

MassillonProud: A Performance Studies Approach to High School Football and Localized
Meaning-Making

By

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Abstract

Residents in Massillon, OH understand their relationship to the town through the lens of football. Football offers residents a narrative to which they can accede when the popularized narratives of the town fail to appropriately frame their experiences. The construction of Massillon as a blue-collar small town conflicts with historical narratives presented by other local institutions. Re-enacting the football narrative constructs a sense of self that rationalizes civic identities when confronted with counter-narratives. High school football, then, perpetuates the local, blue collar sense of self. By advancing the football narrative, they can claim that racial and class relations are less relevant in their lives because football enacts a classless and colorblind meritocracy. Because black and white players work where only talent matters, race and class are no longer determinants of success and opportunity. The spectacles and rituals of football also inform residents' relationship to the team. They valorize the team and socialize newcomers and children into the embodied performances which create emotional attachments. Attachment has reached such proportions for some that they ascribe a biological or essential quality to football. The essential quality of the team also gets perpetuated through discourse and everyday practices. Residents conflate team and town where supporting the team means supporting the town. People enact civic identities as they recirculate the football narrative. Beginning with Paul Brown, an infrastructure supporting the team has grown into a celebratory complex of hundreds of projects and programs. Participation in the complex enhances the oneness of being part of the team. People access the greatness associated with the team by constructing a team identity. Individual, civic, and team identities coalesce during McKinley Week, where residents can combat others who represent what they strive to overcome. The repetition of images and performances ingrains the attraction to the team. Residents use football as a mechanism for meaning-making.

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Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction	1
Theoretical Frames	6
Sport as Cultural Performance	8
Spectacle.....	11
Ritual	14
Social Capital	17
Methods.....	19
Interviews	29
Visual Ethnography.....	34
Representation	38
Chapter Breakdown.....	39
Chapter Two: Town	44
History.....	52
MassMu.....	57
Economy	76
Small Town	83
Race.....	86
Chapter Three: Team	95
Tiger Legacy	102
Band	110
Obie.....	120
The Game Experience	134
Personal Attachment	145
Chapter Four: Booster Club.....	155

Organization	167
Wall of Champions	172
The Sideliners.....	175
Membership.....	181
Community Service.....	191
“Hangers-on”	198
Chapter Five: McKinley Week	211
The Rivalry.....	219
The Week	234
The Parade.....	243
The Bonfire	252
Game Day.....	257
The Stakes	278
Conclusion	281
Appendix A: Oral Consent.....	288
Appendix B: Interview Questions.....	289
Appendix C: City of Massillon Flag Legislation.....	292
Appendix D: Sideliners Do’s and Don’ts	293
Appendix E: Massillon Washington High School Alma Mater.....	295
Works Cited	296

Table of Figures

Figure 1: Superheroes for Hope	47
Figure 2: Animal Blessing	56
Figure 3: Underground Railroad - Two Women.....	68
Figure 4: Underground Railroad - A Sheep's Tale	69
Figure 5: Tiger Legacy - Tiger RVs	95
Figure 6: Human Mascot Obie.....	102
Figure 7: Kickoff Rally - Giant Inflatable Obie.....	111
Figure 8: Kickoff Rally - Kids Huddle around Obie	113
Figure 9: Kickoff Rally - Football Players on Stage.....	114
Figure 10: Kickoff Rally - Youth and High School Cheer Squads	115
Figure 11: Football Player on Downtown Banner	119
Figure 12: Obiemobile	166
Figure 13: Massillon Tiger Calliope	167
Figure 14: Open House - Decorated Hallway.....	221
Figure 15: Open House - Decorated Atrium.....	222
Figure 16: Band Concert - Obie Entertains the Crowd.....	223
Figure 17: Village Idiots	245
Figure 18: McKinley Parade - Giant Obie.....	246
Figure 19: McKinley Parade - Tiger-themed Truck	246
Figure 20: Bonfire - Band, Cheer Squad, and Obie.....	247
Figure 21: Game Day Tailgating - Woman in Tiger Face Paint and Gloves.....	266
Figure 22: Game Day - Tube with Orange and Black Balloons	268
Figure 23: McKinley Game - Team Runs onto the Field	269

Chapter One: Introduction

We are Massillon (Curtis)

The game is out of reach despite a couple late scores by the Bulldogs. A dad calls down to his son “Better watch some football!” Up 16 with 1:09 left in the game and only a few people are leaving, no filing out. Someone in the stands reacts to a Massillon player’s return of an interception for a touchdown with 0:13 left in the game by blowing an air horn. The crowd chants “Undefeated.” A man just above me talks about how the future of Tiger football looks good with this freshman team doing so well, especially compared to McKinley. Some people start filing out before the next kickoff. With 0:07 a “We are Massillon” chants begins followed by “We beat McKinley.” Game over. (10-24-12 fieldnote)

Civic pride. Chants of support. Socialization. Rivalry. The themes extracted from one paragraph of one note on a high school freshman football away game speak to wider socio-cultural structures in Massillon, Ohio. Football in the small, industrial town is not something that residents go to; it is a lived experience. Residents share, embody, and venerate football. Signs and symbols circulate through the pep rallies, parades, and daily life for Massillonians. These signs and symbols mark who is and who is not a member of the unifying cultural and social group. This dissertation documents the role of football in the Massillon community as an example of how embodied performance practices creates and recirculates local culture.

As a field of analysis, sport uniquely can offer insight into the “complexities of social life” (Frey & Eitzen 503). Sport possesses “crystallized forms of social structure not found in other systems or situations” (Luschen 59). Frey & Eitzen write that sport is a “product of

social reality” and open research into “group dynamics, goal attainment by social organizations, subcultures, behavioral processes, social bonding, structured inequality, socialization, and organizational networks” (504). While sport results from social reality, it also holds a unique position in society. “No other institution, except perhaps religion, commands the mystique, the nostalgia, the romantic ideational cultural fixation that sport does. No other activity so paradoxically combines the serious with the frivolous, playfulness with intensity, and the ideological with the structural” (Frey & Eitzen 504). Sands writes that sport “offers a field of study that is becoming increasingly important in relations among cultures, nations, and societies” (7). I would add that sport offers insight “within” cultures as well as among them. A study of sport provides insight for and from performance studies.

Performance studies gives researchers a vocabulary to articulate processes of power, or poetics, in the construction of individual and collective identities. Conquergood writes, “Performance-centered research features the fabricated, invented, imagined, constructed nature of human realities. Cultures and selves are not given, they are made; even, like fictions, they are “made up” (1989 83). In bringing performances studies further into the realm of sport studies, the elements of the socio-cultural processes of sport, or, as Conquergood states, “sheer deconstruction and reconstructions” (1989 83). Interrogating the structures of sport with the theories of performances studies brings the indeterminacy and constructedness of identities to the fore. Performances studies works in concert with ethnographic practices, as both focus research on doing and becoming in contrast to being. Ethnographic practice “mediates a set of power relations” between experiences of observing and doing (Conquergood 1989 84). Performance studies emphasizes the subjective experience of the researcher over any notion of objective realities. Conquergood writes, “The performative turn in anthropology is more properly thought of as a spiral of performative turnings, conceptual flips that problematize different angles of ethnographic research” (1989

87-8). The value of performance studies rests in the ability of such scholarly discourse to explicate the elements of socio-cultural phenomena.

In this study, I engage the discourse of performance studies to interrogate power structures and processes of sport. I utilized ethnographic practices as the primary means of data collection. Through participant observation, interviews, and on-site archival research, I identify and explicate the intersections of sport and the collective and individual identities of the residents. In the process, I detail the structures, practices, and processes of meaning-making in Massillon, Ohio, a small, industrial Midwestern town with a nationally-renowned high school football program. I employ the theories of performance studies in two ways; first, in the literal sense, as a study of the performances in Massillon, both those centered on the football team and those without direct connection; and secondly, in the scholarly sense, as an evaluation of the public events and everyday activities of residents as generative and regenerative, or performative. As the primary theoretical intersection, I use a performance studies frame to evaluate the structures and process of the football program in Massillon. I encounter those phenomena through various organizations and events that incorporate the football team into an implicit/explicit understanding of community. By working through a performance studies approach to the rituals and spectacles, I can offer a nuanced and thick description of the processes, and their elements, that construct a collective identity. I also look at how residents' collective identity informs and is informed by individual identities.

I lived in Massillon, Ohio nine months from March to November 2012, and conducted two follow-up visits in 2013 and 2014. I sought primarily football-specific events, while including events not explicitly identify with the football team. Interaction with football related events included both explicit public events like the Touchdown Rally and the McKinley Week Parade, among others. Also, I attended other events with direct connections to the football team that were not the spectacular events, like cleaning Paul Brown Stadium,

meetings of the Museum Group of the Massillon Tiger Booster Club, among others. Additionally, day-to-day interactions and observation often included practices in support of the football team. Non-football events included an Underground Railroad reenactment, a downtown street fair known as FunFest, and a winter Holiday Parade. The primary event was a week-long series of events supporting the football team in the five days leading up the year-end game against arch-rival Canton McKinley High School, known as McKinley Week. The game, held annually dating back to 1894, closes the regular season, near the end of October. The rivalry has exceeded its regional importance surpassing other local sports teams. At a time when high school athletics stayed a local concern, the game was listed by the sports books in Las Vegas. In an on-line history of Massillon Washington football, one of the team booster clubs refers to McKinley Week as follows:

[A] week-long event for the town and school. The decorations in the classrooms and common areas are worthy of a trip. There is a week-long series of community events - Booster Club, Touchdown Club, the live tiger visiting the schools, service clubs visiting their rival, the band marching through town, the pre-game rally at the school and the Friday night parade and bonfire rally attended by thousands. (MassillonTigers.com)

The week also includes “the see-it-to-believe-it Beat McKinley football parade” (VillageProfile.com).

Massillon lies in northeast Ohio about twenty-five miles south of Akron and ten miles West of Canton, home to the Pro Football Hall of Fame. According to the United States Census Bureau, the city’s population in 2012 was 32,168. Its sole public high school, Massillon Washington HS, is steeped in football history and traditions. Legendary football coaches Paul Brown and Earle Bruce both followed significant success at Washington with greater levels of acclaim at the college and (in the case of Brown) professional levels. The

earliest records of football in Massillon date back to 1891; since then, Washington High School has won twenty-four state championships and nine national championships.

Washington has been playing its rival Canton McKinley since 1894. The rivalry holds such a place in the cultural life of Massillon that an entire week is devoted to the game, with ancillary activities including a pep rally, a parade, a bonfire, and a talent show.

Massillon can even claim significance in the history of professional football.

Braunwart and Carroll argue that professional football first came to Ohio in 1903 when the Massillon Tigers hired four professionals from Pittsburgh to play against East Akron in a game billed by organizers as the Ohio Independent Football championship (1). Professional football in Cleveland, now home to the NFL's Browns (named after Massillon icon Paul Brown), according to Braunwart and Carroll, came when Massillon scheduled to play the Carlisle Indian School (later known primarily for attendee Jim Thorpe) in Cleveland after Canton's contract with Carlisle prohibited the school from scheduling another game within Stark County (2). Arnold, Barkan, and Cicchinelli, Jr. write "Early popularity of the game stems from professional teams in Akron, Canton and Massillon. The Massillon high school team received its mascot name from the early professional Massillon Tigers. Professional football in Stark County lasted until 1923." In a February 2012 article in *Sports Illustrated*, Hoffer calls the 1906 game between Massillon and Canton the "First Super Bowl." The moniker refers more to the magnitude of the game than the event we know today, starting almost six decades later. Hoffer claims that Massillon and Canton "battled for supremacy of professional football"; however, rampant corruption reached its apex during the 1906 clash. Hoffer argues that the scandal damaged professional football until the formation of the American Professional Football Conference, later the National Football league, in 1920 in Canton. In 2008, national sports media outlet ESPN ran a contest to find "TitleTown USA" - the one city in the United States which best demonstrates "championship pedigree" in

football. Massillon, Ohio finished fourth, behind champion Valdosta, GA, Green Bay, WI, and Parkersburg, WV. More than any national recognition of its prominence, though, football in Massillon impacts the lives of the people of Massillon. It impacts how residents view themselves and their town. To the people of Massillon, football *matters*. This community therefore provides an ideal site to examine the relationships between a local sports program and its role in identity production and meaning-making.

Theoretical Frames

This project aims to answer the following questions: How do residents of a semi-rural middle-American town construct and understand their collective localized identity via sports culture? What localized organizations, structures, and processes inform the residents' construction and understanding of their collective localized identity? In which ways, if any, do residents' experiences of the rituals and spectacles associated with the football team inform both an individual and a collective identity? How does the system of rituals and spectacles enacted by individuals and institutions, or celebratory complex, inscribe and reinscribe localized individual and collective identities? How do the experiences of residents within the celebratory complex inform their construction and understanding of individual and collective identities? How does the celebratory system generate social capital? In what ways do residents experience the exchange and expenditure of social capital?

To answer the above questions, I utilize ethnographic practices as the primary method of data collection featuring the residents, sites, and festivities in Massillon. Clifford Geertz describes the value of ethnography in cultural studies:

The culture of people is an ensemble of texts, themselves ensembles, which the anthropologist strains to read over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong. There are enormous difficulties in such an enterprise, methodological pitfalls to make a Freudian quake, and some more perplexities

as well. Nor is it the only way that symbolic forms can be sociologically handled. Functionalism lives, and so does psychologism. But to regard such forms as “saying something of something,” and saying it to somebody, is at least to open up the possibility of an analysis which attends to their substance rather than to reductive formulas professing to account for them. (1973 453)

To attend to substance, I emphasized thick description, or describing scenes or events in context, which deciphers or untangles “a multiplicity of conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knitted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit” (Geertz 1973 10). Through the depth of information from the thick description in fieldnotes, I gained a nuanced understanding of the interplay of practices and identities.

Ethnography intersects with performance studies through its explication of embodied experiences. Clifford writes, “Participant-observation obliges its practitioners to experience, at a bodily as well as an intellectual level, the vicissitudes of translation” (1988 24). This type of qualitative research opens the possibility to interrogate both social and cultural phenomena by privileging the subjective construction of identities over configuring objective experiences. Using sport as a site for research, I read cultural practices that inform social relationships and constructions of individual and collective identities. Performance theory “fits” this ethnographic research model. Conquergood writes,

The [performance paradigm] privileges particular, participatory, dynamic, intimate, precarious, embodied experience grounded in historical processes, contingency and ideology... The performance paradigm insists on face-to-face encounters instead of abstractions and reductions. It situated ethnographers within the delicately negotiated and fragile ‘face-work’ that is part of the intricate and nuanced dramaturgy of everyday life. (1991 187)

If performance theory seeks to extend knowledges associated with embodiment, then

ethnographic practices enhance such applications. An ethnographic study can help articulate the mechanics of how people construct the everyday through performance.

Sport as Cultural Performance

Pierre Bourdieu argues that sport offers a way to examine larger social structures. Bourdieu identifies “the space of sport.” Bourdieu calls for studies that construct “the structure of the space of sporting practices” (1988 158). Those spaces are not limited to the field and practices spaces. The spaces also include symbolic spaces within larger and simultaneous systems and structures. Sport opens the possibility of “social appropriation” (1988 157). The structures that confer significance to and receive value from sports inform the resulting disciplining of those structures. Lindquist argues that the “official forms, symbols, and performance” of football enacts ideas central to the notion of the American Dream, specifically “innovation, perseverance, and achievement” (447). In addition to the symbolic value of sport, the process of sport assist in shaping socio-cultural dynamics. Conquergood writes, “Through cultural performances many people both construct and participate in everyday life” (1991 188). Grant Jarvie argues, “Sport has always been an arena in which various social actors and groups can actively rework their relationships and respond to changing conditions as a whole” (112). Sport includes processes of meaning-making with direct effects of collective and individual identities.

Discourses of sport and performance studies intersect in three regards: first, sport is both a cultural performance and social drama, as discussed by Schechner and Turner; second, the spectacles of sports are performances in themselves; and third, the practices and processes of sport performatively inform the construction and reiterations of collective identities. Schechner places sport directly in the domain of social dramas (in Turner 1988 9). Turner defines as social drama as “an objectively isolable sequence of social interactions of a conflictive, competitive or agonistic type” (1988 33). As social drama and dramatic

community ritual (Turner 1974), sport opens social processes working within the entire system of social networks. Schechner's construction of performance opens the multitude of experiences embedded in behaviors for analysis. Residents of Massillon strongly associate themselves as residents of the town through an association, most directly as fans, of the football team. As fans, they engage in behaviors, often ritualized, that strengthen the ties between the team and town. Considering fandom as performance allows me to read the spectacles of the town and the practices of its residents as mutually constructive restored behaviors. Sport as ritual follows a performative transmission, emphasizing symbolic meaning, the presentational frame, and liminality. The understanding of events as symbolic rituals and social dramas that express a set of cultural meta-languages can suggest ways to combine the sports, arts and cultural events that maintain a community's representation.

Victor Turner identifies sport as a genre within cultural performances, specifically within the modes of play (1988 124). He argues that play, and sport, has taken away some of the functions of religious ritual in placing individuals in a reflexive position, "at once their own object and subject" (1988 124). Sport as play, or leisure, holds no inherent ideological value. Turner writes,

Football, chess, and mountaineering are undoubtedly exacting and governed by rules and routines at least as stringent as those of the work situation, but, being optional, they remain part of the individual's freedom of his growing self-mastery, even self-transcendence... They are imbued more thoroughly with pleasure than are those many types of industrial work in which men are alienated from the fruits and results of their labor. Leisure is thus potentially capable of releasing powers, individual and communal, either to criticize or prop up dominant social structural values. (1977 42)

The sporting ritual, and its associated spectacles, are subject to the social and cultural

structural which inform wider sets of beliefs and values. In that instance, sport can reinforce dominant ideologies. However, sport also holds the potential for employment by others as a means to resist dominant beliefs and structures. Consider “alternative” sports such as skateboarding, or the way that individual athletes such as Muhammad Ali and Jim Brown have used their status as athletes to insert their resistant voices into the public discourse. The individual’s relationship to a specific event or site, and consequently individuals forming groups, gives sport, at a given moment, an ideological character.

Geertz presents sport (and other cultural forms) as the “ensemble of texts.” In his study of Balinese cockfighting, he writes of how sport can simultaneously (contemporaneously?) disconnect from people as “only a game” and reconnect as “more than a game” (1973 451). The cultural codes and social relations embedded in sport gives a researchers the ground and tools to analyze and understand different cultures and communities. Troy Messenger’s study *Holy Leisure* provides a nice examples of how the performances and rituals within a community foster the connectedness. His examination of how institutions (in his study, primarily religious) promote a specific sense of community through performance. Messenger argues that “performances of everyday life... chart a unique understanding of self and community” (24). I propose to study the “performances of everyday life” in a less structured community in the context of sport. I also believe that the wider array of interests permit a different study of the dynamics of identity construction as both top-down and bottom-up. In studying a regional identity, the experience of everyday life becomes pivotal. Polly Stewart offers a model for studying “regional consciousness” that includes how people position themselves relative to outsiders (the esoteric-exoteric factor) and how the everyday actions of people play so significantly in the regional consciousness that examining the events in a culture require an examination of those actions (78). The everyday actions of people, therefore, performatively construct localized identities.

As scholars extend performance studies further into everyday practices, emphasizing the performative turn enhances analysis of meaning-making processes. Ethnography offers researchers an opportunity to study the notions of community which are entirely experiential. Cohen writes, “Rather than being the sign of a traditional and outmoded social structure, the cultural experience of community as a bounded symbolic whole is something virtually universal in both non-industrial and industrial societies” (9). Part of Cohen’s work is “to understand ‘community’ by seeking to capture members’ experience of it” (20). The participation, observation, and interviews from within a community provide a researcher insight into the local processes of mediation and fragmentation in identity construction.

Spectacle

The relationship between sport and meaning making is not natural, but rather mediated. As mediated experiences of community, these events are spectacles. They are designed to be seen from without as well as experienced from within. The spectacle that is football specifically, can offer insight into social structures. Guttman writes, “Since football combines primitive elements with a sophisticated complex of teamwork and strategy, it seems especially well-suited for its dual function of modern social organization and as an occasion for atavistic release” (1978 135). The spectacular nature of football applies those organizing and primitive characteristics to participants and spectators alike. Therefore, theories of spectacle also inform the discourse of performance as a mediation of individual and collective identities. As Guy DeBord writes, “The spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images” (2). Like Schechner’s restored behaviors, these images are not original, they inform the performance of identity.

As a tool for analysis, the discourse of spectacle can interrogate dominant discourses. Discourses of sport open the possibility to “traverse the boundaries between lived experience,

knowledge production, and political practices” (Birrell and McDonald 2000 5). Questions of identity construction necessarily work as both an inclusive and exclusive process in that people either are or are not members of a particular group; however people can also be conditional, part-time, and partial members of a group. Sport discourses open the “power lines” of race, class, gender, and sexuality (and age, nationality, ability, religion, etc.) (Birrell and MacDonald 1999 4). Birrell and MacDonald argue that the study of sport should forgo focus on a single power line in favor of an approach that examines the intermittent connectivity of different power lines. Spectacles disclose dominant discourses. As DeBord writes,

Understood in its totality, the spectacle is both the result and the project of the dominant mode of production. It is not a mere decoration added to the real world. It is the very heart of this real society’s unreality. In all of its particular manifestations - news, propaganda, advertising, entertainment - the spectacle represents the dominant model of life. It is the omnipresent affirmation of the choices that have already been made in the sphere of production and in the consumption implied by that production. (6)

He also describes spectacles as the worldview made objective (5). Through spectacles, I work to “decipher” the dominant narratives of community and self.

Spectacle reveals fragmentation and incongruities in the structures and processes of a community. DeBord writes,

The images detached from every aspect of life merge into a common stream in which the unity of that life can no longer be recovered. Fragmented views of reality regroup themselves into a new unity as a separate pseudoworld that can only be looked at. The specialization of images of the world evolves into a world of autonomized images where even the deceivers are deceived. The

spectacle is a concrete inversion of life, an autonomous movement of the nonliving. (2)

Spectacle presents itself simultaneously as representative of society, as a part of society, and as a means of unification. As a part of society, it is the focal point of all vision and all consciousness. Because this sector is separate, it is, in reality, the domain of delusion and false consciousness: the unification it achieves is nothing but an official language of universal separation (DeBord 3). The inclusive/exclusive character of spectacles forms a facade of culture. Spectacles both include and exclude; one either lives or does not live according to the social reality as constructed by the spectacle. DeBord writes, “Considered in its own terms, the spectacle is an *affirmation* of appearances and an identification of all human social life with appearances. But a critique that grasps the spectacle’s essential character reveals it to be a visible *negation* of life - a negation that has taken on a *visible form*” (emphasis in original 10). Spectacles can make visible that which the community negates or rejects. The study of spectacles, therefore, can advance a discussion of social capital, the value associated within specific social networks.

Sport and spectacle are inextricably linked. In their study of sports in college, King and Springwood write, “the contemporary system of collegiate sports is experienced by students, student athletes, professors, and the broader public through a vast array of public spectacles” (2001 6). While collegiate sports and high school sports operate in different economic and social structures, high school sports also involve an extensive range of public spectacles. Sport at a local level similarly form key signification in social relations. Spectacles of sport “speak to the forms of power, the fields of discourses” and the conditions through sport that construct notions of place and identity (King and Springwood 12). As an explication of the specific rituals in Massillon, this study interrogates the elements that comprise the processes of meaning making.

The spectacle, which Beeman defines as “a public display of society’s meaningful elements” (380), works because it establishes connections between performer and audience through their “phatic connection” (Beeman 386). Like theatre, the spectacular elements – lights, costumes, movement, etc. – reveal the established connections of the social forces underpinning them. Beeman emphasizes the symbolic value of spectacles. “The meaningfulness of a spectacle is usually proportionate to the degree to which the elements displayed to the public seem to represent key elements in the public’s cultural and emotional life” (Beeman 380). Through the language of theatre and performance, I discuss how the spectacles of sport inform and disclose socio-cultural processes.

Ritual

Spectacles of sport present iterations and reiterations of culture to those enacting and those witnessing. Therefore, the language of ritual studies opens how spectacles performatively inform collective and individual identities. As ritual, spectacles of sport emphasize the fan identity through restored behavior, or “a kind of collective memory-in/of-action” (Schechner 1995 457). The repeated behaviors in sport spectacles grant fans access to collective memories. Acting as a fan means reifying previously held constructs of their selves. Restored behavior acquires meaning through an on-going process of repetition and rehearsal. People learn to be fans from other fans, whether parents, friends, or relative strangers. Schechner describes the transmission process of restored behavior as a master-novice relationship. The transmission process necessarily changes through both slippage and direct structural changes.

Meaning-making in sport as ritual stems from this restored or “referential” nature of sporting practices. In her analysis of timber sport competitions in northwestern Connecticut, American studies scholar Kruckemeyer writes, “Group identity is created, negotiated, and sustained through referential performance” (303-4). The key lies in the referential character

of these performances. Recalling the tradition and history of performance, whether occupational (as woodcutting) or leisure (as football), transform these celebratory events into performative constructions. The festive performances build a sense of a local identity (Kruckemeyer 303). The physical character of sport details the performative function of rituals, whether large-scale public rituals or repeated mundane interactive rituals. Sport scholar Chris Stone writes, “It is in everyday life that [soccer] culture is primarily perpetuated, expressed and experienced” (170). Football informs collective and individual identity and social relations, because they are “initiated, reinforced and challenged through the enactment, internalization, embodiment and contestation of structural influences within the daily practices of life” (170). Stone clearly articulates how sporting practices extend beyond specific and isolable contests to include daily practices.

The original is impossible in performance because it is always a repetition of a previous performance. The performer always acts as “not me,” and simultaneously “not not me.” The liminal state of not-me and not-not-me informs shifts in identity through the differences in performances from their previous iterations. As restored behavior, ritual performance emphasizes collective memory because “restored behavior is always subject to revision” (Schechner 1995 443). The identity becomes ritualized through its repetition, even if the repetition results in a slippage of behavior. Through the rituals and behaviors tied to place, many construct their relationship to place and are able to change that identity.

To describe the articulate meaning-making in rituals, I use Sonjah Stanley Niaah construction of “performance geography.” According to Niaah, performance geography “looks at the way people living in particular locations give those locations identity through performance, as well as the interplay between spatial use, character, identity construction, and citizenry” (344). Performance geographies explicitly connect performances to people’s understanding of place. Niaah defines performance as, “the mental, physical, emotional, and

spiritual task of enacting one's being" (344). Niaah and Schechner both present one's being during performance as never original.

Considering sport as ritual illustrates the performed and performative character of local collective identities. Local sports can foster a local sense of belonging and togetherness, or what ethnographer and folklorist Dorothy Noyes calls "the social imaginary that occasionally emerges in performance" (qtd. in Kruckemeyer 304). Rejecting a natural source of identity, Noyes argues that collective identity works "as embodied memory of socially labeled performance" and identity as ritualized performance allows one to reconcile "theories of identity as historical construct to accounts of identity as a felt reality by providing a mechanism through which experience is recoded as essence" (qtd. in Kruckemeyer 304). A local collective identity runs counter to larger homogenizing constructs, like "nation." Kruckemeyer argues that local festivals "provide relief" from larger pressures of professionalization and nationalization. Festival that emphasize community resist "outside" forces that fragment identity (323). Victor Turner echoes a similar sentiment when he argues that sport provides a social space to build *communitas* (1974 79). The social and cultural performances of sport implicate collective meaning-making processes.

As cultural performance, the play, rituals and spectacles of football build a sense of community. Lindquist's description of the "football celebratory complex" in central Ohio recalls Turner's *communitas* in how play and rituals mediate individual and collective identities. She writes, "{T}he football celebratory complex articulates, enacts, and invites conversation about subjectivity and political and economic worldviews" (445). Football presents situated negotiation between collective identities. I expand her articulation of a celebratory complex to describe the network of practices, processes, and structures that connect people to a sporting entity, in this case the Massillon Washington High School football team. Celebratory complexes, I argue, entail two essential functions - valorization

and socialization. Valorization raises the team to an exalted position building emotional energy attached to the team. Socialization functions as the transmission process of rituals, where knowledge and meaning-making pass from one another. Socialization transforms children and outsiders into insiders who embrace the traditions, spectacles, and rituals of Tiger football. The celebratory complex is fluid and negotiated rather than an identifiable and stable superstructure. Multiple organizations contribute to the complex, but so do the activities of individuals. Additionally, the complex functions autonomously, lacking an explicit organizing principle, aspects of the complex work independent of, and occasionally in opposition to, other structures.

Social Capital

The emotional energy and connectedness produced by the celebratory complex serves as a benefit to individuals and groups. To examine the ways the celebratory complex transforms emotional energy, I find using social capital as an appropriate framing device. Broadly, social capital is the value one accrues from membership, personal relationships, and affiliations. Specifically, Bourdieu defines it as follows:

Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group [11] – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a ‘credential’ which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word. (1986 248)

Bourdieu also writes of the process of profit from social capital:

The profits which accrue from membership in a group are the basis of the solidarity which makes them possible.[14] This does not mean that they are consciously pursued as such, even in the case of groups like select clubs,

which are deliberately organized in order to concentrate social capital and so to derive full benefit from the multiplier effect implied in concentration and to secure the profits of membership – material profits, such as all the types of services accruing from useful relationships, and symbolic profits, such as those derived from association with a rare, prestigious group. (1986 250)

Given the potentially subconscious nature of the pursuit of social capital and the realization of its profits, the personal and qualitative data collection from ethnographic practices may be needed to fully elucidate such practices.

Social capital provides benefits to individuals and groups while revealing features embedded in the social structure. Coleman writes,

The value of the concept of social capital lies first in the fact that it identifies certain aspects of social structure by their functions, just as the concept "chair" identifies certain physical objects by their function, despite differences in form, appearance, and construction. The function identified by the concept of "social capital" is the value of these aspects of social structure to actors as resources that they can use to achieve their interests. (S101)

Social capital is thus fungible and transferable to other forms of capital within the social structures. Adler and Kwon describe how social capital provides individuals with authority/power: "Social capital is the goodwill available to individuals or groups. Its source lies in the structure and content of the actor's social relations. Its effects flow from the information, influence, and solidarity it makes available to the actor" (23). A football team in a town such as Massillon carries with it considerable opportunity for social capital to those who can enlist the associate social network. Larger social structures produces constraints on social capital, constraints on where and what constitute social capital and constraints on who can benefit from the acquisition of social capital. Therefore, any study of social capital

requires an analysis of the hierarchical structures. Those structures can either facilitate or restrict access to social capital (Adler and Kwon 28). They write, “[S]ocial capital is unlike other assets that economists call ‘capital’ because investments in its development do not seem amenable to quantified measurement, even in principle” (22). The value of social capital lies in the transfer of power within social relationships. The transitions of power occur not only through explicit efforts but also implicit means. Again, given the intangible quality of social capital, ethnographic practices help bring the “transactions” of social capital to the fore.

Methods

Because so much of the town's activities and events surrounds the football team, a study employing ethnographic practices must cover a range of spectacles and activities as well as interrogate the relationships between the events and the daily life of residents. The initial field work started in June 2012 and lasted through January 2013. Return visits for follow-up and supplementation took place for one week in October 2013 and August 2014. Over the course of the study, I covered public events related directly to the football program, public events unrelated to the football program, games, and regular meetings of the Museum Group of the Massillon Tiger Booster Club. I conducted 22 semi-structured formal interviews using purposive and "snowballing" sampling. Part of the goal in the interview sampling was to let the participants inform the research path as it relates to a range of stakeholders and community residents. The events were also purposively sampled with snowballing. Priority was given to events directly related to the football program with the inclusion of non-explicit football events to assess any infiltration or non-infiltration.

My initial outreach was to the president of the Booster Club. I chose the Booster Club because it served as the primary proponent of the football team with a strong on-line presence. The Booster Club president Ron Thornberry referred me to Richard, the head of the Museum Group, a subdivision of the Booster Club. Richard served as my primary gatekeeper

initially. He fits how Holloway (1997) defines a gatekeeper as an individual who can grant the researcher formal and/or informal access to participants, organizations, and setting. In my initial contacts with Richard, I relayed the subject of my research and how I was going about it. He was welcoming, but concerned, as he told me of a "young lady" who had done some research in Massillon, but cast the town in an unfavorable light. I assured him that I had no intention of representing Massillon negatively, but rather that I was looking to document what I see and my how I experienced the people and the town. I also told him my intention was not to make any moralistic judgments, but that I would document and assess my experiences honestly, regardless of who might see them as "good" or "bad." According to Sparkes and Smith, researchers commonly will have to address concerns of gatekeepers (77). In coordination with Richard, I was able to attend the weekly Museum Group meetings, every Tuesday morning. Consistent with what DeWalt and DeWalt (2010) documented with some initial gatekeepers, Richard "took me under his wing" and introduced me to the Booster Club organization, including many members, and other community members. The establishment of trust is vital for access.

While Richard was my first contact and initial gatekeeper, I soon got to know Gene Boerner, a former Booster Club president, and Eric Smith. I met Eric Smith after finding his MassillonProud website. I e-mailed him and he was a valuable relationship and resource. He had season tickets to the football team and frequently supplied me with free tickets. Gene and Eric fit more of an informal gatekeeper. According to Reeves (2010), informal gatekeepers serve a valuable function in fieldwork. Gatekeepers may help the researcher by "vouching" for the researcher (Reeves 2010). Researchers need not only to gain access to sites, but also to maintain access to the sites. Bondy (2013) argues that the relationship between how researchers access settings and research results demands the attention of the researcher (587). Elaborating on the process and maintenance of access merits explicit detailing in

representations to better inform the form and substance of the research.

Rapport remains necessary for successful fieldwork. Agar defines rapport on its most basic premise – "a good relationship with an informant" – while acknowledging a precise definition varies depending on context (137). Reeves argues that the "trajectory of fieldwork is shaped by the manner in which relationships with formal and informal gatekeepers are develop and played out" (329). Access shifts as relationships strengthen or weaken. Rapport is often complicated by "shifting roles and professional needs" of both researcher and gatekeepers (Reeves 320). The researcher may need to make a greater commitment to developing another relationship at the expense of another. Levels of access and reliance on gatekeepers change as research continues. Part of the importance of rapport is that "access to participants and data needs to be continually re-iterated and re-negotiated" (Reeves 329). Rapport invariably informs the final product. A successful representation "depends on the extent to which the field-worker can pass beyond the role of stranger and establish close relationships with the people he studies" (Caughey 233). Realistically, I was able to maintain strong rapport with three or four people, while maintaining positive relationships with many others.

Establishing and maintaining rapport with participants and gatekeepers informs access and, thus, research outcomes. Rapport, according to Sands, is a process of "cultivating relations" to gain "their approval to seep down through the culture" (37). Establishing rapport with key gatekeepers allows the researcher to establish relationships with other community members. I established rapport by explaining my research, its goals, and my intentions. I also explained my fondness for sport, in general, and aspects of Massillon that provoked my research interest. A key aspect of rapport, according to Agar, is the researcher expressing desire to adapt to the community and conditions of the lives of the participants (138). Rapport also relies on addressing concerns from other participants, as was the case with Richard.

Decisions on what to disclose and withhold about the details of the research and personal information inform the negotiated process of access (Bondy 2013). I tended towards openness in responding to inquiries.

Through Gene, I was introduced to Alexandra (Alex) Nicholls Coon, the head of the Massillon Museum. She introduced me to several staff members at the museum. Also, it was through Alex that I secured interviews with museum staff and a "stronger" introduction with Stacey. I had introduced myself during the Underground Railroad re-enactment and followed up requesting an interview; however, it wasn't until the interview was coordinated with museum staff Liz and Jessica that she agreed to an interview. Mandy, a museum employee, and Alex were gatekeepers at the museum who told me of other events throughout the community. Their assistance proved vital in my participant observation efforts.

Participant observation generated a substantial portion of data for this study, in both volume and detail. DeWalt and DeWalt write that participant observation remains universally accepted as "the central and defining method of research in cultural anthropology" (2). The participant observation component of ethnographic research engages people in everyday activities and special occasions in a given setting. Participant observation serves the researcher in both the "common and uncommon activities" of participants (DeWalt and DeWalt 2). A researcher engages in participant observation in a variety of ways, including the following: living in the community, engaging in those common and uncommon events, and conversing (DeWalt and DeWalt 4). Participant observation contextualizes the visit and other data accumulated by researchers. The range of events and sites of participant observations include meetings of the Museum Group, activities organized by the Booster Club, the Holiday Parade, Underground Railroad re-enactment, and FunFest, among others. Much of the research includes involvement in McKinley Week activities and the Touchdown Weekend. I was able to discuss many of these events with informants, providing multiple

perspectives on each event.

The value in participant observation lies in the creation of full and nuanced representation (if done well). DeWalt and DeWalt write that participant observation aids the researcher in enhancing the quality of data collected, and quality of interpretation (10). Participant observation allows researchers to contextual data. Agar writes, "something occurs, and you are able to talk with informants about what it is and how it is related to an ongoing event" (164). The value of participant observation for a researcher depends on the amount of time spent and the degrees of sustained contact with the sites. Goffman advocated for "immersion" of a researcher in a particular setting. In particular, Goffman insisted that field research involve "subjecting yourself, your own body and your own personality, and your own social situation, to the set of contingencies that play upon a set of individuals, so that you can physically and ecologically penetrate their circle of response to their social situation, or their work situation, or their ethnic situation" (125). Immersion also provides a measure of rapport for informants (Sands 42). Immersion demonstrates to others a researcher's commitment to understanding "their" culture. Living in the community often stands as an indicator of immersion. When moving, I moved to a Massillon address. Upon arrival, I quickly learned from several people (including James and Scotty) that I actually lived in Perry despite what I may write as my address. They told me that they, therefore, did not consider me as someone who lives in Massillon. They were adamant that most others share the sentiment. I was still able to reach two goals of immersion by spending time at the events and meeting in Massillon proper. Therefore, immersion in ethnographic research requires participation to at least two ends; one, to see how others respond to particular events and, two, experiencing one's own responses in these events (Emerson et al.). To realize the second goal, the researcher must mediate his/her cultural background with that of the target culture. I was fully able to meet these two ends of immersion, regardless of address.

