-war American culture.

The afterword, “Discipline, Resistance, and Margaret Gisolo” serves to complicate any understanding of the power within a discipline as reductive and rigid. My objective is to draw attention to both the regulatory aspect of discipline, in that sport produces docile bodies and subjective identities, as well as the potential for resistance and struggle within the discipline. This thesis seeks to recognize the unique context of sport in terms of “play,” in that individuals engaged in sporting activity are not completely synonymous with individuals engaged by other disciplinary structures – the voluntary nature of sport means that sport as discipline allows for possible points of resistance. This refers not only to kinesthetic resistance, in terms of transgressing the kinesthetic disciplinary practices and performing bodily actions outside of them, but also to struggle in regards to the process of subjection at work in discipline. As an example, I refer to Margaret Gisolo, the first and only female player in Legion Junior Baseball history. By drawing attention to Gisolo’s participation, I analyze the potential for resistance within sport as discipline, while emphasizing the implications of power. This thesis thus seeks to gain further understanding of the relationship between baseball, boys and a distinctly American masculinity in the historical and social context of the pre- and postwar period.



Chapter I

“One Hundred Per Cent American – The American Legion and Youth Baseball”

Sport and the Crisis of Masculinity

According to scholars of sport and gender, the changing economic and social orders of the late 19th century that accompanied the Industrial Revolution and the rise of the urban setting resulted in a “crisis of masculinity” for American men. Michael Kimmel asserts that this was not a “generic crisis, experienced by all men in similar way.” Instead, it was a crisis of middle-class white masculinity, the “dominant paradigm of masculinity” in this social context. The responses to this crisis varied greatly, but a common theme emerged in the new attraction of many Americans towards physical health and exercise. In this view, “sports were cast as a central element in the fight against feminization; sports made boys into men.” Health reformers emphasized the dual role of sports as both a physical and moral educational tool.²³ Reformers, both secular and religious, recognized the potential of sport as a medium that could encourage principles of self-character, fitness, and morality. Such reformers were drawing from an ideology that dated back to “sporting traditions of ancient Greece, where fitness and education went hand-in-hand,” and the nature of sport as socially positive can also be traced back to the Puritan ideals of all activities being “moral, revitalizing recreations,” but for those addressing the crisis of masculinity this idea was put into action.²⁴

Further, as baseball historian Harold Seymour writes, adult involvement in children’s activities was supported through a growing social movement that instilled “an

²³ Michael S. Kimmel, "Baseball and the Reconstitution of American Masculinity, 1880-1920," in *Sport, Men, and the Gender Order*, ed. Michael A. Messner and Donald F. Sabo (Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics Books, 1990), 59-61.

²⁴ Steven A. Reiss, *Sport in Industrial America, 1850-1920*, ed. John Hope and A.S. Eisenstadt Franklin, The American History Series (Wheeling, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, 1995), 14-17.

evolution of the concept of play from a time waster to a useful activity through which youngsters learned and developed.” This utilization of “play” attributed to sport, and baseball in particular, “more beneficial qualities than seem possible,” including “good health and morals, deterred juvenile delinquency, [and] Americanized children of immigrants.” Baseball was a means of teaching “loyalty, cooperation, obedience, discipline, self-sacrifice, teamwork, fair play, sportsmanship, recognition of authority, and acceptance of defeat” – baseball was a “panacea” for nearly any social issue.²⁵

Included (and often inherent) within this view of sport as a potentially positive social force was a promotion of masculinity, often explicitly stated by the reformers. An early example of this intertwining of sport and masculinity was the founding of Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) in London in 1844. Historian Steven Reiss explains that as the Association crossed the Atlantic in 1851, it was rooted in the philosophy of Muscular Christianity, which “focused on harmonizing mental, physical, and spiritual dimensions...it advocated clean sport and exercise to develop moral, devout, and physically fit men.” In effect, the goal in establishing a YMCA center in a given neighborhood was to “maintain such “manly” physical characteristics as ruggedness, robustness, strength, and vigor” and avoid becoming a “foolish fop.” The YMCA movement grew quickly – by 1892, the Association operated 348 gyms, 144 full-time education leaders, and approximately 250,000 members.²⁶ Further, baseball was a featured sport in both the YMCA program and the ideas of sporting masculinity being articulated. Theodore Roosevelt included baseball in his list of “the true sports for a

²⁵ Harold Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game* (New York: Oxford Press, 1990), 120-21.

²⁶ Reiss, *Sport in Industrial America, 1850-1920*, 19.

manly race,” and Spalding cited the fact that baseball caused an “improvement in man breeding.”²⁷

In 1899 a YMCA instructor, Dr. Luther Gulick, proposed a new theory of play, based on the previous connections made between masculinity, morality, and fitness. Gulick’s theory supported an “evolution” of sport – younger children enjoyed activities such as tag and footraces, evolved from the hunting instinct, while older children and teenagers enjoyed team sports, which combined the hunting instinct with cooperation. Employing this theory, Gulick (who also helped found the Boy Scouts) supported the idea that “adult-supervised team sports would provide a substitute and, by appealing to the cooperation instinct, would teach teamwork, obedience, and self-control.”²⁸

In particular, Gulick was concerned with the reality of America’s urban spaces, often cited by social critics as the places in most need of social reform. In particular, urban spaces were dealing with “overpopulation, urban development, and municipal codes that regulated streets, roads, and docks [that] made it harder to find a place to play ball, ride horses, or swim.” This loss of public recreation space was compounded by the increasing distance of the “pristine countryside,” meaning that games easily accommodated in rural settings were not as easily adapted to the city.²⁹ Further, the urban environment was often portrayed as containing endless temptations that could lead to moral degradation – Gulick addressed “a few of the present city recreations which exhibit unwholesome aspects” in 1909: “moving-picture shows...dance halls...saloons and other resorts in our large cities which, under the guise of affording amusement, are also

²⁷ Kimmel, "Baseball and the Reconstitution of American Masculinity, 1880-1920," 59-61.

²⁸ Reiss, *Sport in Industrial America, 1850-1920*, 139.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

inflicting evil upon our young people.”³⁰ For Gulick and those that shared his view, cities were perceived as “cesspools of depravity where unsupervised young farmers had gone for work and excitement,” and this was the primary target for social programs such as the YMCA movement.³¹

Yet the notion of sport as a reformist tool was not limited to private endeavors such as YMCA – in 1903, Gulick moved from the Association to director of physical training for the New York Board of Education, and began installing his theories of play. In organizing the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL), a private corporation that received no public funding, Gulick created the foundation of a comprehensive sports program aimed at urban children. This program offered interscholastic sports for students in New York’s 630 public schools, and participants were encouraged to achieve both individually and as a team.³²

The formation of the PSAL was one accomplishment in Gulick’s continual concern for American youth, but he continued to address the issue – he stated just six years later that “city parents cannot provide in their homes places where children play. We are unable to give our young people the wholesome social life which the full, rounded development of their natures requires.” In response to this indefinite crisis, Gulick supported “formulating a comprehensive plan...Not only must municipalities and philanthropic associations coordinate their efforts in some harmonious, comprehensive scheme, but the whole plan must be administered by experts with definite goals in view.

³⁰ Luther H. Gulick, "Popular Recreation and Public Morality," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 34, no. 1 - Race Improvement in the United States (1909): 36.

³¹ Reiss, *Sport in Industrial America, 1850-1920*, 17.

³² *Ibid.*, 140.

It is not enough to give everybody the chance to play. We must also direct that play to specific as well as attractive ends.”³³

However, Gulick’s interpretation of giving “everybody” the chance was definitively limited in terms of gender. In fact, according to Reiss, his biological theory of play “justified single-sex play. Boys and girls were believed to prefer to play activities based on sex-specific instincts acquired during evolution.”³⁴ Therefore, because females had not (according to Gulick) acquired the same instincts, there was no way that the same athletic activities that appealed to men would appeal to them. In fact, Gulick believed girls should avoid “strenuous competitive sports,” and should instead be directed to “amusements such as folk dancing, cooking and singing around the campfire, that would help prepare them for domesticity.” This division between activities deemed appropriate for males and those appropriate for females is further evident in the creation of the PSAL’s sister-project, the Public Schools Athletic League Girls’ Branch, created in 1905. The Girls’ Branch Director, Elizabeth Burchenal, concurred with Gulick’s theory – meaning for girls, “competition in athletics was restricted to interclass contests, and games were modified to prevent rough, unlady-like play.” Programs modeled after the PSAL and YMCA, and based on principles similar to Gulick’s, continued to gain popularity. By 1917, 504 American cities sponsored recreation programs.³⁵

The participation of American female youth in these programs was marked by the implications of Gulick’s theory – that is, girls and the sports deemed appropriate for them were deliberately separated from boys and the sports boys were to play. While some sports may be open to both males and females (tennis is one example), many other sports

³³ Gulick, "Popular Recreation and Public Morality," 36,41.

³⁴ Reiss, *Sport in Industrial America, 1850-1920*, 139.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 139-41.

were defined as either for men and boys *or* for women and girls, with cross-participation not allowed and generally discouraged. While the “overall thrust of developmental thinking greatly encouraged the movement of women outdoors and into the fields of sport,” this thinking often specified which “fields of sport” were in fact open to women.³⁶ In this mode, interested parties - including physical culturists, educators, and social commentators – sought to scientifically study distinctly *female* behavior and physicality. The separation of men and women in sport, combined with traditional ideas about the relative status of men and women in society, “encouraged the examination of sport in relation to differences, real or imagine, between men and women.” Thus while cycling and basketball were seen as appropriate and beneficial for American women and girls, other sports that necessitated “strenuous effort and violent contact” – including baseball – were considered unsafe and unhealthy for the “weaker sex.”³⁷ Both male and female physical educators and social commentators often advocated this view of separate sport spheres for men and women, as will be further demonstrated.

My analysis of the history of youth sport in America evidences the intertwining of American nationalism, masculinity and baseball. The reformers of the late 19th and early 20th century recognized the potential of sport as a positive social force, drawing on earlier sentiments from various cultures as well as developing theories about child development. In particular, the YMCA movement and the efforts of Luther Gulick are examples of this mindset put into action. While each movement, institution and social critic varied somewhat, several major principles formed both Gulick’s theory and the ideology that would follow: it justified the creation of institutions primarily concerned with the

³⁶ Donald J. Mrozek, *Sport and American Mentality, 1880-1910* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983), 146.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 146-49.

organizing of *adult-supervised* team sports; it encouraged both the adult supervisors and youth participants to “downplay ethnocultural differences, focusing on boys’ shared experience of maturation”; and it validated single-sex play, or the concept that males and females are not suited for the same types of play.³⁸

Each of these principles had potential implications for how American sport was to be understood by those involved in any part of the experience, participants and spectators alike. The immediate focus of this thesis is the implications of gender, in that the development, discussion and active physical expression of American sport in this era was informed by and enacted through specific ideas about gender. According to historian Donald Mrozek, the context of early 20th century America meant changes in the experience of American women. “Relative to men, women remained disadvantaged and experienced discrimination. Relative to their own former state, however, many women enjoyed greater activity and a wider range in their means of self-expression and fulfillment.” That is, the increasing popularity and emphasis on sport in America enabled many women to participate in physical activity that had potentially positive health and moral consequences.³⁹ Yet while I would acknowledge that sport programs for females of all ages did provide a previously unavailable social resource for “self-expression,” it is important to understand that this expression was limited in that certain physical activities were not open to all genders. Women were not completely excluded from sport, but constraints were often placed on those who did choose to participate by the organizers of sport programs and other cultural commentators.

³⁸ Reiss, *Sport in Industrial America, 1850-1920*, 139.

³⁹ Mrozek, *Sport and American Mentality, 1880-1910*, 137-39.

Many reformers and physical culturists recognized definite potential benefits in sport for women, yet this recognition was often coupled with a specific understanding of difference between men and women in terms of physical and mental ability, as well as appropriate cultural interests and habits. In short, the activities and benefits of sport were gendered in correspondence with other “traditional” ideas that informed male and female thoughts, behaviors, etc. Women’s place in sport was thus also expressed by commentators such as Spalding, who encouraged women to participate in a limited number of sports such as “golf, tennis, basketball and cricket” in order to join the “broad national sporting community.”⁴⁰ Spalding’s outlook of women’s place in baseball was more direct:

...thousands of young women have learned it well enough to keep score, and the number of matrons who know the difference between the short-stop and the back-stop is daily increasing.

But neither our wives, our sisters, our daughters, nor our sweethearts, may play Base Ball on the field. They may play Cricket, but seldom do; they many play Lawn Tennis, and win championships; they may play Basket Ball, and achieve laurels; they may Golf, and receive trophies; but Base Ball is too strenuous for womankind, except as she may take part in grandstand, with applause for the brilliant play, with waving kerchief to the hero of the three-bagger, and, since she is ever a loyal partisan of the home team, with smiles of derision for the Umpire when he gives us the worst of it, and, for the same reason, with occasional perfectly decorous demonstrations when it becomes necessary to rattle the opposing pitcher.⁴¹

Most critical for this thesis, the above cultural analysis serves as evidence of an active “gendering” of sport in the given sociocultural and historical context. In this mode, the playing of baseball by American boys affirms exactly that – that the playing of the sport of baseball is inherently American, and inherently masculine. This relationship

⁴⁰ Ibid., 144.

⁴¹ Spalding, *America’s National Game: Historic Facts Concerning the Beginning Evolution, Development and Popularity of Base Ball*, 10-11.

would be reaffirmed further through various sources, including the association of American World War I veterans, the American Legion.

Sport and American Military

The focus on athletics in general – and baseball in particular – was also evident within the American military. Baseball historian Seymour argues that “from the time of the ancient Greeks to the present, men have perceived a relationship between sports and the military.”⁴² While the reality of sport bringing about military skill or intellect is questionable, that is not the issue here. Both historically and in the context of the American military before and during World War I, an affinity between sport and the military reified the triumvirate relationship between baseball, American nationalism and masculinity.

The playing of baseball by American soldiers and sailors extends to the Civil War, and the spread of former servicemen across the Western frontier after that conflict also aided in the game’s increasing popularity during the late 19th century. Yet military leaders of the time often viewed sport as a possible distraction, or at least did not see sport as a military “tool” to be utilized. Beginning in the 1890s, however, “military attitudes toward sport shifted from toleration as a diversion to experimentation.”⁴³ This shift, coupled with an introduction of military sport to American military academies, gave momentum to those planning sports programs in the military. By 1894, Army officer Edmund “Billy” Butts was proclaiming the benefits of sport, stating that athletics would result in “hardened veterans, upon whom the safety of the nation could depend.” Further, baseball specifically taught “prompt

⁴² Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 290.

⁴³ Steven W. Pope, "An Army of Athletes: Playing Fields, Battlefields, and the American Military Sporting Experience, 1890-1920," *The Journal of Military History* 59, no. 3 (1995): 439.

and individual action,” “subservience to the united action of the company,” and leadership. According to Butts, “an able captain of a ball team will make an abler captain in the deadlier game of war.”⁴⁴

Between 1900-1910, the military moved from a “tentative experimentation” with athletics to acceptance of the activities as “essential elements of soldier training.”⁴⁵ This move signified not only an understanding of the affinity between sport and the military, but rather a decision to make sport part of the military experience. The line between soldier (or sailor, or Marine) and athlete was encouragingly blurred through participation and competition in military sport programs. While the linking of sport and military may have roots in ancient societies, the implementation of sport in the American military was unprecedented. Military historian Steven Pope asserts that the sport programs started pre-WWI signaled “a newly invented early twentieth century tradition.” The “goals, ideology and organization” of these military programs were heavily informed by the experience of the Spanish-American War, “when a younger, reformist generation of uniformed officers assumed a moral commitment to the soldiers’ welfare and used sport initially to combat desertion, alcohol, and the lure of prostitution.” American military leaders saw athletic programs as not only a means to promote national pride and spirit, but also as a way to “repair class schisms and restore social order and patriotism to the nation.”⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 296.

⁴⁵ Pope, "An Army of Athletes: Playing Fields, Battlefields, and the American Military Sporting Experience, 1890-1920," 441.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*: 436.

To that end, military leaders sought to promote sports to all servicemen as not only a way to maintain focus and pass the time, but as a means of becoming better Americans. Such promotion was led by sport advocates such as Butts, who throughout the 1890s moved to various Army posts to establish athletic programs. These programs were met with success – by 1900, “just a decade after the after the legitimization of sport in the military academies, one-half of cadets took active part in at least one sport; and the other half were enthusiastic spectators and ‘rooters’.”⁴⁷ These programs nearly always included baseball. By 1903 a government order gave permission to request baseball equipment – balls, bats, gloves, catcher’s mask and mitt – to all U.S. naval vessels. Further evidence was the popularity of the sport at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, including the establishment of the Annapolis (Navy) – West Point (Army) baseball rivalry in 1901.⁴⁸ This application of sport to the military experience became “systematic” in 1916, as the American military dealt with a border crisis during the Mexican Revolution. With nearly 100,000 troops along the border, and limited recreational resources beyond “saloons and red-light districts,” the threat of venereal disease loomed. By 1917 Army General John J. Pershing called on a familiar institution to deal with the crisis: the YMCA, which established and managed thirty two training centers for American soldiers. Pershing’s incorporation of sport would continue as he led the American Expeditionary Force into Europe and World War I.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Ibid.: 440.

⁴⁸ Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 316.

⁴⁹ Pope, "An Army of Athletes: Playing Fields, Battlefields, and the American Military Sporting Experience, 1890-1920," 442.