Researchers benefit from close and sustained contact with participants and occasions. Moreover, results and representations benefit from a conscious acknowledgment and active pursuit of a shared knowledge production. Knowledge production in ethnographies comes out of interactions. Researchers benefit from and awareness that participants self-reflexively theorize the how's and why's of their own actions (Kamper 344). The actions of the lives, however constrained, possess meaning for participants. Participants make meaningful choices regarding their lives regardless of perceived limitations of agency (Kamper 357). By recognizing shared meaning-making and actively pursuing it, a researcher provides a richer and more-nuanced understanding of those actions. My participant observation, aided by critical gatekeepers, gave me access to a host of processes in the community. Through the Museum Group and MassMu events, I got to see how community members sought out, collected, and archived historical data and artifacts. Also, I was exposed to how they represented these artifacts in constructing a narrative of the town, the football program, the Booster Club, and, through cotemporaneous constructions, themselves. Through participation as a fan in the crowds, I learned the rituals and spectacles to engage community members. The celebratory complex of rituals and spectacles reaches diverse groups differently. As a member of the crowd in larger community events, like FunFest, for example, I saw how community members seek to use these well-attended gatherings to improve conditions and meet self-interested goals. I witnessed and experienced the spectacles of the town and how members contextualized and understand them. Through participant observation, I saw how community members participated in the valorization of the football team and the degree of veneration.

Fieldnotes serve as representations of participant observation. Note-taking requires a decision-making process gauging appropriate public disclosures on the part of the ethnographer; for example, decisions about when notes may prove unsettling to informants.

Emerson et al. describe the purpose of fieldnotes as follows:

[F]ieldnotes inscribe the sometimes inchoate understanding and insight the fieldworker acquires by intimately immersing herself in another world, by observing in the midst of mundane activities and jarring crises, by directly running up against contingencies and constraints of the everyday life of another people. (10)

Full and rich ethnographies require notes obtained through persistent involvement in a given setting. My notes of the Museum Group were made easy because members rarely acknowledged my note-taking after my initial visit. Similarly, the Wall of Champion meeting rarely evoked a response. In the larger events, where I was one person in a free-flowing mass of people, no one concerned themselves with my presence, to my knowledge. At two of the football games, I was heckled by people, encouraging me to put my pen down and attend to the game.

Fieldnotes should reflect core ethnographic principles, such as the inseparability of the data from the observational and participatory process, the priority given to indigenous meanings and concerns and one's understanding of those concerns, contemporaneously written fieldnotes as the foundation of the broader written accounts of the lives of others, and the importance of the emphasis on social processes (Emerson et al. 11). In addition to description, Emerson et al. details the importance of recalling specific instances of dialog and characterizations of specific people. Contexts provide nuance. My own fieldnotes take the jotted notes taken during any given event, which also include my in-the-moment reactions, and add some reflexive understanding once compiled.¹

¹ I quickly became aware of the subjective nature of the discernment process – what to note against what was unworthy of notation. Emerson et al. describe how fieldnotes take on two central characteristics, "(Note-taking) is both intuitive, reflective the ethnographer's changing sense of what might possibly be made interesting or important to future readers and empathetic, reflecting the ethnographers sense of what is interesting or important to the people he is observing" (11). The resulting account relies on subjectivity. At the most basic level, subjectivity results from the ethnographer describing distinctive behavior because that behavior contrasts with the researchers own social network and experiences. (Caughey 238) Once I became comfortable with that process, I found myself focusing on more details of what I found important rather than "paint with a light brush" trying to cover every detail. Depth in note-taking became privileged in many cases over breadth, while

"Headnotes" – after the fact impressions – becomes an inevitable part of fieldnotes. Headnotes can enhance a researcher's understanding of events. The goal is rich, detailed, nuanced, and vivid accounts. To that end, while general impressions will invariably leak into jottings and fieldnotes, prioritizing sensory details leads to full fieldnotes from which one can recall evaluations and form new understandings. Sanjek (1990a) describes the relationship between a fieldnote and a headnote, "The fieldnotes stay the same, written down on paper, but the headnotes continue to evolve and change as they did during the time in the field...Only after the ethnographer is dead are the fieldnotes primary" (93). Sanjek (1990a) notes a common problem researchers face during fieldwork – avoiding a backlog of scratchnotes through the timely transcription into fieldnotes (Vocabulary 98).²

Part of the effectiveness of fieldnotes relies on the inclusion of "thick description." Geertz argues that anthropological work results from "our own constructions of other people's construction of what they and their compatriots are up to" (9). Providing details alone does not constitute thick description, Denzin argues that thick descriptions should present "details, context, emotion and the webs of social relationships" while inserting "history into experience" and establishing "the significance of an experience, or sequence of events, for the person or persons in question" (1989 83). Thick description does not rely on an objective accounting of facts and details. Thick description includes both the analytical and theoretical on the part of the researcher, dealing with meanings and intentions (Hollaway 154). Ponterotto writes that thick description "speaks to context and meaning as well as interpreting participant intentions in their behaviors and actions (541). Thick description engages the reader by allowing them to "emotively 'place' themselves within the research context" (542). A complete process of thick description leads to engaging work. Ponterotto writes, "Thick

preserving breadth where and when possible.

² Admittedly, I struggled with reasonable timeliness.

description leads to thick interpretation, which in turn leads to thick meaning of the research findings" (542). A researcher fully incorporates thick description upon detailing the processes and procedures used in a given setting (Ponterotto 546). Sustained contact – immersion – allows the researcher to provide thick description (Emerson et al. 10). Process and representation come together through the emphasis on thick description.

In this study, I relied on sampling in two regards – the selection of events to attend for participant observation and the selection of informants for interviews. The selection and sampling processes depend on the circumstances the researcher finds in the field.

Higginbottom argues that researchers make judgments "in relation to the participant's membership of the group or subculture under investigation" (11). In this way, sampling is an iterative process. The iterative-inductive model for research allows one to participate, take notes, and sample in a process that where one experience informs subsequent data collection. The research model is not a "straight shot," but rather a series of loops where the research informs the next set of research questions and the means to answer those questions which, in turn, opens new questions. In addition to selecting a representative view of events and people, sampling works as a strategy employed by a researcher to give credibility to the study.

Becker argues that sampling sets the rhetorical device that the researcher uses to argue the selected part can stand in for the whole (67). "Logics of sampling are arguments that are meant to persuade readers that the synecdoche works, because it has been arrived at in a defensible way" (67). A transparent and appropriate sampling process increase the validity of the research.

I followed a purposive process for sampling, allowing experiences and reliance on others to determine future objects for study. Teddlie and Yu describe purposive sampling as "selecting units (e.g. Individuals, groups of individuals, institutions) based on specific purposes associated with answering a research study's questions" (77). Teddlie and Yu

identify four uses for purposive sampling: representativeness or comparability, special or unique cases, sequential sampling, and multiple purposive techniques (80). I sought specific information from key figures in the community especially prepared to provide such information. I followed a sequential approach to “wherever the theory leads the investigation” (82). Sequential sampling works with an iterative model of investigation where information acquired informs future research strategies. Part of the reason purposive sampling is appropriate for qualitative research is because the goal is not an over-arching generalizable theory. Hammersley and Mairs write that purposive sampling serves “to ensure that as many members of the subculture or group being study are active participators” (5). In sampling, I always “kept an eye” on the topic and subjects relating to this study. A researcher sets the appropriate context, or “picture,” for events through fieldnotes with priority given to details and aspects of events that more directly relate to the study rather than attempting to record everything heard and observed (Agar 174). Agar identifies three ways to observe events: direct observation, the recollections of others, and a hypothetical event for the reaction of others (174). My primary mode for event participation was direct observation. The recollection of others only took place in the interview process. There were events to which I did not have access (the live tiger visits to local schools, for instance); in those cases, I relied on newspaper accounts. I never created a hypothetical event to get responses from others. I relied on participants to help determine events and interview subjects.

As part of purposive sampling, I specifically utilized a strategy known as snowballing. Tedlie and Yu identify snowballing as a specific strategy for sequential sampling (82). In snowballing, participants in the study, including key informants, recommend another individual to interview or include in the study. Streeton, Cooke, and Campbell describe snowball samples as those that “emerge through a process of reference from one person to another” (37). They argue that snowballing becomes appropriate only in studies of social

behavior, thereby focusing on key members of social group (37). Using key informants in the sampling process carries value because, "Participants have specific knowledge or experience of interest to the researcher" (Higginbottom 8). Perpetuating specific biases by following in the line of contacts presents a concern in research. However, Streeton, Cooke, and Campbell write, "Insider knowledge gained through (snowballing) is of particular use in finding the best person to approach in an organization, irrespective of title" (38). Snowballing serves a particular advantage to studies that "explore and analyse" rather than "test hypotheses" (Streeton, Cooke, and Campbell 39). In focusing on process and not outcome, I found the explore-and-analyze approach valuable.

Within my snowball sampling, I considered data saturation as a factor in interview sampling. In their qualitative study, Guest, Bruce, and Johnson found that data saturation started at twelve interviews. Twelve interviews produced 92% of codes in one site and 88% at others. Following the analysis of twelve interviews "new themes emerged infrequently and progressively so as analysis continued" (Guest, Bruce, and Johnson 74). Critical in interviews is the "cultural competence" of participants (Romney et al. 326). While Guest, Bruce, and Johnson conclude that twelve interviews suffice to "understand perceptions and experiences among a group of heterogeneous individuals" (79), I found snowballing necessary to generate a far larger set of interviews to explore the range of themes and experiences for a credible and reliable analysis. The resulting 22 interview subjects contribute both depth and breadth to this study.

Interviews

Interviews in qualitative research seek to answer questions of dynamics and embrace the participant's subjective experience. As one of the main data collection practices in ethnographies, interviews allow the researcher to gain access to the knowledge production of interviewees on their terms. Interviews are neither definitive nor end-points in data collection

as they are both contextual and negotiated as a "particular research conversation that occurred at a particular time and place" (Wengraf 1). Specifically, semi-structured interviews offer insight into the interviewees' lived experiences by seeking to produce narratives from the interviewees (Wengraf 5). As a shared experience between interviewer and interviewee, semi-structured interviews place the researcher in the process of meaning-making in a similar way as participant observation. The interview serves the researcher well in the attempt to access the everyday, lived experience of participants, or life world (Kvale & Brinkman 2009). Interviews make clear the reciprocal relationship in the research process between researchers and members of the researched population Kamper argues that "ethnographic interviewing conducted as a conscious, collaborative conversation" can result in a "more articulate mutual understanding" of the shared experiences. Interviews reveal a subject's self-awareness into their daily actions and provide their understanding of its meaning (Kamper 346). According to Kamper, interviews allow the researcher access to local theories of knowledge production and the researcher should not privilege wider, academic theories (358). Ethnographic interviews open the research to incorporate local understanding of actions and meaning-making, where fieldwork alone may not.

Qualitative interviews seek theoretical and conceptual information based "on the meanings that life experiences hold for interviewees" (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree 314). The qualitative interview takes place in phases. Stage and Mattson identify three explicit phases of the ethnographic interview– the ethnographic explanations, the goal of the interview, and the research questions (98). The first phase includes detailing "why the interview is taking place, the goal of the interview, and the direction of the interview as envisioned by the interviewer" (Stage and Mattson 98). The ethnographic explanations include processual aspects of the interview – how the researcher will conduct the interview, the recording of the interview, and explication of the project (98). I address the first two

phases of the interview during the consent process (see Appendix A - Consent Notice). Stage and Mattson contend that the researcher can best view the process of ethnographic questions as “contextualized conversations.” Using a conversation-based approach to interviews “can produce a more participant-respectful and insightful project” (Stage and Mattson 99). While not entirely conversational, I succeeded in allowing participants more control over the interview process than fully structured interviews while fully acknowledging of the power dynamics as researcher-participant.

I engaged in semi-structured interviews with participants. Semi-structured interviews use open-ended questions determined prior to data collection, yet allow researchers to pursue depth and detail with participants (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree 315). Semi-structured interviews fit well with the iterative interviewing goals of ethnographic methods. All interviews were conducted in-person. The interviews include both individual and group interviews. I had a list of questions at the beginning of each interview identifying topic to cover in (what I viewed as) coherent progression. For the conversational approach, I had the interviewee speak widely on topics, however they understood the question. The goal was for the interviewees to speak broadly on the subject of each question. I would frequently ask follow-up questions to allow the interviewee to both provide context for part or all of the responses, and also clarify misunderstanding or confusion on my part.

I frequently found the interviewees would take the interview in unanticipated directions. In those cases, I would “go with” the interviewee, providing more insight into the subjective experience. If the participant covered subjects of later questions or I determined some questions irrelevant based on the scope of the interview, I would refrain from asking some questions.

All interviewees were active members of the Massillon community and spent time engaged in community activities. Not all participants lived within the city limits, but those

people worked in Massillon and participated in various community activities. All considered themselves part of the community to some degree. The core of the study concerns exploring the relationship between community members and the high school football team, specifically as it relates to broader views of themselves as community members. I structured the guide through a series of ten open-ended “Initial Questions” around how they view the town, themselves, and the football team. (See Appendix B - Interview Guide) I followed with nine open-ended “Intermediate Questions” concerning the interviewees' views of their relationship with the football team. These questions sought a higher degree of reflexivity of the participants. I closed with three “Ending Questions” specifically designed to open the conversation to my potential relationship to the community and, therefore, the study. All participants were encouraged to answer in their own terms. Patton writes,

A truly open ended questions does not presuppose which dimensions of feeling, analysis, or thought will be salient for the interviewee... it allows the person being interviewed to select from among the person's full repertoire of possible outcomes... one of the things the evaluator is trying to determine is what dimensions, themes, and images/words people associated with the program use among themselves to describe their feelings, thoughts, and experiences. (354)

To this end, questions sought individual experience as expressed by those individuals. The construction of interview questions, therefore, deliberately sought subjective experiences. The interviews were conducted in a like manner, conscientious of the constructed character of the interview process and social roles of myself and the participants.

All interviews were formal with predetermined times and locations. Participants determined the time and place of the interviews to heighten the comfort of the participants. Times and places were removed from the activities of the participant's daily life. I conducted

one interview with each participant. Interviews lasted between thirty-five to eighty-five minutes. All interviews, except for one, were captured via digital audio-recording.³ The interviews took place in restaurants, conference rooms, libraries, museums, and one subject's driveway. I placed emphasis on interviewing stakeholders and key informants, but also included others as recommended by participants. Interviews followed the six stages for interviews set forth by Legard, Keegan, and Ward. Upon arrival, I exchanged greetings with the participants and we engaged in "small talk" until participants, including myself, seemed comfortable going forward, when I started recording. After starting the digital recorder, I introduced my research and read the oral consent statement, obtaining oral consent from each participant. I would also check with interviewees to see if they were ready to continue, answering any questions about the consent process or my research. Three participants asked how my research fit with a theatre degree. I briefly explained my performance studies approach, including my focus on public performance (pep rallies and parades, for example) and how those performances and their everyday action contribute to how people view and make themselves; however, I avoided saying "performativity." I chose to avoid discussion of ritual performances, but did talk about people's everyday experiences and spectacles. I would follow the tiers of questions in the interview guide, with follow-ups when necessary and skipping questions that were already answered or that I deemed unnecessary. The last three questions set the ending of the interview and gave participants greater freedom to point to anything unsaid up to that point. I closed the interview turning off the recorder and thanking them for their time, additional "small talk" followed interviews. I made a conscious effort to frame the interview as close to a conversation as I could. I used follow-up questions as "probes" into previous answers. Detail-oriented probes seek "to fill out the picture" of what the participant describes (Sparkes and Smith 93). The explain that elaboration probes seek

³ . One interview was not recorded because of technological failure on-site.

more information on a particular answer, while clarification probes seek clarification (93).

The probes added details and information useful for the study.

Visual Ethnography

The process of participant observation attempts to place the ethnographer “in the shoes” of a community member as the researchers encounters the day to day activities. Interviews attempt to place the ethnographer “in the head” (or the mouth) of the community members. However, visual ethnography, encountering the photographs, videos, etc. place the ethnographer “in the eyes” of community members. Pink writes that visual ethnography requires researchers “to attend to the constructedness of the distinction between the visual and other categories of experience, materiality or text” (31). According to Pink, visual ethnography is not a complex of things seen, but rather “the visual aspects of the world we inhabit, the cultural forms and the technologies we have categorized as visual” (31) or “a practice that attends to the visual elements of the worlds that we inhabit in terms of their inseparability from other elements of sensory experience” (47). Visual ethnography includes objects, photographs, video, and virtual experiences. Knowledge production and meaning-making in visual ethnography follow the same reflexive and subjective processes of participant observation.

Photographs, both taken by the researcher and taken by study participants, enhance a researcher's understanding of the visual culture in a group. Pink writes, “The meanings of photographs are contingent and subjective; they depend on who is looking, and when they are looking. The same photograph may have different or changing meanings” (75). Photographic practices grew as my exposure to the field and the events develops. “Our photographic practices themselves and the research methods we engage develop alongside and are interwoven with relationships we build as our research evolves” (Pink 80). At multiple events, I took photographs sharing not only my experiences, but also how I framed those

experiences. In addition to specific events, on four occasions, I walked through town, taking photographs. These photographic walks allow the researcher “to both represent the experience of, and issues related to, particular environments” (Pink 86). While I made considerable efforts to place the focus outward, on the rare occasions when I took a photograph of myself. Such an act allows a researcher to expand her/his “own experiential knowledge,” by placing her/him in similar “embodied and photographic frames” (Pink 92). In addition to my own photographs, I address photocopies of specific images from articles in the booster club library and photographs distributed by the museum during an exhibition opening. Also, I shared an experience of viewing photographs and displays with one participant and gained insight to his experience of those photographs. The multiple methods of incorporating photographs during the research process generated layered data in the study. The value of the visual is not limited to studying what once was, but also making the past present. The visual in sports merits specific attention. Huggins and O'Mahoney write, “[I]f the written text has been overestimated in the study of sport's past, the visual has been underestimated. The visual lies along fault-lines of past societies” (1101). In the selection process, I include photographs that provide details or magnitude of the experience where textual descriptions fail. As a result, Chapter Five on McKinley Week contains the more documentation as the experience greatly exceeded adequate typed accounts. By including photographs in this study, I add the visual to the thick description of the fieldnotes to provide greater context and nuance.

In addition to photographs, the online presence of individuals and institutions also inform this study. The internet and social media demonstrate how many Americans experience the world and their lives. New media and social media, or the “visuality of the internet” (Pink 123), are new practices, lightly studied, in part because social media changes outpace research. Institutions in Massillon possess large on-line presences to varying ends by

varying means. Pink writes, “We should engage with the internet where it is part of the visual cultures, everyday lives and particular practices” (124). Museum and city websites, booster club web pages, MassillonProud, YouTube, various Facebook pages and Twitter accounts, constitute part of the daily life of residents and also the circulation of images, symbols, and narratives. Digital media gets variously contextualized by the viewer thereby changing their relationship to other aspects of media. Postill and Pink call social media a “fieldwork environment that is social, experiential, and mobile” (125). “A plural concept of sociality that allows us to focus on the qualities of relatedness in online and offline relationships offers a better way of understanding how social media practices are implicated in the constitution of social groups, and the practices they engage in together” (11). An evaluation of social structures and culture makes studying the daily online social process critical to social and visual culture.

In evaluating the reliability and validity in a qualitative study, detailing and specifying process aids in the overall credibility of the study. Higginbottom write, "The credibility of qualitative studies can be enhanced by clear explication of the processes and steps used in sampling and establishing the empirical generalisability of findings" (15). Acknowledging the impossibility of objectivity and capturing the authentic, qualitative research still requires standards to ensure reliability and validity. Often researchers achieve reliability through a demonstration of replicability; however, such a standard is impossible in a study employing ethnographic practices. In qualitative research, reliability is “the degree to which the finding is independent of accidental circumstances of the research,” while validity is “the degree to which the finding is interpreted in the correct way” (Kirk and Miller 20). Kirk and Miller map out a strategy for maximizing reliability and validity, most critically is sustained interaction with the people in their terms on their ground (12). By residing in Massillon for nine months with two follow-up visits to engage the residents, attending public including

three parades and four pep rallies, purchasing local paraphernalia, and dining at local eateries, I sought to embrace the culture and social structures of Massillon.

Roger Sanjek (1990b) argues that validity lies in three canons, “theoretical candor, the ethnographer’s path, and fieldnote evidence” (395). Researchers articulate validity through the writing process. Sanjek (1990b) writes, “Candid exposition of when and why locally developed theories of significance are adopted enhances ethnographic validity” (396). Detailing processes and methods of data collection should help validate the resulting representation. Acknowledgment and incorporation of the researcher's subjective and reflexive experiences strengthen the ethnographic representation. Caughey writes documentation of "personal consciousness" in the field and recorded observations comprise a critical part of the fieldwork process (240). Carrington writes, “[T]he very writing of qualitative research accounts, be they ethnographic or otherwise, becomes the moment for the inscription and performance of reflexivity” (425). Reflexivity further locates the researcher in the study and provides a perspective for analysis. Including prominent sections of fieldnotes helps satisfy the third canon of evidence (Sanjek 1990b 401). In this study, I strive for the elaboration of theoretical foundations, explication of process, evidentiary thoroughness for the end of validity. Fieldnotes, while full of details, conveying meaning for both researcher and informants, fail should they not provide a sense of "presence." The validity comes in the representation. Geertz writes –

The ability of anthropologists to get us to take what they say seriously has less to do with either a factual look or an air of conceptual elegance than it has with their capacity to convince us that what they say is a result of their having actually penetrated (or, if you prefer, been penetrated by) another form of life, of having one way or another, truly "been there." And that, persuading us that this offstage miracle has occurred, is where the writing comes in. (4-5)

Emphasis on “lively details” and “thick description” in fieldnotes is critical to rich, nuanced, and vivid accounts. To that end, while general impressions will invariably leak into jottings and fieldnotes, prioritizing sensory details leads to full fieldnotes from which one can recall evaluations and form new understandings. In addition to description, Emerson (1995) details the importance of recalling specific instances of dialog and characterizations of people. These details help relay to the reader the "been there" quality of the writing.

In articulating the researcher’s subject position one advances a central precept in the representation. In qualitative research, authenticity and objectivity are myths. Rosaldo writes, “The once dominant ideal of the detached observer using neutral language to explain ‘raw’ data has been displaced by an alternative project that attempts to understand human conduct as it unfolds through time and in relation to its meaning for the actors” (37). As writer, I must also establish my authority through the writing process. Rosaldo writes, “[N]o mode of composition is a neutral medium, and none should be granted exclusive rights to scientifically legitimate social description” (49). The right to social description rises out of the authority of the researcher established through a critical assessment of his/her subject position. An ethnography becomes stronger as the writer details her/his subjective experience more clearly and forthrightly.

Representation

John van Maanen calls the ethnographic representation “deconstruction reconstructed” (1995 13). Successful ethnographic representation relies less on “a factual look” and “theoretical elegance” and more on the researcher's ability “to convince us that what they say is as a result of actually having penetrated... another form of life, of having, one way or another, truly ‘been there’” (Geertz 1988 4-5). Even more than demonstrating “been there” or “being there,” the ethnographer must convince readers to believe they would have seen what the researcher saw, felt what the researcher felt, and concluded what the researcher concluded

(Geertz 1988 16). Representation becomes part of the process and practices of ethnography (Geertz 1988; Rosaldo 1989, Wolf 1992). In the pursuit of persuading the reader, the researcher shares the subjective experience. The scratch note to fieldnote, including head notes come together in the representation.

Researchers employ a range of rhetorical strategies to persuade the reader. Golden-Biddle and Locke (1993) offer a model for evaluating such texts in their ability to convince readers of their validity. Golden-Biddle and Locke propose three elements which form the basis of convincing within ethnographies: authenticity, plausibility, and criticality. Each element describes different relationships between author, text, and reader. Authenticity describes the relationship between the author and the text in the rhetorical strategies which convey the sense of “being there”; plausibility describes the rhetorical strategies used to connect the world of the reader with the world encountered by the author; and criticality describes the reader’s relationship to the text when the strategies within the text encourage the reader to “step out” of his/her world and examine the work as a cultural critique. The resulting representation must manage all three relationships for validity, as well as functionality.

Chapter Breakdown

This study follows a telescopic structure, beginning with a wide view of the town, with subsequent chapters “zooming in” to gain clarity on subsets of the previous chapters. Each chapter serves as context for each following chapter. As the study zooms in on the strictures and events of Massillon, the subjects of the chapter lose the context of the previous chapters, but then gain details unavailable in the broader views. Each chapter reveals structures and process that inform the following chapters, while allowing focus on the objects in those chapters. I have divided the chapters into isolable sections to highlight key elements of the study. The included quotation fragments highlight popular perspectives on the

sections' subjects to set a context for the forthcoming section. With each, I highlight the scope of attachment and importance of escalated discourse among residents.

In Chapter Two, I address larger narratives and perspectives of the town outside of football. The dedication, or pride, in Massillon certainly manifest in football-related activities; however, practices and events not related to football showed a commitment to the town. Many of the practices and events demonstrate a desire for history in every phase – the desire to uncover history, the desire to enact history, the desire for display history, and the desire to consume history. City organizations offer narratives of town history that advance the early 19th century founding, the industrial character of the town, and the sensibilities of a small town. The priorities of official histories infiltrate persistent narratives expressed by residents. Persistent arrives include: a town founded by a family bringing sheep to the area in the early 19th century, an industrial town which has faced repeated economic ruptures and restructuring, and a big town with small town values and sensibilities. The residents' desire for history has led to both public financial and social support of organizations that seek out and display historical artifacts, The Massillon Museum and Spring Hill Historic Home. The result of the efforts of the other organizations reveal absences in the official narratives and offer counter-narratives. The City has left out events that might suggest a different historical character. Massillon hosted significant efforts in the anti-slavery (including the founding family), workers' rights, women's rights, and state-sponsored initiatives for the care of the sick and disabled. The progressive histories conflicts with the narratives propagated by the city government. This conflict is manifest in how people see the town. The absences and counter-narratives point to ambivalences and anxieties residents express regarding the popularly perpetuated narratives. They emphasize economic crisis, yet acknowledge growth. They talk about themselves as a small town, but express desire for greater population. The conflict in the narratives plays out in how residents frame their collective identity. Residents

turn to football to resolve ambivalences and mollify anxieties. Local discussions of race demonstrate how they used football as meaning-making. Football promotes color-blinded as its status of a true meritocracy. Also, residents point to black and white players working together as exemplar of representation in Massillon.

Certainly, football dominates the discourse and activities of Massillon residents. In Chapter Three, I articulate the processes the process that elevate the status of football in build attachment to the program. Residents recite the twenty-four state championships, the nine national championships, the coaches, the players, and the games. One figure, Paul Brown, looms over the team. In addition to his on-the-field success, Brown brought in the Tiger mascot and started the swing band as ways to turn football into a community experience. The added experiences also turned the football game into what would later be called The Greatest Show In High School Football. The game experience incorporated spectacles and rituals which built personal attachment to the team. Two simultaneous processes explain the development of attachment – valorization and socialization. Two critical elements in the valorization and socialization are the Massillon Tiger Swing Band and Obie, the team mascot. The spectacles elevate the importance of the team while the rituals teach people how to enact the collective civic identities. The emotional attachments from valorization and socialization expand meaning-making.

During his tenure, Brown implemented and infrastructure which supported the team, in addition to the valorization and socialization processes. The critical entity in the infrastructure is the Massillon Tiger Booster Club. The impetus for the Booster Club came out of the Depression. Brown saw kids who didn't have appropriate diets, didn't have transportation to practice, or had to work to help financially support their family. In Chapter Four, I articulate how the growth of the projects under the Booster Club as grown into an extensive, semi-autonomous celebratory complex. The efforts of the Booster Club

communicate to participants the values first espoused by Brown. The organizational structure of the Booster Club has promoted growth beyond the confines of its hierarchy. No single person knows every tradition, spectacle, ritual, or process. People have their roles and relish their participation. People participate in the Booster Club, in part, because fathers or mothers and grandparents did. Involvement in the Booster Club promotes involvement in other philanthropic effort. Members tied their participation in the Booster Club supporting the team to wider philanthropy. The flattening of the complex hierarchy informs how people understand their participation in the community and their relationship to the team. They see others, “hangers-on,” as betraying the values espoused by Brown in favor of self-interest.

The efforts of residents in support of town, team, and Booster Club culminate in the last regular season game of the year – McKinley Week. McKinley Week encompasses the emphasis on history, the valorization of the team, the socialization of children, and the efforts of the Booster Club. It is tradition. It is spectacle. It is ritual. It is community participation. In Chapter Five, I provide a close analysis of McKinley Week events to demonstrate how Massillonians negotiate their individual, civic, and team identities. Residents frame the rivalry between Massillon and Canton in ways that reenact their ambivalences toward their collective civic identities. They retain small town status by fighting the city school. They overcome economic woes by combatting the poor school. The discourse of the rivalry occasionally takes on racial tones. Schools hold assemblies to see live tiger Obie and talk about the animal and the rivalry. Valorization and socialization continue through the events of the week, but with higher frequency and intensity. Residents are bombarded with images of Obie. The band maintains a persistent presence at all the events. The emotional energy generated through the week are released during the game. In addition to the emotional stakes, the result of the game impacts voting. People credit the success and failure of specific ballot initiatives to success or failure in the game. The penultimate public event, the

McKinley Week Parade takes place on Friday before the Saturday game. The parade is consistently the best-attended event all year. Families line the main street in town. The parade is followed by a bonfire. The bonfire has been subdued due to a city conflict with the state environmental agency. People bemoan the changes. Saturday brings more events, mostly smaller functions with limited participation, except for the tailgating. For example, the team goes to a private church service at St. Tim's in the morning. Organizations use the emotional energy of the game and the rivalry as a source of social capital. A local food bank sets a donation drive as McKinley versus Massillon with the winner announced during the game. Ballot initiatives and blood drives similarly play off of the rivalry. Select community members get to share the field with the teams as they run onto the field. During McKinley Week, the desire for history, the celebratory complex, and organizational structures of philanthropy converge in a football-driven performative experience.

Chapter Two: Town

A small, Midwestern town, industrial decline (Carrie)

A sunny Saturday morning as I get out of my car three blocks from the Holiday parade. I would call the air ‘crisp,’ but not ‘cold.’ That may change the longer I’m out in it if it doesn’t get warmer. The morning time for the parade surprises me a little, but is understandable given the playoff game tonight.

I arrive towards the end of the parade route, across from the Massillon merchandise retailer Howard’s Tiger Rags. I look down the parade route and see thousands of people lining the streets for what I estimate is a mile. Both sides of the street are filled. I am again impressed by the turnout. It is a very social occasion. Lots of talking and socializing. Kids are playing on the sidewalks. Conversations line the streets as much as the people do. One of the conversations is taking place about two feet from me. Two middle-aged men are discussing hardware stores and shows on Nickelodeon. The taller of the two takes a look across the street and says “They really turn ‘em out here.”

After ten minutes of crowd-watching, I hear from behind me “They comin’?”

“Quick, get up. They’re coming.” A mother has joined her son on a concrete half-wall as the boy directs the other children to the coming parade.

The mayor leads the way, just like she did for the McKinley Week parade. A more tepid response this time, which is a positive for her. The “Services Director” follows, preceded the city council president, ward representatives, a state senator, city treasurer, and the Chamber of Commerce members. The

whole parade is sponsored by the Downtown Massillon Association, which includes several Chamber of Commerce members.

A sizable gap follows the politicians. I look down the parade route and see a band marching this direction (It is a marching band after all.) A larger, mustached man in front of me asks, "Why the big gap?" During the gap I wonder about the time of the parade. The morning time feels peculiar to me. Was the parade always scheduled for the morning with the ever-resent possibility (or hope) of a playoff appearance or was the parade schedule for afternoon/evening and changed once the playoff schedule was released? I doubt the latter, but would not put it out of the realm of possibility.

Some kids come up to a woman complaining about being asked to stay on the sidewalk and out of the street. "We were asked to scooch back and we did," says one small boy. Another boy impersonates the person telling the kids to move back in an exaggerated, mocking fashion, "I told you to get on the sidewalk." The woman tells the kids to stay with here.

Another man in a Massillon Tiger sweatshirt next to the mustached man asks, "What is going on with these big gaps?" My back starts to ache during this gap.

Music becomes audible. The music seems to focus people's attention on the parade. Floats and cars go by without music and people maintain conversations, but music plays and my attention gets focused on the street and other conversations pause or stop altogether. The music is a Christmas song I don't recognize. (How do I recognize it as a Christmas song, then?) Belly Dance Massillon demonstrates their skills to the observing public.

The Lions Club president rolls by waving to people, but not a lot of people

are waving back. Thinking back, I don't recall a lot of people waving back at individuals in cars. A person dressed as the Lions Club lion works back and forth across the street. It approaches a little girl in a snow leopard-patterned coat and the girl backs away, retreating behind presumably her mother's legs. Lions Club presence continues with a miniature holiday train rolling down the street.

After the first two of about a dozen churches goes by – 1st Massillon Church and Calvary Baptist, another lull in the parade action spurs more idle conversation. The same two men from before talk about a failed remodeling project. More music plays as the fourth dance troupe dances down the street to some applause. My back moves from aching to hurting.

A group of seven people near me leaves during another lull. I look out and see that more parade is coming. The sizable religious presence continues with about a dozen churches represented in total. All are Christian denominations. Still called a Holiday Parade.

As the Girl Scouts walk by, the parade feels longer than the McKinley Week parade. Part of that is almost certainly because my back is killing me. Even considering that, the paraded has less energy. Representatives from the Massillon Museum walk by throwing out candy and handing out schedules. They have had great energy during past events, like the pep rally, the downtown festival earlier this summer. They are smiling, but more subdued. After I jot down the note in my book, I try to wave them down to say, "Hi." They don't notice me and keep tossing out candy.

Entries from other events are now coming through. The Dalton Holiday Festival, a regional parade, and the Barberton Labor Day Parade Court work

their way down the parade route. A (The?) Batmobile comes through with the sign “Batman and Commissioner Gordon: Superheroes for Hope.” (see Figure 1) I have no idea what organization they are representing. I ask a woman close to me and she says, “I have no idea.”

A young boy crawls and hands and knees to the middle of the street to get some of the remaining thrown candy. The order from earlier is gone. Both side of the street are sparser with fewer onlookers. As the Tiger Swing Band

approaches, though still a ways off, a woman next to me says to some children, “Tiger Rag – we now that sound, don’t we? We know that sound.” The music was



Figure 1: Superheroes for Hope

only slightly audible over the Disney float going by playing some song from Beauty and the Beast. The Tiger Swing Band seems to have begun the closing of the parade as the band was followed by Santa and a pick-up with a City of Massillon sign and a teen girl in a pink jacket hanging off the side. (11-17-12 fieldnote)

I walked back from my car that night with my back hurting as bad as it had in a long time, hoping to relax a couple of hours before the evening’s game. The parade lasted just over an hour, but it had felt longer. It reminded me of the countless parades I had experienced growing up in a small town in Michigan, the kind of events where local businessmen and politicians are featured participants, while bands and pre-recorded music provide the

atmosphere. It felt familiar, a staple of small towns in middle America. Naturally, though, there were differences between the Holiday Parade and the Pumpkin Festival Parades of the 1980s. The Christian church contingent in Massillon exceeded my experiences, while the presence of the school as a local institution seemed diminished. Still, though Massillon is over three times larger than my hometown, it still feels to me like a “small town.”

Massillon residents identify with a small town ethos. Most people generally reiterated Carrie’s description of the town:

It's a small, Midwestern town, industrial decline, pretty typical of a lot of small towns that you see in the Midwest. It had its boom days back in the – probably when it first got settled in the mid-1800s probably to the early 1930s or '40s, and then after that just kind of went downhill, so – as far as like economic prosperity. But there's typical small town, kind of like living in a fishbowl, you know. The same people do the same projects – business owners, political leaders, civic minded people, stuff like that.

While a more-detailed description of the town's relationship to its football teams will come in the following chapters, football remains intimately connected in discussions of the town. All of the descriptions include references (oft repeated) to football. People frequently describe their town in the frame of football. Scotty described it as follows: “It’s our hometown, so there’s a loyalty there, and some of us live and die by that loyalty. Other people don’t give a damn. [*laughs*] Yeah. It used to be a small steel working town. Football, especially the high school football, used to be the backbone of the city. Still is too.” He summed up the recurring sentiments by invoking history, a small town ethos, and a focus on the departure of the steel industry.

While a small town sensibility rarely relies on population size for attribution, the demographic of the area may provide an objective description of Massillon. US Census data

indicates a 0.1% increase from 2010 to the 2013 estimated 32, 183 people in Massillon. The stable population consists of 86.1% identifying as “white, not Hispanic or Latino” compared to 8.8% identifying as “black or African American” (US Census Bureau). The economic status of Massillon includes a median income of \$38,142, or 21% lower than statewide income. A poverty rate of 19.0% represents a 20% more than state of Ohio figures (US Census Bureau). From 2010-2013, Massillon’s economy has remained stable. A map from the US Department of Agriculture’s Economic Resource Service grants Massillon a “nonmetro – micropolitan” designation as opposed to “metro” and “nonmetro – noncore.” The USDA taxonomy appears to support a claim that Massillon can be seen as a small town due to lacking the population of metropolitan areas and surpassing consideration for rural. While religious figure are unavailable for Massillon, county data (including both Massillon and Canton) shows 1.6% of the population identifying as not “Mainline Protestant,” “Catholic,” “Evangelical,” and “Orthodox denominations” (City-Facts.com). The 0.4% of the population in Stark County identifying as Friends, or Quakers, doubles the state average (City-Data.com). The demographics of Massillon provide context to evaluate the accuracy of residents’ constructions.

In this chapter, I document how the residents of Massillon create their collective identity. Residents often root their identities in history. Jessica told me that people in Massillon “place emphasis on celebrating the historic legacy.” Residents desire to uncover, display, and consume history. They show an awareness of local history and use history to describe their experiences. The City government and Chamber of Commerce advance narratives that perpetuate specific conceptualizations of collective identity. Those narratives emphasize the role of industry and economics. Massillon has served as a major port in the region, giving rise to substantial wheat processing and machinery industries. Even the story of the town’s founder, Thomas Rotch, emphasizes the flock of Merino sheep he brought from

Massachusetts to start a woolen mill. Another theme in the narrative is the emphasis on neighborhoods and local districts. The result is a sense of Massillon as a small town. Like Scotty, people describe Massillon as a “blue-collar” and industrial football town. That narrative gets perpetuated in both belief and action. Inasmuch as residents act in accordance with the sense of themselves as residents of a small industrial football town sense, they performatively generate and regenerate that identity.

Several institutions carry out the residents’ desire for history. The residents support the Massillon Museum (henceforth MassMu), the public library (MPL), and Spring Hill Historic Home through relapsing bond initiatives. Each organization works to satisfy residents’ desire for history. MassMu stands out as the prominent body in that search and display of history. It is rare if not unique that a town of roughly thirty thousand supports a municipal museum. Many residents take pride in their support of a museum. The work of these organizations reveals absences in the official narratives and create counter narratives. The official narratives leave out several aspects of history that would suggest a more progressive history that does not fit in a small, blue-collar football town. The Rotches were Quakers who participated in the Underground Railroad. Massillon also housed key figures in early women’s rights and workers’ rights movements. Residents’ perception of their collective identity as a blue-collar small town get challenged. The absences and counter-narratives play out in anxieties and ambivalences regarding the collective identities.

A key aspect of the economic history of Massillon as an industrial hub is the story of economic crisis. While Massillon served as a critical port in the Ohio and Erie canals, The Great Flood of 1913 washed out the waterway, rendering Massillon useless as a port city. Massillon restructured its economy eventually centering its economy on the steel industry. As the steel industry faced a downturn in the late 1970s and eventually left Massillon in the first years of the century, Massillon again experienced a large economic crisis. The narrative of

Massillon as an industrial town necessarily includes the history of economic crisis. Many residents point to a need for jobs and more businesses to help a down economy. Other residents, including Paul, talk about the influx of businesses and the expansion of the industrial base. Economic recovery does not fit within peoples' understanding of their collective identity. They hold onto the idea of their town as downtrodden. People often frame the town in football terms by casting them as underdogs. The move between a belief in the need for growth and their established identity as economically downtrodden.

I also witnessed ambivalence when people cast Massillon as a small town. While embracing and perpetuating the popular narratives, residents point to inconsistencies within those narratives. They express a fondness for the values associated with the small town ethos; they see themselves as neighborly and hospitable and phrase such values as endemic of their status as a small town; however, they also express a need to grow, both in business and population. The small town ethos creates tension with the need for big business and a larger population. Residents have sought ways to mediate dissonances with popular narratives. They often fall back to football to rationalize any disconnect. Football relieves the anxieties and settles the ambivalences. I saw this play out in discussions of race. Discussions of race begin with ambivalence about how they view the role of race in their lives. People quickly turn to football to explain how race does not factor in their lives. People cast football as a true meritocracy, where success is colorblind. They understand their collective identities through the lens of football; football, therefore, is a primary source of meaning-making. They also view football as necessitating teamwork with everyone working together. In this narrative, black players and white players struggle together in the story of success. People turn the perceived racial harmony on the football field into a statement of relationships in the town at large. Regardless of the truth or falsehood of the colorblind narrative of sports, Massillonians act in ways that correspond to the colorblindness rhetoric, applying similar standards to other

social issues, like class. Race and class “disappear” as issues that may merit consideration.

History: So many men who weren’t working, they were striking (Gavin)

History matters in Massillon. It matters a lot. Beyond the history of football, Massillonians revere a range of histories. Stacey, former director of the Spring Hill Historic Home, said that Massillon residents have "a really great sense of heritage and respect for the history of the town.” The interest is not a vague sense of desire for the past, but rather a desire to collect, document, display, and enact the past on the part of city institutions. Residents support institution preserving those histories. Jessica said,

Compared to where I grew up and where I live now, people don't know what anything is and here it seems like everybody has at least heard of the places in this town. Maybe someone that’s still struggling to reach outside of the Massillon area, but I think within Massillon there’s a really good sense of preserving the history that the community has. And I think friendly too within a big sense of people willing to give and donate to help smaller sites or less fortunate.

Support for MassMu and Spring Hill is evident through attendance at events, the financial support, and their involvement in other community events. In addition, the City of Massillon puts forth a city history. In this section, I document how the City of Massillon forwards a narrative of the town and how aspects of those narratives inform residents’ collective identities.

The City provides a brief history as a “sketch of the rich historic and cultural heritage of our community” (City of Massillon). Then-Mayor Francis H. Cicchinelli, Jr., then-Chief of Police Mark Weldon, Kirk T. Albrecht, then-Detective Kenneth Hendricks, Penny Berg, and then-Executive Director of the Massillon Public Library Camille Leslie and the library staff all contributed to the narrative. The City of Massillon, then, provides what amounts to an

official history. The city history begins by specifically relaying the borders of the town, its position in the county and its location relative to Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and New York City. It covers the origin stories including Kendal founder Thomas Rotch and his wife Charity, including his journey from New Bedford, MA with Merino sheep and his establishing a post office. The narrative identifies the name of the home – Spring Hill, a registered historic landmark. A hotlink for “Springhill” (sic) leads the viewer to the Massillon Proud blog. A hotlink for the “National Register of Historic Places” is broken. The City also institutionalized its commitment to Kendal. In a public ceremony in 2012, Mayor Kathy Catazaro-Perry proclaimed April 20 Kendal's Founding Day. They also include a narrative of Massillon founder James Duncan and his efforts to grow the town. The story also makes references to Jean-Baptiste Massillon and Massum Metcalf, the first white settler in 1810. Honoring Kendal was particularly important while I was there because 2012 marked the bicentennial anniversary of its founding. Earlier in the year, Mayor Kathy Catazaro-Perry proclaimed April 20th “Kendal Founding Day.”

The city first references its commercial history when detailing how the first person to live in Massillon had originally planned to live in Kendal. The narrative proceeds, “Business began to center in Massillon rather than Kendal, and it began to progress almost instantly” (City of Massillon). Comparing early Massillon to Kendal clearly implies favorable business environment in Massillon. The City also cites the opening of the Ohio-Erie Canal in 1828. The “Port of Massillon” became of hub for the exportation of wheat. Industries servicing farmers also developed. The need for farm machinery brought forth a new industry—an industry destined to be the largest in the "Wheat City" for many years. In 1845, a thrashing machine built by Massillon's Russell brothers won first prize at the Ohio State Fair. By steadily improving "The Boss," as the machine was called, the three brothers were able to expand their factory until they were leading all competitors.

Other industries, including coal mining and pig-iron, followed the expansion of the railroad into the town. The brunt of the narrative ends in 1853 with the village's incorporation. The Board of Trade, established in 1890, and the development of the Chamber of Commerce in 1915 follow without elaboration. The history clearly serves to advance the position as an industrial city. "Thus, year after year, thriving industrial activities have grown until Massillon became one of the foremost steel and metal working centers of the world. Massillon remains a vital center of steelmaking and fabricating. The city's industrial base continues to expand, with growing food processing, chemical processing and industrial machinery manufacturing becoming ever more important" (City of Massillon). The city narrative closes with demographics, city government organization, and principal city services.

While understandably light on the inclusion of elements of cultural and social history in a city history, the narrative does orient the origin of the town relative to current city structure, including streets. The lots that first comprised the village of Massillon covered the area from "North Avenue to South Avenue and from the river east to the neighborhood of our present Fifth Street" (City of Massillon). In the vein of the everyday, the city documents the building of the first private school and the state hospital, at the behest of then-governor William McKinley. While not a point of emphasis, the cultural history still works its way into the historical narrative of the city.

Even the city's flag and attending laws reveals how concerned the city is with its origin, industrial history, and the everyday. (see Appendix C – Massillon Flag) The flag shows a city skyline silhouette which includes a church symbolizing the city's namesake Jean-Baptiste Massillon, and a canal boat and steel mill stacks symbolizing its industrial heritage, and "City of Massillon 1826" to mark the year James Duncan incorporated Massillon. The flag also includes the city seal showing two key representations of the city's

cultural history: two wheat stacks under a sunrise/sunset.

The histories of the town inevitably intersect with football, suggesting that Massillon's industrial history and its sports history are related. Wilcox and Andrews write that the development of sport functioned within increasingly industrialized cities. "As people left behind the vast, open spaces of their rural existence for the cramped confines of the city, so they demanded new arenas for the pursuit of those healthful physical pastimes that had become so central in their lives" (3). Industrialization and urbanization may have necessitated the development of sport. Sport also provided industrial workers with an outlet for the "relative monotony and boredom associated with life in the industrial city" (Wilcox and Andrews 4). In Massillon, specifically, accommodations were made for industrial workers. Factory workers were kept informed about game scores while working during games, beginning in the 1940's. Liz said, "People who were working in the steel mills for the last shift, they would actually post the results on the board, to make sure that everybody was updated on the score of the game while they were working." The industrial roots of football match the industrial narrative of Massillon.

Family, religion, and football all factor into the cultural history of Massillon residents. Vital to this understanding is the notion of a small town. In our interview, Liz commented about the large number of "mom and pop" stores in Massillon. When I asked Curtis to describe Massillon, he told me it was "a small urban area, but it's special compared to larger areas because everyone knows each other. There used to be twenty to thirty-one thousand people in town, but I think it's slightly less than that now. The character of the town centers on the churches and the schools. That's why there is such a focus on Massillon High School." My experience with Curtis confirmed his account as three different people came up to us over breakfast to talk to him and said, "Hi." Later, Curtis talked about how the town has three large Catholic churches, including "St. Tim's" where they do the blessing of the animal and

bless Obie (see Figure 2), as evidence of the importance of church in the town. The history of the town outside of football nevertheless informs how Massillonians understand the history of the football team.

Residents tie the character of Massillon to its history and traditions. Many of those traditions come specifically from football; therefore the history and character circulate inseparably from football. Danny, a former football player, Massillon as “an old rust belt town, very blue collar. They thrive and live off the tradition. Coach Paul Brown. Very proud town of its history. And once fall comes around the town just comes alive. It’s like springtime



Figure 2: Animal Blessing

for us. Football season’s coming, so...”

Certainly, Massillon's history is more complex than a review of the legacies of Paul Brown, Earle Bruce, and Chris Spielman and cannot be reduced to a series of box scores. The history outside of football suggests a town with a highly progressive past. From the

Rotches and their contributions to the Underground Railroad to Jacob Coxey's fight for workers' rights (including the first march on Washington) to the first state hospital to the rise of unionism in the steel mills, much of Massillon history suggests a commitment to the betterment of others, frequently those traditionally outside mainstream power structures. This progressive character even extends to Paul Brown and his work during the Depression to clothe and feed players. The current focus on community service certainly reflects this tradition, even if people do not explicitly draw those connections. The construction made by people tend to reflect the character of its football program – local, hard-working, fighting through difficulty. The blue-collar small town ethos in the community gets perpetuated by

narratives forwarded by the City. People hold to these narratives as central to their collective identity. People then fold in football as another principle element. However, those narratives contain absences that resist those narratives. The work of publicly supported organizations, such as MassMu and Spring Hill, reveal counter narratives.

MassMu: A one of a kind for a community our size (Paul)

After a relatively uneventful Museum Group meeting, Paul and I meet down at the museum. After a brief exchange of pleasantries with Mary, a pleasant older woman at the front desk, we walk through a double door to see a “typical” family, the Wunderkammers, on a wall immediately opposite us. We are walking into the new exhibit “Odditorium.” The premise, explained later by Jessica, is if heirlooms from an eccentric and local family accumulated over the years in various rooms in the house. All of the items were either local in their creation or local in their donation, so a local family at one point had the object. For example, the father’s room, the “study” has unique guns and weaponry, including what I’ll call a hatchet, but full of ornate etchings all the way through the blade. The study also had a musket and human skulls.

The first room we come across is the young girl’s room, “Betsy,” although she calls herself “Calliope.” A decided circus theme as there is a full circus clown outfit on a dummy facing the corner. A narrative is posted on the wall next to the exhibit, apparently Betsy was at a circus enjoying the majesty of it all when a lion broke free and was charging toward her when a clown pulled her to safety. In the back of the room is a beautiful, stained glass merry-go-round. Paul breezes by without spending much time at this room.

Next is the angst-ridden teen boy’s room, another narrative, this time about

an unnamed angst-ridden boy. His room is fragmented, lacking a coherent theme. Vintage black lingerie from the 50s that he found in the attic, various skulls, a civil war telescope, and a series of vintage cameras occupy this room. Paul also breezes past this room.

When we get to the next room, the bedroom of the lady of the house, “Henrietta, Paul immediately points to a dollhouse and says that that is a scale model of the largest opera house between New York and Chicago, from right here in Massillon, near where the bus depot is. I said, “I’ve been there,” meaning the depot when he looks at me incredulously before I clarify the depot and not the opera house. I asked how long since the opera was torn down and Paul said, “About 30 years.” The theme of the room is coherent in its emphasis on performance. A photo of local icon Lillian Gish hangs on the wall. Opera glasses from 1900 and a gramophone add to the theme. One piece that does not immediately fit, but certainly has a place is a “Votes for Women” sash hanging against the back wall.

We move past the main bedroom when Paul sees a photograph hung on the wall outside of any specific “room.” The picture reads Golf Outing, “4th of July, 1953.” Paul says he was caddying at the golf club where at least one of them golfed in 1952. He relays the story about how one of the men in the picture hit another man with his back swing and hit him “right on the bridge of the nose.” He was taken into the club house and “about four minutes later” came out and finished the round of nine holes. Paul then looks closer at the description and comments “I thought he was older than 80.”

We come across a doctor’s office without much that stands out. I see no narrative for this room. The one item that stands out is a phrenology chart on

the wall. Apparently, my Secretiveness area is well developed, while my Caution area is underdeveloped.

We turn a corner and on the wall of the museum, again not in any “room,” hang four photos of a funeral for a dog, Queenie. I can’t remember the exact date of the photos, but the 40s strike me as the time period. Also, some early 20th century postmortem photos of baby adorn the wall. Opposite those photos stood the study, complete with dead animals and weaponry. In this narrative the father, “Horatio,” talks about travel and adventure. Most of the items referenced in the narrative have been donated by a local family, including an elaborate and decorative Persian rug and an equally elaborate and decorative Abyssinian shield.

Just past the study, the maid, “Dottie Pringle,” writes of how she has accumulated items from three husbands before having to work for the Wunderkammers. The room is fragmented, like the son’s room, but the things seems to fit together, like the Nehi sign and an advertisement for turtle soup from a long gone restaurant, Freeb’s. The quarters hold an object of interest for Paul. He remarks about a menu from a restaurant that was once very popular, but is now closed and the building run down, the Sugar Bowl. He points to what he thinks is an anachronism, a Wheaties’s box with local legendary football player Chris Spielman in his Massillon uniform on the cover. The cover is from the 1980s, not as old as the rest of the items, but still a Massillonian artifact.

We exit the Odditorium and turn right into the elevator with the second floor as our destination. Once the doors open, we are greeted with New Acquisitions and see a 1907 Marine uniform standing next to a wedding dress

from 1910. Nothing connects them, except they are new acquisitions. In the corner off to the left stands a 1907-1908 Stanhope automobile built in Massillon. As I turn toward the main two exhibits on this floor the end of the hallway is a small exhibit for Major General Sam Beatty. An extensive narrative about the man born in Ohio, but spent most of his life in Stark County, tells the story of a soldier in the Mexican-American War and the Civil War. Not many items outside of a piece of his military uniform. Paul doesn't stop and goes right into the Paul Brown exhibit.

We turn left into the Paul Brown exhibit, which is due to close Kickoff Week. Under glass along the left wall are several artifacts of coaching, including a 1920s "Filmo" motion camera Brown used to record games. The camera is next to the book *Coaching*, autographed by its author, Knute Rockne. The book is opened to pages on conditioning. The handwritten notes in the book are pretty remarkable, demonstrating knowledge of nutrition. Notes like "Pop – No Good" and "Day before and day of game no pie or cake – after game alright" are among ten lining these two pages. Apparently pickles are hard to digest – a no-no for game day. Paul talks about how advanced he was in training, in offensive and defensive schemes. Against the back wall are two pretty cool items. One is a full-scale cut-out of Brown standing on a piece of the field turf. Paul tells the story of how his children came to the exhibit and took a picture standing next to the black-and-white stand-up cut-out of their younger father. "Almost like a ghost," I comment. Paul talks about how special that moment was. The other item playing against a screen on the back wall was a film of a game from October 17, 1936 against New Castle, Pennsylvania. Paul stood and watched the footage for a few moments. Against

the right wall are two helmets, one from the Brown era and one from contemporary teams, a period uniform, and a picture of the band with a write-up of its locally famous conductor, George Bird. Paul talked about the importance of the band to Paul Brown, how it helped to create “The Greatest Show in High School Football.” Paul talked about his initiatives to help kids during the depression, starting the booster club, in part, to make sure kids could get to and from practice and that they could get food when necessary.

We walk out of this exhibit past the Beatty exhibit and see a montage of filmed circus acts from the 1940s against the back wall. This is in honor of Robert Immel, who shared a passion for the circus. He carved a miniature circus with 2600 pieces, including 40 elephants and 154 horses. The write-up on the wall says each piece has a story. One of those stories was the circle of men with sledge hammers pounding tent spike into the ground. This set of pieces was outside of the circus proper, outside of the entrance to the circus, but isolated so as easier to see. Prominently displayed right inside the entrance are advertisements for the circus freaks (in other parts of the exhibit are pictures of famous circus freaks [The Hilton Sisters and Lionel the dog-faced boy, for example] and a display of General and Mrs. Thom Thumb and pieces autographed by PT Barnum). Freaks in the imagined circus include Mr. Obese, Gumbo – an African with a pronounced lip plate, the strongman Biceppe, sword eater Sir Lance, and fat lady Fatima, among others. There were three tents – one for the freaks, one for the Wonders of the World – elephants, zebra, and camels, and the big top with crowd and performers inside. Remarkable detail. A parade of horses circled the entire exhibit. Paul tells me the story of how Immel was the manager of Brown at Massillon HS, then Immel went to

college, and met up with Brown again at Great Lakes Naval Station, where they became close friends. Back to Brown.

We leave to find the chief administrator, so Paul can introduce me to her. On the ways to the offices we walk past an exhibit of Historic Homes of Fourth Avenue. Pictures of beautiful, old houses with occasional pictures of their more-prominent residents. The descriptions are primarily of the house and not the residents. But we are on our way to the office.

After asking around and a little wandering we find Alex and Jill, the head educator. After some pleasantries and me explaining my research, I offer to help at an upcoming event, FunFest. They gladly take me up on my offer and we continue to talk about my research. I ask both for interviews, they graciously accept. Paul and I head upstairs to get the business cards. On the way Paul comments on the leadership under Jessica. He says that former Museum heads would emphasize the art with little or no regard to the location and character of Massillon. “They would bring in a collection of Japanese kimonos,” Paul says, “and I would tell them to bring in motorcycles. So Jessica really knows how to reach this town.” In the lobby, no cards, but I get the contact info I need. (7-31-12 fieldnote)

The “Odditorium” represents the effort of MassMu to connect to the residents who support it through recurring bond initiatives. MassMu works to satisfy the residents’ desire for history. MassMu possesses a stature in the community that surprised me. It is a site of cultural and social landscape. In this section, I explain how the support of MassMu and Spring Hill Historic Home has produced narratives that run counter to the popular conceptions and reveals absences in the City’s narrative. Those absences challenge prevailing

beliefs about residents' collective identity.

Residents support MassMu and MPL through levies. Jessica described as follows:

The museum was founded in 1933. And so it just was obvious to them that they had to have a repository for their cultural history, and a place to enhance and celebrate the arts and history of this community. Fortunately the community has seen this as a viable resource and has sustained it over the years, and I hope they continue to do so.

But if we don't connect with every constituent, if we don't connect the teenagers, the preschoolers, you know, the demographics that you might not normally expect would frequent museums, and then we can't sustain ourselves. So we have to be relevant to a huge audience, unlike other museums that can be more focused because they have substantial endowments that one person provided to see through his or her legacy, or they're in the community that is attached to a world-renowned college or a huge industry or something. So that puts the museum in the position to really cater to as broad an audience as we can, which is a challenge and it's interesting.

The historical relationship with the town survives today, but also depends on the museum remaining a viable and relevant repository.

The character of the Massillon Museum shifted, at least in the eyes of some residents after Alex took over leadership of the museum, the focus of the museum was, almost exclusively, the display and dissemination of things Massillonian in character. The term "Massillon" moved from a locator of the museum to a descriptor of the museum. Carrie explained,

We do things that are locally based, and we do bring in things from outside of our area. But when we bring in things from outside of our area, whether it's

a national exhibit that we borrowed from another museum or we've put together exhibits that have toured across the country – like two years ago we put one together called *Modernism in the Midwest* and we focused on modernist paintings from the '20s, the '30s, from artists from Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Chicago, Indianapolis, Columbus, Cleveland. And then when we talked about how even though you might think, "Modern art, modernist art – what's that? That doesn't have any relevance to me as a Massillonian"...

When you look at those different styles, it can be very difficult to understand; if you're a lay person, you don't know that much about art. What we did with that exhibit is we said, "These were all small-town people who lived in the Midwest, who made art as a hobby or did it on the side." We tried to really connect it to Massillonians' experience or say that the scenes that they're portraying in their work – small-town life, industry, labor, immigrants, families – even if the style of painting looks strange to them, the content and the background of the artist are still relevant.

So we do a balance here. We don't want to be totally local, but we do have to be relevant to our community. And so if we do anything that is bigger than our community, we try to tie it back to them. I try, as an educator, to really make sure that it has a relevance and a connection.

Also, previous MassMu administrations largely ignored the local football history. Liz explained,

In previous administrations here at the museum, football was kind of shoved aside as far as history goes, and it was one of those things, it was like "Oh yeah, Massillon football." But what we're trying to do with this new administration is kind of embrace it. You know set aside a specific football

gallery. Specifically look at different eras in our football history through photograph, through video, uniforms, that kind of thing...

But what we're trying to do with this kind of new administration is kind of embrace it. Um, you know set aside a specific football gallery. Specifically look at different eras in our football history, uh, through photograph, through video, uniforms, that kind of thing... Alex Coon decided, um, I think it was time to really embrace, uh, football and go out and pursue a project.

Jessica described some of the rotating exhibits. "We have P.T. Barnum's solid gold hip walking stick and Tom Thumb's wedding garments, and a piece of Tom and Lavinia Thumb's wedding cake from 1862 or '63. So we're eclectic in that way. We can celebrate football. We can celebrate the circus. We have steam engines. We have costumes. We have paintings and sculpture. It's a fascinating place." The exhibits relay the cultural, social, and economic history of the town.

To that end, the museum has both a highly visible online and physical presence in the community. Susan said,

We have a lot of education outreach that our educator does and she has interns working with her as well to try and really have a presence in the community at different festivals, have a table for Massillon Museum so that even if an event is kind of unrelated we are a presence as far as welcoming people to whoever the audience happens to be at that venue.

The museum has become a critical hub for witnessing and experiencing history for Massillon residents. Carrie elaborated on the museum's outreach programs,

As the head of education, I develop a lot of the public offerings that we have, classes, programs for Scouts, workshops. When I came here, I developed a free monthly workshop for all ages the first Saturday of every month to try

to get more of the public through the door, and that's been pretty well received. I also do a lot of outreach, and I take the museum out into the community. I go out and talk to different groups. I set up at different fairs and festivals.

I partner on different projects that fit with the museum, so we're working with Massillon Parks and Rec because they're doing a triathlon, and we're part of a national initiative called Let's Move! that's supposed to tie museums into physical fitness, so that fulfills that part of it. We do a national reading program every year called The Big Read, where we work with the library and a lot of other community organizations to give out free books and then develop programs on that. So I do a lot to get people in the door and then to raise the profile of the museum and to bring the museum out to people in the community.

MassMu holds a mainstream social position in Massillon, rather than on the periphery of social life. Staff members are recognized as community members through their work with the museum. Carrie said,

(W)hen I go out in public – if I go to the grocery store or if I'm just out – I have little kids say, "Miss [Carrie], Miss [Carrie]," all the time because I'm [only] about teaching kids. And so it doesn't matter where I am – if I'm at the hardware store or if I'm at the gym – there are always little kids coming up to me saying, "Miss [Carrie]." So I know that I'm a public face of the Massillon Museum pretty much 24/7 because I go out into the community so much. So just having that level of recognition with the children is kind of funny.

Social status gets tied to the nostalgia of the town. Scotty said,

In the early days Massillon used to be a lot bigger and thriving more. The museum was always a place. It was always there. If you'd go downtown, you

could go right to the museum ‘cause it was right there.” The museum stands as a distinct valued resource for residents, Paul said, “The Massillon Museum is probably almost a one of a kind for a community our size, with over 100,000 items in their storage, and it gets a lot of community support.

I again heard pride, this time for MassMu as a rarity for a town the size of Massillon. The status of the museum in the community positions it to address key social issues in the community – social issues that many may find uncomfortable – like race.

Much of what MassMu does with Kendal, it does so through the Spring Hill Historic Home. Spring Hill is owned by Massillon Museum Foundation, Inc. (City of Massillon). The relationship between MassMu and Spring Hill has been formalized beyond a common trust.

Well, Spring Hill and the Massillon Museum very much have a linked history. The director of the Massillon Museum was actually crucial in starting Spring Hill as an historic column. It was in a family, one family for 150 years and, in the 1960s and 70s they realized that, you know, what the family’s done and, you know, what we do. “

Well, it played a big part in the founding of, Kendall which was actually here before Massillon was. And, uh, so our director, really made sure that that was established as a historic site. The board members who served for the Massillon Museum are also required to serve on Spring Hill’s board.

Every June, Spring Hill hosts an Underground Railroad re-enactment. Stacey described the event as follows:

With the Kendall commemoration this is the 200 year anniversary of that, so we’ve used it as opportunity for sites to work together. Us, Spring Hill, the museum and – and the library, um, to work together and really bring to light what each site has to offer. It’s been great because you can offer all the sites

together and you can – you can push people from – well not push them, but suggest at one site to go to the other site. And I think it's – it's kind of enlightened the staff of each site to know more about what's happening at the other locations so they can suggest things.

I've gotten calls about when we're open that people were here and somebody suggested they go to Spring Hill. And I think with the community to because, um, I hate to say it, but we've kind of been able to piggyback off of Massillon Museum's awareness in the community because they're much more well-rounded than Spring Hill is. It's given us the opportunity to – to reach – to the dedicated volunteers and members and that are looking for maybe something else to – to go see, so they go up to Spring Hill.

The re-enactment begins with the walk up to the house. Also, taking place during the re-enactment were two women dressed in period-appropriate attire (see Figure 3) describing how people would sew blankets with codes for freedom-seeking slave and those who would help them. The codes included local geography and especially dangerous areas. Also near the



Figure 3: Underground Railroad - Two Women

house, a marionette show recounted the Rotches' journey from Connecticut with their sheep. (see Figure 4) The performers also elaborated on the role Arvine Wales played in establishing the home. The re-enactment took visitors around the property, illustrating different elements of life and how the Rotches helped slaves reach freedom.

The re-enactment also included Quaker life at that time, including how children had to get

water from a well, often carrying it on a yoke. Participants also got to ground corn to make meal. The house was also open with volunteers in each room to explain the items in the respective rooms.

Residents' desire for history tends to focus on local events while foregoing acknowledging the relationship with national histories. Despite the event taking place on the same weekend as other Juneteenth events, they do not advertise the event as connected with Juneteenth. Stacey said,

It, actually, in previous years, has been called Juneteenth. We took it out mainly because there was some confusion about what we actually did at our event. We didn't want people to see it as a party, like, "Come and celebrate." Even though it's a happy occasion, there was some, I think, mixed ideas within the steering committee, the board, our volunteers and community members about what we actually were trying to accomplish.

I think we got better attendance and more community support by explaining it as an experience where you come and you're firsthand a slave that's – that's on your way to freedom. And you end with – it ends with some information about



Figure 4: Underground Railroad - A Sheep's Tale

Juneteenth, but I think it was kind of misleading about what we were actually providing to the public and... I think it clarified and almost made it stand out more as its own program.

The re-enactment is a major event for Spring Hill with their Fall Festival. Stacey indicated that people concern themselves with history; they desire to enact it. While appreciating town history, residents do not show appreciation for how Spring Hill and Juneteenth fit with national (non-local) civil rights histories.

By identifying football as an equalizing force, residents engage in a discourse of “colorblindness” and “classblindness.” They translate the efforts of the football team into evidence of community social conditions. They assert that, because all players work together towards a common goal, “orange and black” trump white and black and that “first class” subsumes class differences. They use football to legitimize social conditions.

The early history as read through the documents of MPL suggest a deep concern for marginalized populations. While Spring Hill provides a lived, embodied experience, MPL houses much of the early history archival resources concerning Kendal. The library, through its “Massillon Memory” web page, organizes considerable resources documenting the lives of the Rotches and the history of Kendal. The largest, most specific, archive to that end are the Rotch-Wales Papers. The Rotch portion of the archive “contains personal and business correspondence, diaries, documents, accounts, ledgers, and daybooks of Thomas Rotch (1767-1823) and members of his family” (Massillon Memory). The collection recounts the journey from the Easy Coast to Ohio. The searchable archive includes, correspondence, recipes, and information about their sheep and the woolen industry. The archive also includes the diary of Charity Rotch as she details and reflects on the journey from Massachusetts to Connecticut to Ohio. Her will is among the papers; in it, she donates her money for a school as a “Benevolent Institution for the education of destitute orphans, and indigent children” (The Rotch-Wales Papers). The Charity School of Kendal operated from 1829-1832. MPL also has the student directory. The link opens into a GoogleDoc spreadsheet with a list of children. Roughly twenty percent of the listed children do not include names, some only have

gender and age. In three years, the school took in almost two hundred children, according to the document (Charity School). While the Spring Hill Historic Home specifically highlights the role the Quaker religion had in the actions of the Rotches and their work with the Underground Railroad, MPL does offer a narrative preferring to rely on documents and archives. In contrast, the city narrative makes no mention of the Underground Railroad or Quakers when articulating the founding of Kendal. The history of Kendal resists the popularized color- and class-blind narratives. Race and class are “erased” from the city’s history, thereby clouding how people understand race and class.

The Great Flood of 1913 brought about a significant shift for Massillon. One three-ring binder in the Museum Group archive titled “The Greatest Show In High School Football” recounts the early history of the football team in relation to social, cultural, and political events both locally and nationally. The author, Junie Studer, details the flood and its effects on the town. Builders had just finished a new lift bridge traversing the canal. Later in the spring the flood began. The damage was so severe that it “spelled the end of an era” for Massillon:

The canal banks were so battered they were unnavigable. The city's proud new lift bridge, built in the winter with such pain, and finished so hopefully for the spring “opening” of canal trade, was smashed, with half its abutment washed away.

The Columbia footbridge wash washed out. The Millport bridge north of the city was gone. Traffic on the canal was never restored. Main Street where the new bridge had been, was sadly repaved, and the canal era which had started back in 1828 was over. (Studer 60)

The resulting industrial restructuring finally settled with the emergence of the steel industry. I was, and still am, struck by the parallels between economic crisis in the 1913 flood and the

departure of the steel industry. The city has faced repeated economic restructuring. Even if people do not recall the Great Flood, they focus on economic crisis as a major aspect of collective identity. The steel industry stays in the fore of discussions of current economic and social conditions.

MassMu advances histories other than the industrial and football histories. The histories demonstrate a broader history that does not fit dominant narratives. Jessica said,

Well, certainly I'm a little biased, but I think the Massillon Museum is a cultural gem here. It's a reflection of the rich history that this community has sustained over the years. We have much to celebrate, not at least of which is the fact that Massillon produced the first man to lead a protest march on the national's capital, the first female to ever officially run on a ballot of the United States, one of the pioneers in the development of early photography. Jack London's mother was born here.

So we have a great number of individuals who we are very proud to celebrate. There's also – there are a lot of really wonderful organizations here; the library, the boys and girls club that invest wholeheartedly into our youth and their education. And there are a lot of really great – something that I feel that is unique about Massillon is its commitment to saving its architectural history as well. So of course buildings have been razed over the years. They always are in communities that want to demonstrate growth or who have been through mid-century when it was popular to do that.

But we have an historic neighborhood, historic 4th Street, that retains all the homes of the prominent industrialists who helped contribute to the heyday and prosperity that was here at the turn of the 20th Century. And our downtown still retains a lot of its historic structures. You'll also see a lot of murals

painted downtown so that you can see the way that the arts are celebrated and merge with the history here.

In addition to the Underground Railroad, Massillon has a deep history in the fight for women's and workers' rights. According to Liz,

I think that Massillon had a lot of great people and I hope that they continue to have a lot of great people. We had a lot of women's rights advocates here. Carolyn McCullum Everhart was one of them. Lucretia Mott's parents supposedly lived in Kendall for many years. Jacob Coxey was from here. He led the first protest march on Washington. Started here in Massillon and went all the way to DC. He had 12,000 men with him. That's, uh, a big major step. During the Great Depression, FDR actually called upon Coxey many times to help advise him for all the alphabet soup agencies that helped, you know, to get the - the people out of poverty. He was calling attention to a bill that he was introducing to Congress. It was a no interest bond that basically wanted to take, uh, unemployed workers and put them to work fixing the roads, that was the specific problem that he saw. So, basically a WPA works kind of thing.

The histories of Coxey and McCollum Everhart point to a progressive politics that do not fit within a blue-collar, industrial identity.

MassMu devotes substantial effort to research and circulate the city's industrial history. One spotlight video is "Legacy of Steel: Interviews with steel workers of Stark County Ohio." It contains interviews over photos and clips of the processes in making steel – in both back-and-white and color. It takes on a somber character knowing that much of the steel industry moved out of Massillon mid-century. Thomas Gregory, one-time head of labor relations said, "Was a good ride...I had a false sense that there were rewards we had for loyalty to the company. You can't return loyalty." Many community members see Massillon

still suffering because industry left. Massillon residents draw connections between the city's industrial history and its interest in football.

My dad who played for the Tigers in the late '50s just told me a story. There was a strike at the steel mills; I think he said in the early '50s. He remembers it because there were so many men who weren't working, they were striking. Just for practice you couldn't see the field. They were lined completely around just watching practice. I mean even, you know, everybody in the steel mill it seemed was involved with either the Booster Club or the Sideliners. But yeah, it's mostly economic as far as the steel mills, you know, not being around anymore. But I mean all of us have family members who – an aunt, an uncle or grandfather who've worked in 'em, so we've all heard the stories passed down and, you know. But it's mostly financial. You know the economy's not what it used to be as a result. (Gavin)

The museum's oral histories and the accounts of many residents identify the departure of the steel industry.

MassMu also prioritizes the city's cultural history. The “Odditorium” identified above serves only as one example of the museum's attention to everyday life. Other exhibits included one of photos of homes from 4th Street, an historic group of houses including the Five Oaks house. However, the in-museum exhibits are only one way the museum staff present and display cultural history. Its presence in the community include FunFest, the Holiday Parade, the McKinley Week Parade, the Kickoff Weekend ice cream line (where they serve a specially made black and orange ice cream) (see Item &), and its own special events. MassMu archives include over 300 oral histories in podcast form. While some deal with areas and ages of wider historical relevance, including Massillon residents sharing their experiences during World War II, oral histories inherently subjective, even personal. Podcasts

of interest include Dr. Immel describing his circus, and oral histories about the Massillon Community Hospital School of Nursing, and the life of African-Americans in Massillon.

The museum also maintains its own YouTube channel. Many of the videos are of brothers Rudy and Frank Turkal, under the auspices of the Massillon History Channel, show home movies taken by Frank from 1969 to 1981. The first of seven videos introduces the series and has Frank talk about his time serving under General MacArthur. The remaining six videos are of the town shot either from the street or from a car. They are buildings, businesses, and open park areas around town; presented without narration or commentary, but some music in the background (including repeated use of Massillon standards like “Tiger Rag”). Another video includes nothing but 10:14 of people ice skating on the reservoir dated 1935. The museum does not place the videos within any narratives. The lack of contextualization stands out when watching the videos. Their value is as artifacts, allowing observers to interpret. In a town where dominant narratives circulate, MassMu offers videos on their own, even when they may support those narratives.

Many people have not integrated the social, cultural, and industrial histories that resist popular conceptualizations. Liz said,

[Massillon] definitely does have a lot of heritage, but there’s even some people who have grown up here and still don't know that there’s a museum and that just – that kills me. So I think that, you know, between Spring Hill and the Massillon Museum we’re really trying to get people to understand their history, not even just football, but you know industry and people as well.

In describing a rich history of Massillon, Liz points to the prominence of football as part of meaning-making in Massillon. The major economic crises from the Great Flood of 1913 and the departure of the steel industry resist the narrative put forth by the City as a thriving industrial base. Also, the absences revealed by the work of MassMu and Spring Hill resist

popular narratives of the town. The anti-slavery, workers' rights, and women's rights figures suggest a progressive history which might resist a blue-collar small town Midwestern sensibility. However, those collective identities are more ambiguous than people would suggest. The absences play out in the form of ambivalences people express regarding the popular narratives. I saw this in discussions of the economic situation and the small town ethos.

Economy: A roughed-up syndrome (Liz)

Every person to whom I talked described the economic conditions and its context. Everyone was also aware of the history as well. The departure of the steel industry hangs over the majority of discussions about the current economic situation. People tended to attribute the challenges or problems in Massillon to the departure of the steel industry. Economic rupture factors directly into the identity of the town for many. As Kent described, "...as having seen its best days in the '30s, '40s, and the '50s, and once the steel industry left us, we've been pretty nonexistent as far as any type of business, so we're – I guess we were part of the rust belt, as they called it." The history factors directly into the construction of collective identities. However, the down-trodden narrative may not fit, or, at least, people put any need for economic growth in hyperbolic terms. In this section, I articulate the inconsistencies in the popular narrative and how they manifest in people's ambivalence regarding their collective identity. I identify two challenges to residents' identification as a city in economic disrepair. First, the experience of a struggling economy may not match economic conditions. People have given the steel industry so much hold over the narrative of the town that other factors and information may get overlooked. People with knowledge of economic developments, like Paul, said that businesses are moving in and economic conditions are improving. Second, the rugged, down-trodden industrial American town carries with it a romantic view of struggle, perseverance, and underdog-ness. Expressing a

need to develop would require people to abandon the romantic view of their condition.

I feel obliged to clarify what this observation is not. I do not dispute the damage done by the steel industry leaving town. The largest segment of the economy left when those companies left. The damage was substantial and structural. I am also not disputing that current economic conditions for many are less than desirable. I saw empty store fronts every time I went to town along the main street through town. I do not dispute the need for jobs. Across the country communities big and small are wrestling with economic changes that leave many unemployed or under-employed. My focus is on my experiences and my understanding and perception of those with whom I interacted. The expressions of affinity for Massillon in relation to its economic distress and the intense focus on the steel industry as a central and prevailing source of problems stand out. These tightly held beliefs and identifications may not fully fit current circumstances.

In describing the present, Gavin, like others, references the past, again going to football. He said,

I think from an economic standpoint you can see it's – I think it's hurt the overall morale of the city and, you know. I grew up on the west side of town which was, you know, this end of town. My parents owned a beer joint which was close to the steel mill and a couple of the other bigger industries in town. You watch, from an economic standpoint you watch that and become more and more depressed and I think the morale of the town has waned a little bit with it. But you know as Danny said its springtime. It's football season. You know it's that first game kickoff. But it – it hasn't helped.

Kent described succinctly the thoughts of many when talking about what needs to happen, “Find businesses... Really, really disappointed at some of the decisions that they made in the past. We need work here for people. We need it badly.” He and others carried over the

narrative of economic distress as central to the identity of the town while expressing the desire for change.