Thus when America entered World War I in 1917, baseball was part of the military experience both domestically and for those stationed overseas. In fact, instructors in the New York PSAL (founded by Gulick) “contributed to the preparedness movement prior to America’s entry into World War I by teaching riflery and military drill.”⁵⁰ Military training had been emphasized in the New York school system in the 1890s, but this training had been shifted to athletic events as Gulick established the PSAL. The prospect of war reversed this shift, and military training combined with sporting events gave students the opportunity to acquire “basic military combative virtues which would usefully complement civilian virtues.”⁵¹ Further, military leaders began to recognize that the sporting aspect of the military could be seen as a positive recruiting tool to bring American boys into the armed services. In 1915, as the possibility of American involvement in the war grew, Secretary of War Lindley M. Garrison stated that since baseball was among the most popular sports “in securing good clean men for the Army,” baseball players represented what was valued in a proper American soldier.⁵²

Between 1917 and 1919, the American military elevated sport to a “central component of military life,” and millions of American soldiers participated. “Uncle Sam has created not only an army of soldiers,” one writer observed, but “an army of athletes.”⁵³ This molding of soldier/athletes was seen as largely positive, if for no other reason than the lack of a standing American military force prior to the war.

⁵⁰ Reiss, *Sport in Industrial America, 1850-1920*, 137.

⁵¹ Pope, "An Army of Athletes: Playing Fields, Battlefields, and the American Military Sporting Experience, 1890-1920," 441.

⁵² Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 317.

⁵³ Pope, "An Army of Athletes: Playing Fields, Battlefields, and the American Military Sporting Experience, 1890-1920," 435.

With a base enlistment of less than 250,000 soldiers in 1916, a draft and increase in enlistment increased the ranks to millions – but this influx of new recruits also made physical training and athletics that much more important. Accordingly, fitness and sports were a major part of the makeshift training camps constructed for the large numbers of newly enlisted soldiers.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, steps were taken to ensure that soldiers across the Atlantic also had athletics programs in place, led again by Gulick and other sports advocates. Gulick personally supervised the recruitment of new physical directors for the YMCA, and by September 1917 three hundred of these directors were operating programs for American soldiers in France.⁵⁵ Thus the physical and moral benefits attributed to sport and incorporated into youth sport programs in the U.S. were also seen as potentially valuable for the American military as well. Military leaders saw two immediate benefits of such programs – it eased feelings of homesickness by providing a familiar surrounding, and it provided a distraction to keep the men away from prostitutes and prevent venereal disease.⁵⁶

While football and basketball also proved immensely popular among troops overseas, baseball held a unique distinction: the *New York Times* reported in March 1918 that over 2 million men had joined “Uncle Sam’s League,” with games occurring throughout France. Further, all soldiers – both those on participating teams and the “rooters” of those teams – could follow service sports through *Stars and Stripes*, a weekly paper produced and distributed by the American military (Pope 448). Baseball historian Spalding had discussed baseball’s “following the flag” in

⁵⁴ Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 330.

⁵⁵ Pope, "An Army of Athletes: Playing Fields, Battlefields, and the American Military Sporting Experience, 1890-1920," 446.

⁵⁶ Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 330.

1911 to describe the game's appearance in Cuba and the Philippines, and American servicemen in Europe had once again proved this point (Spalding 371).

The connection between the American military and sport is characterized by a definition of masculinity, because “many Americans believed by 1919 that participation in war established a young man's claim to manhood.”⁵⁷ This thesis argues that this emphasis on masculinity is further reinforced by the fact that participation in war was not open to women, thus making it a source of masculinity that was only available for males. Yet even in the setting of military sport, attitudes regarding women and sport were being defined. Historian Wanda Ellen Wakefield contrasts two examples of sporting women in World War I – the swimming of the Rhine by an American woman, and the organizing of a baseball team by a group of “Y girls” working for the YMCA. While the efforts of the swimmer were applauded, the efforts of the Y girls team was “taken as comic relief” by the servicemen in attendance.⁵⁸ As the war ended, those servicemen would incorporate sport and baseball, and the attitudes toward gender and sport, into the post-war association of veterans, the American Legion.

Origins of the American Legion

The first published mention of a postwar veterans' association has been cited from *Stars and Stripes*, the American military publication that continued to be produced and distributed after the signing of the armistice ended the war. The December 20 issue of the publication, produced over a month after the armistice, cited the need for a veterans' organization. The next news of such an organization

⁵⁷ Wanda Ellen Wakefield, *Playing to Win: Sports and the American Military, 1898-1945* (Albany, New York: State University Press of New York, 1997), 43.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 44.

came in March 1919, when *Stripes* introduced an organization made up of veterans “of all parties, all creeds and all ranks, [for] the perpetuation of relationships formed while in military service.” This organization was proposed at the time as the “Liberty League.”⁵⁹ Later in March 1919, after the first steps toward organization had been taken – including appointment of Theodore Roosevelt as temporary chairman – *Stripes* announced the establishment of the American Legion, an “organization of all ex-servicemen who had served during the War either at home or abroad and had not been dishonorably discharged from military service.”⁶⁰ The first caucus of the Legion was scheduled for May 15, 1919 in St. Louis. While the founding of the Legion was often portrayed as a “spontaneous” organization of concerned veterans, historian William Pencak notes that it was in fact planned and managed by military leaders who “channeled a mood common throughout the AEF”: “They managed the rank and file in the sense any competent leadership suggests and implements policy, issues self-serving publicity, and tries to paper over internal conflicts.” Moreover, the initial aims of the Legion’s originators was widely proclaimed – “they detested ‘Reds’ and ‘slackers,’ cooperated with local, state, and national government officials, established friendly ties with the business community, and lobbied for veterans’ benefits.”⁶¹

Thus there were two main issues that led to the creation of the American Legion, beyond the fact that other American military conflicts had resulted in “veterans’ associations” - including the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), the post-Civil War veterans’ association that served as a basic model for the Legion. The first

⁵⁹ William Gellerman, *The American Legion as Educator*, vol. 743, Contributions to Education Series (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1938), 1-3.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

⁶¹ William Pencak, *For God & Country: The American Legion, 1919-1941* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1989), 52.

of these issues was veterans' affairs – the Great War had escalated the need for physical rehabilitation for many former soldiers, and the government was, initially at least, not in a position to provide these services. During demobilization from the war effort, as nearly four million people returned to the lives they had led prior to the war, the “special needs of many...went far beyond that of the inflation-besieged sixty-dollar chit they received for a new suit of clothes, which at that point was the nation's thanks.”⁶² To that end, the Legion advocated – and continues to advocate – for services that can assist returning and former American servicemen and women.

The second issue providing motivation for the Legion's founding was centered on events occurring nearly halfway around the world: specifically, the rise of Bolshevism and the Russian Revolution. George S. Wheat, writing his *Story of the American Legion* in 1919, stated that Bolshevism was a “wolf at the gates of civilized Europe.” Yet, Wheat continued, “Our men of the army, navy, and marine corps got a schooling in the practical Americanism which our military establishment naturally teaches...these men can and will stem the insidious guile of the wolf...America is safe from any real danger if she can keep everybody busy. The American Legion...program is the most important in the United States today. It means the betterment of the most stable forces in our community life, not only of today but for the next forty or fifty years.”⁶³ The threat of Bolshevism – which would be played out domestically in the Red Scare of the early 1920s – was thus seen as opposing American veterans' groups. As many veterans returned home to changing economic and social orders, the idea that America's soldiers might see Bolshevism as an

⁶² Thomas A. Rumer, *The American Legion: An Official History* (New York: M. Evans & Co., 1990), 7.

⁶³ George S. Wheat, *The Story of the American Legion: The Birth of the Legion* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1919), 180-85.

attractive political option was enough to cause military leaders to take charge of the Legion's formation. According to Pencak, America's Red Scare of the 1920s might be explained "by stressing mass hysteria, efforts to find scapegoats for postwar problems, ambitious politicians hoping to pin red tags on undesirables to further their own careers, or conservatives seeking to destroy radical and reformist groups." Yet to explain why nearly a million ex-servicemen joined the Legion, it is necessary to recognize "that a real wave of postwar unrest frightened returning veterans... The newly created Legion capitalized on the Red Scare to emerge as America's leading anti-radical organization."⁶⁴ In this mode, the potential for class conflict and the need for a distinctly "American" solution were both addressed by the founding of the Legion. William Gellerman, composing a history of the Legion in 1938, stated:

The American Legion not only promised a means to improved morale through providing an avenue of wholesome diversion for ex-service men but it also provided an organization along lines acceptable to the prevailing leadership... Ex-soldiers were restless. Bolshevism had triumphed in Russia. American leaders both at home and abroad were worried. They were afraid that ex-service men might organize along Bolshevistic lines, and exercise such power as to threaten the status quo in America. The American Legion was organized to prevent any such catastrophe. Through this organization the leadership of those who had guided the army in France was perpetuated and the energies of ex-service men were directed against the very foe to which it was feared they might capitulate. The emphasis which the American Legion has placed upon those interests which distinguish the ex-service man from the non-ex-service man has served to obscure the issues of the class conflict which were at the basis of the revolution in Russia and which it was feared might cause trouble in America.

Those responsible for the initiation of the American Legion have been satisfied with the results which the organization has accomplished. They feel that it not only met the threat of Bolshevism at the end of the World War but has been a satisfactory antidote to "radicalism" throughout the entire postwar period and promises so to be for a number of years yet to come.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Pencak, *For God & Country: The American Legion, 1919-1941*, 14.

⁶⁵ Gellerman, *The American Legion as Educator*, 20.

Thus of the many directives and objectives developed and maintained by the American Legion, a commitment to “Americanism” became primary. While this term has remained ambiguous, it was inherent in the organization of the Legion and in the programs the Legion sought to implement. So even if “the Legion’s best minds had trouble *defining* their basic assumptions, Legion boosters never lacked eloquence to *evoke* Americanism and America as subjects of mythical and historical grandeur.”⁶⁶ A major site for this evocation was in the combating of Bolshevism as the antithesis of Americanism – the Legion’s first convention pledged to “attack the red flag” wherever and whenever it existed in the United States. In the Legion’s view, freedom of speech and freedom of expression were warranted only in terms of policy, and only in the “legitimate sphere” of established American institutions. Or put more directly: “We want and need every One Hundred Per Cent American,” Commander Frederic Galbraith declared in his 1920 Armistice Day speech, “and to hell with the rest of them.”⁶⁷ In fact, the targeting of Bolshevism meant that “un-American” extended beyond Communists and other radicals, and included “socialists, pacifists, and liberals whose doctrines overlapped...who expressed sympathy with their grievances...or who went out of their way to defend freedom of speech for militant radicals.”⁶⁸

The concept of “One Hundred Per Cent American” denotes a specific form of American nationalism, which was in fact a source of pride for both the organizers and members of the Legion. According to a report to the Legion in 1923, the Legion’s Americanism consists of “nationalism and patriotism,” and “the undying devotion and

⁶⁶ Pencak, *For God & Country: The American Legion, 1919-1941*, 7.

⁶⁷ Quoted from *Ibid.*, 8.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

belief in the United States of America.”⁶⁹ Further, this “devotion” was to be expressed through not only words, but actions resulting in the dissemination of the Legion’s view and the combating of all “un-American” ideas. This was evident in the Legion’s necessity for an “Americanism Commission,” proposed at the first convention as the:

...establishment of a National Americanism Commission of the American Legion to realize in the United States the basic ideal of this legion of 100% Americanism through the planning, establishment and conduct of a continuous, constructive educational system designed to (1) Combat all anti-American tendencies, activities and propaganda; (2) Work for the education of immigrants, prospective American citizens and alien residents in the principles of Americanism; (3) Inculcate the ideals of Americanism in the citizen population, particularly the basic American principle that the interests of all the people are above those of any special interest or any so-called class or section of the people; (4) Spread throughout the people of the nation information as to the real nature and principles of American government; (5) Foster the teaching of Americanism in all schools.”⁷⁰

While it is not within the scope of this thesis to determine all of the social factors that contributed to the development of Americanism, there are several themes that are both readily available for analysis and connect to the military and sporting experience of the time. First, the connection between nationalism and veterans of World War I was not limited to those ex-servicemen of the United States. It was, in fact, the “American version of organizations founded by World War I combatants throughout the world...former servicemen built powerful associations based on the comradeship and nationalism the war had fostered.”⁷¹ The concept of nationalism, then, was evident in many nations involved in the “Great War,” including Italy, Germany, France, England, Australia and Canada. For those that served in the American military, the development of nationalism

⁶⁹ "Reports to Fifth Annual Convention of the American Legion," (Indianapolis, IN: American Legion, 1923).

⁷⁰ "Summary Proceedings of the First National Convention of the American Legion," (Minneapolis, MN: American Legion, 1919).

⁷¹ Pencak, *For God & Country: The American Legion, 1919-1941*, 41.

was celebrated, most often because it marked the sense of community and civic pride that had been acquired during the war. Theodore Roosevelt Jr., eldest son of the former president and a war hero himself in World War II, later wrote that “The biggest thing we got out of this war (World War I) was a spirit of nationalism.” This spirit was not contained to only American veterans, but was seen to permeate “all classes, all grades in society” in bringing about “a more complete understanding of our country.”⁷²

Yet if citizens of “all grades in society” were witness to this new American nationalism, the principles of that nationalism were established by a specific group of Americans. The nature of military service during World War I meant that the “Americanism” developed by servicemen was not open to every citizen, because in fact not every citizen was in the military. This meant there were trends regarding class and race in the military population: “physical and mental tests caused many lower-class people to be rejected as unfit for service, whereas enthusiastic volunteers from the wealthy ensured...[that] the upper class actually contributed more than its numerical population.” Further, black American soldiers were placed in segregated units and rarely saw combat, and many immigrants could not be inducted and few volunteered. Overall, this meant that “the nature of military participation...tended to give native-born white Americans of different classes and regions a common, positive experience.” It was this experience that was then defined as “Americanism,” and any groups not agreeing to this attitude risked being labeled “un-American.”⁷³

Thus the Legion was promoting a very distinct, yet not completely defined, sense of Americanism. One explanation for this consensus was a similar life experience: “The

⁷² Ibid., 45.

⁷³ Ibid.

young men (average age, twenty-five) who founded the American Legion in 1919 had thus spent their youth watching the GAR parade, listening to the speeches of Theodore Roosevelt, and attending the YMCA, Boy Scouts, and schools that encouraged sports and patriotism.” These same men “shared a nationalistic idealism fueled in part by insecurity about the position of America’s traditional elite in an era of immigration, large-scale capitalism, and political bossism.”⁷⁴ Having “vanquished un-Americanism at home and authoritarianism at home” during the war, the members of the Legion now designated themselves as the carriers of triumphant patriotism. Indeed, as the Legion began to develop and implement its social programs in postwar America, it viewed these programs as a logical extension of work already done – “having made the world safe for the virile Christian nationalism they equated with democracy, a large percentage of the demobilized AEF was eager to continue its crusade at home.”⁷⁵

The Legion’s “Americanism” and the Crisis of Baseball, 1925-1930

Throughout the early 20th century, as the nation’s overall population continued to increase, so did the attendance at professional games: 1902 saw 3.2 million fans attend games; this number rose to an average more than 6.5 million from 1908-11, and by the end of World War I in 1919 the figure had reached 9 million. The first radio broadcast of a game was in 1921, the first amplifiers were used to announce the players at the Polo Grounds in 1926, and in 1929 the New York Yankees became the first team to have identifying numbers sewn on the backs of the players’ jerseys.⁷⁶ And the actual nature of the sport saw changes that both reflected and perpetuated this increase in popularity, as well. The elimination of the “deadball,” a baseball that could not be hit as far or as well

⁷⁴ Ibid., 34.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 47.

⁷⁶ Fred Stein, *A History of the Baseball Fan*. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2005), 39,45.

as the new balls being made, was evidence that the owners had recognized the fan attraction to home runs. The changes were obvious – between 1903 and 1919 batters hit a collective .250 on average; between 1920 and 1930 that number jumped to .280.⁷⁷ Even more telling was the presence of Babe Ruth: when in 1919 Ruth hit a record 54 home runs – more than every other *team* in the American League – the Yankees doubled their home attendance from the previous season. The large crowds created a demand for modern ballparks with increased capacity, ten of which were built between 1909 and 1916. These parks, which included Tiger Stadium, Fenway Park and Wrigley Field, were built at an average cost of five hundred thousand dollars.⁷⁸ The explosion in the sport’s popularity continued even through the “Black Sox” scandal of the 1919 World Series, in which eight members of the Chicago White Sox were given lifetime bans from professional baseball for their involvement in throwing (intentionally losing) games. In fact, the scandal gave then-newly-appointed Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis the opportunity to assert the moral reputation of the sport, leading to even further popularity and value assigned to the sport.⁷⁹

All of these factors positioned baseball as the fastest-growing professional sport in the country, building on a sport already designated “America’s national religion.”⁸⁰ Pro baseball “reached a new level of maturity and stability as an American institution...baseball concocted a powerful myth of its uniquely American origins, the concrete and steel parks of the big league clubs became important civic monuments, and the game produced a galaxy of national heroes equaled by few other professions in

⁷⁷ White, *Creating the National Pastime: Baseball Transforms Itself, 1903-1953.*, 118.

⁷⁸ Reiss, *Sport in Industrial America, 1850-1920*, 170.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 173-76.

⁸⁰ Reiss, *Touching Base: Professional Baseball and American Culture in the Progressive Era*, 53.

American life.”⁸¹ Further, the absence of other major sporting events such as the Super Bowl or college basketball’s “Sweet Sixteen” meant that the “World Series reigned supreme as the central event in the American sporting universe.” This helps explain that “baseball was successful because there were so many ways in which one could derive pleasure from it. And it united the country. Its heroes hailed from almost every region...At no era in American history has baseball more truly been the national pastime than in the 1920s.”⁸²

There was a problem, however – though more fans were attending professional games, there was a marked decline in baseball participation among the country’s youth. In late December 1925, the annual meeting of the National Amateur Athletic Federation was highlighted by the revelation that amateur baseball “had fallen off 50 per cent in the last three years.” In fact, surveys of high schools and colleges by the NAAF had shown a small increase in baseball participation in 1925, but this was after years of consecutive lower numbers in 1922, ’23, and ’24 – leading the Federation to announce that “baseball, which formerly was the major sport in many of our colleges and schools, has now fallen below basketball and track in popularity.”⁸³ Other sports, such as football and tennis, were also seeing increased popularity. This trend was recognized by many social commentators, who began to decry the potential decline of the sport – one of these commentators in particular, Major John L Griffith, was also executive vice president of the NAAF, and Griffith led the NAAF’s survey. Further, Griffith was also a member of

⁸¹ Benjamin G. Rader, *Baseball: A History of America's Game* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 109.