However, some resisted perpetuating the narrative of decline. Paul, directly involved in business development through the Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Massillon Association, referenced specific changes. He said, “Actually, Massillon is a little bit bigger now than it was when (the steel industry) was in town. Part of that is because of annexation, but because of that annexation, those other industries have come in. Sterlite, which is a plastic company, large plastic company. It came in in '96. And three years ago Shearer's, which was down in Brewster just south of us here, couldn't expand. They just built a big facility here in town.” His knowledge allowed him to address specific changes that have taken place. Also, his interests in business development may factor into his positive account as his expression can function as resistance to dominant narratives. The town has made structural changes in its economic development, according to Marcus, “It's more diversified, so it's probably more – oh, it has a little more ability to take an economic – when it was heavily in steel, the steel industry declined and it affected the city, so it's a little more diversified in other industries. So I'd say it's probably a Midwest middle class city.” The conflict between material conditions and narrative contributes stems from the popular fixation on the steel industry. People may be holding onto a narrative that may differ from the actual material conditions.

People are drawn to the economic downturn while recognizing its injurious effects. Part of the affinity derives from the notions of struggle and suffering. Liz described the situation as follows:

I am sad to say that I did not know there was a Massillon until I applied for the internship here at the museum eight years ago, but you know I've kind of fallen in love with it ever since. I think that Massillon suffers a lot from kind of a roughed-up syndrome in that, you know, the steel industry went away and

as soon as, you know, all of the industry really just kind of shut down and focused on different service organizations.

I think that that plays a big part in the identity of the town and the people, you know, your options as far as career go. You know it's no longer that you know you're going to work for Republic Steel. It's, you know, oh boy you know you're gonna go away to college or, you know, there's a few factories and industries still here.

Liz's expression of affection for the town in decline was echoed of several. The draw was not expressed necessarily in specific terms, but as a fondness. The recirculation of the crisis narrative gets romanticized stemming from residents connecting economic conditions to the status of the football team, a status many saw as in decline. A sense of nostalgia results in both realms. According to Gavin,

You – when you have a town that's essentially been 30,000, 35,000 people for the last 60 or 70 years – you know when you lose a third of your employment and basically you could probably attribute more than a third if you figure our feeder industry to support a large industry like the steel mill – when that all goes away it definitely has an impact on the town. I mean season ticket sales aren't what they used to be. Hell when Danny and I were in school I think it was what 5,000 or 6,000 a year – (*trails off*)

People see the town-in-economic-decline identity gets as central to identity. Diane said, “We have, you know, a lot of people that have their roots in the town and we haven't had that resurgence that some cities have had, but hopefully, you know, that'll happen.” Outside of those who saw growth in industry, Diane was rare in her optimism.

The romanticization of economic decline creates a conflict in discussions of class. Valorizing struggle in the general may create uncertainty or ambivalence when the topic of

class surfaced. I found people in Massillon held ambivalent feelings towards issues of class. Many approached discussions of class only to stop those discussions, often falling back to football as an equalizing force. During the following exchange with Gavin and Danny, I perceived a hesitancy when the topic of economics turned to class:

Danny: If you had talent you were –

Gavin: You were playing.

Danny: You were playing usually.

Gavin: Usually.

Danny: I would say very rarely [class was an issue] – I think this would happen in any – I mean there's politics at some level pretty much every football town, any sport, but if you had talent they – Massillon always wants the best talent on the field for the most part. I mean everybody has a story.

Gavin: I think we went through a little bit of, uh, a [*inaudible*]

Danny: And they don't care who or what or where you're from, if you can block, tackle, kick, catch, they're gonna put you on the field.

It seemed like there was a sense that class relations factor into their lives, but people used football as a sign that those issues were either resolved or rendered moot. James said,

We have some wealthier segments. We have a lot of middle class. We have a lot of low class – lower class, as well. I think when those kids specifically put the jerseys on, it's all one class and it's first class. I don't know, I have a hard time thinking that people look as any type of division and look at football as creating or dismantling any type of that division, but I never looked at it that way.

Here again, football serves as an equalizing force. Whether or not football has turned Massillon into a colorblind and classless city, residents construct their collective civic

identities in accordance with those beliefs. The rhetoric of football as equalizing force clouds the constructedness of race and systems informing class constructions. Race and class do not get “looked at.”

Carrie identifies a strong segmentation in Massillon. She said,

(T)here is very distinct neighborhoods and there isn't necessarily that much crossover between the neighborhoods. Like there's the south side and there's the west side and there's the east side. And there's this side that's closer to Tough Lock. And they're all very distinct, and they can all be very closed in, and they can all have very strong opinions about each other.

Now, I don't necessarily know what those are. I just know that that exists, because I just go wherever I'm asked to go and teach, and I know that people will say, "Oh, it's good you're getting over on the west side." And I'm like, "Oh, okay. Good. Why? Why is it –?" Some of it, I guess, extends from the history of certain social groups living in certain areas, and then certain areas are higher income and certain areas are lower income. But I think there's still like a little bit of division. There are lines that are drawn out.

When Carrie referenced history, she was talking about the Heights, an area just outside Massillon developed during the initial economic boom in the late 19th century. The rise of Massillon as a port city resulted in a range of industrial growth, requiring an equal growth in labor. Many Eastern European immigrants settled outside of town, creating a highly cloistered community. For a time, the Heights was a home for elements of crime and general lawlessness. I also experienced a similar sense of segmentation. I had a Massillon address, but many, if not most, interviewees didn't consider me as living in Massillon. Additionally, a Massillon Tiger t-shirt sold on-line referenced a quotation from a prominent community figure, Junie Studer. He hated Canton so much that he refused to even travel past the K-Mart

in Massillon on the main road connecting Massillon and Canton. Neighborhoods matter to many in Massillon.

The economic conditions in Massillon are central to the identity constructed by the residents. I witnessed people romanticizing conditions while acknowledging problems and expressing the need to solve the problems. The commitment of people to identify the steel industry as the cause of current problems may not fit current economic conditions. The preoccupation felt excessive. The focus allows people to follow and reiterate a common and accepted narrative of the town. People turn to football to resolve those ambivalences. In the binder describing the Great Flood of 1913, Studer described daily life, specifically how people were struggling economically. Before the description of daily life and “seismic” social and economic shifts, though, a hand-written note reads “FIRST FOOTBALL BAND APPEARS BUT IS NOT A MARCHING BAND” (Studer 60). In the discussion of economic strife, Studer inserted a note about football. Football has become a default solution or, at least, a mollifying force.

People also drew a direct line between economics and identity, suggesting a need for a new identity. James said, “This section of Massillon really needs an economic boost. It needs a draw that keeps people in town on Fridays and Saturdays and Sundays that aren't football days. That keeps them from going over to Belden Village or down by Canton or something of that nature. I think that's what this city lacks the most is a downtown identity. I would change that.” People often draw connections between the economic conditions and Massillon's self-identified status as a small town. Liz said,

More industry, more businesses. I think that this downtown is – it's not dead and I think it's doing a lot better than a lot of other towns, but you know you always want to see those local mom and pop shops. You want to see business here downtown, but there's enough vacant store fronts and buildings here that

you know it was nice – be nice to get back to that era where there are enough things that you could want to.

In the next section, I identify another ambivalence: the ideal of the small town and the need for population growth.

Small Town: We need a population (Diane)

People often began with describing Massillon in both explicitly and implicitly to the ethos of small-town America. The narrative of economic struggles informs the small town narrative. Carrie said,

Even though times are tough and a lot of residents have difficulty, there's a lot of different charities or organizations that are out there to support people, and there's a lot of just regular, everyday people who are part of that support system, which is nice. So I think that it really embodies that sort of like American small-town willingness to help out and help each other out.

The romanticized struggling blue-collar town fits with the values associated with “small town America.” Carrie continued, “You get to be a part of that, as I said, typical small-town America, where you walk up and down the street and you see people that you know or you go in a business and you see people that you know.” Constructions frequently described an invested and concerned community. Diane described it as follows:

It's interesting, because my husband is not from here, and so coming here it took him probably a few years to actually get in and get connected, even though he was married to me, who I've lived here all my life. So I would say advice – just not be afraid to get to know people. Don't be afraid. Don't get nervous when they ask you where you're from, because that's like it seems like that was one of the things that bothered him. Like they'd say like “Where are you from? What do you do?” – that kind of stuff – and I think that can be kind

of intimidating sometimes for people because it's like why do you need to know all that? I don't know if you noticed that with your... They want to know what you're doing here, what you're about, but overall everybody is good people.

People often talked about close relationships and community bonds. In addition to the idea of closeness, some used hallmarks of small town life. For example, Liz claimed Massillon had “a shocking amount of mom and pop stores.” Similar to attitudes towards the economy, I found dissonance between the ethos of the small town and the need to expand. In this section, I describe the tension between the espoused values of small town America and the desire to grow. People turn to football to satisfy the desire to keep a small town collective identity. Residents talk about the importance of family and church, but the high school football team provides a source of civic pride.

People tend toward nostalgic remembrance in describing their relationship to the town. Gavin said,

Growing up it was a great place to grow up. It was just – it was a fantastic town to grow up in. All little kids, you grow up in the block or two that you live on is kind of your universe. And then you get a little bit older and your parents let you ride a couple blocks further and then all of a sudden, you know, that universe expands. And then when you get to high school you find out that “Oh wow, this” – your universe is now the town. And the funny thing is at that point you’re very, very content with not running outside of that universe.

Description tended to extol the virtues of the small town ethos while mitigating the vice.

Gavin said, “I mean not where your neighbors are peering over your back fence, but if you need a hand, your neighbor’s always gonna be there, you know.” I sensed the need to romanticize the small town. They identified with values which are neither inherent in smaller

population nor absent in larger communities.

Occasionally, those who espoused the values of Massillon within the small town context would express an ambivalent relationship. Diane said, “Small, close knit, probably as a newcomer as somebody coming in new probably hard to understand maybe at first. Probably a little bit people probably – oh, I’m trying to – it’s kind of I don’t want to say cliquy but yet if you’re from here that’s like a big deal. Those people that are from here that they’re more easily accepted than newcomers.” When discussions move away from general descriptions to specific relationships, people express a greater ambivalence toward the size of the town. People wrestle with the idea of Massillon as a small town and that relationship to size and population. Even when lauding their commitment to MassMu, they do so as a small town supporting an institution of a larger city. Marcus described the ambivalence:

Well the town has made a lot of changes. When I first moved here my father worked in a steel mill and at that time Massillon was heavily industrialized with a lot of steel mills. Over the years due to economic changes and world conditions and U.S. conditions with steel industries have been less of an impact. So it’s maintained about the same size because the prior mayor who just left was a big proponent of annexation, so through the annexation the city limits grew and the population probably made up for the loss in the inner city.

Contemporaneous to embracing the small town ethos, some see the need for population growth. When I asked Diane what changes need to take place, she responded, “I mean we need more businesses. Myself personally? Maybe it would be, I mean we just need more businesses and we need more – I don’t know, that’s just a tough question. Maybe do we just need to get more – probably need more room in our schools. We need more people living in our town, so we need a population.” Susan also identified the need for demographic change:

I think it’s having either industry or, you know, something that would retain –

recruit and retain ages, like, 20 to 40. Would be is – is actually pretty crucial because, you know, you have a larger older population and you have the up and coming, you know, but then – Like they always talk about brain drain. If there's something to draw, like, young professionals to the area. I don't have a – I don't have a magic answer, but that's what, you know, probably a lot of downtown feels the same way and then getting enough that in a concentrated area would improve the community.

While expressing desire for material change, Susan also alluded to the need to change the identity that comes with a growing population. Football serves as the mediating factor in resolving the ambivalences. The success of the team greatly informs its potential impact on civic identities. With the downtown business district struggling economically, as evidenced by the number of empty store fronts, the “mom and pop” shops don't offer the same sense of victory and point to the need for expansion. People often expressed the importance of their church in their social life. While religion provides a unifying force, and can create oneness, the spiritual identities constructed through religion don't offer the same opportunity for a unifying people in a civic identity. Churches, and religion in general, create distinctions between faiths. While one can feel belonging, the belonging often gets framed as difference from other faiths. Family, too, can inform social identities, but those, too, do not provide the same sense of community belonging. Football, in this sense, functions as a tool for meaning-making in collective civic identities.

Race: You see these black and white athletes competing together and getting along together (Marcus)

Walking through the museum, I found the Immel Circus Gallery on the second floor. The collection included novelties, such as Tom Thumb's wedding album and a walking stick of P.T. Barnum's. The carved circus stood out, though. The Immel circus stood out for two

reason: the impressive scope and detail in the carvings and its treatment of race. For example, the Gumbo figure is a stereotype of an African warrior with scant clothing and a large stone lip plate. It unsettled me. I used the circus as an entry into a discussion of race in Massillon with the museum staff. Jessica told me that town dentist Robert Immel carved the over three thousand miniatures over the course of fifty years. He carved the pieces with his dental tools. In 1996, he donated the collection and funded the space on the second floor allowing for the permanent collection.

Carrie recognizes the problematic nature of the circus and uses it as an educational moment. She said,

When I take kids up there to the Immel circus, one thing I'll do is, when we go to the freak area, the freak show, the post cards, I'll say how this is what people thought about them back then, but talk about how we view people of different races and people with disabilities nowadays and how we try to be inclusive of them, or if you don't have a disability or if you're normal, how does being treated normal or being treated abnormal make you feel. So I'll use that disability in that sense of exclusion as a talking point for the kids, to make them more aware of how they treat people.

The museum factors representation into its programming. Carrie said,

One thing as an educator that I try to bring up to Alex is if residents in our town – are they portrayed in the exhibits, you know. If an African American girl or boy comes in, for example, right now and they look at the auditorium and they look at the picture of the family, they're gonna say, "I don't see myself there." And that's something that we realized after we set it up.

I said, "Why didn't we have an interracial family?" We just didn't even really think about it, but it is something that we try to think about, to be

representative as best we can if it fits with representing the different demographics in our community in the exhibit. Like we putting together a labor exhibit for next year, for 2013, about like New Deal, WPA type stuff. And we're really excited because when we got to pick from the pool of artwork that we're assembling, there were lots of different representations of different races, which was awesome. So we're like, "Oh, good, we're gonna be very inclusive here."

So we're very aware of it. And if for some reason either it's not in the content that we selected – like it wasn't there at all; we don't try to exclude anyone on purpose – we'll address it. We did a photography exhibit last year about Belle Johnson, who was a Midwestern photographer, and we literally said in one of the education guides, "Why don't we see any African American faces in here? Why does everyone look the same?" And the answer for that was, at the time when photography was being done, the upper middle class white people were the only ones who could pay to have their portraits done.

And so we don't try to avoid that conversation. We bring it up. We talk about it. Like that was actually in my education guide that people could pick up and take home with them. So we try to be really aware of it. My background is in social anthropology, so that's the study of human culture, and all you talk about is the in group and out group and the other and all those things. So I try to make sure that when we are developing an exhibit or when I'm developing educational materials, that we're aware of that.

The museum factors race into its programming so has to address the issue with the public, children in particular. Liz said representation still proves to be a work in progress, "when people come here to do research I think that a lot of our collection focuses on the – the White

middle class people. And then it's been something that for years we've been trying to really document, you know, the experience of African-Americans in Massillon and it's something that we've haven't quite gotten there to do yet." Implicit in these discussion is the idea that, at the least, race is an issue that merits discussion. In this section, I illustrate how football acts as a tool for meaning-making in resolving discomfort or apprehension in discussing representation in Massillon.

However, race does not get talked about much in Massillon. When I asked about the social status of African Americans and other minority groups, many hesitated and showed unease. Discussions about race gets folded into the football team. People use the team as evidence to deny issues of racial representation in the community. Marcus addressed it directly when I asked. He said, "I think Massillon has always had a lot of Black players on the team and they played the – they work together, so I think maybe as a kid if you don't have any black friends, but you see these black and white athletes competing together and getting along together maybe it can lead to better racial relations." Status on the football team trumps ethnicity as it accounts for social position. The following exchange presents a common sentiment:

Danny: In winning. I think there is – there is black, but it comes with orange, orange and black. I don't see it as –

Gavin: Yeah. You know it's – hell I got a picture over there from my grandfather. Uh, you know it was a 1947 or '48 Chevrolet, uh, Progressive Chevrolet semipro team. They had a Black quarterback in the 1940s. We're talking Massillon, Ohio mid-1940s and a Black quarterback. That, you know, um, Black guys who – the football program's been integrated for years. That –

Danny: Yeah.

Gavin: When it came to winning that's fine. I – I think what gets in the way,

not necessarily race, is maybe socioeconomic influences or sociopolitical influences within the town.

Interviewer: Right.

Gavin: You know like I said, you know, we watched it. When Danny would take the ball from one end of the field to the other and then they all “Let’s, you know, let’s put this guy in or that guy in.” Who hadn’t – their skin tone happened to be different, but it didn’t have any – I don’t think it had anything to do with their skin tone as much as it had to do with the coach’s agenda or some, you know, some other outside influence having agenda to push.

According to Susan the issue remains relevant if non-specific. She said,

I do think that it – I’m saying this not really about Massillon – but just I see the point from a personal perspective of the fact of if you have a hero on a team or if you have a certain role model that this is what, you know, folks look up to [*inaudible*] as African Americans you can be successful, but in this one area.

I think that that’s not good enough. I think that really it needs to be opportunity in terms of class and race and gender needs to be in all fields and in all, you know, areas, but I don’t see that anymore in Massillon than I see in general in, you know, our region of the country.

While dismissing race playing a factor in the lives of Massillonians, Carrie talked about her experience. She said,

I think that Massillon is a very working-class town because of the industry that was here and the socioeconomic classes that developed. I think that, as an outsider moving to Massillon – this was just my opinion – I was surprised by the level of integration that I saw historically because of football. I thought

that was really neat to see, and that's not anything that I've studied scholarly. It was just an observation that I had looking at the history of the photographs, the teams.

And I've not listened to any of the oral histories and I've not talked to any of the different players of different races to see how those interactions actually went, but that's something that I observed at least by looking at the photographs. I was like, "Wow, look at this level of interaction that you have." For that time period, that seems really neat, you know.

That's something we're gonna draw out next year when we do the displays about the WPA. We're also doing a reading program, and we're reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*, so we're gonna have a lot of programs about social interactions, interracial topics of the time period. So, hopefully, we'll tease that out and see how that goes.

The staff at the museum are still exploring those issues themselves without establishing (or at least expressing) firm opinions.

People also point to the history of the team to address questions of race. At the same time, race and the level of integration leave some unsure about how different ethnicities participate in Massillon life. Liz said, "Historically, we were really, you know, some of the first teams to have had Black athletes both in the high school and the professional team. Paul Brown was very specific and loud and proud about the fact that he had black athletes on the team. I mean I'm sure that it's still an issue. Um, I don't know specifically where." Similar to race, economics often got broached and then dismissed and dropped. Kent demonstrated that point when he told me, "No, I don't hear anything about race or anything, and I sure don't look at it that way. They're student athletes. That's all they are. They're not – we don't have color separation or anything. And, no, I don't see it. I mean maybe there was a time, but..."

History and the call backs to history recirculate on the surface of how people in Massillon understand and act out interrelated identities.

Jessica connects the primary elements of the dominant narrative (football, economics, history, and size) to class and race. She explained,

I definitely think – again, one of the things that we’re exploring in the exhibit, and in the multimedia component that is going to come later, are the ways in which race and class are impacted, or the way in which you can engage in dialogue about those things as it relates to football. Certainly the population being pretty stagnant at about 30,000 here in Massillon, certainly not growing. And the industry not growing with the same – and, you know, the economy not growing at the rate at which you would hope, it’s going to impact – it’s definitely going to impact the development of different class structures. And in terms of race, you know, it’s interesting because at the museum, we’ve also – even though we’ve had quite a lot of prominent minorities in the community, who we’ve tried to celebrate along in our celebration of historical figures, there hadn’t been a history of doing so.

So we have found that the dialogue that the museum, we’re really trying to focus right now in the past few years on creating a lot of dialogue about race and race relations, and class structure here at the museum as it relates to industry and sports history. But we’re finding that we have to build a lot of that from contemporary material because the museum hadn’t celebrated a lot of those, and hadn’t really allowed us to engage with material culture and a lot of that dialogue. So this exhibit is also giving us the opportunity to explore that.

Yeah, I mean the origins of football here started with a lot the factory

workers, a lot of students who had no more than a high school education, or dropped out of high school to find working the factories to help feed their families. And what did they do in addition to working at the factories when they were out of school? They played football. And the birth of the pro teams here is really on the backs of a lot of those individuals who didn't have the – didn't come from backgrounds that enabled them to pursue higher education, and so they turned to the factories and to football.

So we have a lot of the current history owed to the way in which the economy over hundred years ago also impacted the community. It's interesting. There are a lot of correlations you can make between the economies at that point in time. And then as we had a lot of rise in industry, and as we built the population here, and built the wealth, that shifted a bit.

Understanding football in the dominant narrative readily comes to the fore. It all returns to football. Football is the primary source of meaning-making in Massillon. People understand race, community service, and their larger collective identity within the frame of football. The narrative of excellence through football balances the lack of economic success. The values attributed to football convey the blue-collar values of effort and hard work. Football extols the story of success onto which Massillonians hold. It is the example all people should, and do, strive.

Football fills in the gaps and resolves the ambivalences, becoming a primary source of meaning-making. A prominent aspect of the rhetoric of football in Massillon is that it provides a standard for others to excel. Kent said, "I think some in our community think that we don't put education first, and that's not true, just because of really a strong football. You know, if they would research it, we're the ones that actually vote for the levies for the schools – you know, the ones who are so – but we just think it's a tool that you can use to help bring

those – you know, we can bring everything up to that level. You know what I'm saying? It's not the other way around.” Football permits a narrative of struggle and resistance against great odds and adverse conditions, satisfying the desire to hold onto the narrative of economic disadvantage. In the football narrative, the team embodies togetherness, hard work, and striving for success. When discussing issues of race and class, people would often turn to the values of football as evidence of racial harmony. The color- and class-blindness embedded in the football narrative obscure race and class as factors informing collective and individual identities. According to the narrative, football is a forum where blacks and whites work together as one toward a common goal; it is the epitome of the meritocracy, rejecting race and class as determinants of success and opportunity; it communicates values such as hard work, determination, and perseverance; and, if one adheres to the values of football – hard work, perseverance, and determination – success results.

While the football narrative may not translate to wider social acceptance and equal opportunity, residents re-enact the football narrative. The generalizing character of a master narrative ignores the conditions in a specific situation; in this case, the Washington High School football team. Because they identify football as colorblind, some residents tend not to consider race as relevant to their lives. Because they identify it as a meritocracy, they act as though everyone can succeed given enough hard work. They perpetuate those beliefs through their embodied practices. In the following chapters, I focus on how Massillonians make meaning from football. The football game has turned into a socializing experience where elements often considered peripheral to the game inform embodied a sense of belonging. The rituals and spectacles of the football experience communicate values as people perform the narrative. As people participate in a complex to support the team, they enact civic identities as football informs wider participation, identities unavailable from family, faith, and the “mom and pop” shops of downtown.

Chapter Three: Team

Just about all my life I've been involved in this football program (Marshall)

I walk to the Massillon Museum for the opening of their Tiger Legacy exhibit. As I pass through a breezeway for the Massillon Government and Justice Center, I hear calliope music playing Christmas music. I also see Massillon Tiger-themed buses and RVs lining the street in front of the museum. (see Figure 5) Live Obie is in a cage on display for the arriving crowd; it is, by far, the most popular of the items and objects outside the museum with old and young lining up to take pictures of the live tiger. Band Obie is walking around and a popular draw among the kids with adults (presumably parents) snapping pictures of their kids with the person in the tiger costume.

Another attraction sits next to the sidewalk on the way to the museum entrance. Someone donated a hand-crafted Tiger Legacy dollhouse (picture) for a raffle. Among the highlights for the dollhouse are the hand-fired miniature bricks and the miniaturized pictures that decorate the walls. I pay five dollars to get six tickets for the raffle. I tell Mandy that I will donate the



Figure 5: Tiger Legacy - Tiger RVs

dollhouse back to the museum if I win.

I fill out my name and contact information on the tickets and toss them into the bowl with dozens of other tickets.

As I walk into the museum, Alex greets me, "Hi," and we shake hands. "Look, you're visitor 254," she says showing me the hand-held metallic

clicker counter.

“You’re really busy,” I respond.

“Yeah. A half-hour in and you’re 254. That’s pretty good,” she says.

I wish her well and move into the museum. I see Scotty from the Booster Club Museum Group (unrelated to the Massillon Museum). We exchange pleasantries. Bob Hollander, the tiger caretaker, comes up. The conversation immediately turns to last night’s disappointing football playoff loss. Bob’s first issue is with the stadium in which the game was played. He complains that the stadium was too small and too dark. I concur with the size issue, explaining how there were over a hundred people on a grassy hill and I saw the stadium was standing room only. Scotty complains about the location as well, pointing out that St. Ignatius got to play their playoff game at home. He made a point of St. Ignatius being a private school and the school they played, Mentor, was a public school and that Massillon Washington is a public school. Bob points out that Mentor won. I talk about how I like seeing public schools beat private schools because they are at such a disadvantage most of the time. Bob and Scotty both agree. I excuse myself as I see Jill.

I ask Jill about the ballot initiative for public funding of the museum. She tells me that it passed with 57%. She seems very satisfied with that result. I ask her about the rest of the ballot issues, particularly the one for the school. I had read on the MassillonProud twitter feed that they were still counting and at last count the issue was passing by one vote. She doesn’t know, but that it was supposed to be announced yesterday. She asks if I have seen the exhibit yet. I tell her that I am headed that way now. I do after smile and a “Take care.”

I walk through the entrance and see photographs lining the walls of the

exhibit. I turn to the right and see an interactive portion of the exhibit – Tiger Legacy: Leatherhead Legacy and Fanatics. The display encourages people to try on shoulder pads, a helmet, and scarves. Tryers-on are also encouraged to take a picture and send it out into cyberspace via social media. A small boy tries on the equipment while I was standing there, but no one took a picture or uploaded to Twitter or Facebook or Tumblr. The floor of this section has green plastic turf and shows the history of helmets in Massillon. There are two chairs on which people can sit. During most of my time in the exhibit different people were sitting in the chairs.

I go to what I assume is the beginning of the exhibit which has a blown-up wall-sized photograph of Massillon fans at an away game with “Tiger Legacy” printed on the photo. I hear the “TIG-ERS” call and response cheer and realize that the museum is pumping in crowd noise from a game into the gallery. A middle-aged couple walks up next to me. The wife recognizes them in the photo and points it out to her husband (she called him “honey”).

The photographs are divided into sections (as I move around the room through the exhibit): Generations, Preseason, Team, School, Community, Spirit (McKinley Week), Season, and Rivalry. Interesting that McKinley Week essentially gets two sections. Two photographs in the exhibit really stand out. One is of a football player, a senior and one of the team captains, pounding his chest and ringing the Victory Bell. The emotion of the photo moves me. The Victory Bell is the trophy given to the winning team of the Massillon Washington-Canton McKinley game. It is THE rivalry. The other that stands out to me is next to the Victory Bell photo. It is a tight shot on the face of a teary-eyed mother watching her son’s final regular season game. Football is a

visceral event for sons and mothers alike.

Three men walk up and give another man some joshing for being in the big photo to start the exhibit. Another man walks up to a player and congratulates the kid on “an outstanding season.” The man also mentions how much he likes the photograph of the kid. The player says, “It really makes you reflect on the season.” I denote a wistful note in his voice. The museum has turned that particular photo into a postcard commemorating the exhibit.

Alex steps up to make an announcement. Most people stop what they were doing to listen. She promotes other exhibits, including the Civil War and the Support Our Champions/Booster Club displays. She thanks the teachers, school, Booster Club, and business sponsor Cosmo’s Grill. She introduces the head of the photography project, Richard. He explains that the goal of the photographs was to “look inward,” so there are no photos of on-field action. I look around; he’s right. He thanks the Tiger Moms and cheerleaders and talks of a coming Phase II. Richard thanks everyone for coming.

I walk downstairs, coincidentally following the player from the Victory Bell photo. As I get to the basement, I see a small display entitled “Football as Form.” The museum found local artists to take the structure of the football and create a display piece. One has a skeleton (literally) as a supporting frame entitled “Fans as Bones,” another is woven entitled “Weaver’s Football,” another is a bit more abstract entitled “Football Brain.”

I take the stairs up to the second floor. The first display case I see is new to me. I have come across another tradition. The display case is filled with pins of Mascot Obie painted in different colors and styles. It is the Obie Pin Board. According to the accompanying narrative, each Booster Club president takes

an Obie pin and paints a different design on it. Most of them are some combination of orange, black, white, and grey. Each president contributes a tangible legacy outside of the projects he may undertake.

I follow tiger paw prints into the room that used to hold pictures of historic houses of Massillon. Now, the walls are lined with photographed portraits of former Booster Club presidents. Quotations are included next to some of the portraits. The following quotation stood out to me the most: “[Not having played football] didn’t kill the desire to be a tiger fan, and be there every Friday night.” If I read my jotted notes correctly (and I believe I do), I come to the portrait of former president Rollie Layfield, who started the tradition of giving small plastic footballs to newborn baby boys. Added to the portrait of Dick Reichel was the feature from the “People” section of a 1971 Sports Illustrated. According to SI, Reichel organized a bus trip to Steubenville for fans. The price per couple was \$13. In jest, then-State Representative Reichel offered to cover the cost for anyone who supplied three cases of beer. A few days later a truck showed up in his driveway with 33 cases of beer. He was out the \$143. He is in the same section with tidbits on John Wayne, Willie Mays, and former Soviet Premier Aleksei Kosygin.

I walk out of the portrait gallery and run into Eric and family. I say, “Could have used some defense last night.”

He says, “Could have used some offense; could have used some everything.” We continue to talk about how good their season was. He says this was one of the best teams he can remember. His children have wandered off and Jen has followed them. Eric walks away as someone else captures his attention. He leaves with a “Hi, JB.”

I walk back through the portraits before going into a display that seems to have combined new items and elements with items that were part of the Paul Brown exhibit. The uniform and stand-up Paul Brown are the same; the 13-minute video of interviews with booster club members is new.

I take the stairs down to the first level. I buy the postcards and head out.

(11-18-12 fieldnote)

The Tiger Legacy exhibit sought to put into photographs the relationship between people and the football team. It's unavoidable. Football discussions were everywhere – restaurants, grocery stores, even the Underground Railroad exhibit. Whether one calls Massillon "Football USA" or the "City of Champions," football dominates. In this chapter, I elaborate on the elements and processes of football as a meaning-making device in Massillon. Football in Massillon began in 1891, their rivalry with Canton began in 1894; however, most will cite Paul Brown, who began coaching in Massillon in 1932, as the pre-eminent figure in the history of Massillon football. Brown sought not only to field a successful team, but also create a positive experience for the community, to be known as The Greatest Show in High School Football. Today, the football program extends well beyond the playing field. His, and subsequent, efforts started a series of rituals and spectacles that turn the football game into a full experience. The experience creates the emotional energy that ties individuals to the team. During the rituals and spectacles of the game experience, people enact and reenact the values that inform individual identities outside the football experience.

Oral tradition is a valued source of history of the Massillon football team. The origin story for the nickname "Tigers" and the orange and black color scheme traces a popularized story from 1903. On September 3, the "founding fathers of the Massillon Tigers" (J.J. Wise, E.J. "Doc" Stewart, and J.W. McClymonds) met in the Sailer Hotel in downtown Massillon

with thirty-five other area businessmen to organize the first professional team (MassMu; Shook 2010). According to Shook, the impetus for the professional team was that Massillon football had won one game in 1899 (and the result of that game remains in dispute) and the high school team was 0-5 against Canton Central (21). Citing “the legend” of the basis for the “Tiger” nickname was a practical one. A local sporting goods store had matching orange (or yellow) and black striped uniforms (MassMu; Shook 2010). The founding fathers bought all of the uniforms and named the team the Tigers (MassMu; Shook 2010). The story may lack the grandeur of other Massillon lore; however, the notable aspect of the story is the value placed on oral tradition. While the factual accuracy is in doubt, the story continues (now in printed form).

Most people with whom I spoke considered the early history of football ended with the arrival of Paul Brown. Residents credit Brown with beginning the tradition of excellence and the enduring importance of football. More than simply a coach, he implemented programs designed to turn the football game to a show. The rituals and spectacles of the football game serve two primary functions in creating emotional energy tying participant to team: valorization and socialization. The elements of the game elevate the status of the team; the grander the show, the greater importance of the event. The repetition of elements socialize participants into the way to participate in the game experience. For example, boosters and parents consistently emphasize the status of the band when discussing the team. The band functions as a secondary focal point and avenue for participation in the game. Obie functions similarly. As a logo, Obie appears on hats, shirts, fliers, programs, and signs. The logo is the constant reminder of the team. Obie the human mascot (see Figure 6) provides direct interaction and another cheerleader. When children may not know individual cheerleaders, band members, or players, human, Obie remains constant. Human Obie helps to socialize children by providing them a place for their attention when the action on the field may not.

Live tiger Obie, despite starting decades later, also functions as a source of socialization for



*Figure 6: Human Mascot
Obie*

children. Handlers take Obie through elementary schools during McKinley Week as part of the education of children. By examining a recent controversy concerning the live tiger, I show how residents negotiate the desire for tradition and the desire for change.

Participation in the game experience instills values that shape personal constructions of self. The emotional energy created during the game creates an attachment to the team. The game experiences of spectators and players are founded on a coalescence of traditions. People learn how to participate in the game, and subsequently each other. Individuals internalize the

values enacted during the game carry over, integrating them into the community of fans.

People experience attachment as a part of the greatness started with Paul Brown. The dedication to the team that results in a stronger connection to each other and the city. Because Washington High School, a public school, houses the football team, supporting the team requires supporting the school. Spectators and other participants elevate the social status of players, cheerleaders, and band members. In process they valorize their own conduct. Within the powerful, but narrow, view, those who are not players, cheerleaders, and band members necessarily receive a lesser status. The importance of the team grants greater status to those others see as participating with the team. The emotional builds to where residents essentialize their relationship with the team, often in biological terms.

Tiger Legacy: The Greatest Show in High School Football (Curtis)

The Greatest Show meant more than excellence of the field; it meant turning a football game into a community event. In this section, I trace Brown's efforts to turn the

game into program, especially as understood by Brown himself. It is important to know how Brown understood his actions and why to see what Massillonians take from his achievements. To that end, I look to *PB*, the autobiography of Brown cited by many residents as definitive, to relate what he did then to what they do today. Residents' treatment of Brown's actions and words as doctrine, therefore, intensifies the rituals and spectacles. The traditions are important because he started them. His words and values are embedded in the bodily practices associated with the traditions.

The residents of Massillon are well aware of the history of Massillon football, especially when it concerns Paul Brown. They are not only aware of his success on the football field, but also credit him with the development of the elements surrounding the game that enhanced the experience. Curtis said, "Football and band go hand-in-hand because of Paul Brown. You had to have the band if you are going to create 'The Greatest Show in High School Football.'" I was familiar with the phrase before my arrival, but the extent to which people talk the Greatest Show surprised me. Curtis explained,

The connection between the team and the town, the fans goes back to Paul Brown. The "Greatest Show" necessitated the greatest fans. Paul Brown was the driving force in connecting the team to the town and the town to the team. Everything he did was set up with the kids in mind and how we could all support them. But it also goes to the character of the town, community members had to be willing to work.

The beginnings of Massillon as a football town begins with Paul Brown. I use his history as he wrote it to elaborate on the common belief held by Curtis and others.

Residents have taken much of what Brown began in 1932 and give it meaning and importance. They credit him for values they espouse today such as hard work, discipline, single-mindedness, honesty, and the team above everything (in any venture). Some of the

values come through the anecdotes, while others are embedded in the practices. When he took over as head coach in 1932 at age 24, he reorganized the junior high programs (all three of them) to coordinate efforts. He established a rule that no one was ever cut from the teams in junior high. “I made sure the teams were for *fun*... We wanted as many kids as possible to enter the program and enjoy it” (Brown 1979, emphasis in original). He also implemented the same training systems and taught the same techniques to have players acclimated when they got to the high school team.

In addition to football practices, Brown emphasized good citizens as crucial to a successful team. He was ahead of his time in that regard. “At Massillon we had a psychologist make up some tests and then combined the results with a boy's grade record. Together they gave us an idea of what kind of boy we were coaching” (Brown 6). In *PB*, Brown goes through a wide range of values, provides the why each was important to the team and gives examples of players and situations where the practice of those values succeeded. Honesty, loyalty, tolerance (“We sell tickets to democrats and republicans, capitalists and communists alike” [Brown 11]), respect, discipline, equality, earnestness, and education. The benefit of those values to success gain legitimacy, his system, by his overwhelming success. Brown would not carry as much cache if he hadn't become invested in Massillon overall. He went from football coach, added basketball coach the next year, soon became athletic director, eventually reaching recreation director for the city. He implemented a year-round athletic program. In part, to keep kids busy during their off-hours. Brown writes, “Massillon became so wrapped up in our football program you might say it became our prime industry. There were no such thing as juvenile delinquency because the athletes were the leaders and they were very disciplined” (49-50). Of importance to note, the veneration of Massillon Tiger football in his youth had disappeared by the time he took over as coach. He writes,

When Dave Stewart left Massillon to become coach of Sharon,

Pennsylvania, the bottom dropped out from the high school program, and no one seemed to care. When we began our string of successes, however, the pride revived, and the spirit of the Massillon Tigers suddenly took on new meaning. People in the community came forward, willing to support us with their interest and their money; students expressed willingness to accept the teaching and leadership necessary to propagate this excellence. It wasn't too long before this new spirit became a reality not just for ten weeks but for all year long. It permanently touched every part of this town's soul. (50)

It wasn't just that he improved the town or football program. It was his also fondness and dedication to the town – it was his “heaven” (Brown 23). “I have never lost my love for the city of Massillon, and while I enjoyed and always been a part of every community in which I have coached, that city is my real home, and someday I will be buried there, next to my first wife, Katy” (Brown 22). Part of his “mystique” emanates from his love and commitment to Massillon.

Brown built the program in terms of finances, profile, competitive success, and legend. The pinnacle of the legend of Paul Brown, in the view of Massillon residents, was his 1940 football team. Many call it the greatest high school team ever. Brown didn't go that far, but had the following high praise for his squad:

The best high school team I ever saw was our 1940 team, the last year I coached in Massillon. For the first half of the season our starting eleven didn't even have to play after the first two quarters of the game, and I seriously doubted whether my first team at Ohio State the following year could have beaten that team because it was so *meticulously* coached in our system and had far greater speed. And that Buckeye team lost only one game against major college competition. (63)

The team finished the year undefeated, but that doesn't cover it. The legendary season began the spring before -

In the spring of 1940 we quietly arranged a scrimmage against Kent State and scored for than fifty points, before their people stopped the game with some of the fourth quarter to be played. Kent State won eight of its nine games that season and was champion of the Ohio conference. We also scrimmaged Wooster and Mount Union colleges, and Akron University actually called of a scrimmage when it found out what happened to Kent State. There was nothing to gain by beating us, the players said, and too much at stake if they lost.

(Brown 63)

Brown lays out the critical games that season.

Perhaps our two most important games that season were against our principal rival, Canton-McKinley, and Toledo's Waite High School. The previous year we had been invited to participate in the Buckeye Bowl at Ohio Stadium to decide the state champion, but since we were not allowed to play post-season games, Waite HS defeated Portsmouth HS and declared itself the best team in the state.

Waite had only one open date late in the season, but it was a day we were scheduled to play Canton-Lehman HS. The temptation was too much. We paid Lehman their guarantee (up to \$3,000), took them off the schedule and arranged a game with Waite at Tiger Stadium. It poured the day of the game, but 5,000 people stood in line from early afternoon until ticket windows opened to buy the remaining 2,500 seats. We won, 26-0, with a tremendous performance from Ray Getz, and if it hadn't been for the rain, we probably could have scored well over fifty points. (64)

According to Brown, the Tigers held Waite to zero first downs (64). Going into the McKinley game. Massillon was unbeaten and unscored-upon. After giving up an early touchdown, the Tigers, according to Brown “really did [keep after them relentlessly], and won the game, 34-6. It was our 33rd straight victory, and only an outbreak of the flu in 1937 kept that streak from reaching 60.” (Brown 65) Given the limit of ten games preseason, that would have been six consecutive undefeated seasons. The Tigers finished the 1940 season, outscoring their opponents 477-6, and all eleven starters were voted first-team all-Ohio.

The epic stature of Paul Brown and his teams are part of the history that survives today in the exhibits and meetings and games at Paul Brown Stadium. While not the sole factor, his success resonates, providing people today with a standard. When talking about the popularity of the team and its importance to the community, Marcus said,

Winning championships, winning games, the importance they put on it.

The pageantry, the color, the music, the band, the cheerleaders. Just everything about it. Just the whole football experience that it's fun to go to.

I think Massillonians are very proud of their traditions and it's not just football. So if football, the Booster Club, the team is very respectful of the tradition. It wasn't just this year's team. It's teams seven years ago they something important. It was, so that kind of blends into if you're from Massillon you're proud of your city, so if you're proud of your football program it blends over to being proud of your city.

Brown's success only provides a starting point, however. His values, love for Massillon, and stories recirculate through the collaborative efforts of MassMu and the Booster Club, in addition to the victories.

Brown was the beginning of the legacy, but not the end. To many the legacy of Massillon football is on-field success. The success of one carries through in a desire to

replicate that success.

Scotty: Well, yeah. I was on the '64 and '65 teams under Earle Bruce. You know what they say, once it gets in your blood, you just never lose it.

Paul: Well, he never lost a game either during those years, so that makes a lot of difference.

Paul: Earle Bruce had 20 straight wins while he was playing. I don't know which one it was who caused that.

Marshall: That was Earle. No, he was the only coach in our history to come in and win back-to-back state championships and go undefeated.

William: Then leaves.

Scotty: No other coach has done that. And then leaves, yeah, and go down to Ohio State. Not a bad shot. [*laughs*] But no, we try to support 'em. Try to go to the games, not only the varsity, but go to the JV games, the junior high games to see what's coming up. Because once you get the interest in it, you just want to see the progression of it.

At the risk of a trite adage, in Massillon, the past is prologue. Carrie said,

[N]owadays it's just maintaining that legacy, that heyday. I think that that would be what it is. And like the mayor reinstated the city's motto as 'city of champions' to try to renew that spirit. Even if we're not technically winning the same sort of titles that we used to, there's still that spirit that Massillonians work hard and they're champions and they maintain excellence, so...

In talking about Massillon, she identifies an important aspect of the Massillon narrative – a story of success and overcoming. Triumphant tropes reappear in ongoing discussions.

The desire to replicate Brown contributes to the desire for history. The desire to understand the legacy contributes to the desire to bring what was into what is. History,

football, and Massillon converge in the search to understand that legacy. James explained his project to track the history of uniforms as follows:

I was originally, well first off, my passion is football. My second passion is Massillon football and I've always been drawn to graphics and [*inaudible*] and uniforms specifically and helmet designs. I actually started a website called the Massillon Tiger Helmet Project just to kind of historically track what all the different helmets have looked like through the history of Massillon football in the modern era, like 1960.

And I kind of did what you're doing. I just sat down and talked to people who played in those eras. I got pictures of stuff from people that I could get. I went to the library, researched information and just kind of put my own collaboration together of what the historical advancement was in the helmets, you know, the decals, the facemasks, the colors and why they were chosen to be there.

One thing that ended up really unique about it was I found out Massillon has a history of changing coaches quickly. And when you have signed on to be a coach in Massillon, you have a short window of opportunity to be successful and if you aren't successful quick enough for the City of Massillon, they close the door on you and they move onto somebody else.

Well when that door closes the new coach comes in and it seems like the image of the team always changes. So I was looking at it from the historical perspective and I was like okay, this coach was here from this time to time and this is what the helmet looked like, and then when he left the new coach came in the very next year, he changed the helmet and it looked like something else for this time to this time.

And then when he got fired or left it changed again and it seemed like every five to six years the helmet and stuff was changing. It was very interesting to look at it from above the trees and go wow, we changed coaches a lot, and with that the images of this place changed a lot.

Unlike the players and coaches, fans and boosters cannot directly achieve results on the football field. The result is the desire to replicate other aspect of the program. Uniforms and helmets contribute to the Greatest Show as much as anything else. James is integrating the uniform and helmet histories into the legacy of Tiger football, as Massillon changes its uniforms every year. Legacy expands as more people adhere to Brown's words and actions, both identifying and articulating other elements and constructing new elements that fans integrate into the Greatest Show. The contributions to history-making give people a sense of their place within the legacy.

Band: hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of children between the ages of five and ten (Kent)

I head down an alley between 3rd and 2nd Streets and hear the calliope start up, or start up again if I didn't happen to walk down the alley right as it was beginning to play. I hear the owner of the local sports radio station and radio announcer for Tiger football games over the loudspeakers. He jokes about how the inflatable Tiger (see Figure 7) is of legal age as it was donated 18 years ago thanks to an \$11,000 gift. Right at 6:30 another announcer opens the Tiger Growl, where kids come up to the stage and growl into the microphone. I can't see much as a mass of people block the front of the stage, many parents or friends snapping pictures of the children growling. Some get really into it and give a clear, decisive roar. Some quiet. Boys and girls line up to growl. As the Tiger Growl proceeds, I hear the calliope fittingly churn out "Eye of the

Tiger.” I stopped counting the Tiger Growl at twenty kids. One growl came out as a high-pitched screech. The emcee was very gracious and complimentary of all the growl, even those too scared to participate, but who still made the stage. Periodically, the emcee would call for the “Tiger Bounce” and the kids – and some adults – would hop for a few seconds. This occurs through the Tiger Growl.

I see Richard and walk over to talk to him. Some polite catching up. He tells me that MassMu has brought on a summer intern to inventory and catalog the Booster Club archive. Roars continue throughout the conversation.



Figure 7: Kickoff Rally - Giant Inflatable Obie

Some catching my attention. They have “pretty much” given up on trying to determine the originally designer of the Obie logo. He recalls an assortment of claims that don't fit the timeline of the logo, which first appeared in 1940. Richard says they are stuck at an unnamed local artist. He tells me how Junie Studer, a prominent figure in maintaining the history of the Tigers and the booster club, identified the design elements as similar to an active artist at the time, but without recalling the name. We talk about some of the players on the team, including the sophomore quarterback who committed to Ohio State as a freshman. OSU was his dream school and accepted the offer almost immediately upon offer. Richard remarks how rare it is for a freshman quarterback to get offered as a freshman, extremely rare. Richard says the QB

is a “pretty straight kid,” so far resisting the ego that might come with so much early attention and acclaim. (MassillonProud's twitter feed retweets many players' tweets and his handle identifies him as “prototype.” So there's that.) Among the other players, a senior wide receiver as offers from D1 schools and their kicker has committed to Michigan. Richard has to get back to selling raffle tickets. We wish each other luck.

I sit down to make notes on the conversation as the growls continue. The calliope plays... “circus music” is the best I can do for naming or description. We are now at about twenty minutes of the Tiger Growl. Behind me a group of four kids express frustration at the sea of people preventing them from seeing their friend. “Let's just circle around,” one says as they head toward the back of the rally. When I'm done with the scratch notes so far at the rally, I follow the same path of the kids as I head to the back of the crowd where I see live tiger Obie. This tiger is “friskier” than the others I've seen. It grabs a foam football by its mouth and tosses it to the other side of the cage. It also plays with the blanket and a large leaf got into the cage – I doubt it was put there. Two young girls run up to the cage shouting “Obie! Obie!” (see Figure 8) I see Scotty from the museum group. I go up and say “hi.” He and the tiger's trainer/handler talk about how Obie has moved from boneless pieces of meat to chicken. Bob Hollander says she is 18 weeks old. I hear the emcee conclude the Tiger Growl. When I went to the Massillon Tiger Booster Club website

and its Calender of Events, I saw the rally started at 6:30. However, when I went to verify the name of Duncan Plaza, the Downtown Massillon Association's Calendar specifics the Tiger Growl begins at 6:30 and the Rally begins at 7:00.



Figure 8: Kickoff Rally - Kids Huddle around Obie

The emcee talks about Massillon, including its status as “City of Champions.” The band plays the alma mater. As it does, the four rows of players – who have obviously taken the stage (see Figure 9) – sway in unison by row with rows alternating directions. Pretty cool. The announcer introduces the mayor, Kathy Catazaro-Perry. Some applause. She starts with “I have one question for you. Are you ready for some football?” She talks about how Massillon has the “greatest traditions' and tells how the players play with their heart, the cheerleaders cheer with their heart and the band plays instruments with their heart. She concludes with “God bless all of you and go Tigers!” The emcee then announces the “outstanding Superintendent of Massillon Schools” Richard Goodnight (?). I can't hear anything he says. Next up is the high school principal, Brad Warner. He starts with “Go Tigers!” then talks up tomorrow's game against Perry and concludes with “Go Tigers!”

The emcee asks
 “Where are we going
 tomorrow night?”
 Crowd shout, “Perry!”
 “Who are we gonna
 beat tomorrow night?”
 Perry!” This was the



Figure 9: Kickoff Rally - Football Players on Stage

second time he's done this tonight. Not the last. Next to the stage is the director of the cheer squad. She introduces the young ladies of the varsity squad, including the Football Captain of the squad. She then points out two other cheer squads, one JV and the other [*inaudible*]. She also points out the young girls who participated in the summer cheer camp with the varsity cheerleaders. (see Figure 10) All four groups do with the TIG-ERS call and response and follow that with a “Massillon – We're the best.” I missed the first two cheers taking pictures. Next music starts with a longer choreographed routine. No youth squad with this one. I don't hear words with this music, I guess I did with the previous cheers. Ends with a “Go Tigers!” The high school squad performs with a music bed and lifts and jumps. “G – O. Let's go, Tigers. G – O. Let's go” Music with words. I get out my phone and open the Shazaam app to get the name of the song I don't recognize. “Problem” by Ariana Grande and Iggy Azalea. Ariana was a Nickelodeon TV kid with Broadway experience, no clue on Iggy Azalea, except both were advertised for the MTV Music Video Awards, which I did not watch. They must be big with the kids these days. They close with some impressive lifts draw loud cheers from the audience.

“Can you hear me out there?” from the emcee. Then he talks about the sponsors of the events asking/telling us to “credit the Downtown Massillon association.” The new Booster Club president takes the stage. Didn't get the name. He talks about how sometimes he gets so excited that sometimes he “doesn't eat, doesn't sleep.” He gives a shout out to the Tiger Moms saying



Figure 10: Kickoff Rally - Youth and High School Cheer Squads

they “feed these kids all summer long.”

The Tiger Moms organize breakfast and lunch for the players, including band members and cheerleaders occasionally if they are practicing when the team does, during summer workouts and training camp. He

explains how the season is like a menu

with summer workouts and scrimmages as the appetizers, the season schedule as the main course, didn't hear what was dessert, although I suspect the playoffs and banquet. Those seem logical to me.

Another “Who are we playing/who are we beating” call and response. Massillon Tiger Swing Band director, Jason Neel, introduces band squad leaders. “Tiger Rag” precedes “Eye of the Tiger.”

An awkwardness comes over me as I realize that I am not singing the words to the song in my head, but rather the Al Yankovic parody “Theme to Rocky XIII” with the lyrics “Rye or the Kaiser” as Rocky reflects on past days of glory in his deli. It was just in my head, no one knew, but I definitely felt a certain lameness and misplaced momentary discomfort. Another TIG-ERS call and response. The band then goes into “Seven Nation Army” by the White

Stripes. No Shazaam, this one I knew. The first seven notes from the song are now standard fare at games of (almost) all sports and US venues. Crowds have taken to it and join in as those seven notes are repeated several times.

The emcee introduces “another man who works tirelessly’ – the president of the Sideliners, *didn't understand name*. He calls for another Tiger Bounce, but says “he is too old to bounce.” Some laughter from the crowd. He explains the purpose of the Sideliners was originally to make sure players were fed and nourished with “a little counseling here and there” and they still follow that model. He talks about how the seniors have been with the same Sideliner since they were freshmen. He says these kids have “Tiger heart” and then remarks how the Booster Club president “stepped” on his “Tiger Mom thing.” He asks for the Tiger Moms to stand up and asks the crowd to applaud them for their hard work and importance to the team.

The radio owner and .game play-by-play guy, Ray, introduces the “greatest stadium announcer” – Walt B. My scratch note has the words “announcing” and “song” next to his name. No idea. Maybe a song played before the emcee took the stage. The emcee call attention to a football that will be raffled off with the signature of every player. He thanks the sponsors listed on the giant banner behind him and points of the “US Bank table” for the raffle of a \$50 gift certificate for Fisher Foods. He calls on the crowd at the count of three to yell “All the way, Tigers.” Then he wants to hear “Go Tigers!” so loud “they gotta hear us in Perry.” Another “Where are we/Who are we” call and response. He calls out the crowd for not being loud enough saying “This is a football rally, not church.” Calls for a Tiger Bounce from the team who have just taken the stage. Players participate, but half-heartedly, at best.

The pep rally to kick off the season provides the most explicit coming together of the different elements of the show – players, Obies, band, cheer squad, and boosters. A prominent group at pep rallies (and games and Booster Club meetings and parades), the band recirculates images and embodied experiences that contribute in ways other than entertainment – valorization and socialization.

The band receives a favored status in Massillon, much like the football team. Residents frequently call band members' social status equal to that of the football players. Again, Paul Brown gets credit, as indicated in the following exchange:

Richard: If you read the book *PB*, second chapter, it shows how he developed relationships within the school system with the superintendents and how he wanted it to be part of the town and the community. And it was one of those things that because it was done so well, people related to it and wanted to be part of it. It's gone throughout the fiber of the whole community.

Paul: This isn't just football either.

Richard: The choir, the band, those two probably have more awards than the football team.

Paul: Our band has basically played all over the world, and it's a unique band. It was unique when it was started, The Swing Band. Our choir, I was in the choir in the '50s, and we were getting what they called fives I think back then. That was the highest award you could get. That has never stopped in all the years since, 60 years. They still are getting those top awards. And I have a granddaughter who's in middle school, and I go to her choir contests, and they get the same thing. Every one of 'em got top awards.

Scotty: I think along those lines too, even if you were not an athlete or in the

choir, in any of these. I was just in football and that was it, but I knew a lot of the kids that played basketball and that were in choir and stuff. And you looked up to them and respected them and supported them as much as they supported you, so you had the two-way interaction because you're all part of one thing. You're all part of the school, so we had mutual support and admiration for each other.

Scotty: I was in the choir. We had probably a third of the football team was in the choir.

Paul: Didn't have the numbers we have today on the football team. I think we only had 50 or 60, but plenty of the guys were in the choir.

Scotty: A lot of places you go to, if you're in the football team and you're on the choir, they'd deride you for that. We didn't do that. We kinda respected the people for doing that 'cause there's more than one thing that you can do as a person. We never put anybody down. We always had each other's backs when we were going to school for that. The students had a lot to do with it too because they say, "Yeah. You won a championship in football," and then we'd come back and say, "Yeah. You did great in choir," or debate or whatever it was. We were always patting somebody on the back for something.

I often doubted the professed equal status between the football team and the band. Band members do not get banners hanging from light posts downtown like football players do (see Figure 11). Many insisted otherwise. Regardless, people often knew the history and accolades of the band to the same extent as the team. Fewer people fit that claim; however, band members are celebrated. Diane said,

Band is huge. Band is the band parents are as supportive, or more supportive probably, than the football parents. I mean they are they run all the

concessions here. Those kids work so hard. They do all the same things that the football team does. They don't get probably fed as good as the football team, that's for sure, but they – their parents are incredible.

Game day with the band – I mean the band is what makes it. I mean without the band, I mean even these football players would play like when they're practicing they hear the band, that's like cool. That's like a big deal, because the band, Jason Neel has just done incredible things with that program, because they – he has been around I think six years now.



Figure 11: Football Player on Downtown Banner

Curtis said during his time as superintendent, he made concerted efforts to equalize the statuses:

Efforts go beyond the pale to keep cohesiveness (between band and team). If there is a skirmish or whatever, they'll get brought together. When I was principal, if the football team took motor coaches, the band took motor coaches. If the team took buses, then it was ok for the band to take buses. It doesn't make much sense to treat the team better because from an administrative standpoint, the second biggest booster club is for the band.

Even without equality, the band offers others the chance to participate in the football team, thereby sharing elevated status.

The band elevates the importance of the team and the game. The band creates emotional energy that connect people to the team. When asked about the band's role at the games, James explained,

That to me, just means that football is getting ready to start, but it – I don't

know, it's kind of like I would liken it to a relationship like a relationship between a man and a woman. When they get married they have their wedding song or whatever. That to me is Massillon's wedding song.

That is the connection between football and the players that that music, if that song starts playing that's Massillon. That's like our song, our alma mater, our type of vibe. That's what we're recognized by. And we're very critical of other schools that have "Tiger Rag" too, by the way – Clemson and Louisiana State.

The band provides an alternative focus when the game does not captivate, children especially.

The band, thus, plays a critical role in the socialization process, especially during games.

Kent said,

My sons, they take their kids. You've not experienced it yet, or if you do get to, it'll be just hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of children between the ages of five and ten. It's amazing that – and, to me, it's all part of the process in this town and why the football games are so important, because it gets entrenched in a very, very early age, and that's part of it, you know, that exposure.

James told me, "I actually think our band by the way our band carries themselves from their personality and when they take the field and they play 'Tiger Rag' and 'Carry On' and the people in the stands are really excited about that and there is not football going on. It's just the band playing our alma mater. I think that's probably one of our best traditions." In contrast to the site and time-specific and presentation to the band, Obie is everywhere, all the time.

Obie: Better treatment than some human beings (Marcus)

The head coach take over, recognizing the waning enthusiasm, with a "Let's see if we can get this thing going" followed by three TIG-ERS call and

response shouts. 'How loud can we make this?' He thanks the swing band and cheer squad. "There's nothing like being in the middle of two-a-days and hearing the band practice." He says it "revitalizes" the team during the long, hot summer practices. Another scratch note – "90-10-12" – refers to some configuration of numbers of players. Pretty sure the "90" refers to the number of players on the team. That would make the 10-12, the number of freshmen who will play this year on the varsity squad. That sounds right. He went on to talk about the youth camp this summer, talking up its success. He praises the leadership of the seniors, while also praising the parents. The seniors are "great kids because of you." He calls the 30 seniors to the stage to introduce themselves. I have trouble hearing many of them. The standard introduction goes [name] – [number] – [position] – [parents]. One player told the crowds it was the birthday of one of the players, calling the player a "man-beast." Rather than naming his parents, one player explicitly gave a shout-out to his parents who were about three feet in front of me. I've noticed it before, but more couples are interracial than I've experienced elsewhere, either in raw numbers or some per-capita estimation. Stands out more than any other place I've lived. Maybe it's just my expectations of a small town in Ohio, but I don't think so.

While the players continue their introductions, I walk over to live-tiger Obie. As I do, I hear a woman say, "Do not put your fingers in the cage." A few kids still surround the cage, clearly responding to most of the moves of the tiger. While I am at the cage, I hear a player give a shout-out to the Village Idiots, eliciting a sizable cheer from the crowd. The coach calls on the crowd to sing happy birthday to the aforementioned player. We do. He says the Perry

game is sold out and that about one hundred tickets are available for next week's game against Glen Oak. The announcer with another "Where/Who" call and response. He calls for and leads a large round of applause for the Tigers.

Time for the drawings. Four different prizes are raffled off, including the Fisher Food gift certificate and the autographed football. The emcee "reminds" the crowd of the grey-out for the third game and that those grey-out shirts are being sold at a table in the back sponsored by the high school economics club. He introduces a pastor, who tell everyone that his church will be opening in December. The emcee announces the end of the rally and reminds everyone of the free ice cream. As usual, the football team gets served first. Some are already coming back with ice cream with the closing announcement. The band plays "Tiger Rag" as they and the cheerleaders leave the plaza. I look back at live tiger Obie and see more kids surrounding the cage. It occurs to me that I only remember seeing mascot Obie with the cheerleaders and during the Tiger Growl. I sit down on a bench to rest. My feet are really bothering me. More items are announced as raffles, like a yearlong membership to MassMu, and the 2013 Tiger Season Highlights DVD. I get to people watch while sitting that I don't necessarily get to do during the rally. I see several "Beat Perry" shirts and signs. Two little girls (maybe 4-ish) throw pompoms into the air and shout cheers for the Tigers. Another girl (-6-7 maybe) does a series of air splits. An older woman goes up to the two little girls and tries to teach them specific cheers. They follow along, but doesn't seem to take, because when the lady leaves, the girls go back to their previous throwing pompoms and shouting. Lots of mingling and

socializing in the plaza after the rally. More football players return to the plaza with ice cream. I don't see any cheerleaders with ice cream. I see kids with swing band shirts with ice cream. (Not that they are in the band, but it might indicate such.) Pockets of people are still talking, not leaving the plaza. A woman with a "Football Mom" t-shirt is posing for photos with some players. I can see the line for ice cream from the plaza. It's long, down the entrance sidewalk and turning the corner on to the sidewalk along the street. Over a hundred people, I would estimate. After walking part way to the line, I go back to the bench instead of waiting in line. My foot still really hurts. A woman walks by with a "beat Perry" shirt, but with stars around the lettering. The plaza slowly clears out 15-20 post-rally. A couple near me tells some people with them that they are headed over to get ice cream. I look over. Line is still too long for me. Eventually, I talk myself into getting in line to participate in the experience, which I tell myself includes waiting in line.

As I walk over, two police officers walk through the people hanging out outside the museum. I take my camera out to grab a couple photos of the scene outside the museum. As I snap one off, a kid (teenager) walks in front, saying "Not trying to photobomb you" as he walk away without breaking stride. I see a large group of black kids (teenagers) in front of the museum, but not getting ice cream and not of them have ice cream. It gets my attention because it goes against the experience of the last two hours. I don't recall seeing a group of 12-15 kids that homogeneous. It strikes me as a division of race that defies my other experiences, especially when thinking about high school-aged kids. I look around and think back. The line. The football team. The cheer squad and band. The crowd. Nope. I remember smaller groups of kids that were all

white, maybe 6-7 kids. I know I've seen large groups of adults without a person of color. I struggle because I don't know what to make of it. It strikes me as my own bias, because I don't know if I would make this much, notice, or put in my note a group of 15 white kids. The kids seemed uninterested in the ice cream.

As I get toward the museum entrance, I see Alex. We chat it up for a while. I ask about the exhibits. She says they have a small exhibit in the lobby for the ice cream line. It's an exhibit marking the 75th anniversary of Paul Brown stadium. She shrugs at the word "exhibit" as if that was a too large of a term to describe the series of old photos and blue prints inside the lobby. She also said the Tiger Pride exhibit is coming back with a one year follow up. I ask here if I could send her a chapter of the dissertation on the town. She accepts, noting she's not sure and I will help how she can help. I tell her she'll be perfect and thank her. The line moves into the museum. Coming out of the museum is a woman in an orange shirt with the large "LO" over "VE" with a heart in place of the "O." Inside the heart is the Obie mascot. Couldn't think fast enough to stop her to see if I could get a picture of the shirt. I make my way through the line looking at the photos and blueprints. I step out of line as people pass so I can get shots of the exhibit. I approach the ice cream table and am directed to my server. I see as she begins scooping it that the scoop is all black ice cream and no orange ice cream. I am disappointed. I see a small trace of orange on one side. I try to get a couple shots showing the ice cream is black and orange.

(8-27-14 fieldnote)

At football games, I saw hundreds of people wearing a shirt or hat showing a playful cartooned Obie logo. At every event I attended, children thronged the cage of Obie, the live

Tiger. During appearances, the human ascot Obie regularly elicited shouts from adoring children. These are the three faces of Obie. The cute non-threatening design, the adorable tiger cub in a cage, and the fearsome costumed cheer leader each contribute build and sustain the personal investment of fans in football. The ubiquitous cartoon figure keeps the tiger in the eyes and minds of everyone. The live tiger gets taken through elementary schools, especially during McKinley Week, to educate children in both the biology of the animal, but also the traditions of the town and football team. The mascot maintained childrens' interest in the game, when they action on the field may not have. Each are entrenched in the history of Massillon football. While the origin of the logo is unclear, the first known appearance is in a program from 1939. Pep Paulson first donned the taxidermied tiger skin in 1938. Each of these trace back to Paul Brown. While the live tiger first didn't showed up on the sideline of a football game until 1970, Obie is as central to the socialization process as any other tradition, especially with children.

Like many other projects, the Booster Club documented all three Obies, if to varying degrees of comprehensiveness. The beginnings of the mascot are well documented. During my time with the Museum Group of the Booster Club, Lyle spent hours looking through documents and artifacts searching for the original designer. Some claims were readily dismissed; conjecture and educated guesses were denied; and, little was answered. While I'm confident Lyle will continue to keep an eye out for information, Richard and Paul were resigned that no one will know the answer. The Booster club more thoroughly documented the live tiger.

In the binder "3 Faces of Obie," the Booster Club has a typed narrative of the origin of the live tiger in Massillon. Former Booster Club president Wilbur Arnold initiated the project in the late 1960's According to the narrative, he began researching Bengal tigers, in part by asking the managers of the Cincinnati and Cleveland Zoos. After his research Arnold brought

the idea to city officials. "The idea was resisted based on cost and safety. Negative forces began to multiply." Despite a thorough presentation addressing safety and finances, the city rejected the plan. The uncredited author then includes details that might lead someone to believe it more lore than actual events. "Though the report failed to receive approval it assured that Massillon would have a tiger. To be at the (presentation) meeting Arnold delayed a business trip. The airplane he would have scheduled crashed in Lake Erie with all hands lost." According to the story, this turn of fate gave Arnold greater resolve to acquire a tiger for Massillon.

Plans continued to bring a tiger to Massillon. The Booster Club approved a plan to keep the feline in Arnold's mother's fruit cellar. The narrative specifically mentions that Arnold and others had no endangered species acts with which to contend. The cub arrived one week before the opening game of 1970. The narrative then includes the following as the final consideration before the tiger was adopted by Arnold:

At the animal exchange the manager took them to a small cage. Inside was a ten week old cub, highly disturbed to say the least.

The manager said, "That's what we promised but you can see she's not very easy to get along with."

Arnold was concerned. "How long will it take her to calm down?"

"Oh, a couple weeks with of a (sic) close personal relationship would bring her around."

"I hoped we could handle her right away."

"I understand. We may have something over here that would interest you. The box over there just came in from California."

"How old is that one?"

Three and a half or four months – weighs about thirty five pounds."

"How big will she get in another two and a half months?"

"About like that baby lion over there – maybe sixty-five pounds (in fact OBIE weighed more than 80 pounds at the season end)" (sic)

"Will you be able to handle a tiger that size?"

"That depends..."

A decision was required. The tiger in the box was friendly. She peeked out through a little hole in the box sheathing and made a snuffling sound when the kids approached.

"That's the way they talk to you."

When the kids put their fingers through the cage mesh, the tiger rubbed against them and snuffled.

The decision was simple – the four month old tiger entered Massillon before supper time a week before the first game.

Over the course of the week, boosters built a painted mobile cage and an undercarriage with steering capabilities. Everything was ready by game time for the first game. The connection kids can make with tiger cubs was an integral factor in the story of Obie's arrival. As the story goes, Obie I's first handler made a trip to California, where she was sent after her time in Massillon, to visit and she immediately recognized him. Obie has its own legacy. In contrast to the cartoon logo, the live tiger gives a body the mascot, albeit a cute mascot. The kid-friendly mascot is another tool for socialization.

During the school year, especially during McKinley Week, Bob Hollander, Obie's handler and caretaker, takes it around to elementary schools. Many schools will have an assembly, while others will have Obie into the classrooms. First, Obie is a tool for educators, something to include in the curriculum. The educational value is important to many. Diane said,

Oh it's great, because I'm a schoolteacher – that is like a great educational thing for our kids. They bring that tiger out to the school and the kids get to, you know, they actually bring it and the kids all sit around and they get to, you know, they talk about it. They talk about tigers. So it's totally educational in that sense.

The other part is it's great at the games. I mean the kids come up and it's not just about looking at the tiger, because there is a lot of educational pieces, because the guys that are involved in that, they know so much and it's I think it's a great thing.

The program is a valued tradition in Massillon.

The lure of Obie is great, even adults are drawn to Obie. Kent said,

(Obie) such a people magnet. I mean, again, we get on a personal basis with it, you know. You roll around with it. You allow it to grab you or mouth you, which it will, and you just get on a personal basis. And they're no different than a young child or a young dog – a puppy, whatever. It grows on you and vice versa, and they recognize you and – you know.

And, of course, the tiger's a little more – to watch them with their natural instincts. They'll hunt and their tactics. I don't know. I think they're very good looking. I think they're a very attractive animal, and it's just the curiosity, but people magnet, huge people magnet. The tiger goes to our rest homes, and the older people, they just – it makes their day. It just goes to our schools, the elementary schools or whatever. The young kids are just the same way. It's just a huge people magnet.

Residents view Obie as an important element of the community. While not consciously making connections, Marcus placed Obie in the larger socialization project when he said of

the school visits,

(The handlers) bring Obie. That's the kids get to see Obie. You know, they can wear Massillon colors on Friday, so it's kind of kids grow up in it. Little boys, they want to be in the football team. Little girls want to be cheerleader. And even if you don't want to play football, if you like music you can still be part of the experience too.

Obie shares a status akin to band members, cheerleaders, and football players. Recently, however, threats to Massillon's authority to adopt and care for Obie opened a dialogue over the appropriateness of a live tiger mascot. The origin of "Obie" name goes back to 1926. The information was passed on oral tradition with limited supporting documentation. According to Junie Studer, a prominent own and team historian whom researchers at the library contacted, the high school held a contest in 1926, won by Viola Black (MPL). Another patron of the library informed reports that the tiger's name stands for "Orange and Black Is Everything" (MPL Reference Department).

Shortly before my time in Massillon community members engaged in a dialog over the live tiger. The State of Ohio debated legislation that would prohibit the acquisition and possession of exotic animals, including tigers, outside of zoos. A specific incident served as the catalyst for the bill. In October 2011, the owner of the Muskingum County Animal Farm released 56 animals just outside Zanesville. Police killed 48 animals, including leopards, bears, wolves, and lions. The owner committed suicide just after releasing the animals. While no person was harmed, the bill was written and debated during the first few months of 2012. While everyone expressed deep affection for the tiger, a dialogue took place among communities members. I was not present during this time, so I have used articles, op eds, and letters to the editor from *The Independent* to show how the community negotiated the potential loss of a deeply-held tradition.

Outside of personal conversation to which I had no access, a dialogue played out in the pages of *The Independent*. As the bill was working through the legislature, IndeOnline staff writer Staley reports the addition of an amendment in the bill that would allow Massillon to continue its tradition. Staley writes, "Though Obie and Washington High School are not named specifically in the bill, the legislation indicates educational institutions would be allowed to use a 'single dangerous wild animal as a sports mascot.'" (Staley "Is Obie spared?") The official reprieve did not stop the conversation about Obie.

Despite the amendment, the law included regulations to ensure safety. Schools would need to maintain a one million dollar liability policy, receive accreditation from professional bodies, obtain state animal shelter permits, microchip the animal, and provide background checks for all handlers (Staley "Is Obie spared?"). The debate among residents ranged from the care of the tiger, to the added costs of the regulations, and the morality of keeping a tiger in Northeastern Ohio. The accumulation of regulations still jeopardizes the live tiger tradition. Kent talked about the value of Obie and the difficulties going forward to keep it.

We have a exemption – this goes back probably ten years – a state exemption to allow us to have a live tiger mascot. But we can't own a tiger. There's no way we could take on that responsibility. So the problem's becoming where they are making it so tough on the breeders and the others that, even though we have an exemption, it's probably not gonna mean anything... [*trails off*]

The debate continued in the newspaper.

On March 12, IndeOnline published an editorial calling for an end to the tradition that reads, in part,

We are happy for those who have made Obie so popular over the years; sincere, loyal Massillonians whose conviction it is that the young tiger adds to

“The Greatest Show in High School Football.”

That said, this is one tradition that the Massillon Tiger football program can and should live without. There are just too many downsides to the live animal mascot, not the least of which is the chance — however remote — that a maturing Obie could somehow escape his keepers and attack someone or something. No, it has never happened before, but there’s a reason the insurance premiums for Obie are what they are. ("Editorial: Rethinking the Obie tradition")

The letter later disputes the idea that the bill specifically targeted Massillon or its traditions and raised the issue of cost in maintain the tiger.

The editorial prompted more letters, two of which were published on March 23. The primary argument of the letter is the value of tradition and what Obie means to Massillon.

The letter reads:

This is about keeping Obie our mascot. He is a member of our Massillon Tiger team.

I have been driving in the Pro Football Hall of Fame Grand Parade for almost 30 years and Obie has been in front of me many times in that parade. The people who come from all over America to see our parade love Obie. They scream his name all the way for the two miles to the end of the parade.

Obie is family. Would you get rid of one of your family members after 40 years? I don’t think so! Or on the other hand, maybe you might. (Kirkpatrick)

The emotional appeal stands against cost, feasibility, and regulation.

The counter letter also appealed to one's emotions, but focused on the care of the tigers. The author is a self-labeled “avid football fan!” A thirty-seven year resident, Calhoun makes both moral and social arguments in the letter. The letter reads, in part:

My eyes were opened a couple years ago when I visited Stump Hill Farms during their open house. At the entrance were two adorable tiger cubs drinking from a bottle. I excitedly asked one of the attendants if one of these would be Massillon's next Obie. Her reply was that one undoubtedly would. I then asked if any of our prior Obies were on the property; her answer was yes and she pointed in the direction of his whereabouts.

As I approached this now huge magnificent animal in his small enclosure, pacing and agitated, my excitement changed to sadness. Now, I'm sure that these animals' basic needs are being met. But are we doing these cubs, being bred to supply us with a 10-15 week experience called a tradition, a disservice? Is it selfish on our part to condemn them to an imprisoned life, denying them who they were meant to be for our purposes?

Perhaps, we should concentrate on the kids and the game. Perhaps, it is time to put this tradition to rest. Instead, let's honor this magnificent, strong, honorable specimen that represents us by simply respecting him. (Calhoun)

When I asked, most people consistently rejected the claim that Obie was in any way mistreated or lacking suitable care. Some also viewed the incident in Zanesville as distinct from Obie. Marcus said,

I know the people that handle Obie. Obie gets a better treatment than some human beings do and stuff, unfortunately. Well, it was not – it's never mistreated. It's educational. I thought it was the thing that happened in Zanesville created a need for that bill. I was totally it's apples and oranges.

I mean we're – they're not abusing this animal and it's actually when you take OB to an away game it's the people are fascinated by him. Just how many times you get to see a live tiger, but it's well maintained, so I thought, you

know, the Booster Club was against it. We wrote letters and we put petitions around and we finally got an exemption for Obie.

Marcus pointed to the two main arguments for keeping Obie: tradition and care. Seldom addressed was the safety of others – the original impetus for the bill. Some saw this as the government infringing on local matters. Russell told me,

I know our tiger is well cared for while it's here. What happens to it afterwards I really don't know, and I don't think we can be responsible for it, but while it's here it's well taken care of. And so I just look at it as a group of people that want to impose their view on something on somebody else and that view is that I guess that you – well, their way of treating animals and why we want to impose it on other people and restrict you, and I just don't think they should. So I was kind of, I was kind of disappointed that they passed the law, and so Massillon shouldn't really need a restriction, you know, an exemption. And because I just know that the animal is well cared for and so we have too many rules and regulations anymore.

Care for the tiger, though, evolved over time. Diane said, "they feed it chicken that's donated. A lot, you know, they get chicken and that actually started and then the guy actually kept it in his house instead of cage in his basement like a room where you kept it, I suppose it kind of, but now it's out here [*inaudible*]... yeah." Obie is a key element of the football experience. When the game does not hold a child's attention, Obie provides a way to keep them invested in the program, providing a fond memory later associated with the team. Likewise, the children witness and learn the embodied performances.

With live tiger Obie spared, the prevailing opinion is that tradition matters and contributes to the community. Carrie said,

I was glad that that tradition could continue. I've been out to where the Obies

are raised and taken care of, and they're a very nice facility, so I guess I'm pleased. I do think it's weird whenever anyone gets a special exclusion for anything – you know, when they're a special case and they get to carry on when other people don't. But for the – because Massillon isn't – you know – doesn't have that record winning-ness anymore, being able to maintain that live tiger helps with the other aspects of their identity, so I'm glad that it can continue in that way, because a lot of people just enjoy that part of it, being able to see it when it comes out, so...

In describing the desire to maintain an identity of winning, Carrie points out how Obie stays popular despite the success of the team. As the team may not win to standards set by community members, Obie keeps people, especially kids, emotionally invested in football.

The Greatest Show in High School Football involves more than the action on the field. The program includes the band and Obie, as well as the cheerleaders and the calliope, elevate the game experience. These elements give greater importance to the team.

Surrounding the team with rituals and spectacles make the team something deserving of valorization. The infrastructure that supports them, including the Booster Club, make the entirety a celebratory complex. Each visible element provides not only entertainment, but also a socialization into the program. The traditions inculcate children and newcomers with the values and emotional that translates to pride for Massillon, the football team and, subsequently, the city. The Tiger Swing Band and Obie are the clearest examples of how Massillonians emphasize the Greatest Show in high school football.