⁸² Reed Browning, *Baseball's Greatest Season: 1924* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 93.

⁸³ "Scrub Baseball Now Has Leagues," *New York Times*, May 2 1926.

the American Legion, and had already communicated his desire to implement a youth baseball program to the state commander of the South Dakota Legion.⁸⁴

After the revelation of the survey's results at the NAAF's 1925 meeting, a committee was appointed to look into the decline. One member of this committee was Frank C. Cross, National Director for Americanism for the American Legion; the Legion was a "unit member" of the NAAF. Cross delivered a report stating that the Legion had "formulated a national athletic policy" aimed at engaging more American boys in baseball leagues and tournaments across the country, with the founding of the program to take place in 1926 and tentative plans for the first Junior World's Baseball Series in Philadelphia that fall. Cross stated further that some 19 million American male youth did not currently "enjoy the privilege of supervised athletics," but it was the aim of the Legion – and the Americanism commission in particular – to change that.⁸⁵ Cross was supported by the success of the South Dakota Legion's "experimental" baseball program, as the South Dakota Legion representatives encouraged the Legion to expand the program nationally. At the national level, the Legion baseball program would be managed by the Legion as part of the "Americanism" program.⁸⁶

The Legion's concept of "Americanism" had been inherent in the group's foundation in 1919, as the "postwar association" of American veterans of the American Expeditionary Force, the U.S. military program involved in World War I. Within a year, the Legion had nearly 353,000 members, and the long- and short-term goals of the organization were being articulated by Legion leadership. To be sure, "Americanism" as an ideology was defined in various terms by various sources. A Pennsylvania senator that

⁸⁴ Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 85.

⁸⁵ "Fights Pro Menace to Young Athletes," *New York Times*, December 30 1925.

⁸⁶ Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 85.

predicted “Americanism” would be the key issue in the 1920 presidential race was asked what the term meant, and responded with “How in the hell do I know? But it will get a lot of votes.” Further, the Legion’s Americanism Commission stated in 1925 that it was in a sense “a sales unit” charged with selling the ideas of the Legion to the nation.⁸⁷

Americanism in its earliest form was a response to “Bolshevism as an ideology, as a disruptive force in American labor and education, and as a so-called solution thrust upon returning servicemen” that were facing problems upon coming back to civilian life.⁸⁸ However, Americanism was also an ingrained value, “the belief that personal freedom requires responsibility to a community defined both morally and historically,” which was at the core of the Legion’s worldview.⁸⁹ While the Legion saw American “liberty” as “a liberty for service,” with military service the pinnacle of this ideal, Americanism did not lack for concerned outsiders. In 1927, the ACLU called the Legion “the most active agency in intolerance and repression in the United States,” and much of this controversy stemmed from the Legion’s designation of who deserved to participate in the body politic – “the problem of free speech and expression,” in regards to the “subversives” who were the main target of the Legion’s own political and social influence. The dedication to “one hundred-percent Americanism” was problematic, and the Legion was often divided on how to “combat un-Americans,” though there were instances in which Legionnaires identified “radicals” and “ran them out of town.”⁹⁰ Other historians have characterized the Legion’s Americanism as a kind of “civil religion” that was developed and implemented by “self-appointed guardians” of the country. In this

⁸⁷ Ibid., 86.

⁸⁸ Rumer, *The American Legion: An Official History*, 77.

⁸⁹ Pencak, *For God & Country: The American Legion, 1919-1941*, 21.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 22.

vein the Legion “advocated strictures on immigration, tried to suppress those it considered “subversives” and “radicals,” and even “lent encouragement to fascist movements or solutions” in times of domestic crisis.⁹¹

More often, the directive of Americanism resulted in questioning the education system, citing liberal teachers and textbooks as “sources of “un-Americanism”” challenging traditional community values,” and consequently determining ways in which individual American Legion posts could influence local communities.⁹² The Legion adopted both direct and indirect approaches to the propagation of Americanism – the intervention in education was considered direct, but other community projects were sought that were more indirect, which the Legion had determined was more effective. Among these community projects, American Legion Baseball would immediately prove effective. In fact, in their efforts to “convey the benefits of sport to younger Americans,” the Legion’s National Americanism Commission “spent as much time debating the rules and praising the merits of Junior Baseball as worrying about the radical menace.”⁹³

While Cross would state that the Junior Baseball program was designed to safeguard amateur baseball from “professionalism” – in short, playing the sport for money – the program was actually created in South Dakota with an interest in physical education for young American males. After a proposal by the Milbank, South Dakota post, that state was the first to propose it nationally after receiving support from several sources, including the Athletic Director at the University of South Dakota and Commissioner of the Western Conference (now Big Ten) colleges. In 1925 the program became national upon approval as a “convention action” at the national convention – it

⁹¹ Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 86.

⁹² Pencak, *For God & Country: The American Legion, 1919-1941*, 274.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 33.

was at this meeting that the Athletic Director at USD, “Stubs” Allison, convinced the Americanism Commission to sponsor the program. Allison said: “You will catch them [the boys] when they are just a bunch of clay in your hands.” This would allow the Legion to take “a bunch of softies” and transform them into “a bunch of hard-fisted fellows who can meet competition at all times.” This competition was a reference to actual combat – “When the gong rings again, as it did in 1917, maybe these little cookies will go in there and do their stuff.”⁹⁴ This connection between baseball and war, which again inherently suggests both American nationalism and masculinity, was further emphasized by Major Griffith at the time of the program’s conception: “Legionnaires know the value of national physical fitness in war...the qualities of character stressed by athletic training are the same as those needed in the making of a soldier...initiative, aggressiveness, poise, courage, co-operation, unselfishness, willingness to serve and the ability to carry on when punished.”⁹⁵

While several states held competitive leagues in 1925, the official Junior All-American Baseball League was formed in the spring of 1926, involving 15 states and open to boys from 14 to 16 years of age.⁹⁶ In 1928, funding became an issue, and to that end the Legion sent Dan Sowers, Americanism Director, to meet with the Commissioner Landis, and the Presidents of both the National and American Leagues. Sowers was able to secure \$50,000 for the Junior League, with Landis expressing his support and National League President Heydler stating that the program “will automatically result in thousands of playgrounds being reserved throughout the nation under the supervision of a well-

⁹⁴ Rumer, *The American Legion: An Official History*, 206.

⁹⁵ Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 87.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 88.

governed and patriotic body.”⁹⁷ Landis, whose “political views harmonized with the Legion’s,” would not only pledge his support for the program, but also attended the Junior World Series and often threw out the first pitch.⁹⁸ The concept of Americanism as a response to Bolshevism was central to this support from Landis, as he convicted socialists and members of the International Workers of the World for obstruction of the war effort prior to his assignment as baseball commissioner. It was, in part, these convictions that led to support for his nomination as commissioner in 1919.⁹⁹ With solid financial backing, the Legion program quickly expanded. The 1928 season saw 10,000 Legion posts nationwide, with each hoping to sponsor baseball as “a practical means of teaching Americanism to the boys, holding the principles of sportsmanship inculcated in this manner were akin to the to the principles of good citizenship.”¹⁰⁰ One report from May of ’28 stated that the Legion expected 15,000 teams for that season, with 82 games held in Chicago in a single weekend.¹⁰¹ By 1929, every state placed teams into competition, and the National Broadcasting Company broadcast the Junior World Series on nation-wide radio⁶. Both the Legion and its baseball program increased in members during this time – by 1928 nearly 122,000 boys were participating in the baseball program, and Legion membership had swelled to nearly a million.¹⁰²

Rationale for Junior Baseball

There were many motivations behind the development of the Legion’s Junior Baseball program, and it is not the aim here to thoroughly cover each of these factors.

⁹⁷ "Majors Back Plan for Boys' Tourney," *New York Times*, February 15 1928.

⁹⁸ Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 88.

⁹⁹ Crepeau, *Baseball: America's Diamond Mind 1919-1941*, 19.

¹⁰⁰ "Baseball Revival Planned among Boys of the Nation," *New York Times*, April 1 1928.

¹⁰¹ "175,000 Boys Organized for Baseball, Nation-Wide Survey by Legion Shows," *New York Times*, May 8 1928.

¹⁰² Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 88.

However, the purpose here is to analyze the masculinity and nationalism inherent in the program's structure, as well as display a correlation with the ideology of reformists and physical culturists such as Gulick. Recalling Gulick's theory, which informed and overlapped with many other social critics, there were several principles which were established to manage youth sport programs: the need for physical sites where such programs could take place, especially in regards to urban environments; proper supervision of youth sport, in that youth would learn and play the sports in the correct fashion; and finally the intertwining of nationalism and masculinity within participation in the sport programs. To be sure, these different issues were not perceived as such, but rather were entangled with one another as an understanding of youth sport.

The potential ills, both in terms of health and morals, of living in an urban setting were recognized by many social critics. Gulick expressed his concern about the numerous temptations in the form of "unwholesome" amusements that awaited around every corner, and stressed that "conditions peculiar to the city...give the problem of recreation there an added pertinence."¹⁰³ In this view, the environment of the modern city was detrimental to the development of children. Urban youth "gambled with dice, played with fire, got into fights, and joined gangs that taught destructive values and encouraged antisocial criminal behavior."¹⁰⁴

Yet while the need for moral education in the face of a city's temptations was a concern for reformists such as Gulick, the issue often came down to a simple lack of available geographical space. As the modern city grew, vacant lots and open spaces disappeared, swallowed up by industrial and housing development. Many cities had

¹⁰³ Gulick, "Popular Recreation and Public Morality," 35.

¹⁰⁴ Reiss, *Sport in Industrial America, 1850-1920*, 137.

limited space available for baseball diamonds, meaning as the vacant lots disappeared, the “boy who would play ball...has to travel long distances to find a diamond.”¹⁰⁵ The lack of space or resources in the form of a playing surface was evident in other sports, as well, but the relative size of a baseball field created unique problems. Those young ballplayers who did not or could not travel these “long distances” were left to find a vacant lot for a pick-up game, or risk playing on the street and possibly being arrested.¹⁰⁶ This lack of options had serious consequences on the status of the sport in terms of participation. In fact, baseball historians have noted that a lack of adequate baseball diamonds was the primary factor in the decline in youth participation shown through the NAAF survey.¹⁰⁷

The need for not just recreation, but adult-supervised recreation, was often directly connected with a lack of adequate resources. However, the concept of adult-supervision was immediately applicable to all regional and geographic American settings – both city and rural youth were in need of “directed” play. For Gulick, the movement for more and improved recreational resources such as baseball diamonds was by itself not enough. That is, along with a “comprehensive scheme” to bring more of these resources to a community, “the whole plan must be administered by experts with definite goals in view.” Baseball was used by Gulick as an example:

The tendency of a recreation to be warped from its legitimate purpose, when left to private adventure, is well illustrated in the development of baseball. Our national game has produced spectators in a number far out of reasonable proportion to the number of players. In England the actual participation in cricket is much more universal...The boys must not only have sufficient opportunity to take part themselves in wholesome games,

¹⁰⁵ Reiss, *Touching Base: Professional Baseball and American Culture in the Progressive Era*, 183.

¹⁰⁶ Gulick, "Popular Recreation and Public Morality," 38.

¹⁰⁷ Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 84.

but these must have that intelligent supervision which shall insure not only the highest degree of pleasure, but also the fullest moral profit.¹⁰⁸

The rationale for adult-supervision was rooted in the physical and moral benefits that the reformers and physical culturists designated as inherent in playing baseball – “good health and morals...loyalty, cooperation, obedience, discipline,” etc. In the view espoused by various institutions and social critics, including Gulick and many Legion members, “Play could no longer be left in the hands of children...if American ideals and morals inculcated through play were to withstand the corrosion of urban-industrialism and the flood of immigrants unfamiliar with American traditions.”¹⁰⁹

The task taken up by the American Legion in creating a youth baseball league responded to perceived social ills, as well as a continuation and expansion of the promotion of the ideology of American youth sport. A particular example from the Legion’s publication *American Legion Monthly* serves as evidence of this response and continuation crystallized: a comic by the Legion’s cartoonist “Wallgren” entitled “Batter Up! The Old Sand Lots Ain’t What They Useter Be (sic),” which describes the potential impact of Legion Junior Baseball on an American community. The comic is divided into four rectangular panels, with the narration proceeding from the top panel to the bottom – each shows a stage in the development of Junior Baseball.

The first panel shows a group of youth, dressed in everyday clothing, as they hurry away from the site of a pick-up “sandlot” baseball. As the children remark about the incoming presence of the police officer, the officer exclaims “Didn’t I tell yez to stay offa this lot? Ye little devils!” Meanwhile, a cigar-smoking man with a Legion cap stands

¹⁰⁸ Gulick, “Popular Recreation and Public Morality,” 41.

¹⁰⁹ Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 120.

in the corner, stating “It’s a shame! These boys need our help! This is a job for the Legion Americanism Commission!”

The second panel leads with a heading: “The old back-lot games have been improved considerably in the last few years since The American Legion has been sponsoring boys’ baseball teams as a means of teaching practical Americanism.” Underneath the heading, the neighborhood boys now crowd around the Legion member, who is handing out information while exclaiming, “Say boys! How would you like to be formed into a real team in the American Legion Junior Baseball League? Backed by a Legion post – with a real manager, and a coach – just like the Big League teams?”

The third panel’s heading reads: “Thousands of teams in the Junior Baseball League are organized and directed each year by the Legion’s ten thousand posts. This year...the activity is being promoted on a much larger scale.” The setting has changed to the “Post 186 Ball Field,” complete with baselines and a pitching mound. The neighborhood boys – now clothed in baseball uniforms, from hats to cleats – yell in excitement about their “real team” with “real baseballs, bats and everything!” The Legion member explains how the change came about: “Well fellows! Now that you’ve helped clean up and make a regulation diamond out of this old lot – and got enough good folks interested to equip the team with uniforms, etc. – what say we get down to real ball playing?”

In the fourth panel, the full effects of the Legion’s Junior League program are realized. The header suggests that Legion equates “good sportsmanship, as developed by playing baseball” with “principles of good citizenship.” The Legion member – now identified as National Americanism Director Dan Sowers – explains to the boys that they

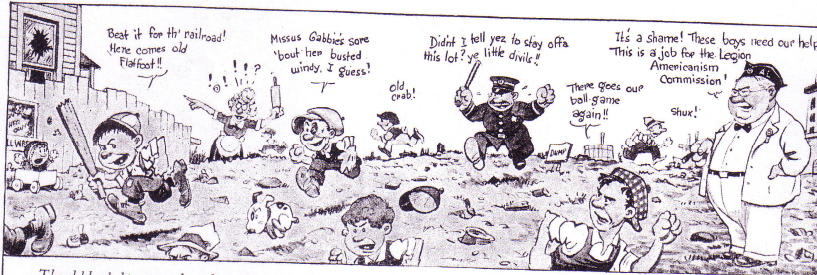
are “playing under the “official playing rules of baseball”: all disputes to be settled by the umpire, or Post Officer in charge – and that the “code of sportsmanship,” fair play, team work and honest effort must prevail.” As the children reply in the affirmative, a “Big League Scout” peers over the outfield wall.¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ Wallgren, "Batter Up! The Old Sand Lots They Ain't What They Useter Be," *American Legion Monthly* 1926.; Image next page.

BATTER UP!

The Old Sand Lots They Ain't What They Useter Be

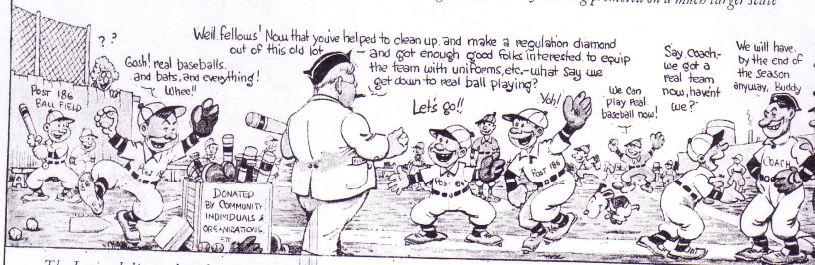
By Wallgren



The old back-lot games have been improved considerably in the last few years since The American Legion has been sponsoring boys' baseball teams as a means of teaching practical Americanism



Thousands of teams in the Junior Baseball League are organized and directed each year by the Legion's ten thousand posts. This year, with the support of the National and American Leagues, the activity is being promoted on a much larger scale



The Legion believes that the principles of good sportsmanship, as developed by the playing of baseball, are close akin to the principles of good citizenship—and that junior teams should be heartily supported in every community



The season will close in September with a Junior World's Series. Every boy who has played in the League as well as those who have participated in any way will find that they have been made better Americans

The comic is a vivid illustration of the American youth sport program – given proper athletic resources, such as the “real” bats and baseballs, as well as *adult-supervision* of the athletic experience, sport would realize all of those benefits that had been assigned to it. In fact, the unique status of Legion members as military veterans allowed for their recognition as potential teachers of “civic lessons” to be emphasized. This “legitimacy of military institutions” was perceived by the majority of Americans, meaning that “for them, military enthusiasm for organized sport was cause enough for popular acceptance and appreciation.”¹¹¹ The focus on the Junior Baseball program by Legion members has already been emphasized, but such a focus makes a link between the program and the preceding ideology of American youth sport that much stronger. The Legion did not simply advocate for youth sport, it was determined to incorporate youth sport into its campaign of Americanism. Indeed, Junior Baseball was often exemplified as “without a doubt...the greatest Americanizing influence on the young manhood America...because of the intimate personal contacts the American Legion is making with hundreds of thousands of boys each year.”¹¹² The growth of the baseball program was impressive, as by 1929 nearly 300,000 American boys from communities across the country were participating.¹¹³

It is also important to note that the Legion did not view the Junior Baseball program as separate and uninterested in the concept of Americanism, nor was the playing of baseball separated from the themes of nationalism and masculinity inherent in Americanism. This is evident from the Legion’s different approaches toward the

¹¹¹ Pope, "An Army of Athletes: Playing Fields, Battlefields, and the American Military Sporting Experience, 1890-1920," 456.