The Game Experience: Everyone is there and it feels so potent (Jessica)

I drive the 1½ hours to Mansfield for the playoff game. Eric had told me to buy the ticket on-site during an earlier conversation, so there is a bit of a risk. I am walking in the brisk cold up to the stadium right at 7pm. I hear the “TIG –

ERS” chant as I walk up to the ticket box with Massillon up 7-0 less than 2:00 into the game. Massillon’s quick strike offense pays off early.

I buy a General Admission ticket and the man in a blue sweatshirt and brown Carhartt coat points me to where seats are available. I walk over there and turn the corner into the section to see that it is primarily Whitmer fans and I am wearing a black Massillon Tiger sweatshirt and black Massillon Tiger hat. I decide to try to sit with the Massillon fans.

As I clear the stands to see the other side, the Massillon sections, they are full, standing room only. Even the standing room is limited as I see hundreds already standing. I find a grassy hill in the corner on the Whitmer side about twenty feet away from the Whitmer band. There are close to one hundred people with me on this hill, many wearing Massillon gear. There is a fence behind me. About twenty people are lined up behind the fence watching the game without paying for a ticket.

I look to the Massillon side and see that the Massillon band take up almost a full section with other fans occupying the top four or five rows and standing behind the last row. In contrast, the Whitmer band takes up about half of a section of Arlin Field, with its 14,000 seat capacity. While trying to observe my surroundings, Whitmer has scored three straight touchdowns.

After the first quarter with Massillon trailing 21-7 and Whitmer threatening on third down, the Massillon side engages in a loud “TIG – ERS” chant. As the Panthers take the field for the 2nd quarter a “DE-FENSE” chant emerges from the Massillon side... to no avail as Whitmer scores on the next play and goes up 28-7 with the extra point. Two older gentlemen in Massillon gear walk by and one says, I was ready to go when they had 21.” I realize that

many people leaving early will have to walk right past me to get to their cars. I also notice a pair of buses with “Go Massillon” signs on the side. They have to stay for the whole game, no matter how bad or cold it gets. Despite the defection of these two men, it is still Standing Room Only on the Massillon side.

I see the sign for Arlin Field – the “Home of the Tygers.” A man behind me in a big parka-looking coat tries to start a “TIG – ERS” call and response cheer, but not enough people are around, so all anyone hears is a couple “TIG”s.

During an on-field injury I turn around I notice more people gathered behind the fence. The cold has not discouraged people from coming to the game. Many of the men behind the fence are wearing Massillon jackets or coats. One of the men behind the fence in a white coat says of Massillon, “They need to go down field” – meaning they need to try deeper passes further down the field. Either he is really new or not really paying attention, because the Tigers have taken shots down field and missed on all of them that I have seen. A short completion turns into a long gain for Massillon and the Massillon crowd chants for the quarterback as “Ky-le Kempt” chants ring out, turning his first name into two syllables. A few plays later, Massillon kicks a field goal. 28-10.

I take a closer look at the Whitmer side and see a couple pockets of orange and black. I would estimate Massillon fans account for 8,000 of the almost 14,000 at the stadium tonight. The Massillon side erupts with cheers at the first defensive stop of the game. The same guy shouts out “TIG” hoping to get the return “ERS.” No dice. Shortly after that, 2:34 left in the half with the

score 10-28, the cheerleaders start a successful “TIG – ERS” call and response cheer. Very loud.

Not much offense for the Tigers as they quickly punt the ball back to Whitmer. The quarterback for the Panthers throws to a receiver; it looks like a backwards lateral with Massillon recovering the fumble! Big play! Officials rule an incomplete forward pass. A chorus of boos rings out from the Massillon side. I look around for a replay screen. My eyes want a replay to no avail.

Timo walks by and pats me on the back. We greet each other and shake hands. As he walks away, he shouts back, “It’s all your fault.”

I shout back, “Why? How is it my fault?”

He says, “You’re wearing the sweatshirt, hat... Nah, we’ll come back. There’s still time.” A few minutes after he says that, Whitmer scores again to make it 35-10. I look to the Whitmer side and I only see spots or pockets of school colors, there may be more Massillon fans than I originally estimated. Not a lot of loud cheers despite the dominant performance.

As the teams leave the field for halftime, both teams need to walk past the Massillon fans to reach the locker rooms, Massillon fans boo the Whitmer team. I get it, but something is wrong with booing and demonstrating hostility toward 15- to 18-year olds. The kids are just playing, nothing to merit scorn. But, I get it.

Both bands come out to the field for halftime shows, Whitmer goes first. Facing the Massillon side, Whitmer performs a tribute to college football including OSU’s Buckeye Battlecry, Michigan’s Hail to the Victors (resoundingly booed), Notre Dame’s march, Florida State’s War Chant, and

LSU's Tiger Rag (Massillon's song).

Massillon Swing Band comes out to perform Carry On and Tiger Rag, for the second time this halftime. They went on to perform selections from various halftime shows throughout the year with American Band, Jungle Boogie, and Get On Your Feet of Miami Sound Machine fame. The Massillon band also orients themselves to the Massillon side. Tiger Rag receives great crowd support and singing along from fans, even those in my corner.

As the second half begins, "brisk" is no longer appropriate, it is straight cold out. The cold has significantly diminished neither the size of crowd nor the enthusiasm of the crowd. A "DE – FENSE" chant starts up right at kick-off. A little misplaced, but its loud and energetic.

With 10:35 left in the 3rd quarter, a sack makes it fourth down for the Tigers. One guy off to my left leaves. He stays through halftime to give his team one more chance. Chance lost, he leaves.

On a 3rd and 9 for the Panthers, a nice, but not great "DEFENSE" chant comes from the Massillon side. Pass incomplete. Massillon prepares to get the ball back. They advance down the field, settling for a field goal, though. The field goal misses – badly – and a couple, which had been very vocal in their support and cheering of Massillon, pack up their stuff and leave. They wave to another family on their way to the parking lot as they pass me.

Pockets of seats are opening up on the Massillon side, though some people are still standing at the top of sections. A funny moment when a Whitmer player gets flagged for a personal foul and the Massillon fans shout, "You can't do that." A smile breaks through the cold.

A steady stream of people have been leaving. Sizable pockets of empty

seats on Massillon side. The knoll on which I am stationed is pretty empty. Another Whitmer TD (42-10) and another man next to me leaves. Two families who brought blankets on which to sit start packing up. They leave. An injury stoppage allows more people to get up and leave. Between 20 and 25 people on the knoll, not counting those waling past to leave.

The game gets chippy as it gets out of control. Another personal foul on Whitmer makes it five since halftime. Massillon has three personal fouls. TD Whitmer at 8:24 left in the 4th quarter. I'm leaving at 49-10. On my way out I hear over the PA another personal foul on Massillon. Two older black gentlemen reflect on the season with perspective. "The game was disappointing, but this is one of the best teams to ever play for Massillon."
(11-17-12 fieldnote)

The traditions of the football team, including the band, Obie, cheerleaders, and calliope, contribute to the game experience. Specifically, the isolated elements of the Greatest Show come together in memory.

I can't put a thumb on when I – when the first time is I attended a game, but I can remember a lot of games when I was younger in that same thing, you know, going with my parents. Going in through the west side gate, hearing them calliopes playing the music that out front. Hearing the old timers talk about the seasons in the past and the band and the football team running out on the field through the hoop and there is probably not a smell, but I know that there probably is. And we get up in that stadium and if I closed my eyes and I couldn't hear anything I could probably tell you that football was getting ready to [*inaudible*]. They just... it's weird. A lot of people have had conversations

with it from Massillon that you can't understand Massillon unless you're from there. It's just, it's a really tough nut to crack.

The rituals and spectacles of the game repeats previous game events. Game day traditions provide recognizable elements to an otherwise varied competitive contest, framing the game to enhance the personal experience. Repetition of recognizable events allow spectators to invest more energy and attention on a game than a game lacking consistency. In this section, I detail how people respond to the experience of the game as all the individual elements come together.

Massillon games contain predictable traditions. Curtis explained the progression of the game event, “The first thing that comes to mind when thinking about the games is 'steeped in tradition.’” Diane talked about the time outside the stadium as part of the game experience. “Usually do some tailgating up in the parking lot. Then you come down. You watch the opening, you know, they as they warm up and then it's huge. I mean they come running out. The band – the whole experience with the band, the football team coming out, running out and it's just, I don't know, it's just great. All your friends are here and everybody actually watches the game. Nobody is just hanging out and just, they're all actually involved in the game. I love it. I don't know, it's just – it's pretty incredible.” Curtis explained to me that the pre-game band performance stays the same: the band playing “Tiger Rag” and “Carry On,” forming a block “M” for the national anthem, and ending with the alma mater. The end of the game has its own order. Diane told me that the band plays “ceremonial” music with the lowering of the flag, “tiger Rag” again as band and football parents take the field. She also said that she valued the experience because it allowed time for “mingling” after the game.

While resisting the notion of an "average" game, Kent acknowledged patterns that contribute make up the event. Kent extended the game experience to tailgating before the game. He said,

If there's such thing as an average game, on the games that are not our fiercest rivals, there's probably – shoot – a good 500 people, and they gather in what we call the North Lot. It's a parking lot that's smaller of all the rest, but it's off by itself kind of on the north end of the stadium. And it's a lot of – I mean you've got it all. You've got people that just have the trunk of their car open, you know, or are sitting in lawn chairs, to campers and motor homes. It's just – there's the whole gamut.

It's a lot of colors. There's bonfires. I know there's one organization that they had ties to Massillon Cable, and they have a underground cable in a box where they plug in. They got TVs going, you know. I mean it's really the place to be. I mean I like it. I enjoy that aspect of it. It's like going to an Ohio State game or – which I can relate to for tailgating. It's like going to a NASCAR event, which I can relate to for tailgating. It just is a smaller scale, you know?

Individuals identified specific moments within the event that enhanced the experience. Kent emphasized tailgating. The identifiable traditions contribute to the enhanced experience. As Diane and Kent articulate, the game experience extends beyond the stadium and the time of the game. The expanding experience reaches its zenith during McKinley Week.

Repetition builds anticipation. Diane talked about her favorite isolated experience. She said, "I think probably when the kids come running out and Walt just said here is the Tigers. That's my favorite, when he says here's the Tiger and they come bursting through that 'M.' That's my favorite absolutely." The experience of previous games creates anticipation for future game. In the following exchange, members of the Museum Group identify specific elements that elevate their emotional experience.

William: It's exciting. You wait all week long. You're at work, and you want to do something for relaxation. You want to go to Massillon football and enjoy

the game, and you go there, and you might not always win, but you always see exciting, hard fought football games. It means a lot to everybody.

Marshall: It's a show. It's a show with the football game and the band. It's something to see. Something you don't normally see in high school football games.

Paul: Our cheerleaders, they do the mounted stuff. They're throwing kids all over the place. But the whole thing is a show.

William: It's a show.

Paul: We actually have a video screen. It was the largest one in the state other than college. I think it still is. So you can watch the replays on the screen.

By talking about the cheerleaders, they describe the celebratory complex, framing the event as a show. The discussion of the video screen as a replication of the televised experience in the above exchange was not repeated by others. The live aspect of the game dominated most discussions. The game experience begins during the week before.

The live experience made an impression on Jessica at her first game. She was impressed with the energy and enthusiasm result from the totality of the elements. She described it as follows:

From the perspective of someone whose husband has tried for the last six years [*laughs*] to explain the game on Sundays, and get me to understand what it is to be a Browns fan. Not having grown up in a football house, I'm fascinated by the atmosphere at the game. You know, I went to football games when I was in high school, and I've never seen anything like walking into the stadium at Massillon Washington High School. It was amazing.

It wasn't just students, it wasn't just again the parents of players; it was everyone. It was everyone in the community. It was all your bank tellers, the

people who make your pizzas, your printer, your insurance agent, people who you know are members of the museum and you see frequently at events. Everyone is there. Everyone is there and it feels so potent, that sense of community.

And I was just awestruck by the beauty of the stadium, by the size of the scoreboard, by the professionalism, by how slick everything was, and just how excited everyone was to be there. It's an awesome display of... I don't know, Jill is the one who said this, our educator, so I can't take credit for coming up with this analogy, and she may have talked to you about it, but she said it's like very Spartan.

It's very – you really get the sense – like you would attending, you know, a Euro Cup game or even a Browns game. But we're talking about pro sports here, and we're talking about nationalistic identity that we're comparing these things to, and it's high school football. *[laughs]* So I can't compare it to anything but what I've known not having been as familiar with the football culture my whole life. But I'll tell you what, it's pretty remarkable.

The experiences exceeded Jessica's previous experiences.

As I listened to James describe why he values the game experience, despite talking about a collective experience, he talked about the importance for his child. He described the way the Greatest Show comes together during the event, passing the emotional qualities to children as part of the socialization process. He said,

My four-year-old knows it's Friday night. She knows that it's what she calls *[Tiger]* football night. She puts her stuff on. We get in the car. We go to the game. There is a lot of fanfare that surrounds getting to the game with the calliope music that goes on out front. Just the excitement of people being able

to be out of the house and doing something on a fall Friday evening.

But then my family gets together. We all sit together at the same section that we've been sitting in for years. My sister was a cheerleader. My other sister was in the band, and when they were on the field we were in our same seats, and then when they weren't they're up there with us and it's been that way forever and it continues to be that way. It really is a family event for us.

.The emotional energy gets passed on through different channels, though family is a primary channel. James also referenced different elements (the band, the cheerleaders, the calliope, etc.) that attract different family members. Many described the process from childhood memories. Familial experience informs personal attachment. Recollections of childhood and memories of family dominate discussions. Richard described his first experiences with the football team as follows:

Mine goes back to age five. My dad worked at the stadium. He parked cars. One of the neighbor kids and I, he took me. He was older. It was kind of a babysitter thing, but he brought me out to the stadium. We walked from up in Walnut Hills and walked to the game and then met my dad there because he was parking cars and stuff. I remember the game, and the thing I remembered about it, I'm so young that I rooted for this team in blue because I liked blue better than them orange and white uniforms. *[laughs]* Kinda my first recollection of football, but the team in orange and white won. I do remember that.

Above, James talked about the importance of passing the traditions of football to her daughter. His sister's commitment comes from her role as a cheerleader. He alluded to his sister as another source of transmission for his daughter. Richard explained how the connection from early family experiences informs the emotional quality of football

experiences.

When I got too caught up in the framing elements of the show, Russell reminded about the emotional energy from the on-field action.

I think the game is for me, it's exciting and the, you know, you get when it's a close game and it's always better when Massillon is ahead. It just gets your, it gets you know, your blood flowing and I just love the competition. I see, I like to see the players when they get involved and they get, you know, you can even tell when they are putting out over 100 percent of their, you know, their playing ability. They just try hard and that's so much fun to watch.

Personal investment in the action is central to the game experience. While Russell described an idealized game, he values the on-field action. The supporting structures lose value without an on-field product. The totality of the experience includes the game. The reiteration of the game experience creates a personal connection to the team. The rituals and spectacles internalize the emotional energy to create a personal attachment. The experience starts for children by watching the band, Obie, or the cheerleaders. Youth cheer squads and pee-wee football gives provide a different range of embodied experiences. High school opens more opportunities with the band, in addition to cheering and playing. High school students who do not actively participate get further exposure through assemblies, tiger visits and school banners signs and other students in uniforms. The experience infiltrates home and schools. As adults, tailgating and “mingling” extend the time involved in participation.

Personal Attachment: It's just in people (Diane)

It is oddly warm already at 8:30am. I hear whistles blowing and pads smacking from inside the stadium. I see two women walking towards the stadium and follow. Two big trucks are on the upper parking lot repaving. In the shade of the stadium I see two fold-out tables in an L-shape with foil trays

fill with food – watermelon slices and wedges, orange wedges, carrots, little cups of peanut butter, celery, granola bars, and apples. A tall man with a shaved head in a Massillon Tigers t-shirt is pouring Gatorade into cups and lining them up at the end of the ‘L’.

I see Diane and she explains the process and the mom’s involvement, even though there is at least one dad. In the summer in the three weeks leading up to school, the football team begins practice for the upcoming fall season. For a couple weeks during that time the team practices twice a day, hence ‘two-a-days.’ The mom’s sign up for dates they come in during two-a-days to fill out the breakfast table. They arrive at 7:30am each of those days to cut the fruit and cup the peanut butter. She explains how they used to hand out peanut butter sandwiches, but the current coach did not want sandwiches, so they switched to the cups of peanut butter for protein. This practice has been going on since at least the early eighties. They will also do a lunch table inside the cafeteria of the school. All the food is donated, mainly from the parents, but also local restaurants.

Joe, a former player, remembers the table from when he played almost twenty years ago. The restaurants who donate food often will be the restaurants visited by the team and the Sideliners during their dinners. Diane tells the story of how her son when up to the manager at Charlie’s, a fast food joint, and personally thanked him for supporting the team. Joe considers it “returning the favor.” This “returning the favor” is both organized by the team and Sideliners and encouraged individually.

Diane suggests we go into the stands for the interview. I am a bit worried about ambient sounds – the whistles, the grunting, and the popping of pads –

but I accede. During the interview, she waves six or seven ties to passing kids. Her son is a freshman on the team and she teaches in the system, so she knows most of the kids personally. After we turn off the tape, Diane tells me about how the last away scrimmage at Lorraine, they brought pizza and a sundae bar for both teams and how impressed the kids from Lorraine were. She tells about the respect they have for their opponents and even honor one player from each opponent each year at their banquet.

After the interview we head back underneath the stands to the training table. She calls Joe back over and formally introduces us. He started at quarterback for the team and now has a son on the team. We talk about traditions and how some of the traditions have changed. Joe says he isn't involved more in the Booster Club or the Sideliners because he doesn't agree with the way things are done now. Sideliners used to be for the upperclassmen and now the Sideliners are for the incoming freshmen to help with that adjustment and are for one year. Diane wonders why they changed. I told her what I had been told, that the head coach at the time of the change wanted the change. She says, "That's interesting. That's interesting." Joe and Diane don't give much more in the way of details as to why they are not as enthusiastic about it as they were. Joe talks about how he thinks there was more respect for teammates in the past. He cites how an upperclassman will cut in line in front of a freshman in a food line.

Players start to trickle in with a parent manning each tray to pile them on the plates, except carrots. Kids are polite and accept most of the food. Diane notices that kids are not taking carrots, so she jumps in line puts on thin, white, plastic gloves and starts handing out carrots, "at least one." I don't see

any line jumping while the kids go through the line. The parents chat up the kids briefly as they go through the line with occasional words of encouragement, like “Keeping working hard out there” or “Take care of yourself.”

After the team goes through the line and head back out to the stadium, plates in hand, Diane tells me I should meet the manager at the ticket office and we head towards the high school. On the way to the office, we pass an older woman with four envelopes. She’s shaking her head. Then Diane says Hi and inquires about what is wrong, the woman says that the ticket box screwed up her season tickets and that she had to fix them. The situation is resolved, but the woman is clearly distressed by the mix-up. As we walk away, Diane turns to me and says, “See, that’s what happens...”

“When you mess with tradition,” I say.

“Yes, even a mistake and people get upset,” says Diane.

We go up to the ticket office and Diane introduces me to Michelle in the office. I ask for her contact info for an interview. She writes it down for me. I ask about a Will Call ticket that Eric said he would leave for me. She says that this week is about season tickets and Eric knows that, so he should place the order next week. I say my thanks to her and Diane and head to my car. (8-13-12 fieldnote)

While people’s roles supporting the team vary, the contributing experience informs how they understand their experiences. Diane is a Tiger Mom. She helps in a number of different events. One example of her support comes during the summer. In August, shortly before the season begins, the teams go through two-a-day practice. During that time, the

Tiger Moms prepare breakfasts. For three weeks, Diane told me, they start their preparations at 7:30am, but she gets up at 5am to her and her son ready for practice by 6:20. They cut up fruit, prepare small cups of peanut butter, and set up tables to hand them out during a break during the morning practice. They return to the high school to prepare lunch. Occasionally, during scrimmages, they will prepare lunch for both teams. All of the food is donated by area businesses, so the meals vary according to who is donating. Pizza and chicken wings are common fare. Diane told me that they are occasionally able to set up a sundae bar. SHE justifies the commitment to the football team because the emphasis remains on academics. I doubted the commitment to academics. As a teacher, she explained, “You can't – you have to be a student athlete. You just can't be an athlete. You have to have good grades and you have to perform in the classroom to be able to play. And they are very strict about that, so making sure that [my son] is ready and getting his rest and doing what he needs to do.” Diane framed the commitment to football as part of a commitment to her family. She also indicates that football is part of the process of betterment in that players have to do well or they can't participate. Regardless of the accuracy of those beliefs, she treats her attachment to the program as both personal and familial commitments.

Emotional energy generated through the game experience informs a personal attachment people experience which, in turn, informs how people contribute to the program. In this section, I explicate the transition from emotional energy built through the game to the attachment that results from the re-enactment as a contributor to the program. Everyone finds his/her place within the program. Most residents contribute in some direct way through the countless programs and events to support the team. Fans are contributors, too, as they enact the rituals and give spectacles their prominence. Every person contributing to the football program enacts her/his own personal attachment. Football becomes a source of meaning-making, informing how people understand their individual identities. In addition to the

extension of time (pre-game, post-game, the week prior) and space (high school, home, and parking lots) during which embodied performances recreate emotional connections to the team, participation becomes a personally meaningful experience. From enjoying the experiences of the game, people involve football in their lives as they support the experiences that create emotional attachment.

While people label their attachments differently, they are able to articulate the process that went into the formation of attachment. Scotty, for example, expressed attachment as pride. He said,

Being a former player and on back-to-back championship teams, my whole family is proud, and we're gonna get one of these bricks and put in the walk of fame out there. I'm gonna put the whole family in there, my kids, and my kids just, they beam at stuff like that. Because they wouldn't normally do it, but their old man did something, and they're a part of that. And that makes them very proud too, so they show their friends. It's kind of like a trickle down thing. It makes everybody happy and puts a big smile on their face, and then their friends are saying, "I wish I had somebody that could do that for me," and stuff like that. So for me, it's a thing of pride.

Without using the language of performance studies, Scotty said that the experience is embodied, rehearsed, and internalized. Excitement begets attachment begets pride. Some, though, describe their attachments as a commitment. Marshall said,

I remember going to the first game with my mom and dad. They had season tickets, which we still hold them season tickets, my wife and I do now. And that's since 1946. I remember being in service down in Columbus, the Air Force, and I drove home every weekend to see the football game. Every weekend. The only place I couldn't drive from was Vietnam. They wouldn't

let me come home for that.

Attachment gets understood in general terms. Pride, family, and commitment each express the value of football as bigger than the individual identities.

People also describe personal legacy as essential rather than socialized. The legacy extends to families. Liz said, "There's many citizens who have had the same season ticket seats for 50 years. There's a gentleman a few years ago who passed away. He was 104 I think. He had the same seats for his entire life. Like he just – it was the same seat every time." People frequently referenced the connection between person and team in biological terms. Scotty talked about being born into football. Diane talked about love of football as DNA. Diane said, "It's the one thing that has everybody together. I think it's kind of like in the DNA. I don't think you can – I really don't think you can like I don't think if you tried to recreate this like right now, I don't think you'd be able to do that. I think you can go the tradition is so old it's just, it's in – it's just in people." The following brief exchange between Danny and Gavin articulated embodiment in the emotional attachment.

Gavin: I don't know. I was watching Danny while he was talking. I don't know if he was cold or if he was just having the hair stand up on his arms while he was talking about it, but.

Danny: I'm not cold.

People also extend the personal attachment, physical or emotional into a dedication to the team, and subsequently, the town. Making the attachment as biological makes football a essential element of identity. Fondness and attachment are predetermined. The transition from excitement to pride is the internalization of the emotional energy. The reiteration of the spectacles and rituals re-enact the attribution of greatness and importance (valorization) into an ingrained experience (socialization). Re-enactments replay the attachment until it is internalized.

The personal meaning people ascribe to football often changes and informs other aspects of identity. The attachment to the team gets translated to (or conflated with) the town. Scotty said,

I think one of the big things too is I keep going back to the tradition I think. Now, if I lived in Jackson, we wouldn't even be talking about football. Basically to me it's a sidelight for them. Here, it's a way of life. That's the way it's supposed to be.

And we get done with football season, and yeah, you need a little bit of a break. But after say two months, you're ready to go back for some more football. This is the only place I've been to, when I was in the service I was three or four different places, and there is nobody, nobody that I've been to, and I've been down in South Carolina and [*inaudible*] and all that, but there's nobody that really cares about their high school football team the way Massillon does. And I'll even venture to say McKinley doesn't.

In describing McKinley, Scotty demonstrates that the build to the “us” is critical to developing rivalries. His even demonstrates the derogation of the “other,” Canton McKinley, in the rivalry.

Kent told me how his commitment to the team led to his commitment to Massillon.

It's probably about the only thing that ever kept me here. You know, about everything else you could get somewhere else. There's probably a lot of – maybe a dozen programs nationwide that you could talk someone to the same way, but it's just such a huge draw, such a huge social thing. And, you know, that's not a bad thing because the other things can feed off of it.

Playing for the team becomes playing for the town. Individual commitments inform collective meaning-making. The football team unifies the town. Jessica said,

I think that the businesses all show a lot of support by putting up signs in their windows, by wearing orange and black on the day of games. People don't even have to had a son or daughter, a grandchild, who played football or even when to the high school to support the team. And I think that having a city too, you know, the mayor and the previous mayor as well. They've always thrown their support behind the team as well.

And the mayor has redubbed this the "City of Champions" to celebrate all of our heritage. But our football heritage is certainly part of that. I don't know. I mean you go into the First Merit Bank, and they have all the Obie [inaudible] Obie. whomever, pins out for the public to take during football season. You come into the Massillon Museum and you'll see an exhibit of a – you know, a football exhibit in the lobby or one on the second floor.

You'll see banners throughout the downtown. You'll see a banner stretching across the street. You'll see the representation of the team in the parade. I don't know. It just permeates everything.

Terming football energy and commitment as ubiquitous alludes back to the legacy and essential character of football in Massillon.

The understanding of individual identities, and subsequently collective identities, as essential and legacy both explicitly and implicitly recalls Brown. His commitment to build the football team into The Greatest Show in High School Football reflects his desire to build a community experience. He started traditions that game the game into a full experience. The resulting show contains ritual and traditions that rehearse a collective identity. Key aspects of the game, the Massillon Tiger Marching Band and Obie, valorize the team and socialize children and newcomers. Obie also demonstrates how football functions as a meaning-making device. In light of legislative efforts at the state level, residents recently engaged in

discussions about the live tiger. They went back and forth on the value of a live tiger as a mascot. They discussed what Obie means to them. The rituals and spectacles around the game create an event to which people experience in personally meaningful ways. The experience builds emotional energy and rehearses meaning-making for participants. The rehearsals forming emotional energy build to a personal attachment to the team. The spaces where attachment takes place extends beyond the stadium into the parking lot and the home. The amount of time during which emotional connections build extends beyond the time limits of the game into a weeklong experience. Residents essentialize football, ascribing biological qualities to it. Rather than personal identities, people perform collective civic identities, creating the experience of unification and belonging.

Chapter Four: Booster Club

I just became more and more involved (Russell)

I walk in for the first time and three older men are sitting at a table. All are wearing Massillon gear of some sort. Richard stands and welcomes me, guessing who I am. He introduces me to Ron, and Edward, Lyle is quietly going through game tapes, dubbing an old game.

Is it quietly and watch the action after talking about my project. They all seem receptive and interested. I am nervous and unsure and did not feel comfortable pulling out my notebook and take notes. Consequently, this note is a skeleton of what future notes will be.

Four conversations stood out from the meeting. Ron and Richard were going through old yearbooks and programs to find who drew and designed the original Obie logo that is still used today. The logo dates back to the early 1930s, at least. The topic has recently re-emerged as an obituary was published and it included a claim that the man designed the original Obie logo. Richard tells me that the dates don't really match up. The man went to school in the 1940s, when it is claimed he first drew it. Ron pulls out a program from 1937 and shows me the logo. Lyle tells me the rumor that the "godfather" of the Booster Club Museum, Junie Studer, designed it, but he has denied the claim.

Richard proudly claims that they have full documentation of every football game Massillon has ever played, whether scholastic or professional. I look and they have three-ring binders covering two floor-to-ceiling light brown wood veneer shelving units in an L- shape framing two sides of the table. The top

three shelves of the unit closest to the door are filled with binders labeled with years going back to 1894. Richard pulls that binder off the shelf and shows me the news coverage. Other binders include every major coach at Massillon, alphabetical listing of every player to have every played for the team, sometimes a one-page summary of their careers. Others, like Chris Spielman, have more extensive following of their entire careers.

Paul comes in and Richard introduces us. Paul is an older man who walks in with gravitas. He talks about budgets and his background in business. I find out that he and Richard are former presidents of the booster club. He points to a series of binders on the shelf away from the door that detail the history of the booster club. There major projects and history are detailed in those binders. I ask if I can take them for my study. Richard says yes and writes my name on a nearby chalkboard with the numerical listing of the binders I take. They also tell me about four books I should review, *Century of Heroes*, *Towpath to Warpath*, Paul Brown's biography *PB*, and *Massillon Memories*. All but *Towpath* are specific to football, while *Towpath* is more of a general history. I get the two marked Booster Club History.

One of the traditions of which I was aware prior to arriving in Massillon was that newborn boys receive a plastic football in their crib. I ask about the tradition, Richard confirms the existence, but says most births don't actually take place at a Massillon hospital anymore, but that Massillon babies born in nearby Canton, will still receive the ball. No one knows from where the footballs come or who is responsible for handing them out.

Paul tells me about a recent ban on exotic animals in Ohio. Richard tells me that Massillon received a specific exemption from the law for its live tiger,

Obie. Neither know, or are willing to tell, how that specific exemption came about. Scotty talks about how well the tiger is taken care of and how much it means to Massillon.

The story of the beginning of the Booster Club is one of benevolence. The popular story goes that Paul Brown saw a player vomiting green tomatoes and decided that students and their families needed support, financial and social. He put together a group of “downtown coaches” as the infrastructure to support people through the Depression. The story follows the logic that Brown used people’s interest in the football team for the betterment of the children. Therefore, the Booster Club story started as support the players – providing food, transportation, and fan support. After the initial programs, the Booster Club created sub-groups, most of which are tasked with specific duties in the furtherance of club goals. Such groups include the Museum Group, the Wall of Champions committee, and the Massillon Tiger Sideliners. Each group offers different avenues for residents and fans to get involved. The groups work to enhance the football program in a variety of ways. Some projects provide functional support to improve the success of the team; some projects valorize the team; and, some programs follow the socialization efforts. Many serve multiple purposes. Many also provide social benefits for the individuals involved.

The Museum Group preserves two related histories, that of the football program and the Booster Club. The Wall of Champions demonstrates how the Booster Club honors the football program's past and shows how it wrestles with the idea of “champion.” The Sideliners are a group of boosters who mentor football players. Their support of the players reenacts the original purpose of the Booster Club, to support players in whatever challenges they may face. Those groups provide a framework for individuals to act in support of the program. Individual roles are not fixed. Over time, a single person may engage in different

types of project. Russell talked about his experience in the club with one eye on his role, Married a lady from Massillon [*laughs*] who hates sports, and so I end up loving sports and got into the Booster Club for something to do and the Sideliners too and just working with the different programs that the Booster Club has and doing different things – fundraisers, making signs. Used to paint the field, and now it's artificial turf, thank heavens. [*laughs*] We don't have to paint the field. And just different things through the years, and tons of things that we're trying to forget and fundraisers for the Booster Club. Now, you want to buy a ticket for a car?

Much of the activity of the Booster Club valorizes the team, as befits all boosters clubs. The extent of the celebratory complex sets Massillon apart. Here, too, I saw the importance Paul Brown in introducing and infrastructure to support the team, especially the Booster Club, which has grown into a semi-autonomous celebratory complex. In this chapter, I demonstrate how the structure of the Booster Club and the conglomeration of projects and programs have grown into an extensive, semi-autonomous network. On any day, hundreds of people are involved in supporting the program, but no single person can identify all those people or the projects on which they are working. I use Lindquist's concept of the "celebratory complex" to articulate the workings of this network of projects, identifying the Booster Club as the primary site for analysis, given its prominence in the complex. The organization of the Booster Club, including its mentorship program, build the valorization and socialization processes. I also articulate how participation in the complex informs how people understand their role in the Massillon community. Participation benefits contributors. They get to experience themselves as part of the team. The experience of self-as-team leads to wider involvement in community development as pride generated by the complex extends to the town.

I walk into the meeting knowing Paul is on vacation; he has been talking about it for a couple weeks now. William is wearing a “I’m proud to be a Massillon Tiger” 100th anniversary shirt, Richard is wearing orange and black though not specifically Massillonian, Ron has a Massillon Tigers shirt and black slacks. Edward is the only one without wearing an homage to the team, gray shorts and short-sleeve patterned shirt.

Conversation quickly turns to the penalties handed down to Penn State University. A long-time PSU assistant football coach had recently been accused by multiple people of molesting young boys during his tenure at PSU and after as a privileged guest. Penn State was found complicit and ignored, even covered up, prior accusations. Penn State football program has been handed a three-year bowl ban, a significant scholarship reduction and sizable fine, among other penalties. Ron argues the penalties are “not fair,” in that all of the accused parties are no longer with the university, even though one was still technically on administrative leave. He says this only punishes students and coaches who had nothing to do with any of it, especially since former PSU coach and icon had been fired earlier in the year. Richard calls the decision “balanced” saying the NCAA punished the entire school for a culture that allowed such a blind eye or cover-up to continue.

The conversation turns to former coach Leo Strang, who is credited with three state titles and two national titles in six seasons as head coach. Ron says Strang was the first coach to ever put decals on a helmet. All the logos we see today on helmets can be traced to Strang, according to Ron. Ron also says that he was the first to equip his team with white shoes. I did not ask what color the shoes were prior to Strang.

Ron then talks about playing football as a child, growing up with football. He talks about how he would “go get the guys from Pearl and play.” The memories seem very alive and present to him. “We could play football, baseball, basketball all at the same time.” He talks about playing, especially playing football, on a sandlot. He says he learned how to play football from the sandlot. “If you didn’t know how to play, you learn real fast.” He would play with older boys and if you didn’t pick up the game quickly, you would get beat repeatedly and often. Richard shares a story of when he got concussed throwing a jump pass. He laughs at the pleasant pain of childhood.

Edward says that the Massillon Museum has requested some artifacts of Obie, the uniformed mascot. Later I would come to distinguish it as Band Obie, as opposed to Logo Obie or Live Tiger Obie. The whole group brainstorms what artifacts they have to offer. Lyle rummages through the drawer in the file cabinets and programs looking for pictures from early Band Obie. He finds one picture that looks like a live tiger standing in front of the goalposts.

Al Hennon walks in. He is an energetic older man. I find out he is a former superintendent for the schools and now works with the Booster Club and Sideliners. He knows about the connections between Massillon and Kansas, including Chuck Mather and Homer Floyd. He says he recently talked to Floyd. Richard tells him about Junie Studer’s brief foray to Lawrence. How he served as an assistant to Mather and was asked to start up an all-football residence. Al is here for a Wall of Champions meeting which Richard asks if I’m staying for. Now that I have the invite, I accept his invitation. (7-24-12 fieldnote)

In a series of the three-ring binders, they document the many facets of the football program, including the Club's past presidents, organizational structure, and projects. Photocopies of articles and narratives, many of which are without full citations, fill much of the archive. In this section, I present that history, in their own words and documentation, and relate that to my experiences with the Club, particularly through one subset of the Boosters, the Museum Group. As per their charge, the Museum Group investigates gaps in the histories, organizes those histories, and seeks ways to display and celebrate them. The histories of the Booster Club document increasing complexity and autonomy.

The booster club began in 1934 as a way for fans of the Massillon Tiger High School football team to achieve "insider" status. In a newspaper article identified as from 11 September 1934, the group is identified as follows: "No strings attached to the organization. The club is merely being formed to bring fans closer to members of the team and give them an inside picture of every game" (Booster Club – History). Another photocopied article on the same page describes the first members, "Seated in the stands that night will be the Washington high booster club, largely of fellows frequently referred to in the past as the 'downtown coaches.' The article describes the first meeting attended by one hundred boosters, headed by Arvine "Tink" Ulrich and dated as 1934,

The majority of the first string players took a bow and then demonstrated some of the formations and shifts they will use this fall. Coach Brown followed this demonstration with a blackboard illustration of the offensive and defensive formations the Tigers will use this fall and described the personalities of each individual player and why each was stationed at his particular post.

Many of Washington high's oldest and most loyal football fans were seated

in the audience of 100 that heard coach Brown speak. They will form the nucleus of the Booster club the membership of which will never be closed to a supporter of the team. You, too, can become a booster and get on the 'inside' of Washington high school by attending the next meeting which will be called in the near future by Chairman Ulrich. (Booster Club – History)

The booster club self-history has four accounts of the beginning. One is a typed excerpt from the article above identified as from *The Massillon Evening Independent*; however, the typed copy identifies the date as 13 September 1934. Another typed narrative entitled “The Beginning” draws a connection between past and present and calls for a tribute to the founder and early members

On Wednesday September 12, 1934 at the Washington High School Gym a small group of men(fewer than 100) (sic) turned out for the first public meeting of the Tiger Football Booster Club.This (sic) was the birth of an organization that would endure time and grow to a membership of nearly 200 fans.

Organization of the club was conceived by Karl Young, a member of the board of education. Young consulted with other members of the board along with coach Brown,they (sic) encouraged and embraced his idea to bring fans closer to the players and coaches and give them an inside picture of every game. Club dues were 25 cents.

Arvine “Tink” Ulrich was elected the club's first president that first meeting. “Tink” worked hard, and was an inspirational leader,just (sic) as he was when he captained the 1922 Tiger team to 10 victories and the state championship.

The Booster Club held it's (sic) first annual banquet Wednesday Dec 12

honoring the Washington High football team at the Elks Club. 200 attended and L.C. Boles head coach of Wooster College was the speaker.

We owe our gratitude to these money for their dedication in forming this unique organization. Their efforts shall always be remembered and honored.

(Booster Club - History)

This account places the first meeting on the day after the newspaper clipping describing the meeting.

A third account, this one also typed, provides the rationale of the club, crediting Paul Brown, absent from the other accounts.

Formed on September 12, 1934, The (sic) Massillon Tiger Football Booster Club is the Granddaddy of high school booster clubs. It is responsible for identification of the Massillon Tigers as “The Most Recognized Show in High School Football.”