¹¹² "Summary Proceedings of the 11th National Convention of the American Legion," (Indianapolis, IN: American Legion, 1930).

¹¹³ Gellerman, *The American Legion as Educator*, 30.

dissemination of Americanism, categorized by a “direct” or “indirect” approach. In the first few years of the Legion, it became apparent that the direct approach was not the best method, or at least not nearly as effective as the indirect. One social critic later wrote about these approaches:

“The American Legion, in its program for childhood and youth outside the schools, places principal reliance on what it refers to as “the indirect approach.” If the time and attention of minors are consumed by activities which they enjoy and which teach them those qualities which the American Legion considers essential to good citizenship, the American Legion has no fear that they will succumb to “the economic fiction” advanced by “subversive elements.” The American Legion sees in its program of “constructive” activities for the young an opportunity to ground them so firmly in “true” and “sound” teachings that “the preservation of our Nation” will be assured. To achieve this end the American Legion has successfully promoted a junior baseball program which has grown with extreme rapidity.”¹¹⁴

The Legion was directly invested in the relationship between Americanism and youth baseball, both in terms of their individual time and effort spent in support of the program as well as in regards to the “preservation of our Nation.” Baseball’s portrayal as a distinctly American sport originated with support by commentators such as Spalding, who coupled the sport with the pillars of American society: “The genius of our institutions is democratic; Base Ball is a democratic game. The spirit of our national life is combative; Base Ball is a combative game.”¹¹⁵ Others have attempted to explain the connection between baseball and American nationalism through the reasoning of historical materialism – in this view, baseball grew in popularity because there was plenty of space to play, and relatively few requirements in terms of equipment. Of course, such games never would have counted as “real” baseball in comparison to the Legion’s program. Yet even supporters of a materialist understanding have accepted that baseball’s

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 237.

¹¹⁵ Spalding, *America’s National Game: Historic Facts Concerning the Beginning Evolution, Development and Popularity of Base Ball*, 6.

popularity “depended less on absolute material conditions than on people’s perceptions of sports and the ways in which they grafted onto some sports attributes which they considered specially American.”¹¹⁶ The “grafting” of particularly American attributes to baseball has been under display throughout this thesis.

Further, baseball was a means for teaching specific American philosophies and ideals – that is, Americanism – to foreigners, both in their home countries and in the United States to recent immigrants. While baseball accompanied American imperialism abroad in countries such as Cuba and the Philippines, for immigrants baseball “offered an effective means of teaching civic virtues, democratic values, and respect for authority.”¹¹⁷ For American citizens, baseball became the “National Game” that symbolized all that was great about the nation. In effect, in this time period the playing of baseball became a rite of citizenship: “The American boy should understand two things by the time he reached the age of eighteen: the meaning of the Constitution and the meaning of playing baseball. If the boy grasped both of these, he “is sure to be a true American.”¹¹⁸

Unstated but readily apparent in this marker of citizenship is the element of gender – only American boys were expected to know about baseball, and more importantly how to play the sport. This reflects the larger theme of sport and masculinity: “above all, sport served to assuage the crisis of masculinity that afflicted the WASP male bourgeoisie by the late nineteenth century. The increasing feminization of culture threatened the traditional balance of social and domestic power.” In this mode, sport could serve as a kind of “surrogate form of war” with which young American males

¹¹⁶ Mrozek, *Sport and American Mentality, 1880-1910*, 167.

¹¹⁷ Gerald R. Gems, *The Athletic Crusade: Sport and American Cultural Imperialism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 10.

¹¹⁸ Crepeau, *Baseball: America's Diamond Mind 1919-1941*, 65.

could realize their potential masculinity.¹¹⁹ While athletic opportunities for both men and women were increasing, the opening of baseball to women was not in question. While the Nineteenth Amendment giving women the right to vote served as a social marker for shifting social and cultural attitudes about gender, other potential social shifts were not allowed. For most, the attitude taken by Spalding in regards to women and baseball was the acceptable one – women and baseball could mix, but only in the grandstands. In terms of participation, women were culturally and socially discouraged from playing the sport; “Baseball had always been a man’s game, serving the red-blooded American boy. There was no doubt that from the standpoint of participation it would remain so.” Further evidence of the dominant attitude taken towards women’s potential playing of baseball can be seen in a short poem, published in 1919 by *Sporting News*:

When women enter baseball
They’ll shake a batter’s nerves;
I never knew a player
Who could catch on their curves.

When women enter baseball
The time take your heed
Is when by chance you tackle those
Who have both curves and speed.¹²⁰

Through this analysis of the history of youth sport, sport in the American military, and the American Legion Junior Baseball program, this thesis connects masculinity and American nationalism. A sociohistorical analysis evidences a link between the ideology of American youth sport as it existed pre- and post-World War I, and the Legion’s Junior Baseball program founded nearly six years after the war had ended. This ideology is characterized by specific political views and specific attitudes towards gender – thus the

¹¹⁹ Gems, *The Athletic Crusade: Sport and American Cultural Imperialism*, 15.

¹²⁰ Quoted from Crepeau, *Baseball: America's Diamond Mind 1919-1941*, 159.

themes of masculinity and nationalism are entangled with sport in general, and baseball in particular. Through this analysis, I have examined the convergence of masculinity and American nationalism through the playing of baseball by American boys. That this history exists is a testament to the Legion's program, in that it was undoubtedly successful – that the program still continues is further evidence of this success. Yet what is important here is an understanding of the motivation for such a program, and how masculinity and nationalism are inherent in that motivation. The Legion presented its rationale for the Junior Baseball program in 1926:

The basic purpose which should motivate the American Legion to organize a Junior All-American Baseball League is to promote citizenship through sportsmanship...A popular athletic program would afford the American Legion the best possible medium through which to teach the principles of Americanism. Under cloak of a sport code, we would inculcate more good citizenship during one year than would be possible in five years of direct appeal.¹²¹

Americanism, Baseball and Hegemonic Masculinity

By examining the social and historical context of the Legion's Junior Baseball program, it is possible to connect with the concept of "*hegemonic masculinity*," which "as a state or condition of ideology, helps frame understandings of how particular ways of performing maleness seem natural and normal, yet at the same time act to sustain problematic relations of dominance within an assumed structure or *order* of gender."¹²² In this view, I would suggest that the discourse surrounding the development of the relationship between baseball, masculinity and American nationalism works to establish a specific masculine nationalism (or nationalist masculinity). This thesis acknowledges that

¹²¹ "Summary Proceedings of the Seventh National Convention of the American Legion," (Indianapolis, IN: American Legion, 1926).

¹²² Pringle, "No Pain Is Sane after All: A Foucauldian Analysis of Masculinities and Men's Experiences in Rugby," 473.

this nationalist masculinity was also defined by attitudes regarding race and class, but these aspects are not the immediate focus here. Moreover, this does not mean that every boy who participated in the Legion's program was being coerced – on the contrary, since we remember that “sport is not forced labor.” Yet despite the voluntary flavor of participation in youth baseball, this thesis recognizes the theme of “inculcation” which was explicitly stated by developers and supporters of youth baseball program. This means the discourse *does* result in the formation of a hegemonic form of masculinity, which Connell describes as the “most honoured or desired in a particular context,” and as “the configuration of gender practices which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women.”¹²³

In this case, hegemonic masculinity is based on a specific nationalism (the Legion's Americanism), which the subjective identities can be modeled on or measured against. This is evident in Allison's statement about how the younger generation, as a “bunch of softies,” could be transformed into the model of masculinity being set forth. Moreover, it is imperative to understand that the American nationalism is definitively male in gender, developed through a connection between the military experience and sport as well as connections between masculinity and sport in youth programs. The specific context of the post-war era is also significant: “this equation of gender dominance with national might effectively subverted the possibility of an alternative vision of masculinity...the establishment and preservation of a gender hierarchy

¹²³ Connell, *Masculinities*.; "Debates About Men, New Research on Masculinities." Connell emphasizes the implications of masculinity for both the social and the individual: “Further, masculinity exists impersonally in culture as a subject position in the process of representation, in the structures of language and other symbol systems. Individual practice may accept and reproduce this positioning, but may also confront and contest it.” (165).

demanded not only that masculine males be distinguished...it demanded as well that women be placed firmly at the bottom.”¹²⁴ Thus the connection between masculinity in sport, both in youth programs and through the experiences of American men in the military, reinforced the established gender hierarchy and the concept of American men as supremely masculine. Spalding’s words echo this idea: “Base Ball is the American Game *par excellence*, because its playing demands Brain and Brawn, and American manhood supplies these ingredients in quantity sufficient to spread over the entire continent.”^{125 126}



A reminder that Legion junior baseball teams will play again this season in every State and tournaments will be held under the auspices of Legion departments—this was the moment of victory for the team from Yonkers, New York, which won the Junior World's Series at the Legion's Philadelphia national convention

¹²⁴ Wakefield, *Playing to Win: Sports and the American Military, 1898-1945*, 44.

¹²⁵ Spalding, *America's National Game: Historic Facts Concerning the Beginning Evolution, Development and Popularity of Base Ball*, 143.

¹²⁶ Image: "Yonkers Legion Team," *American Legion Monthly*, May 1928.

Chapter II

Are Ballplayers Born or Made? – Sport and Discipline

Through a social and historical analysis, it is possible to recognize a discourse of ideas, attitudes and social interaction that links baseball and a distinct form of American masculinity. While my analysis has focused on youth sport and sport in the American military, another possible source of this linkage is sport at the professional level. Professional baseball saw a surge in popularity during this time period, as the '20s and '30s have been called the “Golden Age of Sport,” and other writers have already produced research with a primary focus on how American nationalism, masculinity and the professional game can be linked.¹²⁷ These previous works have focused primarily on two sources of information – sports writing about the games and players of professional baseball, and histories both fact and fictional that lend themselves to creating the “legends” of the game. Most importantly, the discourse analyzed in such studies is primarily linguistic; that is, these studies build on linguistic evidence pulled from newspapers, magazines, and oral histories and this discourse is then cited as both cause and effect of baseball’s nationalism

There are several reasons why these studies, while invaluable, leave uncovered some aspects of the relationship between baseball and an “American” masculinity. In particular, a focus on the professional game means less attention paid to amateur baseball. In my view, “amateur baseball” in 1920s America comprised experiences ranging from youth sandlot games with neighborhood objects as bases, to baseball rivalries of college teams like Navy and Army, to leagues for teams of industrial workers of the same factory. Most baseball players in these situations were, at least in spirit,

¹²⁷ See Crepeau, *Baseball: America's Diamond Mind 1919-1941.*; Reiss, *Touching Base: Professional Baseball and American Culture in the Progressive Era.*; Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game.*

playing for something other than monetary payment. Further, professional players undoubtedly experienced at least one if not many of these different stages of amateur baseball. For my purposes, an apparent question emerges: how did these amateur players learn to play the sport? It is critical here to divide between knowledge of a sport, in the sense of traditions, legacies, names of players and teams, etc., and knowledge of how to be kinesthetically active in the appropriate motions, with appropriate direction, speed, etc. There are, no doubt, multiple and always changing sources for this kinesthetic knowledge, yet historical and social context can reveal how these sources existed in a given historic period.

Amateur players of the 1920s had an obvious source for knowledge on how to kinesthetically “play” baseball – the explosion in professional baseball’s popularity meant more fans were going to games than ever before. For those that attended professional games, the players that they cheered (or booed) served as kinesthetic examples of how the sport was to be played. Yet the idea of professional players serving as a model for sport instruction was problematic for reformers and social critics like Gulick: “If our boys are going to learn team play; if they are going to acquire the habit of subordinating selfish to group interests, they must learn those things through *experience* and not from...the “bleachers” maintained by professional baseball.”¹²⁸ Not only does Gulick’s opinion emphasize the necessity for adult-supervised youth sport, but it also argues against professional baseball as a model for sport instruction. This disassociation of youth baseball from professional baseball would be further supported in the wake of the 1919 Black Sox scandal, when the moral superiority of the sport would be

¹²⁸ Gulick, "Popular Recreation and Public Morality," 41.

questioned.¹²⁹ Thus studies examining the connection between professional and youth baseball represent one aspect of the larger concept.

However, I believe that what has often been looked over in these studies has been the actual playing of the sport, or to paraphrase William Sewell, an emphasizing of “games” in our discursive “language-*games*.” That is, if we understand that both linguistic practices and other forms of semiotic practice “conjointly constitute a language game,” attention should be paid to the other forms as well. In this case, the language game is made up not only from the linguistic forms of baseball’s cultural expression (sportswriting, baseball anecdotes, statistics about fans and players), but also the “various kinesthetic moves and strategies” of the sport.¹³⁰ Sewell’s example is contemporary basketball, but the same framework could be applied to baseball both current and historical. The kinesthetic moves and strategies of baseball might include the movement of the third baseman towards home plate when the batter is set for a bunt, or the pitcher throwing a pitch “high and inside” (towards the batter’s head, more or less) when the batter is deemed too close to the plate, or simply a batter “choking up” (moving his hands up the bat to shorten his swing). If we understand that discourse “shows the historically specific relations between disciplines (defined as bodies of knowledge) and disciplinary practices (forms of social control and social possibility),” my analysis seeks to examine,

¹²⁹ Crepeau, *Baseball: America's Diamond Mind 1919-1941*, 23. Numerous scholars have documented and analyzed the 1919 Black Sox scandal and the implications for professional baseball and American society; Crepeau emphasizes how Commissioner Landis’ decision to impose a lifetime ban from the sport on the eight players involved, despite their acquittal in legal court, served to “renew” the sport and sever a connection to its possible moral ambiguity.

¹³⁰ William H. Sewell, *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 340.

in a specific social and historical context, the discipline of baseball and the disciplinary practices – both linguistic and kinesthetic - that constitute this discipline.¹³¹

Further, I would suggest that what is inferred in this active semiotic practice is a distinct relationship to the players as “bodies,” which draws much more attention to the gender roles at stake in the nationalism being constructed. Through analysis of the kinesthetic practices that correspond to baseball as discipline, this focus on bodies can lead to further connections between the sport and a historically-grounded hegemonic masculinity. In short, rather than trying to answer the question “What was/is American about baseball?” by analyzing the impact of the sport as it is engaged by spectators and professional players, this thesis attempts to find *how* baseball was both a specific “American” through both practice and instruction of amateur athletes and citizens. This conception of baseball as American is recognized as having implications in terms of race, class and gender – this thesis sacrifices a thorough analysis of other factors for a focus on masculinity and nationalism. Thus this thesis seeks out a *kinesthetic discourse* of bodily movements that, when taken together, constitute the sport as a whole. By analyzing and identifying such a discourse, a better understanding of the connection between baseball, masculinity and nationalism can be attained.

My own attempt to work through this concept of kinesthetic discourse has led me to incorporate the theorization of discipline and disciplinary technologies originally conceived by Michel Foucault. “According to Foucault, power is not an institution, and not a structure; yet neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name one attributes to a complex strategic situation of struggle in a particular society. With, not

¹³¹ Alec and Wendy Grace McHoul, *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 26.

apart from, these very power relations, resides the potential for resistance, not a sporadic, dramatic, revolutionary intervention, but something more internal to the power dynamic itself.”¹³² That is, we should think of power as a creative and omnipresent force that contains the “potential” for both dominance and, more importantly, resistance to that dominance. And we should not expect such resistance to be immediately recognizable, in the form of direct actions or rhetoric – instead, the “struggle” is most often internal to the power relations. In Foucault’s thinking, rather than paying attention to any *sources* of power, we should instead concentrate on the *practices* involved, or what Foucault called “discipline.” More simply, “that disciplinary power consists of ‘highly specific procedural techniques’ opens up the possibility of replacing the question of ‘Who exercises power’ with questions about how disciplinary power is exercised.”¹³³ In this mode, my analysis of kinesthetic discourse will not seek to understand how power is utilized by certain social actors, but rather how power surrounds both social actors and the processes they are involved in.

Moreover, much as we need to think of power as creative rather than reductive, it is imperative to understand that “disciplines are not negative, they are positive...the body is not passive, but active.”¹³⁴ The result of the relationship between positive disciplines and an active body is, according to Foucault, a “docile body.” That is, “a body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed, and improved.”¹³⁵ Thus the body is the central

¹³² John and Alan Tomlinson Sugden, "Theory and Method for a Critical Sociology of Sport," in *Power Games: A Critical Sociology of Sport*, ed. John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson (London: Routledge, 2002), 7.

¹³³ Debra Shogan, *The Making of High-Performance Athletes: Discipline, Diversity, and Ethics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 9.

¹³⁴ Georges Vigarello, "The Life of the Body in *Discipline and Punish*," *Sociology of Sport Journal* 12 (1995): 160.

¹³⁵ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 136. Foucault’s work – specifically *Discipline and Punish* – is recognized as a primary inspiration for this thesis.

focus of the many disciplinary processes that are maintained in a given cultural site – while Foucault was primarily focused on institutions such as the prison and the asylum, I would argue that sport, too, functions as a cultural site for disciplinary processes. That is, “sport often functions, much like these institutions, to produce a disciplined and docile body...one of the primary goals/functions of sport is to produce a trained, efficient, machine-like, and obedient body.”¹³⁶ As such, the sporting body is recognized as docile, in that the disciplinary processes of a given discipline function to produce distinct bodies and accompanying identities. Thus the discipline of baseball, through disciplinary processes, produces docile bodies that might be recognized as “ballplayers.” As Foucault explains, “these methods, which made possible the meticulous control of the operations of the body, which assured the constant subjection of its forces and imposed upon them a relation of docility-utility, might be called ‘disciplines’.”¹³⁷ In guides for baseball instruction, then, the disciplines become evident – throwing, pitching, catching, batting, and sliding – and each functions towards a similar goal of creating a “docile body.”

What disciplines produce, then, are subjective identities/positions. If indeed “these broadly defined subject positions...do not reveal specific knowledge about the subject located in each of these positions,” then my goal here is to in fact reveal more of the “specific knowledge.”¹³⁸ The notion of disciplinary power as creative is especially important when employing Foucauldian power concepts to sports (as opposed to military or medical discourses, for example), because “sport is not forced labor; it must and does

¹³⁶ Laura Frances Chase, "(Un)Disciplined Bodies: A Foucauldian Analysis of Women's Rugby," *Sociology of Sport Journal* 23 (2006): 233.

¹³⁷ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 137.

¹³⁸ Pirkko and Richard Pringle. Markula, *Foucault, Sport and Exercise: Power, Knowledge and Transforming the Self* (London: Routledge, 2006), 41.

include a strong voluntary flavor.”¹³⁹ I am not suggesting baseball was a means for controlling young bodies and minds, though I will support the idea that baseball was a means of extending the concept of the sport as both American and masculine. That is, apart from the discourse surrounding the sport, which assigned certain values and gender expectations, this analysis will seek to recognize the playing of baseball through specific kinesthetic movements and abilities – the sport’s kinesthetic discourse - as constructed as masculine and American. What follows is my attempt to identify and analyze this kinesthetic discourse, using Foucauldian concepts of discipline and power and a recognition of baseball as a discipline constituting disciplinary processes.

Baseball as Discipline

The rise in popularity of baseball within American society during this historical period is evidenced by an increase of published materials associated with the sport – this includes baseball fiction, statistical records, and most importantly for this study, training guides and manuals. These guides and manuals serve as the best possible evidence for grasping a cultural understanding of baseball as a discipline within the historical context – thus this thesis focuses on guides published from 1905-1930, with the majority published in the 1920s. These guides are authored by a variety of sources, primarily professional and amateur coaches and players. Further, analysis of these materials allows for recognition of the structure of baseball as discipline, and of the techniques that make up baseball’s disciplinary processes. In his discussion of discipline, Foucault recognizes four specific characteristics of discipline: spatial distribution of bodies, control of the activities undertaken by these bodies, segmentation of training, and a coordination of all

¹³⁹ Juha Heikkala, "Discipline and Excel: Techniques of the Self and Body and the Logic of Competing," *Sociology of Sport Journal* 10 (1993): 399.

parts into a cohesive whole. Each of these elements function to continually produce subjective identities, through a rendering of the body as docile. An analysis of baseball as discipline, then, must establish how each of these characteristics is evident in the sport and its training.

In terms of spatial distribution, discipline has several techniques, including “enclosure” and “partitioning.” The method of enclosure effectively sealed off the bodies involved in the discipline from those not involved – it requires the “specification of a place heterogeneous to all other and closed in upon itself.”¹⁴⁰ In this mode, the cultural site of the baseball field becomes the site of discipline, a closed-off space that is maintained solely for the purposes of discipline. Further, enclosure results in a separation of those that are deemed eligible to participate in the discipline from those that are not; for the purposes of this thesis, the enclosure of the baseball field separates boys from girls, following the ideology of “single-sex” youth sports. The technique of partitioning takes this spatial distribution even farther – once the eligible bodies have been enclosed in a set space, these bodies are then spatially individualized. That is, “each individual has his own place; and each places its individual.”¹⁴¹ The spatial distribution of baseball-playing boys thus extends to the partitioning of each individual to his position on the field, where each individual shortstop is separated from each individual second-baseman, separated from each individual right fielder, etc.

Control of the activities of these individual bodies is central to baseball’s discipline, in that the body involved in a discipline is “constantly applied to its exercise.” Such control is necessary for the full functioning of the disciplinary processes, and it also

¹⁴⁰ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 141.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 143.

requires an emphasis on supervision of the bodies and their activities. In this way discipline requests “constant supervision, the pressure of supervisors, the elimination of anything that might disturb or distract; it is a question of constituting a totally useful time.”¹⁴² This “totally useful time” is not made up of simple non-idleness, but rather activities that are concerned with “extracting, from time, ever more available moments and, from each moment, ever more useful forces.”¹⁴³ Thus disciplinary processes must constitute activities that are designed to promote discipline in every moment and with every movement or activity. This characteristic of discipline corresponds with the need for adult-supervised youth sport programs as emphasized by reformers, social critics and organizations, including Gulick and the American Legion. In this mode, only adult-supervised youth sport was seen as capable of promoting the moral and physical health that such critics deemed as inherent in sport. The techniques involved in the control of activities, and the connection to baseball as discipline, will be further discussed shortly. However, even this brief analysis draws a possible connection between baseball as discipline and the Legion Junior Baseball program

The segmentation of training is also connected to baseball as discipline, as the method of practice is heavily rooted in this technique. Not only must individual disciplinary activities be controlled, but they must also be arranged in a manner that yields the regulation of “bodies and forces” over a duration.¹⁴⁴ This arrangement constitutes both a method of instruction and categorization: individual bodies progress through the various segments, attempting to complete the shift from student to master of the disciplinary practices, and thus varying levels of skill are designated. In this way a

¹⁴² Ibid., 150.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 154.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 157.

discipline seeks to establish “a hierarchy, where each stage of the learning process is significantly more difficult than the last.”¹⁴⁵ In particular, this concept of training connects to the baseball “practice,” in that certain skills and knowledge are being taught in a non-competitive game context. The cultural site of a baseball practice is thus composed of various segments of training – hitting, fielding, pitching, catching, etc. – that might be recognized as “exercise.” For Foucault, exercise is “that technique by which one imposes on the body tasks that are both repetitive and different, but always graduated...exercise makes possible a perpetual characterization of the individual either in relation to this term, in relation to other individuals, or in relation to a type of itinerary.”¹⁴⁶ Thus the exercises that constitute a baseball practice function to both gradually enhance the disciplinary competency of the individual player, and to observe this level of competency so that individual players can be placed on a hierarchy of disciplinary ability.

Yet the composition of individual subjects with disciplinary ability does not mean that discipline seeks to produce only competent individuals – rather, disciplinary processes function to promote a cohesive whole made up of these individual bodies and abilities. That is, discipline recognizes “the need to invent a machinery whose principle would no longer be the mobile or immobile mass, but a geometry of divisible segments whose basic unity was the mobile soldier with his rifle.”¹⁴⁷ In this mode, discipline seeks individual docile bodies that, when involved in the disciplinary processes, functions as a single part of a larger machine at work. Thus the individual soldier possesses disciplinary ability, but it is not until this ability is joined with that of others that the collective force is

¹⁴⁵ McHoul, *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject*, 70.

¹⁴⁶ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 161.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 163.

strongest. This parallels the relationship between an individual baseball player and the team: the individual body is disciplined so that it might better function in relation to the team, and the individual body's ability is utilized for the success of the team as a whole.

Thus the concept of baseball as discipline is supported by the evidence of disciplinary characteristics – baseball, and in particular the training of a baseball practice, is characterized by spatial distribution of the individual bodies, control of the bodies' activities, segmentation of different disciplinary exercises, and the composition of individual players into the cohesive team. Yet while this overview of baseball as discipline draws several connections to the organization of sport through programs such as Legion Junior Baseball, this linkage is further strengthened through a more focused analysis of the control of activities. The control of activities is a core element of any discipline and the disciplinary processes within it, as the supervision necessary for such control both regulates the activities and realizes the entire process as a means of disciplining individuals. That is, the control of activities is central to discipline as “an art of rank, a technique for the transformation of arrangements. It individualizes bodies by a location that does not give them a fixed position, but distributes them and circulates them in a network of relations.”¹⁴⁸ In short, without the element of control of activities, a discipline would cease to function as such. Further, for the purposes of this thesis, the control of activities is recognized as critical to a linking of discipline to kinesthetic movement; in this view the control of activities brings kinesthetic action under disciplinary control, making regulated and disciplined movement a part of the disciplinary process. That is, discipline includes the imposition of a “correct” kinesthetic

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 146.

form or technique, as offered by the guides under analysis and implemented and evaluated by the supervisors – including coaches of the American Legion program.

Foucault identifies several features that characterize this control and the place of control as an element of disciplinary processes. The temporal control of activities, in seeking a “totally usefully time,” has already been discussed. Another characteristic is “the temporal elaboration of the act,” in which “the act is broken down into elements; the position of the body, limbs, articulation is defined; to each movement are assigned a direction, an aptitude, a duration; their order of succession is prescribed. Time penetrates the body and with it all the meticulous controls of power.”¹⁴⁹ In this mode the power inherent in the disciplinary process is embedded in every possible detail of the kinesthetic action being directed, making the action a disciplinary practice in itself. Any action that does not follow the disciplinary technique is not allowed, or at least discouraged, in order that the discipline be perfected. Consider directives for the “overhand throw:”

For the full-arm throw, the ball, grasped in the hand with two fingers on top, the thumb on the left side, and the third and fourth fingers on the right for support, is carried well back behind the shoulder at shoulder height, and the left side of the body turned in the direction the throw is to be made. The left arm is raised and carried around in front of the body, the left foot slightly advance, with the toe touching the ground, and the weight of the body on the right foot. With a full swing of the trunk around to a position in which the thrower faces the direction he wishes to throw, and a stride forward with the left foot, the hand is brought forward to an extended position in front, and the ball is turned loose with a downward snap of the wrist. As the hand comes around, the elbow travels below it until its extension forward. The right foot drags or swings around to a stride position at the side. The foot does not come down flat at once, but remains with the toe on the ground and heel pointing up and out until the body is in a balanced position.¹⁵⁰

In the kinesthetic action being prescribed, the entire body is under discipline – each limb and function is carefully and specifically informed with a definite task, and

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 152.

¹⁵⁰ Charles D. Wardlaw, *Fundamentals of Baseball* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), 5.

these tasks when taken as a whole constitute a disciplined kinesthetic movement. While each of the individual movements and articulations symbolizes little on its own – raising the left leg, shifting weight from one foot to another – these movements comprise the kinesthetic action of throwing a baseball. Yet this kinesthetic action is only recognized as such if it is in adherence with the disciplinary practice being described. The body does not take to throwing a baseball in this manner naturally, but instead is disciplined to accomplish the given kinesthetic task. In this manner baseball as discipline is made up of many disciplinary practices that are imposed on the body. This includes fielding ground balls –

As soon as the pitcher makes a motion to deliver the ball all players should be ready instantly to start to either side or forward for a batted ball, with the weight forward on the balls of the feet, the trunk bent slightly forward and the knees bent...Keep the hands close in to the body with the fingers pointing down and the little finger sides together. Keep the feet close together, either on the same line or with one slightly back of the other.¹⁵¹

Another disciplinary practice would be sliding into base. Here the practice is further divided according to various slides, including the “stand-up slide”:

Instead of sliding off to the left with a fall-away, the slide is started right at the base, so that the spikes of the left shoe strike the bag. The right foot here is bent under the left at the knee. The slide is made in a sitting posture. By a pressure on the right leg and the digging in of the heel of the left foot, or the act of striking the bag with the heel, the runner may instantly rise to his feet.¹⁵²

This segmentation of a disciplinary practice into subsets of discipline, in which the disciplinary practice of sliding becomes different techniques for different types of slides, suggests that a given kinesthetic movement is not always appropriate – just as a head-first slide is not always an appropriate movement for the context of the play. Thus

¹⁵¹ Gladys E. Palmer, *Baseball for Girls and Women* (New York: A.S. Barnes and Co., 1929), 26.

¹⁵² Wardlaw, *Fundamentals of Baseball*, 47.

another characteristic of the control of activities is the “correlation of the body and the gesture.” Here Foucault refers to the fact that “Disciplinary control does not consist simply in teaching or imposing a series of particular gestures; it imposes the best relation between a gesture and the overall position of the body, which is its condition of efficiency and speed.”¹⁵³ That is, the disciplinary process must discipline bodies into the correct technique of a given kinesthetic action as well as position the body to commence this action in an efficient manner. This is seen in the throwing example from above, in that the directives on how to throw ends with the thrower in a “correct position for a pitcher to assume after he delivers the ball to the batter. In this attitude he is balanced and ready to field the batted ball.”¹⁵⁴ Here the disciplinary process includes not only the correct technique for the practice of throwing the baseball, but also disciplines the body to be in correct position for throwing and fielding.

The connection between a body-gesture correlation and baseball as discipline is particularly emphasized by the disciplinary practice of fielding. Because fielding requires a reaction of kinesthetic movements to a preceding action, the necessity for a correct “overall position of the body” is critical. This is demonstrated in the fielding example from above, in that players in the field have a correct form to assume as soon as the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand. In this mode fielding relies completely on a body-gesture correlation: “A bounding ground ball...necessitates either an advance or retreat on the part of the fielder. Generally for the sake of speed it is necessary to advance to meet it. This is called “playing the ball.” The player is trying to get the ball when it is at either position, trap or height. He times the speed of his advance with the bound of the ball, and

¹⁵³ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 152.

¹⁵⁴ Wardlaw, *Fundamentals of Baseball*, 5.

his success lies in the correctness of his timing.”¹⁵⁵ A fly ball hit through the air requires a similar correlation:

The most important thing in fielding a fly ball is to get under it as soon as possible. Do not go after the fly ball on the jump or with your hands raised in the air, as it slows up your speed and spoils your vision. Make the catch close to the body with the fingers pointed either up or down. If a fly is hit beyond you, turn your back on it and run for the spot where you think it will land, glance around, locate it, turn front and catch it. Never run backward to field a fly hit over your head...Get under it quickly and try for it.¹⁵⁶

Even when the ball – whether hit on the ground or through the air – has been fielded, the body-gesture correlation is central to completing the disciplinary practice. The fielder now must engage in other disciplinary practices in order to get the runner out. Here an emphasis on body-gesture correlation is especially true for the infielder – “He should be able to pivot on either foot. To “pivot” means to be able to turn on the ball and toes of one foot, and to turn as quickly to the right as to the left, or as quickly to the left as to the right.”¹⁵⁷ Thus the disciplinary practice of fielding requires a constant attention to body-gesture correlation that will result in the most efficient means of accomplishing the goal of getting the runner out.

The characteristic of “body-object articulation” also denotes the control of activities in a disciplinary process, in that “discipline defines each of the relations that the body must have with object that it manipulates.” Here the power inherent in a discipline and disciplinary process incorporates both the body and the object involved in a particular disciplinary practice. That is, “over the whole surface of contact between the body and the object it handles, power is introduced, fastening them to one another. It

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 23.

¹⁵⁶ Palmer, *Baseball for Girls and Women*, 30.

¹⁵⁷ John B. Foster, *How to Play the Infield and the Outfield*, Spalding Red Cover Series of Athletic Handbooks (New York: American Sports Publishing, 1921). Accessed June 2008, A. Giamatti Research Center, National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York.

constitutes a body-weapon, body-tool, body-machine complex.”¹⁵⁸ In regards to baseball as discipline, an example can be found in the directives for control of the ball while pitching: “Control in pitching is largely a matter of form, and can be acquired through an analysis of positions and careful attention to such details as the length of stride, point at which ball is turned loose, etc.”¹⁵⁹ Further, this characteristic is fully evident in the disciplinary practice of batting. In this mode the bat, as object, becomes the weapon, tool or machine that the body is merged with, and thus the player batting becomes a singular “batter.” In the disciplinary practice of batting, the body must be again positioned in a certain way – “the trunk is generally inclined slightly forward,” “the position of the hands on the bat depends upon whether a man is a free swinger or a choke hitter,” “the most important factor in good batting is the use of the elbows.”¹⁶⁰ The practice is not complete until the body and object are one entity; this can be seen in the directives for the actual swing: “The swing forward should be made on a horizontal plane...By lowering his hands he puts himself in the same disadvantage that he would be in were he firing from his hip. If the bat is parallel with the ground there are some two feet of its surface liable to meet the ball,” ensuring the maximum efficiency with each swing.¹⁶¹

Another illustration of batting as disciplinary practice is made in the following instructions. This example first introduces the correlation of the body and gesture, then demonstrates the body-object articulation, and finally gives a temporal elaboration of the actual kinesthetic act of swinging at the ball:

¹⁵⁸ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 153.

¹⁵⁹ Wardlaw, *Fundamentals of Baseball*, 10.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 37.

How to Stand at the Plate

First, however, plant yourself firmly. If you bat right-handed your right foot should be in the rear of your left foot and most of your weight on that foot. Get a firm grip on the earth with your spikes. In the meantime your left foot is out in front resting lightly on the ground and you are ready with it to move either way. The right foot acts as the pivot and you are thus ready to step either way in order to get out of the way of a ball that may be thrown too close.

How the Bat Should be Held.

This is the most important part of batting. A firm grip should be taken about six or eight inches from the knob with right hand uppermost if you bat right-handed and the left hand uppermost if you are a left-handed batter. The short grip is better than the long grip because you can be more unerring in your hitting. Do not think when you are thus fixed that you are to “kill it,” as you hear so often on the prairie diamonds. Don’t try to do anything of the sort. You will do enough if you make a hit just now, and after a while you may become a home-run maker of renown. Just as sure as you sing with all of your might at the ball you will miss it.

A Short Swing is the Best.