There were two drivers for formation. During a strenuous workout Coach Paul Brown observed one of his players throwing up green tomatoes. It was a depression yea and when Coach Brown found out the player had little to eat he asked for help to keep the team fed. In this early year of Coach Brown's career following a one sided loss to arch rival Canton McKinley in 1933 he developed the idea of a club to bring fans closer to program activities. (Booster Club - History)

This attribution to Brown's work during the depression continued in a fourth, hand-written account, also emphasizing the organization's legacy. The Paul Brown-Booster Club narrative has circulated widely to the point of common knowledge. Liz said,

The booster idea was actually started by Paul Brown in the 30s during the depression when, um, you know boys would come to football games, they

were hungry because their families couldn't afford to feed them, so the boosters really rallied around the players to get them where they need to go with transportation, uh, you know, took care of them, fed them, that kind of thing.

Obviously nowadays it's not quite as prevalent. It's not the depression, but, um, you know what can the boosters do to help raise money for uniforms, take boys where they need to go, those kinds of things.

Russell echoed those sentiments when he told me, "...the Booster Club is well-respected and the – yeah, I think that the relationship, it's well respected, I think, and then you go to – you've been to meetings and almost everything you hear is we do this for the kids and it's always been that way." Residents are very conscious of the original impetuses and diligent in its discharge

The fourth narrative alludes to the legacy started at that first meeting.

THE FIRST PUBLIC MEETING, HELD AT THE WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL GYM, HAD AN ATTENDANCE OF FEWER THAN 100 MEN.

THIS WAS THE BIRTH OF AN ORGANIZATION THAT WOULD ENDURE TIME AND GROW TO A MEMBERSHIP OF NEARLY 2000 FANS, THUS BEING KNOWN AS THE "GRANDDADDY OF ALL BOOSTER CLUB." CLUB DUES WERE 25¢. (Booster Club – History)

The extent of the documentation and narratives around this first meeting frames the origin as a crucial moment in the town, as well as the Booster Club.

Loyalty was repeatedly invoked as a critical trait for boosters with a desire to be on the inside of the sporting landscape. In a newspaper article one month later, 10-23-34, in a faded yellow-highlighted section, the Booster Club passes a measure to preserve solidarity:

“Criticism of the practice of some members of the club reselling their tickets for the Canton-Massillon game at a profit was voiced at the meeting. A resolution opposing such practice and asking members not to sell them for more than \$1 was passed.” While 100 attended the first meeting in September, boosters bought over 1400 tickets for the Canton McKinley game and over 900 to non-rival Barberton one month later, in an article date 16 October 1934.

Part of the growth of the Booster Club includes involving previously excluded groups. Recognizing that women can be fans too, the Booster Club allowed women to attend the banquet in 1936. In an article about the boosters praising the team for their success, two sections were highlighted in pink (again faded) – the sentence recognizing the passing of the measure to allow women and the election of next year's officers. A yellow highlighted section described when and where the year-end banquet would take place.

By 1940, the Booster Club becomes the largest organization in the city. In an article, identified as from 1940, titled “Organization Is One Of Largest In City,” Luther Emery writes about the popularity of the year-end banquets, “It was the first of the famous Booster club banquets that now have become so popular that no place in Start county is big enough to serve all those who desire to attend.

The year 1935 found the Booster club growing in leaps and bounds. Everybody wanted to join and everybody who had 25 cents or more to contribute was taken in as a member. Alvin D. Wampler was elected president.

(Booster Club - History)

Later in the article, Emery, while writing about the growth in popularity, describes a slight shift in the expressed goal of the Booster Club from a group of athletic insiders to overt promoters of the program:

The Booster club meetings are being attended better than ever this year,

indicating an increasing rather than declining interest. Under the leadership of Charles Hess, the club continues to cater to those who have means of making Massillon football known to the world.

Publicizing the Tigers has come to be one of the club's important activities. The football profits of an entire season, a season that has seen some 165,000 fans pass through the gates to see the Tigers play, couldn't begin to pay for the columns that have been devoted to Massillon football. (Booster Club - History)

Emery also indicates how much the media has focused on the Tigers. The media certainly contributed to what would later be called “The Greatest Show in High School Football.”

The rest of the Booster Club archive focuses on their projects. Other projects of note include an Obiemobile (1988) (see Figure 12), a calliope (1974) (see Figure 13), and a then-active WWII bomber (1943). Also during the 1940's, local business had a scoreboard for the night shift onto which managers or supervisors would relay the score of the game as communicated by Booster Club members. Current programs often follow in the lineage of their predecessors. Eric live tweets football games as part of his MassillonProud social media efforts. He allows those who may not be able to attend access to games. Other later projects from the Booster Club includes pole banners picturing football players hung on



Figure 12: Obiemobile

downtown street lamps in 1994 and a 1996 banner that spans the street for McKinley Week. Other projects were less glamorous, but functional, including upgrading the weight room,

and building a press box in the stadium, new turf, etc. The values recirculate today through



Figure 13: Massillon Tiger Calliope

the projects implemented since. Hard-work, commitment to excellence, sacrifice for children, and community participation resonate today. In addition to the values espoused, all of the projects valorize the team and players, socialize newcomers and children,

and/or provide functional support for the team.

Organization: I was a general member for about 15-20 years (Marcus)

I walk into the meeting and William greets me with “So, are you helping out Saturday?” I say “Sure” before even knowing what I’m getting into. I quickly ask with what am I now helping and what I will be doing. William asks me if I have any paint brushes to bring. He explains how every year Booster Club members and other community members get together at Paul Brown Stadium to spruce up the stadium, inside and outside. They usually add one element or piece to the landscaping or work inside the stadium. Generally, though, the work entails weeding, planting, painting rails and fences, upkeep work. William’s job this year is to help organize volunteers. I ask “What time do I need to be there?” William tells me 8am. Early for me, but OK.

Richard asks if I want to go with him to the Touchdown Club meeting. I have already been doing research on the TD club, so I know that the club started as businessmen, and women, who could not make the regularly scheduled Booster Club meeting and organized a group within the club. The group is not as limited, with membership more open. The group has a little more access than the overall club. Richard tells me they often bring in guest

speakers and the coach speaks at the meetings. The meeting is three weeks from now at noon at the Eagles Club.

Edward is transferring a VHS interview of a team historian, something Hudak. The volume is kept down and I can't hear the interview.

Paul was contacted by John Pflug. His dad recently passed and he wants to put something together from the archives. His dad, J. Robert, was part of the original class inducted in 1994. Paul finds a yearbook and searches through it. He spends much of the time looking for pictures and references to Pflug.

Richard, Edward, and Lyle continue searching for pictures and objects related to Band Obie. Lyle talks about the original head to which he has access. Lyle has also found other smaller objects. I don't think they provide much value in a museum exhibit. Some nice pictures are found, but not the originals. Edward and Lyle are encouraged, but I am less so. This is for an exhibit the museum will run on Obie for the season opening pep rally that takes place down the street.

Lyle and William leave after sitting a while and not really talking or helping the two search efforts. Paul so thereafter ask me if I want to go to the museum and meet Alex. I agree and we get ready to go. I'll drive separately.

(7-31-12 fieldnote)

In adhering to the mission begun by Brown, the Booster Club has added projects and programs continually ever since, to the point where the Booster Club no longer maintains control over the complex. The number of projects has exceeded the Booster Club's ability to administer all of them. Consequently, outside organizations have taken responsibility for some initiatives. In ceding control, as more agents and decision-makers gain authority, the

Booster Club loses control over aspects of the complex. For example, MassMu has fostered a relationship with boosters, specifically, the Museum Group. Because the Booster Club archive lacks a permanent site, the Museum Group and MassMu has begun to integrate archives to be housed by MassMu. Other organizations outside of the Booster Club purview have also assumed responsibility for programs. Eric operates the MassillonProud website and social media network independently. In this section, I articulate how the organization of the Booster Club and it's the ever-increasing number of projects contributed to the semi-autonomous network operating today.

Since its inception, the Booster Club has created a structure that encourages further participation of its members. Two primary aspects to the structure include a stratified membership and subgroups open to the wider membership. Marcus told me that the Booster Club includes three levels of membership – general membership, the junior board, and the senior board. The junior board is made up of Booster Club members that have done a lot of service and have reached a higher level than a regular member. The junior board requires nomination from a current member of the board. Marcus told me he was a general member for fifteen to twenty years before getting nominated. The senior board consists entirely of former Booster Club presidents. When pressed during interviews, Marcus and others, could/would not clarify the functional differences between the boards. In addition to the boards, the Booster Club organized other subgroups. The Museum Group, the Sideliners, the Touchdown Club, and the Orangemen offer members additional involvement. The newest of those groups, the Orangemen, has received scant documentation with and unclear purpose. However, the Touchdown Club has retained its prominence. Paul talked about how the Touchdown Club started,

Back when Booster Club started, meetings were always in the evenings, but the stores were open on Monday nights. All the local stores, so the local

business people didn't have an opportunity to go to the Booster Club meeting. And so that would have been Chuck Mather, I believe, was the coach at the time, and he suggesting having a noon luncheon type thing. It was called the Massillon Club.

No longer in existence, and it may have been a group of 20 people would just go there, and the coach would come in and talk about what he would talk at the Booster Club of the night before. Or they could have been on Monday too at noon, but they were either on Monday or Tuesday. They switched back and forth. Then it started getting larger, and they had to move, and it's moved about three or four times. And now you can have up to 120, 150 people.

Probably the average is around 100, but depending on who the speaker's going to be, you could have as many as 150 people.

Richard told me how the "social club" changed,

A lot of 'em are the older people. Maybe they have a favorite program on Monday night or Tuesday. *[laughs]* You know? They don't want to. Plus, there's a lot of groups, guys that are buddies, who will come to it, and it's a place for them to meet. We've had very interesting speakers. It's different than the Booster Club in that Coach brings in a player or players, introduces them, lets them talk. Assistant coaches at times. We've had Earle Bruce come back. We've had you name it.

According to a typed account of the Touchdown Club, the first meeting of the year takes place the Tuesday before the first game and meets every Tuesday until the week after the McKinley game. The write-up includes a hand-written corrections – the narrative says it started in 1952, with an "ERROR" mark with an arrow to "1950." According to another handwritten remark on this account "FROM THE FILES OF PHIL GLICK," suggesting it

was a later addition to the archive passed on to the Museum Group.” (Booster Club – Sideliners, TD Club, Orangemen)

The TD Club event is more informal than the Booster Club meeting with greater access to the coach and special guests. It is as lunch-time event with the local AMVETS Club providing food and drink. Guests are permitted, but have to pay for lunch. I did. Unlike the Sideliners or the Museum Group, the TD Club benefits the members with greater access to the coach and program without a clear and distinct purpose for the betterment of players or the program.

Like many groups within the Booster Club, the Museum Group serves the needs of the program and residents, but also serves a social function. Members freely reminisce about past teams, assess the current team, and converse about other topics unrelated to the team. Over the last decade, the Museum Group and the Booster Club Football Museum have moved three different times. They moved from the library to an old elementary school. Now they have moved to the old city government building. Part of the issue is resources, they are heavily dependent on donations. Another issue is that they are subject to availability of space and repurposing of city spaces. As a result, the Museum Group is transitioning many of its artifacts to MassMu. Jessica explained the expanding relationship as follows:

That is one that has been mutually beneficial over the last few years. They have an incredible collection of archives and artifacts that are unparalleled that really represent the history of Massillon Tiger football, and the legacy that Paul Brown left. They are audio/visual archives there, clipping files. The ephemera they have, it’s all so well organized. It’s immensely – it’s like a gold mine for anyone researching this topic, and they pride themselves in being stewards of that information.

They are volunteers. They are highly dedicated not only to supporting the

team and the coach and the tradition as a whole, but those material artifacts that retain how important that legacy is. They also are Mammalians through and through, and they feel it and it's part of their livelihood to do this thing, to support this team in and the players and retain this history. We are an art and history museum, and also have a collection of Tiger football memorabilia and artifacts, and we also realize the importance of celebrating and preserving the history, and exhibiting it, and we have the credentials to do so.

We're accredited with the American Association Museum, and we have museum professionals on staff who can help interpret that history, and make it available to the masses. So the football booster club is currently without a building in which to exhibit their work. We have the building, and so we've been partnering, working closely with them to help exhibit their artifacts and relying on their expertise to help with the interpretation that we bring to lighten the exhibits. So it's been a very good foundation for a relationship, a very positive one, and I hope to see it grow in the future.

This relationship further extend the museum's commitment to Massillon as its shift in priorities under Alex's leadership. MassMu fills some of the gaps in the Booster Clubs mission no longer sustainable.

Wall of Champions: To share a heritage (Bob)

At 10:55, Bob walks in in his Massillon Athletic Department golf shirt and khaki shorts, he is the assistant athletic director. Al, Richard, and Edward stay for the meeting. This is the newest iteration of this committee. It is new to Richard, Edward, and Bob. Al was on the old committee, along with William, who is not present at this meeting because he is out golfing. Some light-hearted grumbling comes from Richard and Al. Richard hands out an agenda

with eight items. Richard thanks everyone, especially Bob, as his schedule is the tightest because he is the only one with a full-time job. In red pen, Bob checks off the “Welcome” agenda item. He would proceed to check each agenda item as they are gone through.

Richard gauges everyone’s thoughts on the use of a picture over a painting. They used to paint portraits of the inductees, but the cost was in the multiple thousands, so Al says they switched to photographs. Everyone seems to favor the less expensive alternative. Bob checks off the agenda item in red. Later, they would come back to this subject, except to see which business they should use. Richard and Al both talk about the business they used to use, but Richard brings up that the current Booster Club president runs a photography studio and does a good job. He talks about the potential sensitivity of the situation. Bob suggests they table the discussion until they get further in the process.

Richard moves the discussion to the criteria for the Wall of Champions. It is currently a Massillon athlete who has achieved All-American status or equivalent national recognition and made significant contributions beyond that status. Edward compares that criteria to the criteria for Distinguished Citizen, which includes the second part, and iterates the need to keep them separate, yet equivalent. Richard asks if they need to keep the All-American status requirement or if another standard should replace it. Bob says that having a high standard is a positive and a bar to which everyone can aspire. Al talks about the reasons for the All-American standard and relates it to the first batch of Wall inductees, of which there were 22 or so.

This leads to the one major sidetrack – a discussion of some of the athletes

honored. Al wonders if it was too football-heavy. Edward points to a couple who were not football players. Richard mentions a couple other names.

Bob talks about his desire to bring it to the kids of the school, especially the athletes. Involving the kids, Bob says, allows the school “to share a heritage” and show the athletes what the athletics program “is all about.” I see a posterboard presentation for Homer Floyd. Bob suggests that they put on a program during the school day where they bring in the honoree, in this case Floyd, to talk to the students, maybe just the athletes. He also suggests “doing it up big” by letting Floyd come out for a ceremonial coin toss or a halftime presentation. “If we are going to do it, let’s make it a big deal.” This would be similar to a Paul Brown assembly the school has every year.

Richard asks about a weekend for which they can shoot to have the presentation. Bob again says if they shoot for a home game weekend, he can arrange something for the game. The goal is to get him in this year, but no firm date is set. They need to get in touch with Floyd to see when he may be available. I think Al says he can get in touch with him.

Al talks about how they used to pay for the process. It started as a “cart before the horse” process where they would say “here’s what we’re doing, now how’re you gonna pay for it.” Richard says they have some money already available. They work on scheduling the next meeting. Edward, Richard, and Al say they can work around Bob’s schedule, or Brad’s – the principal – if he will be the one in the meeting. Bob says he will get with Brad and figure out a good day in the next month to meet. (7-24-12 fieldnote)

The committee for the Wall of Champions functions under the Museum Group. The group meets periodically, as schedules fit, to decide who, if anyone, get inducted. The Wall

of Champions provides a clear example of part of the valorization component of the celebratory complex. Also, the Wall of Champions socializes students into the program. The Wall is along a central hallway in the high school. Students walk by it every day. Probably, students pay limited attention during the day, but it always there. They honor excellence. Curtis told me that it sets a standard of excellence for which students should strive.

Additionally, assemblies that honor the inductees relay the history of the athletic program, specifically football, as a means to generate pride. The Wall of Champions illustrates the way the structure of the Booster Club valorizes the team and socializes students.

The Sideliners: Kinda like the Big Brothers organization (Marshall)

The Sideliners, started in 1957, represent another layer of stratification within the booster club. Of all the projects of the Booster Club, the Sideliners recall the attributed reasons behind the formation, namely the support of children during the Depression. The Sideliners program matches a booster with a football player. That booster is to serve as a mentor to the player all the way through high school. Booster laud the lifelong relationships that begin as mentors. The values recall the impetuses of Paul Brown's Booster Club, helping students with social and material support. The Sideliners take their students to a dinner Friday night during the season, made possible largely by donations. In addition to the mentorship, they provide boosters an access point into the program. They gain a greater "insider" status unavailable to others. The history and organization reveal how individual interests can infiltrate the organization.

The Sideliners are as ingrained as any group in the Booster Club. The Booster Club documents the beginning of the Sideliners in its archive – in the binder "Booster Club – Sideliners, TD Club, Orangemen." A brief, type narrative account of the Sideliners described the beginning and process as follows details how it was started by Coach Lee Tressel in 1957 "to create a group that could act as 'Big Brothers' to varsity players" (Booster Club –

Sideliners, TD Club, Orangemen). According to the account, the weekly dinners were always an aspect of the program. Also, Tressel stressed the social mentorship. “A useful purpose of the Sideliners is the ability to learn of any personal problems that can be resolved by an adult” (Booster Club – Sideliners, TD Club, Orangemen). The values of the Sideliners echo the values important to Brown.

The Sideliners have laid out a standard of conduct for mentoring. The “Sideliners Creed,” typed and included in the archive, illustrates how the group connects to the larger community.

The Massillon Tiger Sideliners are men dedicated to the Massillon Tiger Football Program. Our dedication is shown by own support and encouragement to all people associated with the football program.

Realizing that high school football is part of the Massillon Public Schools and a means to a positive end to our youngsters, we strive to develop mature attitudes in the students participating in the football program. We encourage these student (sic) to excel in their families, in the classroom, on the athletic field and in the community.

We strive to develop a positive relationship with the coaches, faculty, and administration. All people associated with the football program must do all that is possible to provide scholastic and athletic opportunities for our youth.

Massillon Tiger Football represents a strong sense of community pride. Many people in our community share this pride. As sideliners (sic), we strive to conduct ourselves in a manner so as to set mature examples of sportsmanship, achievement, and citizenship for all people in the community associated with Massillon Tiger Football. (Booster Club – Sideliners, TD Club, Orangemen)

An abbreviated “Mission Statement for Sideliners,” written in 2008, states the importance of the group to the larger football culture. The Sideliners perform three functions: mentor and support football players, encourage players to excel in everything they do, and “(h)and down our traditions through real life and true examples stories (sic) of our great traditions and fondest football memories” (Booster Club – Sideliners, TD Club, Orangemen). The Sideliners explicitly socialize players. Kent told me his primary reason for joining the Sideliners was to help children,

I absolutely love being around the young people. I coach sports. I've two sons. I do have a picture business now which is sports related. That's what we do, is sports. I just – you know, they're precious, they're sponges, they mess up, but they're young, and you can make an impression and you can influence somebody. And I just – I really enjoy being with the young guys. And I should rephrase that probably, but [*laughs*] –

That's who's blowing me up on my phone right now, is football players. So it's just like – you get personal relationships, you know, that – and that changes you as a fan. You are no longer watching a stranger and you're (*inaudible*), "Why the heck did he not –?" You know? It changes all that because you have a personal relationship now.

In speaking to Kent, I also had the sense that access to players and a closeness to the program also motivate Sideliners, even if the motivations are secondary or unspoken.

In the three-ring binder documenting the Sideliner program photocopied newspaper article from 1984 explains that every Sideliner get a membership card that lists four responsibilities: (1) show dedication by support and encouragement; (2) strive to develop positive attitudes; (3) promotes personal (*illegible*)-men, sportsmanship and citizenship; and (4) instill strong personal and team pride. The same article details the general actions, "In the

basic Sideline-player relationship, The Sidelineers take their players to an informal dinner on Thursday nights during the season, slaps his back as the team charges onto the field for the game and visits him in the locker room after the game, win or lose." This suggests that the Sidelineers' visits to the locker room, a point of access unavailable to others, enhances their status as insiders. The article also cites the Big Brothers program after which the Sidelineers program is modeled. Others invoked the Big Brothers program in name and purpose. Russell said,

(T)he Sidelineers was the way really to help the kids. You know the players, a lot of the players don't have parent involvement and so you become like I would say a big brother or, but you become involved with the kids and it gives them some thought that they can talk to – thought that they know, and I still run into this I wasn't a side – I think I was a Sidelineer four years. I still run into the kids I had on the street and they'll say, "Hi, Mr. [Lawrence]," you know. It's kind of nice that they remember after all these years.

The Sidelineers operate in accordance, at least nominally, with clear guidelines and order. The archive also includes, the structure and 'rules' of the group, including listing “do's” and “don'ts” for the Sidelineers. (see Appendix D – Sidelineers Do's and Don'ts) I neither saw nor heard anything to suggest these "rules" are not followed.

The Booster Club, however, does not exert full control over the program as the head coach determines much of the structure. Coaches will assert their priorities as it comes to how the mentorship operates. Recent changes are a point of contention for some boosters. Many referred to "changes" or expressed frustration over the structure without specifics. For example, Marshall said, "I guess it's kinda like the Big Brothers organization. One on one with the player. Helping him out with things, problems he has, and kinda keep him going on the right path. It's changed now. It was..." It wasn't until I talked to Kent that I got a full

account over the point of contention. The exchange went as follows:

Interviewer: Well, I did have a question about the Sideliners too.

Kent: Okay.

Interviewer: When did that –? (The Sideliners) changed, right?

Kent: A couple years ago.

Interviewer: When did that change and what were the changes? 'Cause I haven't gotten a clear answer, I don't think.

Kent: Well –

Interviewer: Because I think it's a great project. I just –

Kent: Be careful with this one. It needs to go back the way it was.

Interviewer: Okay. Well, I don't think you're alone in that thought.

It wasn't always a program starting with freshmen, just as the early documents indicate. He went on to give a thorough account of the program and changes.

The Sideline program was how I started, you know, when I became physically active. Sure, I'd always went to the games, was a big believer – you know, true, blood orange-black, all that. But the Sideline, that's the most unique part. That's where you build personal relationships with players. A very, very strong program.

And it changed a couple years ago, and we went from having the varsity players down to having the freshmen players. And there's some merit there. We would even compromise with those who do just want having back the varsity players, to keep the freshmen – 'cause they can mentor. They could be – they could help us mentor that freshman. But all it is, is you're assigned a player and you should be visiting with him year round.

The resistance to change highlights the importance to mentors and how it informs changes in

how they understand their roles. They value the stability of the relationships. Kent continued,

For our coach to take it away from the seniors, thinking that they don't need it, they really do need it. I mean it's more they come from split homes. You know, some of 'em don't have fathers at home or a father figure. We have players that Jason has found – that's our coach – that has found that are sleeping on bare floors, not on mattresses. Those are the kind of thing that get taken care of quietly that we're about. Yes, there's still a weekly meal.

Neither the coach nor the boosters exert full authority over the program. The power is negotiated, but always (for boosters) with an eye on the value in how it has been done. Kent continued,

We're gonna bring the varsity back this year. We're getting a little bit back. That's why I said what I said earlier about [Gavin]. We may have four or five this year with varsity and freshmen, all of us.

But it's about keeping them out of trouble if we can, being a mentor for them. Some have solid family, and I know I've been asked, "Well, he already has a father." My last one, his (*inaudible*) were having problem more this way, and the young man asked his dad, "Is it okay if I like him?" And it turns out, you know, his dad, "Dude, you made such an impression on him."

Well, he ended up not playing his senior year. He blew out his knee just the week before the season started. But yet I've got a lifelong friend, and he's got somebody he knows he can call and ask something or whatever he wants. You know, he's down at Ohio U. It's just young people need all the mentors they could get. That's my opinion. They need all the mentors they can get.

The importance of the Sideliners to those involved runs beyond the relationships with individual players. The changes challenged both their understanding of the relationship

between mentor and student and also a wider sense of community. The Sideliners expressing displeasure with changes to the program articulate it as a difference from the way they like it. The growth of the complex beyond the scope of the Booster Club has created anxiety among some members. Changes are happening to valued programs and they are limited in their ability to change it. In the Sideliners program, the coach has say, the school administrators have input, leaving the head of the Sideliners limited input. Consequently, the individual mentors have less control.

Membership: I guess I'm responsible for everything (Kent)

I arrive at the stadium around 8:15 in red shorts, black t-shirt, and sunglasses – socks and shoes of course – the last time I would use wear any of those items. I brought extra black t-shirts and Sobe Lifewaters to drink – Blood Orange/Mango and Cherry/Pomegranate, if it matters. I walk out of the parking lot up a stretch of stairs toward a stadium suitable for some colleges. The exterior of the stadium is lined with nine huge portraits of previous coaches, the stats that justify their inclusion in this painted Rushmore-esque display, and a business, presumably the business that sponsored the inclusion of that coach. Gravitas emanates from such a structure and the lineage of coaches that merit honoring. I see a dozen or so people doing yard work on the land in front of the stadium. I see Richard standing in front in full Massillon gear. After a brief “Good Morning” I ask how I can help and Richard points out a man with blond curly hair closer to the stadium, Troy. “This is his show; he’ll know what needs to get done.” From inside the stadium I hear, whistles, practices are going on.

“Thanks,” and I’m off to work. I go up to Troy, no Massillon gear, and ask how I can help. He point to two areas in front of two small gardens on either

side of a large walkway with bricks that people bought to have their names forever in a path to the stadium. They are taking the grass off of these areas to extend the garden and put in two benches on each side facing the stadium. I grab a shovel and start piling clods of dirt into the back of a Kubota flatbed. Within ten minutes, my feet start to hurt – bad day to break in new shoes. When my services are no longer required on one side I move over to the other and continue shoveling. The idea is to dig up the layer of grass, dig the holes for the two benches, set the benches and fill the holes with concrete. As he is digging the wind kicks up and I am showered with sod and a grass. When we get to the end of that without much interaction with the other man I'm working with – a name I never got, btw! He was very workmanlike and focused on getting the job done, except for a brief exchange when he talks current practice injuries for the team with another worker. Apparently, some kid named Rambo is the most injured with a bad ankle. Complaints of toughness for the rest of the kids and coaches. I go over to a fold-out table with two coolers of drinks on them and grab a water. I look at the time, not even nine am yet.

I walk back over and Russ, the facilities manager at the stadium and his son David have brought over a motorized auger to dig the holes for the benches – nice wooden benches dug up from somewhere else as I can see dirt and sediment on the posts. The motor of the auger roars as David and Russ seemingly dig the first hole sans problem. They stop. They're not getting any deeper.

Russ and David take control of the benches. As I shuttle back and forth, Russ and Dave do the brunt of the work. We are going pretty well until loud “clangs” and... we've hit rocks. So we dig a little and Russ digs out the rocks.

We follow the same procedure for the fifth hole. David, Terry – an older man with some authority as he would say what we should do, then leave, and Russ and the other man would complain but would always show deference – and the other man, were talking about what to do with the first three holes since the depth of the holes were all different and not getting deeper.

I see an elderly couple weeding out the garden and spreading dark and rich mulch in the gardens. Two other men – Glenn is very overweight and wearing a black bandanna over blond hair and Danny is a middle aged man otherwise fairly nondescript – are working a lift so one can paint the flagpoles – four of them two on each side of the walkway. I should have asked which flags there are. I still should – later. Or I can look when I go back for the game.

I walk over to Troy to see what else I can do and he asks me how I am at painting. I'm painting. He points to Steve and Glenn and says I should paint the bottom six feet of the flag poles. No problem, I remember seeing a paintbrush in the stadium. I get over there and see about a dozen bees – big round, yellow and black bumble bees – flirting with the lilacs on either side of the flagpole and one rose bush. I hmm and haw debating if I should ask for something else – I hate bees. I decide to compromise. The lilacs and rose bush cover the bottom two to three feet of the pole – I am not sticking my face in a swarm of bees – not a swarm but a group. Steve, high above, occasionally drops white paint on me – thrice. Sue, the elderly woman weeding and spreading mulch, hears my quandary and grabs the brush and dives right in and returns unscathed. The two flagpoles closest to the parking lot have lilacs and a rose bush with the next two, about twenty feet closer to the stadium, in the midst of shrubs and ferns (?). I continue my dance and paint where I can. I

still do a pretty good job.

When done, Troy directs me to the facilities room in the stadium to clean out the brush. What a disaster. After four or five minutes of running water through a brush and trying to work out the paint, the only paint that seemingly left the brush is covering my hands. I walk out of the room and ask Troy about paint thinner or turpentine, he knows not; I find David and he knows not, too. I ask him how many times he's done this and he says that this is his first as the previous years he worked Saturdays. (I later overheard Russ saying he essentially ordered his son to come out and help.)

I walk back and most of the people have left. Ron Thornberry, the BC president, shows up again. We have three people now working on the second set of benches, but a group of court-ordered offenders have shown up, five of them so that makes eight putting in the other two benches. Steve is still up painting flagpoles. Troy is cleaning up. I walk over to him and ask how long he's been doing this. He says he's been doing it all six years, "It was my idea. I had to wrangle with the unions and everything." He asks me if I've ever used a sealant. Nope. He tells me it's easy, shows me briefly how to use effort and pull it back to fill the cracks. No problem. He expresses thanks for helping out today, and he seems genuine. He is the third person to express disappointment in the number of people who turned out. I start and work for fifteen minutes. I think I was going too slowly for Troy or he had nothing left to do because he comes over to take over. As he takes over, Ron walks by and Troy yells about getting paid for the day. Ron smiles and yells back that "all he needs is his name on the line." Troy responds, "All I really want is a state championship."

I see Richard standing by the table of water and talk to him. William walks

up and talks about getting food. I see Ron with a paintbrush and painting a flagpole. I jokingly make a comment about how I must not have done a good job. Richard jokes that Ron needs to look like he is doing something. Ouch! He points to a pavilion area up the hill and says that there will be a lunch up there and we should head up there as it is after 11:30. Sounds good to me. William suggests we go get the “food we were promised.” We head up.

Most of the players from practice are already up there with dozens of parents and booster club members. It must be a shirt hand-out day, because I see several people with a white Massillon Sideliner shirt over their shoulders. I follow Richard to a group of people, they are talking Booster club politics, as “Brock” was in line to be Booster Club president, but he is not even on the ballot. Other nearby conversations talk about practice injuries and who on the team is hobbling. One man recalls an injury from 1991 that plagued the payer for the entire season. Another man complains about the lack of toughness and says that the players need to play sore and hurt, but not injured. He then talks about how players get used to soreness and hurt by playing through it and seeing that they can. Lots of reminiscing. More Booster Club politics as William is trying to sell tickets to a car raffle and people are handing money to each other for tickets and dues. Some booster club members mingle with the players, but the players and school-aged kids stay to themselves for the most part. William has walked off and I am with a group of people I don’t know. I’m filthy and don’t feel like trying to make a great first impression like this, and my feet are killing me. I hear one man dressed in a new Sideliner shirt say that he has no desire to participate with the booster club, that he is just fine being a Sideliner. A true statement evidenced by the fact that I had not seen

him all day and he was well-groomed and clean. I contemplate leaving (feet and filth), but buck up, so I walk over to William. He's standing with an older black man in full Massillon gear, with an orange shirt over his shoulder.

I decide to introduce myself and he says he is Brock Herring. I tell him about my project and ask for an interview without much rapport, he modestly says he isn't the one and gives me to names to look up. He goes on to tell stories from his playing days, like the blarney stone, which is a rock post up the hill from the stadium. He says if you screwed up badly, you would be told to "Kiss the blarney stone." That entailed running the half mile uphill to the post, yelling "Tiger" and running back. Most of the time the coach would look at the player and ask him if he, in fact, did kiss the blarney stone. Whatever the answer the coach would tell them to do it again.

Brock and I talked for another fifteen minutes, it felt like. It regaled me in more stories about playing for Massillon. Most of his stories are about practice under Earle Bruce. While recounting a number of experiences practicing he would smile at the designed futility of the exercises. Apparently some drills were designed for failure. He laughed with every account of "clobbering" during games and drawn blood during practice. He describes every drill in vivid detail. They won the state championship that year (1964) with a perfect record.

And one day his Sideliner took him and another kid to the Ohio River for a day of boating and skiing and how amazing that experience was. He grew up he "kinda poor," then catches himself and says he was "straight up poor." He would never have had that experience without the Sideliners. Here was a poor black kid in the Ohio River on a boat.

I think standing on the stadium drew his memory to the rule about the field, or the "Sacred Sod." He called the field "manicured" and protected. The

field was treated as a religious place. You were not allowed on the field except for games. You could run the track around the field, but practice was always on a practice field. Walking on the field would result in a kissing the blarney stone, Brock says. Great stories. William says he is getting hungry and he was promised food, so Brock excuses himself and we walk over to Richard

Richard and I find a couple steps to eat on, pasta and potato salad for me with a diet Pepsi. He tells me about his 32 years at a can factory, and how it was a mature industry. He needs to explain that one to me and he does. We happen to sit next to his Sideliner from last year and he introduces me. We eat chit-chatting and I head home sweating, sore, and layered in filth and paint. (8-4-12 fieldnote)

The beautification of Paul Brown Tiger Stadium demonstrates one element in the complex of people and activities supporting the program. Promoting the program continues throughout the year, Kent explained, "(A)s you've probably found out, on any given day a hundred people working on football, year round. It might be a small thing or a little thing, but I mean, seriously, it's amazing to me the things that are getting done that I don't even know about." The president of the Booster Club, as well as former presidents, would be best positioned to know what programs and projects are underway and who may be involved. They don't.

In this section, I highlight participation in the complex by individual members. People ascribe value to their participation, personal and organizational. The sense of self out of contribution is an identity relative to the celebratory complex. Often, people take on multiple roles within the complex. By supporting the team, they can associate as members of the team. They feel (more) like members of the "team." Most people trace their participation to their experiences as children. Russell collects statistics for the team every game, then maintains the

computerized databases for the Football Museum. He also serves as a primary webmaster for the Booster Club. Russell traced the roots of his participation with the Booster Club to high school. He said,

Back in the – we went to Mass – both my wife and I graduated '64 from Massillon High School and we continued like back when most of the people just continued going to the games. So we went to the games and back in the mid-70's that's all I did was go to the games.

And mid-70's a guy asked me if I wanted to go down and help make signs for the Booster Club. And so I says “Oh, sure, I'll go and help out.” and so we go down there and I made signs. Then I went down the next week and the following week and I just became more and more involved, became part of the Sideline Program in the mid-seventies.

His participation grew through the seventies. He got more and more involved into the eighties. Work and family limited his participation until his children entered high school in the nineties. He “switched back” and his contribution again grew.

Kent was equally reflective on his roles supporting the team, eventually rising to Booster Club president. President is a prestige position in the celebratory complex. In the way the Booster Club has structured its leadership, it seems to recognize this. Booster Club presidents serve one-year terms before turning the presidency over to the Vice-president. As president of the Booster Club, Kent has responsibilities other Boosters don't have. With those responsibilities comes great access. He said,

I guess I'm responsible for everything that we oversee, which means at the end of the day I'm usually the guy doing it. [*laughs*] I do have help. I've got a lot of help, but there's just a lot that goes through me. It's just like having a full-time job that you don't get paid for, that you don't have time for. And I'm still

trying to run a business, so it's very – I've got my hands full.

Throughout the interview, he talked about the joys and honors associated with his presidency despite the commitment. The changes in status and access alter his relationship with other fans, albeit temporarily. He talked specifically about tailgating, a typical game activity. He said,

I will not be able to this year. But, yes, matter of fact, I do. My sons have continued that. They will have their own spot. I was just asked this past week if "are you gonna be able to come up?" I might get up to see 'em, but I will not be able to – I guess I could, but why would I want to do that when this is –? I only get one year to be president of the football team, and that one year gives me total access. You know, I'll be in the locker room. I'll be with 'em before they get to the locker room. I will be – and I won't have that opportunity again, so this year's gonna be different in that respect.

In the discussions of membership into the booster club.

One example of a semi-autonomous program is a program of which I was aware before entering the field was Massillon famously handing out small, plastic footballs to newborn boys in their cribs. The program started in 1957. The footballs read "We hope you will play for the Tigers someday." Everyone was aware of the program, but no one could direct me to the person responsible for handing them out. Danny knew that it was happening, but not who was leading the effort. He said, "It's back open now and I just read something on Facebook. I believe they are doing it again. Now all my kids were born at – in Canton because Massillon city stopped their maternity. But all you had to do was call the booster club and somebody would be there and bring you a football. That's what they did for my two boys." James said that girls are getting footballs. Despite getting a football, the lack of clarity or consistency has damaged the tradition and the associated comfort or stability for some. I

cite the following exchange with James:

Interviewer: Did your daughter get a football?

James: I had to ask for one.

Interviewer: You had to ask for one?

James: Yeah. Which I was very disappointed about this, she does have one, but I had to ask for one. My second daughter didn't.

Traditions, when not followed consistently or correctly, lose their power for some. Much of that could be due to the lack of clarity behind the program. The program functions, but inconsistently and knowledge is limited. Someone is in charge, but no one could tell me who or how it happened; it just happens (mostly).

It wasn't until I talked to Kent that I got clarity of how it works, to a certain degree. As much as the program gives footballs to the babies, the tradition is still more for the adults.

Kent said,

Who else does it? I mean our current superintendent wants the cheerleaders putting pom-poms in with the girls. It's just unique. I know I received one. My children received one. My grandchildren received one. Now, being president, I've delivered footballs. It's just very, very unique. And when I've delivered the footballs, I guess the person to ask is the parents that just light up, knowing that they're being recognized. It's just one more thing that entrenches us.

I finally got an answer (mostly). Footballs to newborns, then, enhances the emotional energy and attachment to the team. The projects and efforts of the Booster Club support attachment to the team.

The continuation of the program despite uncertainty and setbacks demonstrates that the complex functions without clear lines of authority. The program continued after the maternity ward at the hospital in Massillon closed; and, the complex adapted. The complex

also adapted to includes baby girls; albeit while reaffirming traditional gender roles. Inefficiencies arose in the flattening leadership. Members still value the program enough to keep it active as their contribution to the team. In the next section, I illustrate how enacting team support within the complex informs a more generalized civic support.

Community Service: Pick out some organizations (Carrie)

An overcast day for an outdoor event, not a great omen. Driving in, sprinkles. I get to the road barricade, blocking off the three blocks of Lincoln Way and see hundreds of people filling the streets. A few minutes to find parking, but I park a few blocks away and it's still sprinkling. The first thing I see is a big trailer for a bloodmobile with no one signing up to donate. Next is a bookmobile trailer selling used books. No one at that booth. At the same end is a table set up for a Hobby shop. They have signs encouraging people to try Yu Gi Oh and Pokemon. No one. So where are the hundreds of people I saw? I walk down from that far end toward the center of FunFest. A large group of children line around a booth with a row of parents standing behind them. Home Depot's booth allows children to build something. As far as I can tell, they are building a box with an open end. I line of people stand in front of a hobo-style clown making balloon hats. A caricature artist is drawing parent-child combos. At least twenty people waiting for caricatures. I see a stage with a children's group singing about how fun it is to use your imagination. A few people in front.