Better with a wrist movement combined with the body and arm movement than with a full length swing of the arms. It is much more effective. A short swing is better than a long one because it does not jar you so much and therefore does not impair your vision. If you swing short with the wrists, body and arms all at the same time you can keep your eyes on the ball almost until the moment that the bat connects with it.¹⁶²

These examples, through the evident characteristics of disciplinary techniques, support the concept of a baseball discipline, and the various disciplinary practices that comprise that discipline. Yet from the analysis of Foucault’s theorization of discipline, it is imperative that these disciplinary practices engage not only the individual players’ bodies, but work to discipline the bodies as a collective force, as well. That is, the kinesthetic discourse of baseball must not be made up only of individual disciplinary practices of hitting, fielding, throwing, catching, etc., but also must regulate control the activities of the team as whole. This presupposes that baseball’s discipline includes a

¹⁶² Jesse F. Matteson, *How to Bat* (New York: American Sports Publishing, 1905). Accessed June 2008, A. Giamatti Research Center, National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York.

submission of the individual will to that of the team, which is indeed echoed in the training guides:

If you get your body in good condition and earn a place on your team, forget your individuality as soon as you go on the diamond. Remember you are one of the nine cogs in a machine. Unless that machine functions smoothly there is bound to be trouble. Strive to perfect team play all the time. No club can succeed without it. You may be a great individual player but unless you pass up self-glory for the good of your fellows, the team is very likely to be beaten. You are only cheating yourself in trying to play an individual game. No one can stand out long who cannot or who deliberately fails to cooperate with his team-mates.¹⁶³

This concept of the team as a machine, and individual players as just one cog, directly links to the concept of discipline as both an individual and group method. While baseball's disciplinary practices require a level of individual competence or disciplinary ability, the incorporation of that competence into the functioning of the team is critical. A specific example yields this type of group or team discipline, while bearing the characteristics of an individual disciplinary practice – the kinesthetic action of the “double play,” in which two runners are put out in the same play. Note the teamwork, or essentially team discipline comprised of individual disciplinary practices.

Double Play Around Second Base

The duties of a shortstop on a double play which arises first at second base are twofold. For example, he is responsible in one part of the double play for fielding ground balls accurately and in turn throwing it accurately or tossing it accurately to the second baseman, who in turn throws the ball to a subsequent base for the second out. On the other hand, it often falls to the duty of the shortstop to be the pivot man and to receive a thrown ball from another infielder and in turn throw it to a subsequent base for another out. In the first play, the shortstop must judge accurately of his position at the time he fields the ball and if he is near second base, he should toss it to the second baseman with a scooping motion, but if he is over twenty feet away from second base or over towards the third base side of his territory, then he should throw the ball as quickly and as accurately as possible to the second baseman. Please study the diagram which I have inserted to indicate the point I make here.

¹⁶³ Stanley Harris, *Baseball: How to Play It* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1925). Accessed June 2008, A. Giamatti Research Center, National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York.

Where the shortstop is acting as pivot man in a double play, he should learn to be on second base ahead of the thrown ball and get the ball from the infielder as quickly as possible and throw it to a subsequent base. The shortstop, in order to do this efficiently, must have good foot-work and avoid a run-in with the player coming in to second base. If the shortstop sees that a subsequent play cannot be made after putting the runner out at second base, it is often wise for him to hold the ball rather than to attempt a further play because if he is hurried or off balance, a wild peg will be the result.¹⁶⁴

In this example, each individual player/body – the shortstop, the second baseman, and any other fielder involved in the play – are exhibiting characteristics of several disciplinary practices; these individuals are fielding, throwing, catching and positioning themselves in accordance with the discipline that has regulated these kinesthetic motions. Further, this example serves to show these various practices functioning in conjunction with one another, resembling the “machine” that baseball as discipline deems necessary. More importantly, this reinforces the concept of the team over the individual, and team’s disciplined machine over the individual disciplined body. Indeed, when analyzed in this manner, the individual disciplined bodies are subsumed by the entire discipline of baseball: “It has been a source of pleasure as I have sat on the player’s bench and watched a play take place, which thrilled the stand, to know back of most such plays, is an intricate and scientific modus operandi. Although much credit is due a player when he makes a so-called “star play,” still more credit is due the game he is playing.”¹⁶⁵

This “star play” suggests the type of individual kinesthetic effort that may or may not fall within the boundaries of a given kinesthetic disciplinary practice – the individual body may have essentially improvised movement outside of the discipline, for example a

¹⁶⁴ Byrd Douglas, *The Science of Baseball* (New York: Thos E. Wilson & Co., 1922). Accessed June 2008, A. Giamatti Research Center, National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York.

¹⁶⁵ Wilbert Robinson, in *The Science of Baseball*, ed. Byrd Douglas (New York: Thos E. Wilson & Co., 1922). Accessed June 2008, A. Giamatti Research Center, National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York.

shortstop flipping the ball backhanded to the second baseman to start a second play. Such a kinesthetic move would not be recognized by the disciplinary practice, as it does not adhere to the disciplined movements of the body. First, I would argue that this type of play provides evidence of the resistance involved in discipline and disciplinary power, and to that end a further discussion of this resistance will come later. More immediately, though, is the recognition that the “star play,” rather than serving as a testament to an individual’s skill or ability, is constructed here as a testament to the game of baseball. I would argue that not only are individual bodies and the accompanying disciplinary ability subsumed by the discipline and functioning of the team, but that both individual and team disciplinary ability is subsumed by the larger discipline of baseball. In this manner the discipline, and the kinesthetic actions and knowledge maintained and distributed through it, remains impermeable to any individual body or group of bodies. The discipline of baseball thus retains its disciplinary power.

Are Ballplayers Born or Made?

This analysis, which displays the various characteristics of baseball as discipline, including the recognition of baseball’s disciplinary practices (hitting, fielding, sliding, catching, pitching, etc.), allows for a kinesthetic discourse of the sport. That is, aside from the linguistic and statistical discourse which surrounds and informs knowledge of baseball as a sport, this focus on the kinesthetic disciplinary practices – and the incorporation of that discipline into both individual bodies and the team as a unit – suggests that the actual playing of baseball further informs and shapes understandings of the sport both as physical activity and as social institution. When individual bodies carry out the kinesthetic motions regulated by disciplinary practices, those actions (fielding,

throwing, batting, etc.) serve as evidence of baseball as discipline, and function to reinforce the correct techniques and manner of playing the game.

However, it remains imperative to historically and socially situate this study, in order to reflect the always changing and always shifting nature of discipline and disciplinary technologies. Philosopher Joshua Rayman argues that in more recent years, baseball has engaged a “new baseball science” that has “transformed the reality of the game and the procedures by which this reality is known.” This new science is based exclusively on a “non-visual, analytical, statistical method,” and is often referred to as “sabermetrics.” If this is the new baseball science, for the purposes of this thesis I am more concerned with the old science, characterized by a “primarily visual model of understanding the game, based on expert observation of qualitative and quantitative characteristics of bodies.”¹⁶⁶ In this traditional baseball science, the kinesthetic and strategic knowledge of the game is maintained by experts – much like those that distributed this knowledge through training guides and supervised youth sport programs. More importantly, this science is directly invested in the individual players as “bodies,” providing a direct link to baseball as discipline. Indeed, Rayman draws a parallel between the shift that occurs between these two baseball sciences and the “Foucaultian transition from the classical ideal of the natural soldier to the Napoleonic model of the disciplines.”¹⁶⁷ For Foucault, this transition marked the end of the ideal of natural ability, and a shift to understanding that such ability could be “made” through discipline of the body. Whereas earlier soldiers were deemed naturally fit for such a position, Foucault

¹⁶⁶ Joshua Rayman, "Discipline and Punish the Ball: Foucault, Metaphysics, and Baseball," *International Studies in Philosophy* 37, no. 1 (2005): 95.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*: 96.

explains that by the late 18th century, “the soldier has become something that can be made; out of formless clay, an inapt body, the machine required can be constructed.”¹⁶⁸

Baseball too was undergoing this type of ontological shift within the period being examined – in fact, the debate between those arguing for a “natural” ballplayer and a ballplayer that could be “made” is evident in the discourse of the training guides. These statements, from training guides of the pre- and postwar period, support the idea of the natural ballplayer:

Of course he must have some natural ability along pitching lines. Few twirlers are made. The best of them are born.¹⁶⁹

A youngster can improve his batting, but he must have some natural ability as a hitter to start with. If you have this and go to the plate with confidence and without fear, you will be a menace to almost any pitcher.¹⁷⁰

Learning to play the game is of the least importance. That’s a natural thing. Either a man has ability as a ball player or he hasn’t, and I take it for granted that no young fellow will plan a baseball career unless he is assured of his mechanical abilities.¹⁷¹

This understanding of baseball ability as natural does not invalidate the purposes of baseball as discipline, because even those with natural ability must work to improve and further that ability. Yet this concept of natural baseball ability does contrast with baseball as discipline, in that any individual body is open to being disciplined, often through practice – which denotes the characteristics of discipline (spatial distribution, control of activities, etc.) discussed earlier. Thus the shift in baseball science towards ballplayers as made through discipline rather than nature is also reflected in the discourse of the training guides. These statements often incorporate the concept of natural ability

¹⁶⁸ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 135.

¹⁶⁹ Harris, *Baseball: How to Play It*.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ George Herman Ruth, *Babe Ruth's Own Book of Baseball* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, The Knickerbocker Press, 1928). Accessed June 2008, A. Giamatti Research Center, National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York.

and reconcile that with the potential of baseball as discipline – that is, this concept “understands athletes both as natural bodies, according to the classical conception of the soldier, and mechanical bodies, according to the disciplinary model of the individual.”¹⁷²

It has often been said that batters are born, not made; and, while there is more or less truth in this assertion, there is not the least doubt in my mind that a poor batsman can become a good one by consistent practice.¹⁷³

A player must have good eyes, good poise, good courage, and in my opinion, good form, in order to be a good batter. Some batters (we are told) are born, but most of our good hitters are fellows who have played several years before they became known as great hitters.¹⁷⁴

A ball-player can be made; a batter can be made, many prominent coaches to the contrary notwithstanding; but it takes time and careful teaching and an exact knowledge of the bodily mechanics involved.¹⁷⁵

Therefore, the first step in the process of becoming a good baseball player becomes a question of finding out whether one has native talent for the game. The second thing to do is to learn the game: memorize the rules, study the knotty problems given in most rule books, and become a master of the actual theory of baseball. And the third thing to do, and the most important one, is to practice. Although, as I have said, practice won't make a good player out of someone who lacks native baseball ability. It will make a much better player out of anyone...A student of the new psychology, of course, finds it hard to agree with Mr. Huggins' truism to the effect that baseball players, like poets, are born and not made. Experts are now agreed that practically any normal person, with proper instruction and practice, can become a good baseball player.¹⁷⁶

These statements serve as evidence of the then-ongoing shift in an understanding of baseball, from the traditional model of a natural player to the new model of the disciplined body/player. The aim here is not to enter this debate, but rather to frame this

¹⁷² Rayman, "Discipline and Punish the Ball: Foucault, Metaphysics, and Baseball," 100.

¹⁷³ Tannehill, "Good Advice for Players," in *How to Play Baseball*, ed. T.H. Murnane (New York: American Sports Publishing Co., 1904). Accessed June 2008, A. Giamatti Research Center, National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York.

¹⁷⁴ Jim Bottomley, "Batting .300," in *Making the Big League*, ed. Bill Doak (New York: Rawlings Manufacturing Co., 1927). Accessed June 2008, A. Giamatti Research Center, National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York.

¹⁷⁵ Wardlaw, *Fundamentals of Baseball*, 9.

¹⁷⁶ Alan Monk, *Baseball: How to Play It and How to Watch It* (Girard, KS: Haldeman-Julius Publications, 1927). Accessed June 2008, A. Giamatti Research Center, National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York.

shift and connect this evidence to the ontological shift discussed by Rayman – an analysis of the discourse of these training guides reveals that in this historical period, this ontological shift was indeed underway, and understandings of baseball as physical activity and social institution were changing. However, it is crucial to establish that in the model of baseball as discipline, much like the model of baseball ability as natural, the kinesthetic and strategic knowledge of the sport was maintained and constructed by experts. That is, while this ontological shift marked new understandings of baseball, the regulation of kinesthetic and strategic knowledge remained constant.

This is evidenced by the methods, both qualitative and quantitative, employed by Major League scouts of the era – these “experts” would travel the country, often attending games of youth players such as those involved in the Legion Junior Baseball program. These scouts would assess players based on quantitative data, including height, weight, speed, strength, and throwing velocity, but also on *qualitative* data that was only discernable to the objective “expert” view. Thus criteria “such as looks, swing, the movement of pitches, throwing motion, and psychological profiles compiled through interviews, hearsay, and background research” were also a central element of an evaluation of an individual player. In this mode baseball players are understood as “artificially constructed, disciplinary bodies subject to mechanical laws.”¹⁷⁷ That is, the objective expert – and the objective expert alone – is able to evaluate the disciplinary ability of each disciplined body. Yet “this mechanical, partially quantitative, disciplinary determination of bodies in motion is combined with, and helps to generate, a classical conception of the “natural” athlete.” Here Rayman introduces the concept of the baseball “Face,” as one physical feature of an individual player that could only be recognized by

¹⁷⁷ Rayman, "Discipline and Punish the Ball: Foucault, Metaphysics, and Baseball," 100.

the objective expert.¹⁷⁸ This dependency on the objective expert for confirmation of baseball ability is echoed in the various training guides –

Now suppose you...feel that that you play some position well enough to entitle you to a try-out. First – collect all the clippings from newspapers etc., that tell about your ability. Then get some man who knows baseball to recommend you. Not a fan, understand, but some man who knows the game well enough to judge whether or not you've really got the stuff that makes big league players.¹⁷⁹

Further, the objective expert is present in these guides, because such experts were those interested in writing and publishing such material. Thus many of these guides explain in detail what is required for a certain position – in effect, judging the individual body before the player has even seen the field. In this manner the objective expert maintains a position of authority and knowledge. Moreover, by categorizing individual bodies based on qualitative observation, the expert supports the spatial distribution of individual bodies into separate positions on the field. One particular training guide includes the necessary attributes for these various positions, both in terms of physicality and personality:

Pitching – Physical Requirements, How to Train, What a Pitcher Needs

Physically a pitcher should be big. He should be of good height as well as size and be of the rugged type. He has to be stronger than the average in order to stand the strain. But he can't be overgrown and clumsy and expect to make much headway. There have been small pitchers who have met with great success. They are an exception to the rule. As a general thing, the percentage is against them. Take Waddell, Young, Mathewson, and Johnson, for instance. They were tall, big-shouldered and trim-waisted. They also had big hands and long fingers which are great assets to a pitcher. The mental equipment of a pitching candidate is almost as important as a good physique. Summed up, a pitcher needs a good physique, brains, coolness and courage.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.: 101-02.

¹⁷⁹ Charles Barrett, "Picking Rookies," in *Making the Big League*, ed. Bill Doak (New York: Rawlings Manufacturing Co., 1927). Accessed June 2008, A. Giamatti Research Center, National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York.

Catching – The Needed Type, How To Train, What a Catcher Needs

The ideal physical type of catcher is one of stocky build. This is because the nature of the position demands a man who can stand hard work and plenty of it. Not all great catchers are big men physically. But they...had a knack of conserving their strength, and so were able to stand the pace better than many bigger men. In baseball, as in everything else, it is the exception which proves the rule. It is impossible to set up an absolutely arbitrary physical qualification for any position on a baseball team. I am pointing out what qualities will be the greatest asset to a youngster, seeking a given position, and the ones which are more or less essential to his success. But boys should bear in mind that if they have the will to do a certain thing it will go a long way toward overcoming many handicaps.

Second Base – Needed Qualifications, Fielding Duties

Size doesn't make as much difference in a second baseman as it does in some of the other positions. There have been tall and short, lean and stocky players who have filled the place successfully. But the youngster breaking in as a second sacker should have plenty of speed, a good throwing arm, and good sized hands, to start with. Every youngster must practise constantly and intelligently if he is to get anywhere as a second baseman or in filling any other position. Baseball is no game for the drone.

Shortstop – Needed Qualifications, Fielding Duties

No definite specifications on size will apply to the shortstop's position. The player between second and third can be small or rangy so long as he has the ability to cover a lot of ground. Furthermore, you will need a strong arm if you fill the position. Frequently you have long throws to make to first base from your deep territory. A weak arm is a damaging handicap on such plays. Unless you can whip the ball across the diamond fast and true you will miss many men who ought to be retired. A steady, sure throw is the thing to strive for. Bear in mind that it is better to take your time and make the play this way than it is to hustle the ball toward first to nail the runner by a wide margin and perhaps make a wild throw.

The Outfield – Needed Qualifications

The youngster hoping to be a successful outfielder will need to be fast on his feet, own a fine throwing arm, have an instinct as to where a fly ball will drop, and possess the knack of taking ground balls almost as fast and accurately as an infielder. He also has to be a heavy hitter and a good baserunner. This may seem a large bill to fill. And it is. If you find you are markedly shy in the

qualifications I have listed, you had better make up your mind to try for some other position than that of an outfielder.¹⁸⁰

By identifying the qualifications for each position, the objective expert reinforces the claim as a holder of baseball's knowledge, giving the expert a privileged status. Further, the expert also serves as supervisor of baseball's disciplinary practices, allowing for a reconciliation between natural characteristics and disciplinary ability. Thus while "the natural baseball player...could be identified just by looking at him," this status as a player with recognized ability "depended on the agreement of disciplines ranging from physiognomy, medicine, and physiology to psychology."¹⁸¹ Though this combination of disciplines is acknowledged, the immediate focus of this thesis on the kinesthetic discourse of baseball as discipline makes the physiological element of greatest concern. In short, the discipline of baseball meant that correct techniques were established, individual bodies were then disciplined according to these techniques, and those bodies were then evaluated by how they measured up to these techniques.

Here it is possible to reconnect with concept of disciplinary as a productive force, in that "Discipline 'makes' individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments."¹⁸² In other words, the disciplines of baseball – throwing, catching, batting, sliding – do not only create baseball players, but they create individual subjects. To reemphasize a particular view of "power," this creation is the crucial point that Foucault hoped to make: "We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms...In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the

¹⁸⁰ Harris, *Baseball: How to Play It*.

¹⁸¹ Rayman, "Discipline and Punish the Ball: Foucault, Metaphysics, and Baseball," 102.

¹⁸² Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 170.

knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production.”¹⁸³ This means that when we speak of baseball “disciplines,” it is imperative to understand that these methods of power do not simply restrict subjects into a perpetual state of homogeneity. On the contrary, disciplines create individuals because it assigns the individual a place in relation to the larger group: “Discipline is an art of rank, a technique for the transformation of arrangements. It individualizes bodies by a location that does not give them a fixed position, but distributes them and circulates them in a network of relations.”¹⁸⁴

Discipline, Nationalism, Masculinity

Yet the aim of this thesis is not to solely analyze the making of baseball players, but to recognize the cultural and social significance of the subjective identities being created. This study has established a historically-specific relationship between youth baseball, masculinity and American nationalism in the pre- and post-World War I period, and has also recognized the kinesthetic discourse of baseball as discipline. In fact, it is the aim here to examine the connection between these two elements: to demonstrate that the kinesthetic discourse of baseball as discipline was inherently bound up in the relationship between baseball, masculinity and American nationalism. Returning to Foucault, “the term ‘discipline’ to designate these training procedures...stresses also the connections between these techniques of power and the forms of knowledge that developed alongside them.”¹⁸⁵ Thus aside from an analysis of baseball’s disciplinary practices and baseball as a discipline, this thesis seeks to unpack the “forms of knowledge” that both informed and were informed by the discipline. I would argue that these forms of knowledge are readily available for analysis in three major themes: moral discipline, masculinity and

¹⁸³ Ibid., 194.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 146.

¹⁸⁵ McHoul, *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject*, 70.

nationalism. The first of these themes serves more as an example of form of knowledge, while the latter two are central to the overall premise of youth baseball as inherently masculine and nationalist.

By “moral discipline,” I refer to the inclusion of a moral standard in the discipline of baseball articulated by the objective experts of both the training guides and the youth sport programs. In short, the kinesthetic disciplinary practices of baseball were often accompanied by a necessity for moral discipline, in terms of avoiding both health and social ills. The need for physical health might be self-evident, in that athletic excellence often requires a level of physical health – yet the experts often made this a primary focus:

Keep physically fit always. It isn't hard if you do it, but if you let yourself slip it's doubly hard to come back.¹⁸⁶

The lad who wants to play the game should be sure that he is in good physical condition. And once he gets into proper shape he should do his utmost to remain so. Otherwise he has a heavy handicap to overcome. So my advice to all who would be successful on scholastic, collegiate, amateur, semi-pro or professional teams is that they keep their bodies in the best of condition. Only by so doing can they be certain to put forth their best efforts. I know of promising young ball players who have neglected their bodies to the extent that they have failed to make good as amateurs. Others have sacrificed excellent futures as professionals for the same reason.¹⁸⁷

This emphasis on a discipline of physical health often included a moral element, as well, in regards to overconsumption:

Another thing that is essential to perfect health for ball playing is the proper digestion of food, and to get this it is necessary to have regular exercise and regular hours for meals. A man should rise not later than seven in the morning and retire not later than 11 p.m. During the playing season all players should abstain from all kinds of liquor and stimulants.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ Ruth, *Babe Ruth's Own Book of Baseball*. Ruth's advice is made even more interesting considering his own reputation in terms of diet and exercise. He also reflects his own experience when giving financial advice: “Most important of all – and this goes not alone for baseball but for every other profession – save your money!”

¹⁸⁷ Harris, *Baseball: How to Play It*.

¹⁸⁸ Tannehill, "Good Advice for Players."

Another thing – there’s no place in the majors for the lad who drinks or dissipates. A player’s habits are investigated first and they must be clean.¹⁸⁹

The rest is practice and then more practice plus clean living. No big league player can afford to dissipate in any way whatsoever.¹⁹⁰

This discourse thus links disciplinary ability within in the kinesthetic and strategic discipline of baseball with a discipline away from the field – in short, the body is now disciplined both on and off the baseball diamond. As such, this evidence connects the discipline of baseball with social and cultural issues and attitudes that reach beyond the playing of the sport by disciplined bodies. Most important to this study, then, is a connection between the discipline of baseball and the discourse of masculinity and nationalism. Therefore evidence of this discourse in correspondence with baseball as discipline is necessary.

This evidence abounds in the training guides, as many of the experts that laid claim to baseball’s kinesthetic and strategic knowledge also supported and reinforced the concept of the sport as beneficial to the development of a masculine nationalism. The use of these terms in combination – masculine nationalism – rather than as separate themes represents the inextricable binding of these concepts at the cultural site of the baseball diamond. Again, this thesis does not dismiss the aspects of race and class within this site, but acknowledges that a thorough examination of the implications in regards to these issues is beyond the immediate scope of this analysis. I argue here that nationalism was tied to masculinity, and that this knowledge was developed alongside the discipline of

¹⁸⁹ Barrett, "Picking Rookies."

¹⁹⁰ Bob O'Farrell, "Behind the Bat," in *Making the Big League*, ed. Bill Doak (New York: Rawlings Manufacture Co., 1926). Accessed June 2008, A. Giamatti Research Center, National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York.

baseball and the disciplinary practices therein. In this mode, the discourse of nationalism and masculinity within the training guides serves as evidence of this connection:

“Sport functions as a very real part of our national life...Since the beginning of Time, Youth has admired, not the men of philosophical attainments, not the men of intellectual pursuits, but the mighty men of valour, the men of great physical skill, the men who excel in war and its modern substitute which, let us hope, is sport.”¹⁹¹ In this passage the linking of sport to a “national life,” to “mighty men” of “physical skill,” and to excelling in combat is all readily evident. If sport equates baseball – which it does, as this passage is from a baseball training guide – then this quote, and the concepts and ideals which provoked it, epitomize the relationship between the discourse of baseball, masculinity and American nationalism. Another guide reinforces the epitomizing of this relationship, while also stressing the element of youth sports:

Youngsters must learn to think all the time in order to make good in baseball. The national pastime is no game for the mental sluggard. The game is not one for the faint of heart. Courage of a high order is demanded of all those who earn regular places on a team. Baseball will teach you many of the needed lessons of life. It will aid in the mental, moral and physical development of any youth. There is not better school in which to develop the young manhood of the United States.

If you have a liking for the game, play it as hard and as often as you can. You will be a better man and a better citizen by reason of so doing. The sport will teach you discipline, build up your body, sharpen your mental powers, and help develop you into a better all-around man.¹⁹²

Examples of the discourse of the training guides such as these encapsulate the forms of knowledge being developed alongside and through one another – youth baseball players, through learning the kinesthetic and strategic knowledge of baseball as discipline

¹⁹¹ Branch Rickey, "Foreword," in *Making the Big League*, ed. Bill Doak (New York: Rawlings Manufacture Co., 1927). Accessed June 2008, A. Giamatti Research Center, National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York.

¹⁹² Harris, *Baseball: How to Play It*.

as articulated by specific sources (experts), are also engaged by a discourse of masculine nationalism that is presented as inseparable from the sport. Thus on one hand this thesis has sought to connect the theme of nationalism in different contexts – a nationalism that is inherent in the ideology of youth sports programs led by reformers and social critics such as Luther Gulick, inherent in the Americanism program of the American Legion, which included American Legion Junior Baseball, and inherent in the discipline of baseball as recognized through a kinesthetic discourse. American nationalism and baseball can be connected at various social and historical moments, institutions and individuals, only some of which have been examined in this study. Indeed, these connections are so varied and common that adoption of baseball as America’s “National Pastime” has been reinforced and largely uncontested. Further research would yield other understandings of this connection between American nationalism and baseball, but this thesis has focused on drawing out specific connections within the historical and social context of pre- and post-World War I America.

More importantly for the critical aspect of this thesis, the connections being drawn out allow for the recognition of baseball as inherently masculine in this context. In this mode, I argue that the discipline of baseball simultaneously creates disciplined bodies and subjective identities, in particular the identity of “ballplayer” which constitutes ability in the disciplinary practices of baseball. Thus the disciplinary process includes an element of subjection – “‘subjection’ refers to particular, historically located, disciplinary processes and concepts which enable us to consider ourselves as individual subjects and which constrain us from thinking otherwise. These processes and concepts

(or ‘techniques’) are what *allow* the subject to ‘tell the truth about itself’.”¹⁹³ This thesis has established that baseball as discipline “subjects” individual bodies to disciplinary techniques, and the subject then tells the truth about itself: it is now a disciplined ballplayer. Yet it is imperative to note the second part of this concept – these disciplinary processes include an element of regulation, in that they “constrain” subjects from alternative identities. One such constraint on the subjective identity of “ballplayer” is that of gender, in that the subjective identity of ballplayer is inherently masculine. This concept follows the social history of youth sports programs, wherein girls and boys were separated according to “single-sex play,” and the history of a connection between sport and the military, which articulated a binding of masculinity, sporting experience and combat. Further, the combination these histories – and the ideologies they informed and were informed by - ultimately resulted in the formation of the American Legion Junior Baseball program.

Thus by 1927 baseball was deemed intrinsically masculine, and only capable of being played by males, if for no other reason than the kinesthetic requirement of the “throw:” “Throwing is perfectly natural co-ordination for boys. History and heredity have produced it. Primeval man threw stones to kill his meat, and throwing games were the natural outcome of this early developed skill. All races have thrown either stones, javelins, or balls; and the male has been the one to do it.”¹⁹⁴

Yet, despite the supposed biological and historical evidence, and in contrast to the attitudes and opinions of reformers and social critics, women and girls increasingly took an interest to baseball. However, this interest was not rooted in a seat in the grandstands,

¹⁹³ McHoul, *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject*, 3.

¹⁹⁴ Wardlaw, *Fundamentals of Baseball*, 3.

but rather in playing the sport. The social force of women's interest in playing baseball thus required a negotiation, which allowed for women to play the game without providing an equal plane of kinesthetic ability and physical prowess. To that end, physical culturists and sport directors created different and altered forms of baseball – these included indoor baseball, “the first baseball game to be played extensively by girls and women,” “Playground Ball,” an early modification of contemporary women's softball, and “Diamond Ball,” originally designated “Kitten Ball” by the creator.¹⁹⁵

While the name alone of this final version suggests a gender inequity, at least in the view of that particular creator, the idea that women and girls were not physiologically capable of playing baseball by men's rules was a guiding principle for those vested in youth sport programs. This is evidenced by remarks from Gladys E. Palmer, author of a baseball training guide published in 1929, *Baseball for Girls and Women*, and then-Assistant Professor of Physical Education at the Ohio State University. Palmer's guide exhibits many of the same disciplinary characteristics – in fact, several of the textual examples from above are sourced from her work. To that effect, baseball as discipline would appear to discipline both male and female bodies, and I would not dispute this contention. However, the sport that Palmer discusses is definitively baseball for women, a distinct version of the game set apart from men's baseball. Palmer states that:

Until 1926 there were no outdoor baseball rules to meet the particular requirements of girls and women. Long before that date, however, it was generally agreed that the national game as played by men is unsuited to girls and women, because:

1. The intricate technic [sic] of the game is too difficult for the average girl to master.
2. The throwing distances are too great.

¹⁹⁵ Palmer, *Baseball for Girls and Women*, 6.

3. There is no advantage which cannot be enjoyed through participation in a more simple and well-planned, but less strenuous game, based on the men's game.
4. The danger of injuries is unnecessarily great with the use of the small, hard ball.¹⁹⁶

Thus while women and girls were interested in playing baseball, the sport they were encouraged and allowed to play was something similar, but not the same. Further, the benefits of playing baseball – even in modified form – were seen as a possible source of some intellectual and physical equality between male and female. Palmer explains that

...baseball, because of its highly organized nature, has a great deal in its favor as a game for girls and women. It teaches them what the boys have learned from time immemorial in their sand-lot games: the ability to think quickly to coordinate thought and action, to exercise good judgment, and a certain faculty in divining in advance the thoughts and actions of others.¹⁹⁷

This distinction between what boys “have learned” and what girls apparently have not signals an understood inequality between men and women – in this view, girls have lacked these attributes, whereas boys have attained them.

Yet moving past this distinction, I would argue that the sport as designed for women results in a discipline of baseball that creates different subjective identities than that of men's baseball. Palmer refutes Spalding's statement that women should only be in the bleachers, explaining that such comments “were made only with reference to the game as played by men...It is now generally conceded...that the game as developed in recent years for girls and women does not require violent exertion on the part of the player.”¹⁹⁸ However, the distinction between the men's game and the game “as developed...for girls and women” cannot be understated. This difference, I would argue, results in distinct differences in the discipline of men's baseball compared to women's

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 12.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

baseball. If these disciplines both create subjective identities, it follows that women – despite playing a modified form of the same game – are not able to become the disciplined body of the men’s game, which is constructed as inherently masculine and nationalist. That is, women are constrained from participating in the discipline of baseball as articulated earlier, and the discipline they are able to participate in does not incorporate the same elements of masculinity and nationalism. Thus while baseball provided an opportunity for males to achieve a realization of masculine nationality – privileged in this context as the dominant “hegemonic masculinity” – this opportunity was not open to women. In short, baseball as discipline constrained and regulated any understanding of the sport as anything other than gendered and American. Yet the desire of women to play baseball, and play baseball with men, was not absent. To that end, I will seek to connect women ballplayers with a concept of resistance – a discussion of this kinesthetic disciplinary resistance will be furthered in the Afterword.

To sum up the work of this thesis thus far, I have introduced the concepts of sporting nationalism and a connection between sport and masculinity, emphasizing the need to historically contextualize these themes. A social and historical perspective of attitudes and ideologies regarding youth sport and baseball is then combined with a textual analysis of baseball guides of the period, specifically focusing on the joining of nationalism and masculinity through the kinesthetic playing of the sport – recognized here as a kinesthetic discourse of baseball. Moreover, the individual disciplinary practices of baseball – batting, fielding, pitching, catching, etc - comprise a discipline of baseball, through which a process of subjection realizes the subjective identity of the “ballplayer.”

This thesis thus explores the relationship between amateur baseball, American nationalism and masculinity in the historical context of the post-World War I period (1920-1930), focusing on the American Legion Junior Baseball program started during that same era. By incorporating the theorization of “hegemonic masculinity,” first popularized by sociologist R.W. Connell and subsequently a major theme in the sociology of sport, I argue that amateur baseball constituted a distinct form of nationalist masculinity that figured prominently in both the status of the sport and the status of gender roles within post-war American culture. By focusing on the instruction and action of these amateur players, I demonstrate how nationalism and masculinity converged through the playing of baseball by young American males.

Afterword

Discipline, Resistance and Margaret Gisolo

“The World War proved conclusively that American men were perhaps the best physically of any other participants. One of the reasons for this fact can be found in the great love for sports which our boys and girls have shown. This love must be kept burning if our national physical welfare is to be maintained. Baseball is a National Institution and the father of all sports in this country.

In considering Baseball from the financial viewpoint, we are possibly blinded to its other greater values. If Baseball could be played only by professional players, it would not commend itself to a high position in athletics. But, it offers to every boy a safe means of physical development and removes the anxiety of mind generally rising among parents when their sons compete in other forms of sport. The list of casualties in Baseball is practically nothing in comparison to other sports.

I shall always believe that Baseball is a National asset. Is there a boy anywhere who does not like to play? Baseball is a “play” game, but it also develops the boy’s mind for it is scientific. In a physical sense, a man can be made only from a boy and a nation can be made only from its men. If Baseball assists in making better boys physically, it is directly helping to make our Nation and in doing so impresses upon all its value as a National sport.”

– John McGraw, Manager of New York Giants and
“Dean of Baseball Managers”¹⁹⁹

The sentiment expressed by McGraw demonstrates again the intertwining of baseball, American nationalism and masculinity in the post-World War I period – from this viewpoint, the sport constituted the necessary characteristics of an American male. As this thesis has argued, the idea that “a man can be made only from a boy and a nation can be made only from its men” was realized in the ideology of youth sport. In this mode, reformers, social critics and organizations such as the American Legion all recognized sport as a possible site for cultural instruction, which included an emphasis on the disciplined body of the ballplayer. Yet it is imperative to understand the complexity of power in this disciplinary framework; following Foucault, power is not possessed by a privileged person or group, and is not simply exercised over those who do not possess it.²⁰⁰ Within the parameters of this thesis, this means that the youth sport

¹⁹⁹ John J. McGraw, in *The Science of Baseball*, ed. Byrd Douglas (New York: Thos E. Wilson & Co., 1922).

²⁰⁰ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 27-28.

reformers, social critics and instructors and coaches involved in youth sport programs including Legion Baseball were not somehow outside of the power inherent in the disciplinary system of baseball, nor were they exercising power over oppressed or coerced bodies. Incorporating Foucault's concept of discipline, this thesis sees "the 'wielders' of power as being just as inextricably caught in its webs as the supposedly powerless. It [sees] power in terms of relations built consistently into the flows and practices of everyday life, rather than as some *thing* imposed from the top down."²⁰¹

This necessary complication of power does not restrict the potential for discipline to create a docile body, and it does not interfere with the authority of the disciplinary figure, whether a ranking officer in the military or a coach or instructor on the field of sport. Yet this thesis reflects an "ascending rather than descending analysis of power...Hegemonic or global forms of power rely in the first instance on those 'infinitesimal' practices, composed of their own particular techniques and tactics, which exist in those institutions on the fringes or at the micro-level of society (within the family, the classroom, and so on)."²⁰² Thus through a specific analysis of the disciplinary practices of baseball, this thesis reveals how those practices are made up of particular techniques and tactics – and through these practices how the process of subjection takes place. In short, the disciplinary practices of baseball create subjects that are characterized by embodied docility, referring to the kinesthetic moves and strategies that are in effect "taught" to the body. The discipline of baseball, through the disciplinary power inherent in the system, creates the subjective identity of the "ballplayer." This thesis goes further, however, by following Foucault's charge to

²⁰¹ McHoul, *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject*.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 90.

analyze how disciplinary mechanisms of power have been “invested, colonized, utilized, involuted, transformed, displaced, extended” by institutions and ideologies alike.²⁰³ To that end, this analysis extends beyond the kinesthetic disciplining of the body, and incorporates the discourses of American nationalism and masculinity that are developed alongside the sport of baseball.

The incorporation of an analysis of the social history of youth sport and sport in the military in the pre- and post-World War I period allows for further understanding of how baseball and a distinctly American masculinity were continually and consistently linked; I argue that in turn the very playing of baseball by American male youth constituted the realization of an ideal American masculinity. That is, disciplinary systems create a situation so that “in any given social historical period we can write, speak or think about a given social object or practice (madness, for example) only in certain specific ways and not others.”²⁰⁴ In the social historical period of the 1920s, the social practice of baseball was understood, talked about, thought about, and acted out in relation to a specific American masculinity, which this thesis argues was a form of “hegemonic masculinity.” This contiguity, however, requires a further interrogation of the possibilities for resistance and rupture within the disciplinary framework – this presupposes that the very presence of power relations suggests the potential for resistance, even if only at the level of the “infinitesimal.” According to Foucault, the existence of power relations

depends on a multiplicity of points of resistance: these play the role of adversary, target, support or handle power relations. These points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network... There is a

²⁰³ Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (London: Harvester Press, 1980), 99.

²⁰⁴ McHoul, *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject*, 81.

plurality of resistances, each of them a special case: resistances that are possible, necessary, improbable; others that are spontaneous, savage, solitary, concerted, rampant, or violent: still others that are quick to compromise, interested, or sacrificial; by definition, they can only exist in the field of power relations.²⁰⁵

In this mode, power is understood as the “multiplicity of force relations extant within the social body. Power’s conditions of possibility actually consist of this moving substrate of force relations: the struggles, confrontations, contradictions, inequalities, transformations and integrations of these force relations.”²⁰⁶ This means that power is everywhere, yet the presence of power ensures potential struggle against that power.

It is necessary to acknowledge the potential problematic of applying a theoretical framework of discipline and power to sport; in short, this thesis recognizes that the sporting experience features “some vital disanalogies” with other systems of discipline, and that “sport, ideally at least and perhaps practically, differs from mere drill.”²⁰⁷ Not only does this approach emphasize that “Power is everywhere...because it comes from everywhere,” meaning that no individual or organization is outside or in possession of power, but it also stresses the process of subjection inherent in the disciplinary system.²⁰⁸ Sport as discipline means that individual subjects are regulated, because discipline “validates knowledge claims and...inculcate[s] the idea that the self/body must be subjected to the oversight of knowledgeable persons (experts).”²⁰⁹ To this point, sport as discipline apparently

²⁰⁵ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 95-96.

²⁰⁶ McHoul, *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject*, 84.

²⁰⁷ Leslie A. Howe, "Play, Performance, and the Docile Athlete," *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy* 1, no. 1 (2007): 48.

²⁰⁸ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, 93.

²⁰⁹ Howe, "Play, Performance, and the Docile Athlete," 49.

parallels military discipline – and while this parallel should not be avoided or overlooked, it does not serve as an adequate analysis.

This is because sport includes a notion of “play,” understood here as “the anarchic human(e) fundament of expression and innovation.”²¹⁰ Play is the element of improvisation within a sport discipline and within the disciplinary practices, techniques and tactics – in baseball, it is the “unorthodox” swinging or pitching motion, the using of the glove to flip the ball to a teammate during a double play, the outfielder scaling the fence to catch a deep fly ball. These kinesthetic actions – and the kinesthetic strategies that accompany them – are not necessarily included in the discipline of baseball, and yet are present in the playing of the sport. Moreover, as this thesis argues that such kinesthetic improvisation signals a resistance to the disciplinary practices of baseball, it also argues that the forms of knowledge developed alongside the sport result in potential resistance or ruptures within the process of creating the subjective identity of the “ballplayer” as definitively American and male. That is, just as kinesthetic improvisation (“play”) is possible resistance to the kinesthetic discipline, the subjective process is characterized by points of resistance which make possible a transgression of the social understanding of a discipline as confined to a specific identity or identities.

This thesis emphasizes that these points of resistance within power relations, and within the subjective process, are contradictory, complex and are characterized by historical and social context. Thus while a theorization of resistance is incorporated in my analysis, it is understood that the theoretical framework being

²¹⁰ Ibid.: 50. Howe distinguishes five possible concepts of “play” in relation to sport, which allows for a claim that sport includes more than regulatory discipline: “[sport] includes or even *requires* play defined in terms of spontaneity, either as improvisation or self-expression.” (51)

developed is contingent upon the historical and social context of American amateur baseball in the pre- and postwar period. Rather than offer a model for recognizing resistance in a given context, my aim is identify and analyze a particular point of resistance.²¹¹ As one example of this resistance and transgression, consider the case of Margaret Gisolo (or Gislo).

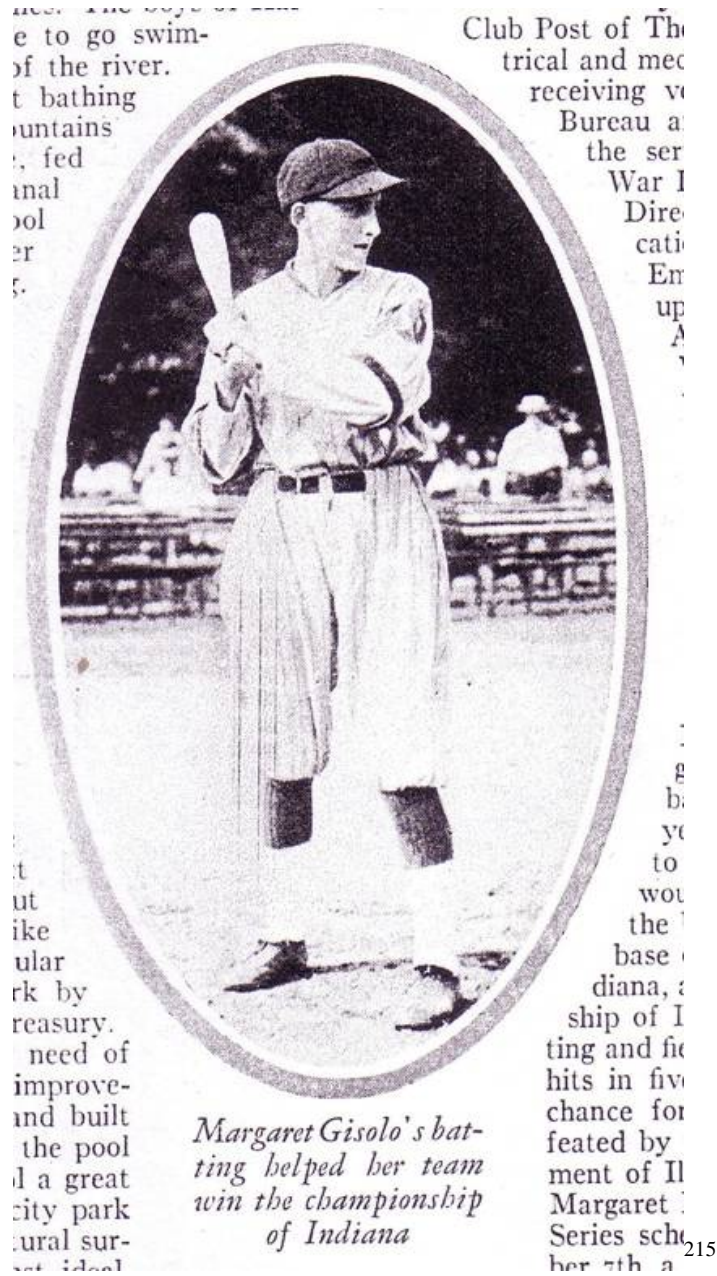
In 1928, after the Legion had voted to continue Junior Baseball as a “major part of the Americanism program,” Americanism Director Dan Sowers cited the “building of character in those youngsters who are steadily marching on to manhood to take over the reins of this country” as the primary benefit of Junior Baseball.²¹² That summer, in a Legion baseball county championship in Clinton, Indiana, the game was won on a twelfth-inning single – and it was quickly discovered that the game-winner had come off the bat of Margaret Gisolo, the only girl on record playing Legion Junior Baseball. Gisolo had played for Blanford youth teams previously, and often joined in games at the “home field” that sat across the street from the general store that her family owned. Under the coaching of her older brother Tony, she then played for the Blanford Cubs during the Legion season, but not until her performance beat the team from nearby Clinton did any attention come to the situation.²¹³ In fact, Gisolo had several hits in the game, stole three bases and

²¹¹ See Jocelyn A. and Rachel L. Einwohner Hollander, "Conceptualizing Resistance," *Sociological Forum* 19, no. 4 (2004).; Hollander and Einwohner assert that “Examining the interactional nature of resistance...highlights the *central role of power*, which is itself an interactional relationship.” Yet they bring attention to multiplicity of definitions and theorizations of resistance within sociology and cultural studies – “The wide range (as well as the mutual contradictions) of the definitions of resistance...illustrates the fact that *the concept of resistance is socially constructed.*” (pp. 548)

²¹² Rumer, *The American Legion: An Official History*, 208.

²¹³ T. Ladd, "Sexual Discrimination in Youth Sport: The Case of Margaret Gisolo," in *Her Story in Sport: An Historical Anthology of Women in Sports*, ed. Reet Howell (West Point, New York: Leisure Press, 1982). Ladd documents the relationship between Gisolo and baseball, explaining that her family and community was greatly interested in the sport.

had fielded without an error – but the losing team protested because, as the rule book stated, “Any *boy* is eligible to participate...” A ruling on the situation was passed from local tournament officials, to the Legion’s state baseball chairman.²¹⁴



²¹⁴ Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 88.

²¹⁵ Image: "Margaret Gisolo - Pies and Home Runs," *American Legion Monthly*, October 1928.

The immediate reaction by the Legion's state official was to suspend Gisolo for a few games, but he turned to national Director Sowers, who was advised to hold off on a decision until the Legion could consult with professional baseball Commissioner Landis. Landis announced, citing the service of "our women in the World War and to the American Legion...it is held that...a girl...who has fulfilled all the requirements as to team registration and age eligibility will be entitled to play on teams."²¹⁶ In Landis' view, there was no language in the Legion rules that meant girls were ineligible to participate. With the Commissioner's and the Legion's approval, Gisolo then scored the winning run in the district championship against Terre Haute, and helped the Cubs win sectional and state championships as well – including pitching in the sectional championship and earning the sportsmanship trophy in that tournament. When the Blanford Legion team finally did bow out in the national finals to a team from Chicago, Gisolo registered three hits and again fielded without an error in the loss.²¹⁷

However, Gisolo's "debut with the boys" would be short-lived. After her team was defeated in the regional tournament, the National Americanism Commission promptly passed a rule prohibiting girls from the Junior Baseball program.²¹⁸ Gisolo did receive a sort of consolation – a ball signed by Commissioner Landis and sent to Gisolo now resides in the National Baseball Hall of Fame.²¹⁹

In this case, the hegemonic masculinity being promoted through Junior Baseball had been disrupted – and that Gisolo had demonstrated a high aptitude of

²¹⁶ Rumer, *The American Legion: An Official History*, 209.

²¹⁷ Seymour, *Baseball: Vol. III - the People's Game*, 88.

²¹⁸ Rumer, *The American Legion: An Official History*, 209.

²¹⁹ Gisolo's baseball a part of the Diamond Dreams exhibit, National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York, June 2008.

baseball as discipline in her performance further complicated the masculine identity being formulated. Thus in one sense, Gisolo serves as evidence of the resistance possible in “play”-ing a sport:

Nevertheless, play, like pleasure, constitutes a potential point of resistance: while the docile athlete submits to practice in order to ‘discover’, that is, receive meaning from, the structures that construct him, the spontaneous exultation of the body in the joy of play (playfulness) persists as a singular point of expression and construction of self, or perhaps rather, ‘selfness’, that is a de facto resistance to the reduction of sport to maximal programmisation. The playful athlete is open to embodiment’s possibilities rather than engaged in the struggle to subdue its subjective in commensurabilities. To embrace play is to express one’s subjectivity in activity, albeit through the medium of learned movement rehearsed in conventional forms, and to, in effect, declare one’s *subjective embodiment* to be at the centre of one’s self (emphasizing both the subjective *and* the embodiment). Thus play requires a constant insertion of an agential self and it is in this respect that it persists as a point of resistance to complete submergence under discipline.²²⁰

In this mode, Gisolo’s participation in Legion Junior baseball problematizes the idea that baseball as kinesthetic discipline is capable of being played only by males – from a strictly kinesthetic viewpoint, females are capable of developing and possessing ability in baseball as discipline. Further, Gisolo’s apparent ability in many of the separate disciplinary practices (batting, fielding, pitching, etc.) reinforces this idea; thus Gisolo’s performance is evidence of kinesthetic resistance. While the discipline of baseball was constructed as male, Gisolo’s kinesthetic performance refutes the biological theory of single-sex play included in the ideology of youth sport, and problematizes the gendering of the kinesthetic discourse of baseball.

²²⁰ Howe, "Play, Performance, and the Docile Athlete," 54.

Yet Gisolo's participation also evidences a potential rupture or inconsistency within the subjective process of the discipline of baseball - referring not only to the kinesthetic discipline of baseball but also to the forms of knowledge developed alongside this discipline: American nationalism and masculinity. The discourse of American masculinity in connection to baseball, as examined throughout this thesis, meant that the subjective identity of the "ballplayer" was constructed as inherently American and male. My analysis argues that Gisolo's participation in the sport, as a female body that was subjectively processed as "ballplayer," signals a particular point of competing discourses involved in the discipline of baseball. That is, while Gisolo was able to perform the kinesthetic discourse of the sport, the discourse of American masculinity that accompanied this kinesthetic discourse was being made problematic by her performance. The power relations of the discipline of baseball was characterized an American masculinity acted out by male bodies, and these power relations depend on points of resistance - thus this thesis argues that Gisolo's participation in American Legion Junior baseball was a particular point of resistance.

In this "special case," the point of resistance is neither violent nor improbable - Gisolo's embodiment of the "ballplayer" did not bring about violent social conflict, and the desire by many females, not only Gisolo, to play baseball makes her participation plausible. My analysis focuses on a recognition of Gisolo's participation as resistance that did not require intent on her part, nor on the part of her teammates and coaches; this point of resistance is spontaneous and possible rather than concerted and necessary. In this mode, the inclusion of Gisolo in the subjective process of baseball as discipline evidences the potential for struggle and

confrontation within the power present in that discipline. As power relations rely on points of resistance and struggle, the power involved in the construction of baseball as defined by American masculinity resulted in the potential for a female body to become a “ballplayer.”

However, the identity that a female “ballplayer” embodied was apparently recognized by others, specifically those in charge of Legion Junior baseball. Gisolo’s subsequent prohibition from the program is one display of the boundary work that was necessary to maintain the hegemonic masculinity evident through the discourse of Americanism. Had Gisolo been allowed to play, the Legion’s explicit focus on “manhood” would have been disturbed, as would the structure/order of gender contained within that masculinity. Barring girls from participation in the Legion program would mean that this potential struggle or confrontation would be eliminated, and would ensure the preservation of a recognized linkage between baseball and American masculinity. The Legion’s own coverage of the Gisolo case exemplifies this approach - in the October 1928 issue of American Legion Monthly, the “Keeping Step” section includes the following:

Pies and Home Runs

A modest little Indiana girl who helps her mother with the dishes and likes to bake pies might have been an outstanding figure in The American Legion’s Junior World Series baseball games...²²¹

The brief story details Gisolo’s leading the Blanford Cubs through the state and sectional tournaments, and their loss at the national level – it does not mention anything about her subsequent exclusion from the Legion program. This framing of Gisolo’s participation in strictly gendered terms – evoking the traditional femininity

²²¹ "Margaret Gisolo - Pies and Home Runs."

of baking and kitchen work – recognizes Gisolo’s accomplishments, but only through the lens of her constructed gender difference to the other Legion players. Gisolo may have been a ballplayer, but this subjective identity would be closed off, at least through the Legion program. Baseball and American masculinity would continue to be inextricably linked.

This thesis has sought to demonstrate how a distinct form of American masculinity was promoted, projected and realized in youth sport programs of this social historical period, including American Legion Junior baseball. In particular, the discipline of baseball – and the disciplinary practices that comprise the sport – created docile bodies that were, through the process of subjection, made into the identity of “ballplayer,” an idealization of the hegemonic form of American masculinity. This work recognizes that “Foucault’s retheorisation of the concept of power cannot reveal to us how a ‘female’ body is turned into a ‘feminine’ one. Instead, by claiming that historical conditions positively produce forms of consciousness or subjectivity, what Foucault can account for is why female subjects today are different from those of the past: in Foucault’s schema, one the of the main reasons is that power techniques have changed...Foucault provides a way of situating, historically, forms of masculine and feminine consciousness.”²²² Thus this thesis’s incorporation of Foucauldian concepts of power and discipline result in a recognition of a historically and socially situated form of masculine consciousness, the American nationalism that was constructed as inherent in this consciousness, and the potential for both kinesthetic resistance to the discipline of baseball, and struggle within the system of power that was possible through the playing of the sport.

²²² McHoul, *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject*, 75.



“First baseman Margaret Gisolo (lying in front) poses with her Blanford Cubs teammates in 1928, the year they won the American Legion Indiana state championship.” – Image and caption accessed June 2008, National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, New York.

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