I decide that I will give blood. It's been awhile. I go back and they have one volunteer entering the trailer. I go through the paperwork, answering the questions to make sure I am eligible. The paperwork even defines the three kinds of sexual contact that they mean with all of their questions. I am glad

that is written out instead of the awkwardness of someone explaining it to me. I go through the paperwork and identity verification. The whole time I hear “I like reading. I like books,” repeated over and over and over.

I go into the trailer to test my blood, temperature, and blood pressure. All fine. Inside a cramped room inside the trailer, Dominique, the attendant, asks me if I want to give doubles. I say “Sure.” She opens the door and yells, “We’ve got a doubles.” She opens the door again and repeats, “We’ve got a doubles here.” I’m thinking that I’ve given before and doubles would not be that big of a deal. Wrong. I get into the main cabin and they give me additional paperwork for doubles. It’s going to take at least half an hour. I could change my mind I’m sure, but my attendant and an assistant seem so excited for doubles, I decide to go for it. Gary, my attendant, is very upbeat and telling me what a great thing it is I’m doing giving doubles. I can see some of FunFest going on.

Very few people come to the hobby store. I see an actor dress up as Barney Fife and a police car straight out of The Andy Griffith Show with the license plate “FIFE.” At least twice, Barney revved up the siren for kids coming by. He would never wander too far from his post, but interacted with whoever happened by. I strain to see the booth with a sizable line in front of it. It is a dunking booth for the Massillon High Cheerleaders. I am not sure how I think about it. After a moment, it’s a little creepy, especially the long line. I see a brown-haired woman with a Massillon t-shirt and shorts drenched shivering upon her perch. \$1/ ball leaves a lot of people willing to help out the cheer squad. The crowd around the Home Depot booth never seems to wane, and yet I only see boxes with one end open.

After thirty-five minutes with the needle in my arm and occasionally squeezing a rubber ball wrapped in paper towels, I get some “berry” juice in a squeeze box and a chew granola bar. I wish them well and go on my way. Giving blood takes over an hour of my time. As I go further in FunFest I notice ten different booths sponsored by churches – New Life Church, St. John’s Lutheran, Canton Baptist – to name a few. Each has a kid-friendly activity. At one, kids make pipe-cleaner figurines with beads. The Spring Hill Historic Home has an informational booth, but I don’t see an activity for the kids. That seems to be the key – have an activity and you will likely have plenty of kids (and their parents) attracted to your booth. Two bouncy castles. The crowd in front of the band seems to have dwindled. I walk towards the other end and I see Lowe’s has a booth with craft-making and they are as busy as Home Depot.

I had volunteered to help the Massillon Museum with clean-up. I got to walk around FunFest for a little less than half-an-hour. MassMu is tie-dyeing shirts for kids. Christine tells on women who came up that they are out of most of their shirts, having just adult large and extra-large available. 2pm and people are beginning to break-down their booths. I meet up with Jill and she introduces me to Chris who is apparently heading up the clean-up effort. He sends me around to collect chairs. As I am doing that I see Stump Hill Farms breaking-down their fencing and someone walking a tiger into a trailer. That has to be Obie. Obie being here makes sense. I then get on garbage detail and help Greg haul garbage to dumpsters a block down the street behind some restaurants. Things are going quickly because we have court-ordered offenders and freshmen football players helping us. After the garbage I help collect and

haul tables to a storage garage when this blonde kid in a lack Massillon football t-shirt introduces himself as if reporting for duty. I tell him I'll let Chris know. When I next meet up with Chris and ask him about the football players, he tells me that all football players have community service and this is one of those events. It's just freshmen now, because the varsity team practiced earlier in the day. Trucks are going through the streets picking up stacks of tables to bring to the garage. Clean-up takes about forty-five minutes – longer than the time I toured FunFest, but less time than it took to give blood.

Jill and Mandy tell me about snacks in the basement of the Museum. I walk down and see some of the football players. One man is questioning a lanky freshman about the health and depth chart of the team. The kid is very reluctant to answer, but obliges. I grab two left-over hotdogs and two Cokes that didn't get sold during the festivities. I make my exit. (8-11-12 fieldnote)

Residents inextricably link football and service in Massillon. The attachment generate through the experience and participation in the celebratory complex “spill over” in collective, civic identities. Carrie said, “I guess because of the football history, you really see a lot of that pride in that Massillon and that tiger motif woven in there as well.” In this section, I interrogate the relationship between the espoused commitment to service and football. Football gets credit for town pride. Community service stems from that pride. I found that football was a primary source of meaning-making in Massillon. They understand their lives and collective identities through the lens of football. Football resolves ambivalences: it allows people to retain the struggling, underdog status lost in the ambivalence of the economy and the emphasis on the high school keeps the focus on local organizations.

Central to many people's relationship to the town, community service provides a

meaningful way to grant salutary qualities to football. People frame service as a part of their daily lives, rather than an exceptional experience. Marcus told me the extent of his involvement in the community. In addition to the Lions Club, he performs vision screenings in area schools, he invites fellow parishioners of St. Mary's Catholic Church who have recently lost loved ones over for dinner, and serves as secretary of the Booster Club. Marcus was clearly proud of the breadth of his involvement. At one point, told me commitment to both football and philanthropy are "ingrained" in people.

Massillonians view football and service as essential. Paul spoke of biology, an inescapable element of self. He described how he got involved with the Red Cross, Salvation Army, YMCA, and YWCA – or "every damn organization that existed." After returning to discussions of football and various booster clubs, he says, "I guess at the Chamber we started a couple booster clubs, academic booster club for the school. And I guess you get it in your blood after a while, working with non-profits." Service gets framed as an element of self.

Additionally, service performs a principal social function. Service can be the primary means of interaction with other community members. Carrie said,

(T)he museum is one of my primary ways of interacting with community members. I'm head of education here, so I go into the schools, I go into community centers like the rec center or the YMCA or the library, and I teach a lot of children and adults in that way, so a lot of people know me through the museum. I'm also involved in the Downtown Massillon Association, which is an organization of business leaders who do things like organize the holiday Christmas festival, organize the annual parade that happens in the fall, put up the Christmas lights. I go to the library a lot, so I interact with people in that way. I go to the YMCA as a patron, so I interact with people in that way. I think that's probably it.

Carrie continued explaining that socialization into football helps integration into the community.

Pick out some organizations that you could get involved with – the library, the museum, the rec center, the YMCA, the Rotary, Eagles, things like that. There are lots of different civic clubs that you can join, so you can get plugged in and meet people. And if you're civic minded and active, then it's really easy to get to know people and get to become a part of things.

Community service serves a key socialization function for Carrie. Community service interplays with another common trope: economic decline. The view of Massillon as a struggling, industrial town also drives participation.

The activities generated by valuing of the football team do not isolate the football team, rather support becomes additive in other areas. William said,

Married a lady from Massillon [*laughs*] who hates sports, and so I end up loving sports and got into the Booster Club for something to do and the Sideliners too and just working with the different programs that the Booster Club has and doing different things, fundraisers, making signs. Used to paint the field, and now it's artificial turf, thank heavens. [*Laughter*] We don't have to paint the field. And just different things through the years, and tons of things that we're trying to forget and fundraisers for the Booster Club. Now, you want to buy a ticket for a car?

Strong support for one segment of the community, informs support for other segments of the school and community. Support builds and participation grows in extent and complexity.

The call for involvement is socially driven. Paul said, “One thing that nobody's says, but I think it might be the most important thing why you get involved is who your friends are. All my friends, when I came back, were all people that were involved in the Booster Club

and they got me involved, basically.” Specifically, the Sideliners provide a “first step” to wider community engagement. Richard said, “I, growing up here, just loved high school football. Honestly, I think the first thing I did is I joined the Sideliners, and that was probably when I got out of the service back in ’76, and it’s just evolved from there.” Paul echoed those sentiments when he said,

My parents had season tickets all through the time I was in high school, and I continued to have them. My dad would go to Booster Club meetings occasionally, and I’d go along. But after I come back from the service, I had friends who were involved with the Sideliners, and I got into the Sideliners and I became chairman of the Sideliners and then Booster Club president and never quit from 1973 on.

Football, the Booster Club, and social organization all work toward a mixed individual-collective identity. Russell said,

I know one incident expresses that I view myself as a person that's not real active, but I do things that I think improve Massillon like the charities our church works through or the activities of the Lions Club, all them things that are – or the Booster Club is and then the football program. All them things I think are to do something for somebody else in Massillon.

The celebratory complex works on individual and collective levels.

Pride in the football team grows into pride for the community with the tiger recirculating in discussions. Marcus said, “I think it's pride in the community. Not just the football team. The schools, the churches, the community groups. The pride in the football team is spread over to other people are proud of their churches, proud of their local organizations are involved and proud of their families such as is it proud of the tradition.”

Jessica elaborated on the idea when she said,

Massillonians really feel a great sense of pride in the fact that they are from here, and a lot of it is tied to football. But there is a great deal – amount of respect that a person new to this area needs to have for that sense of community pride, and what that means in the sort of generational impact of that.

And also not to dismiss this as strictly a football town. There are so many fascinating historical, artistic, cultural things going on here that there's a real energy. There is a really great energy here. So I would ask that, one that people respect the tradition of football here, and the sense of pride that the community feels in that, and then also again not to dismiss the fact that there are a lot of other really wonderful things to celebrate.

Reiterations of pride, community, and football team illustrate a dynamic interplay of values. The commitment to community service fits within the blue-collar, small town ethos. Helping neighbors overcome adverse economic conditions follows the line of the popular narratives. Town pride generated from football runs through community service allowing people to resolve the ambivalence of the small town ethic and struggling economy. It informs how they see themselves as community members, thereby acting in accordance with those beliefs. By participating in, and enacting, the football narrative, residents rehearse a set of values inaccessible from other institutions. Other institutions may impact community service efforts – as many religious organizations organize philanthropy efforts. The football narrative perpetuates a common set of beliefs and values where church and family may advance beliefs that create divisions between residents.

“Hangers-on”: Who doesn't want to be associated with a winner? (Gavin)

I pull into the parking lot of the high school searching for a parking spot. It is just after dusk. All of the spots seem filled. Then I see a row of cars on the

grass – no spot. Another minute or two and I decide the area in front (or behind?) a light post is actually a spot into which I can fit without blocking the aisle. I walk up to the high school with about eight people lingering before the meeting, most in Tiger gear. The live tiger is out in its cage. The top of the cage, which looks suitable for a circus, reads “Massillon’s Terrific Tigers” and then below that “Obie XLIII.” It takes me a moment – yep, that makes it 43. That’s a lot of Obies.

I walk into the school and the first thing I see is a table selling Tiger t-shirts. I spend my \$15 (maybe \$10?) on a shirt that says “BEAT MCKINLEY” on the front with the Obie logo on the back. I run into Ron and Richard, who asks me “What week is it?” I show him my shirt. “You got it.” Before I head into the meeting I see a story by a third-grader posted on the wall entitled “What Does OBIE stand for?” It talks about pride and tradition. Richard ushers me into the meeting and I sit next to him towards the back of the auditorium. I write auditorium, but it’s more of a theater with rows of seats covered in red fabric raked with a proscenium stage in front. Eric comes up sans family, a less familiar sight for him. We exchange pleasantries and he points to his family in another part of the crowded room. He says he saw me and had to come over to say “hi.” He welcomes back and says that I’m in for a treat this week.

An older man takes the stage and introduces “the voice of the Tigers,” Ray Jeske. Ray praises the team for their hard work, saying they are among the hardest working, most together teams in recent memory. “They get it – they play as a team, they play for each other.” He talks about how the town has really gotten behind this team “and for good reason.” He ends his part with

“Let’s get our bell back. Beat McKinley!” The bell would be mentioned several times throughout the night. I would later ask Richard about the bell. He tells me the Victory Bell is the trophy the winner of the Massillon-McKinley game gets for the year.

After he ends, the Tiger Swing band plays as they walk down the aisles of the theater with mascot Obie and the cheerleaders. I notice all but two girls on the cheer squad are white compared to about half of the football team. I look around the auditorium and the audience of well over a hundred people is predominantly white. The ratio seems out of proportion to my experience of the population of the town at large.

The cheer squad leads the TIG-ERS call and response that has become quite familiar. The emcee calls out “What are we gonna do Saturday?” The audience, including me, responds “Beat McKinley!” The band breaks out the Survivor rock classic “Eye of the Tiger.” The cheerleaders follow with “Gimme a ‘T’” where the crowd responds “T!” and go all the way through to spell out T-I-G-E-R-S. The band goes into the Massillon High alma mater (see Appendix E – Massillon Washington Alma Mater). The play “Tiger Rag” out as they leave the stage.

Football coach Jason Hall is the next to take the stage. He first informs the attendees that the team will be donning black jerseys, as that is what the team leaders voted for. He talks about how proud he is of this team and how they committed to hard work and preparation from early in the summer, praising the leadership of this team. He calls up the leaders of the team to talk about what this game means to them. Malcolm talks about growing up in Massillon knowing the importance of the McKinley game, learning about what this game

means at an early age. Finally, being a senior, this game means more to him than it ever has. Ruiz says the game means everything to him and that he is driven to “bring the Bell back” to Massillon. Dutch is up next talking about how growing up he learned how much this game means to the town and that this is a dream come true. Masters says that, while he wasn’t born in Massillon, he chose to attend Washington, in part, because of the game. Ridgeley says he has been waiting for this day for years and that his goal is to “get the Bell back.” He gets emotional as he talks about the game and the town before he excuses himself. Star quarterback, Trig, moved from Oregon after his dad transferred for his job while choosing Massillon over other posts. Trig says that the more he learns about the community the he realizes the importance of the game. Johnny says that he always dreamed of playing in this game even though he grew up in Perry. When he was able to come to Massillon, he knew it would come true.

Coach Hall excuses the group and proceeds to talk about the McKinley game – how tough the game will be, how hard the team has prepared, offensive and defensive strengths and weaknesses of the Bulldogs. He says that thirty thousand people (roughly the population of Massillon) are dedicated to this event and that the game is never about the playoffs – the game is crucial in itself. He opens the floor for questions. The first question, from an older man, concerns the coach’s thoughts on punting, given the strength of the McKinley return game. Coach Hall responds by joking that they don’t plan on punting, but seriously, he is not giving out the game plan. Another person, who I can’t see clearly, asks about the health of the team. Hall says “We’re healthy.” A question from a younger man deals with preparation for this game

versus prep work for other games. Hall responds that he tries to make this week as normal as possible, knowing that all the events and hoopla are enough distractions. It's hard enough the "keep everything in check," so practices are the haven where they can shut it all out and focus on what they are doing. He jokes that they are going to put in three reverse throwbacks to Trig as a trick play. He commends the team and community for the "enthusiasm for what we do." An older man gets up and makes a statement about the importance of the National Anthem and how he would like the team to demonstrate more respect for it. Coach says he agrees, but that he thinks the teams understands the importance of the anthem. He thanks him for the comment. A middle-aged woman asks about practicing with wet balls since they have had some problems with that throughout the year. Hall confirms they do practice and that they routine practice ball security. Someone, again I can't see him, asks about ticket sales. Coach doesn't know specifically, but thinks they are sold out without knowing specifically about the lot of tickets McKinley gets for the game. Coach Hall closes by telling the audience that they have already qualified for a home playoff game which generates some buzz from the attendees.

The emcee announces the raffle winners. Winners collect an assortment of coupons from local business and Tiger gear. The final announcement is a reminder of the Food Fight and Blood Battle and the importance of both for the community.

Richard and I get up and walk out toward the entrance, lingering to talk to other Booster club members. More pleasantries. I excuse myself and tell Richard that I'll see him later in the week. I walk out and see that the live tiger

and cage are gone. Head to my car and leave for a bite to eat before returning to my hotel. (10-24-13 fieldnote)

Emotional energy and attachment to the football team can bring people together. The collective identities shape interactions and perceptions of self and others. People express personal benefits from participation, while focusing on the shared benefits. Some gain access to the team; some gain satisfaction from contributing; and, some receive an elevated social status. Permissible benefits, as long as they aren't view as motivation for involvement. I discerned three types of Hangers-on: (1) those not committed to a winning football team, choosing to emphasize the ancillary items, (2) those who lose focus on benefitting the children, choosing to emphasize maximizing personal gain, and, (3) those who resent the attention and valorization the football team receives, failing to see how the success of the team benefits everyone. Residents cite the values of Paul Brown in disparaging every category of hanger-on

While specific definitions may differ, all identify violated value from hangers-on. Some cite winning, and subsequently excellence, as the primary virtue passed on from Brown. Danny and Gavin consider themselves purists in that their commitment to the program centers on creating a winning program. Winning elevates the entire town, according to both of them. Individual agendas and those committed to the surrounding program lead to hangers-on.

Gavin: Everybody likes a winner, you know.

Danny: Yeah.

Gavin: I mean if –

Danny: What are we? Second, third all-time wins?

Gavin: Yeah, something like that. It's, you know, it's who doesn't want to be

associated with a winner I mean. And I think that's, you know, that's where I, you know, Danny and I, I think – think, you know, we have similar thoughts on this. You know there's – there's the tradition of Massillon that maybe I'll call us the Purists and then I'll call us the – you know there's the purists and then there's the hangers-on.

Individual motives cloud and detract from the mission of the booster club. Gavin and Danny emphasize the winning culture and how some focus on the banquets size of the press box, seemingly irrelevant to success on the field. The elevation of winning football provides a model for all to strive on and off the field. In addition to blatant self-service, hangers-on include boosters caught in the minutiae of the different functions, including the Sideliners. According to Gavin,

The hangers-on [*inaudible*] their vision of the tradition is the booster club and the Sideliners and the pep rallies and buying the kids t-shirts or, you know. To me the tradition and what binds the community together is this tradition. The tradition of Massillon is going out and beating the shit out of everybody's play. I –

It's, you know, if you look at Massillon in their heyday, uh, the – the best – the best example I can give you is a gentleman that lived across the street from my grandmother. His name was [*inaudible*]. He played in the mid-50s. When I was in college, um, I worked in a machine shop and he was working there. And Massillon had lost a tough game on the weekend.

They played a Saturday. It might have been a playoff game or something and we were sitting there that following Monday at lunch and I says “Edward,” I says “What was it like in your day?” He says “What do you mean?” I says “Well Massillon lost a game.” And he looked up from his – his

lunch and he looked me dead in the eye and he says “I don't know; we never lost.”

When it came to winning that's fine. I – I think what gets in the way, not necessarily race, is maybe socioeconomic influences or sociopolitical influences within the town. You know like I says, you know, we watched it. When Gavin would take the ball from one end of the field to the other and then they all “Let's, you know, let's put this guy in or that guy in.” Who hadn't – their skin tone happened to be different, but it didn't have any – I don't think it had anything to do with their skin tone as much as it had to do with the coach's agenda or some, you know, some other outside influence having agenda to push.

When pressed to elaborate on the "outside influence," Gavin went back to the idea of hangers-on. Those who decry hangers-on often cite motives over actions as deleterious. Common narrative reappear. The values of life in a small town and working for the betterment drove the following exchange:

Gavin: There's – there's guys that – that never – either never even thought about playing football that they run around town now and they want to be – they want to be part of the program and have any kind of influence or input into the program and it's – it's hilarious because, you know, you grow up in a small community. You know who's who and you know who did what in their life.

Danny: Everybody in this town knows everybody. And if you don't know ‘em your – your mom or dad probably know ‘em and they can tell you all about ‘em.

Gavin: Yeah. Oh he, you know, this guy was – he didn't even come to the

game. You know he was underneath the bleachers smoking cigarettes on Friday night, he wasn't playing football.

Danny: Right. That's – go ahead you can finish your point.

Gavin: It's just to me those are the influences that – that sometimes get in the way of – of what Massillon should be. To me – as I says Massillon should be putting the best kids on the field all the time and the goal should be winning.

It's not about what are we having at Sideline dinner this Thursday?

Paul Brown was hugely successful. His success stands as an example for all. Brown streamlined the grade school and junior high programs to facilitate winning. A culture of winning encourages everyone to strive for excellence. When the goal isn't winning, then other, inferior motives must be at play. They continue,

Danny: Yeah. I think especially for like Gavin and I – I think he'll agree with me – guys who went through and played, you know, I was just an average ballplayer, I wasn't a star or anything like that. [*inaudible*] Division One. It – it drives us nuts to see like he says the hangers-on who never were part of it trying to bend a coach's ear or do this – how do I want to say it – flex muscle through the booster club in some way or try to influence.

Gavin: I don't – I don't know any details or anything of that, but you hear rumors around. If it was my way and I know it would never fly, if you didn't play for the Tigers, you shouldn't be in the booster club, but that – that would go over like a [lead balloon]. It's just you always wonder what their motive is.

Gavin and Danny also engage who has rightful authority. Danny played and believes people who did not contribute on-field have undue influence. Without requisite knowledge winning suffers for enhancing one's ego. Even though he talks about playing as a determining factor, his role as a player was limited. I got the sense from Gavin that growing up in Massillon,

loving the team from childhood was paramount, despite agreeing with Danny. Winning is the beginning and the end to them.

Many talked about the increasing self-aggrandizement by some participants. Striving to benefit oneself distracts from the real focus – the children. In an unrecorded interview with Curtis, he illustrated such a sentiment.

"The issue for me, given the large number of people involved with the team in different ways, is conflict. People lose focus on why they volunteer – some use it to suck up some power. Some selfishly try to advance themselves through the football team. This transfers to other areas of town. They lose track of what this is about. You build it up – a high-mark of excellence. You use it to build others up. The good thing is, a lot of people are involved. The bad thing is, a lot a people are involved."

We talked about the political and social cache around the football team. He talked about how factions would run competing board candidates and hassle the coach. It reminded of the '64 article that praised the success of the booster club, in part, because they dealt solely with the team and stayed out of the other functions of the school. He attributed it to part of the transformation of the small town and society. The increased mobility, including digital, was just the way things were going.

We talked about race. He says they are still a small town and you can still see racial issues arise. He attributed some of the racism to hangers-on, people on the fringe who aren't fully invested in the success of the kids. They don't get what this is really about. It is less about age, then about willing to invest in the success of the kids. The fringe actors and hangers on neither understand nor help all the kids. Some are still living in the past.

We talked about how most of the stores have posters in their window supporting the team. “If you’re not associated with the overall program, you’re nothing.”

"What sticks in my craw, from instances as superintendent, it bothers me that people would use the relationship (to the team) to benefit themselves over the kids. That in itself bothers me the most. It goes to 'hurt.' Some people will ride the horse, then ignore it after the ride is over." (8-1-12 fieldnote)

Curtis later relayed the story of Brown, at age 88, doing a popular touchdown dance of the 1980s – the Icky Shuffle – when responding to what he hated about football. Brown was adamantly against elevating yourself at the expense of others. Curtis’ role in the school system before retirement informs his emphasis on children. Brown used the Booster Club and wider participation to help kids during the Depression. The best interests of the children was a priori for him.

The benefits of access and heightened association can lead to aspersions. Kent expressed concern that his elevated position carries risks. Rather than “hangers-on,” he identified “haters” for people jealous of his access. He said,

I guess I'm a target, but I'm also – I'm asked by the museum to do certain things. There's just a lot of organizations – churches are asking us to come, reaching out to us. There's all kinds of organizations that reach out to us, so I guess as far as the social network, it's way opened a lot of those channels, so naturally that's good and bad.

That's the negative side of being a business owner. I just worry that somebody doesn't misinterpret something or gets – that there's such a hater – which we have those – that they don't associate the two. You know what I mean? What I'm doing for the booster club, for the football program, I think is

a great thing. If somebody has a totally different view, I hope they don't take that out on me business-wise or personally.

Kent's haters seem to fall into two related categories; first, people who are skeptical of the valorization of the football team, and, second, those jealous of others' access and status. The emphasis for Kent is the team, different, but related to the other two types of hangers-on. To Kent and others, people who criticize the attention just "don't get it." They fail to see how the team provides a model for excellence. Especially in the high school, the expectations are excellence. Kent, Curtis, Diane all specifically talked about the grade point average for the team (and the band). The emphasis returns to the example of excellence on and off the field. The lack of clarity for what constitutes "hangers-on" suggests that only different priorities prompt scorn. By Gavin's and Danny's definition, Richard and Kent are hangers-on because they are part of the Sideliners and value the parades and pep rallies. Likewise, because Danny and Gavin emphasize winning over everything else and don't prioritize the students, they fit Al's definition of hangers-on. The lack of a coherent understand of what people meant when they talked of haters, suggests that variance in motives dictates who receives scorn. Some will decry self-interest as a perceived motive for participation; other cite those who are seen as acting outside of the Brown's original values. Only those who blatantly exploit relationships with the team would seem to fit every understanding of hater and hanger-on; however, I did not come across anyone who I thought prioritized self-aggrandizement or financial gain in supporting the team. Yet, many residents benefit from the team while genuinely supporting the team. People prioritizing self-interest over the success of the team or students almost certainly work within the program; however, I never met any of them and no one was willing and/or able to identify specific people. The number of people harboring scurrilous motives appears exaggerated when factoring only blatant self-interest and not simple differences in motivation.

The Booster Club heads many of the activities that support the football team. Brown used the Booster Clubs to help children with families struggling through the Depression. Additionally, they organized attendance efforts. They also gained access to the football program unavailable to non-members. Brown also created a unified football program that valorized the team and socialized residents into the ritual and spectacles of Massillon football. The Booster Club has continued that program for the last eighty-three years. It has implemented hundreds of programs and projects to valorize, socialize, and support the team. The growth of the Booster Club follows Lindquist's model of the "celebratory complex" as a network of organizations and projects supporting the team. As the Booster Club sought, and seeks, outside organizations to assist in program maintenance and development, the complex has lost a clear authority structure. Projects continue without clear, identified, or known leadership, but the projects continue nonetheless. The semi-autonomous structure may have impaired the efficiency of the complex, but processes continue with imperfect knowledge of operations by most.

Chapter Five: McKinley Week

It's nuclear (Gavin)

I pull into the parking lot of the high school thinking I am a little early for the open house. Ray told me yesterday it's today, but I haven't seen the time it is supposed to start. I look at the MassillonProud web page but don't see a time. Parking lot is empty except for a handful of cars around the side of the stadium, away from the school. I drive around the parking lot towards the stadium, then behind it. I see the band practicing outside their building behind the stadium. I recognize Tiger Rag. The cheerleaders practicing in a nearby open space. I decide that I still have about an hour before things start, around 6pm. Grab a bite at the Firehouse.

I return just after 6pm. I go back to MassillonProud and it finally has a posting for the time 6:30. Cool, just a few minutes to wait. As I'm waiting, cars are not entering the parking lot, just a few cars in the lot – less than ¼ full. I don't see Obie outside, neither the tiger nor the costumed student. Last year, Obie was in her cage outside with kids gathered around. Approaching 7pm, I turn on 990AM to listen for coverage of the meeting, again going off last year. General network sports talk. Parking lot still isn't filling up. I decide I'm going to just go in to check. I walk up to the door and it's locked. That's disappointing. A security guard sees me and tells me I'm on the wrong side of the building. Thanking him, I had back to my car. I clearly outed myself as an outsider. I felt it, not that it matters, but still.

Getting to the correct side of the building, I see people going in, a pretty steady flow of people, but still no Obie outside. I walk into the building at

7:10. Because it's an open house, I'm not late, just later than I had planned. I see Obie tiger in her cage with one kid looking in with a huge smile, ignoring everything else around him. I give Richard a wave while I walk up to the table with t-shirts for sale. No sign saying who gets the money, but I buy an orange shirt with "Tiger Pride" in black. After some pleasantries, I head into the auditorium seeing a full cheerleader squad on stage and the band in the aisles play a song I don't recognize.

The emcee comes out. I recognize him but his name eludes me. I don't really know anyone around me so it will have to remain a mystery. He talks about how Coach Bruce, a legendary figure, spoke at the Touchdown Club earlier in the day. "We gonna beat the pups in their own back yard," referring to the McKinley Bulldogs. "Pups" gets repeated by several throughout the meeting, hasn't be as prevalent in past experiences. He tells how the 1994 game and the "power set" story of Willie Spencer. The details of the story evade me, but the emcee did say that hearing the story again made "the hairs on his neck stand up." Coach Hall takes the stage. He references Coach Bruce at the TD Club and how inspiring that is. An older man on the other side of the auditorium makes some comment I can't hear which elicits laughter from the audience. Coach laughs, pauses, then says "No comment." More laughter from the audience. No Ray Jeske. Coach talks about the difficulty of managing the schedule for the students for the week. The team has commitments throughout the week, not the least of which are practice and "this whole school thing." He says part of his job this week is acting as a buffer for the kids a bit from the public, turning down potential events for the team and making sure to manage the schedule of the events they do attend. He talks about the upcoming prayer

breakfast and how it is so early in the morning, but he still has to get them out of there in time to get to school on time and then modify practice that evening because they had to get up so early and still probably have school work to do. Wherever they go, they bring the Victory Bell with them as it is so important to the team and community, a symbol of excellence.

He brings the seniors to the stage, actually in a line in front of the stage. One of the smaller players rings the bell bringing applause from the audience. The star wide receiver talks about the importance of making sure he and others (using the general “you”) have fun this week and during the game, like they did last year when they won. He doesn't talk about pressure, but he does talk about the importance of the game and wanting to make his family proud, make the fans proud. Another wide receiver introduces himself and says he is excited and that they feel the best “once we're ringing that bell Saturday.” He says it's important to “make our city proud.” Most players talk in terms of pride for family and fans). A cornerback says the game is about “more than us.” He gets to the end of his spiel pauses then says “Alright... Go Tigers!” Feels a little awkward. Twenty-four seniors total, most were far shorter than the first two. Name, position, parents and “Go Tigers. Beat McKinley. From the parade of seniors: the game “means the world to us,” “our last McKinley makes it more special, “can't wait to make” the city proud, “what we've grown up to do.” One senior who transferred from nearby Perry, with the option to transfer to McKinley, that he wanted “to prove to my family I chose the right side.” The last player to talk seems far more comfortable than the rest of the team and, after introducing himself and family says, “All I got to say is we're ready to go.” Cheers from the audience.

Coach opens the floor for questions for the players. One man tells the story of remembering his first “TIG-ERS” cheer in 1974. Another man says he heard that a particular player gets intense and wanted to see that player's “focus face.” A quizzical look from the player, a smile, then face – pursed lips, furrowed brow, and slight squint to the eyes. He keeps it for a second or two, than laughs, other players and audience follow suit. A woman asks the players about listening to Coach Bruce at the TD Club. A fairly generic response about respect and his status. A man asks an offensive lineman, with multiple offers from Division 1 schools, if he is excited to go up against a good McKinley defensive line. “Yessir,” he says he wants to “drive he guy on the other side of the line into their end zone.” Cheers from the audience. It puts a smile on my face. Coach asks, “What's it gonna be like running out” onto the field for the last time McKinley game). “I thinks it’s gonna be electric with everyone cheering for us.”

Coach gives a scouting report for the game. He doesn't talk about their gameplan, but his impressions of the offense, defense, and special teams of the Bulldogs. He talks about some “negativity” going around town that McKinley game helps bring “our whole town” together. I took it as referring to the till-down economy versus any people talking bad about the team or program. He says, “Our kids talk about representing our town, our people.” I miss the first part of what he says next, something about orange mouth pieces and orange teeth. A man talks about how McKinley often does kick the extra point after the touchdown, but instead goes for two points. Coach says it doesn't change what they will do. They have one of the best high school kickers in the country, who has committed to play at the University of Michigan. An older

woman makes some comment I can't hear that brings applause from the audience. I'm frustrated about missing these pieces. A woman asks if they were allowed to throw candy during the parade and one of the players says "Yeah." Coach says "Go Tigers. Beat McKinley." he then rings the bell saying he "forgot I wanted to do this." He surveys the audience about how many tickets people have bought. He asks people who have bought at least 5 to raise their hands. A few people do. He asks about ten. All but one hand goes down. Coach then goes to fifteen and the guy still has his hand up. Coach asks him how many he bought. He says 15. Coach tells the crowd that less than 1000 tickets were available as of this morning.

The president of the Booster Club gets on stage and takes the mic. He speaks to the team (standard tropes): importance to town and family, lasting memories, he's proud of them. He says, "It's all in front of you and we're all behind you." He talks about wanting to get to the freshman game going on now and his appreciation of the time management issues the team faces. "Go Tigers. Beat McKinley" The cheerleaders take the stage and start the "TIGERS." It takes the audience a couple times before getting fully into it. The band plays the cheerleaders out. It's 7:45 and I head out into the lobby. I talked Richard about the meeting of the Museum Group and he says it meets tomorrow, but at the old city building. We exchange good-byes and head back to me car to get back to my hotel. (12-29-13 fieldnote)

So begins McKinley Week – the series of events that precedes the annual game between Massillon Washington High School and Canton McKinley High School. The historic rivalry garners the attention and the full resources of the celebratory complex in Massillon.

Where many high schools may have an in-school pep rally and/or a parade, Massillon fills the week with events to reinforce and build that complex. The parades, school functions, and other community events recirculate the icons and language of Massillon football. The rivalry with McKinley occupies such a prominent place in Tiger football history that residents often describe their history and successes in relation to McKinley. In this chapter, I chronicle the experiences of McKinley Week, both my own and those of the residents to explicate the negotiated identities of Massillonians in this annual reenactment of civic, individual, and organizational identities. As we shall see, the week is devoted to building emotional energy and attachment. The series of events brings processes of valorization and socialization to the fore. The number of spectacles and rituals within close proximity in time and space intensify those effects.

History sets the foundation of the rivalry as people connect to the rival through past personal experiences. Dating back to 1894, Canton and Massillon have faced each other scholastically and professionally. The rhetoric of the rivalry contains racialized language. Washington High School is down a rural road away from traffic and stores; McKinley is the city school. Massillon struggles to overcome economic disadvantage; Canton is poor. Massillon is a tight-knit community; Canton is the urban environment. No one articulated the rivalry in such explicit terms during interviews or most direct interactions and most were respectful of McKinley; however, in the stands and bars, I heard more explicitly racially-tinged language. In the presence of a few, I experienced discomfort when confronted with racist language. Still, for most, the rhetoric of the rivalry includes subtly racialized euphemisms. However, because most residents believe that football renders issues of race (and class) irrelevant, they re-enact those relationships. Football obscures ambivalent attitudes towards race and class.

The conglomeration of events that comprise McKinley Week deepens the valorization

and socialization taking place throughout the year. From the Obie tour through elementary schools to the band marching through the downtown street to pep rallies, events raise the emotional energy heading into the game. The week of spectacles and rituals strengthen the meaning-making, emphasizing civic and organizational identities over individual. People participate in a week of dressing in like colors, repeating call-and-response cheers, and seeing Obie hundreds of times, in all its forms. Each event reiterates each participant's and witness' relationship to town and team. The enhanced emotional energy comes from the multiplicity of rehearsals. The repeated reinforcement of attachment builds through the week and releases during the game. At the same time, residents re-enact valorization and socialization perpetuating the football narrative. Valorization places the team on a proverbial pedestal. Socialization integrates people into the embodied performances that build the emotional energy, reinforcing the football narrative. Residents readily acknowledged that football serves as a model of excellence for which people, especially students, can, and should, strive. The popularized football narrative articulates how hard work, determination, and teamwork result in success. The hard work associated with football assures residents of the blue-collar character of the town. Determination, with hard work, allows the belief that they can overcome any perceived economic hardships. Teamwork promotes the power of coming together, unity, and community. The meritocratic story of football further advances the power and existence of oneness; therefore, race and class matter less in the social structure of the community. McKinley Week amplifies the energy and attachment heightening the effects of performance practices.

The parade is the best-attended event leading up to the game and takes place Friday night before the Saturday afternoon game. Thousands come out to share in the celebration of the team. However, the parade celebrates the celebratory complex as much as it celebrates the team. The scope of organizations supporting the team literally parade through town. The

Booster Club, MassMu, businesses, and politicians make their way down the main street followed, in the end, by the football team. Not that players receive the least consideration; on the contrary, the preceding cars, trucks, and walkers build up to the pinnacle of the team. They celebrate their participation in the celebratory complex.

Following the parade, hundreds of fans, mostly teenagers, walk the three and a half blocks to a parking lot near the community centers to join a bonfire already blazing. The event is another pep rally complete with cheerleaders, swing band, human Obie, the team, with the head coach relaying a few riling comments about the Bulldogs and the game trophy – the Victory Bell. The energy and excitement surpasses that of the parade. However, the parade has undergone changes over the last twenty years. The State of Ohio sent letters to City officials enforcing environmental regulations regarding open fires. Adults bemoan the mandated changes. They view it as a loss of tradition, therefore a loss of meaning. The loss served as a starting point for many to articulate both social changes and changes to the celebratory complex. The bonfire stands in for other perceived losses of tradition. The experience of the bonfire does not match what others cite as lacking. The changing perceived importance of the bonfire shows the fluidity of the celebratory complex.

Game day marks the social apex of the Massillon calendar. Beyond the game itself, people negotiate meaning and relationships during events throughout day. A Saturday morning church service for the football teams strikes a sobering tone. The building is filled with parish and local history. The priest invokes history in his address to the team. He reinforces the legacy of the team and their place therein. Meanwhile, a local restaurant holds a festive event of breakfast and beer. People can start building their sense of community, emphasizing the collective identity over the individual. Later, boosters and their families decorate the home locker room. They fill the cement floored dressing room with hand painted signs on construction paper, balloons, and crepe paper streamers. They engage their

relationships to the team. The pre-game tailgating celebrates the community of fans. Games of catch and alcohol consumption elevate people until the game begins. Once I returned to the game, I saw people explicitly benefiting from their associations with the team. Select community members get to take the field with the team as part of a spectacle as players run onto the field. The energy and emotion built during the week pour out of people's bodies and mouths as they cheer and talk trash. At a previous McKinley Games, I heard repeated calls over the stadium sound system encouraging people to support a local bond initiative, the results of rivalry based food and blood drives, and businesses "proud to support" the game and teams. People take advantage of the elevated collective civic and team identities to advance agendas. Energy and excitement gets spent through the yelling, cheering, and jumping to the fortunes of "your" team. Then, the game ends.

Throughout the week, people strengthen their attachment to the team and each other. After the game ends, people return to their "normal" lives, changed by the experience. The change has implications for the community. The outcome of the game, winning or losing, informs reversion to stasis. With winning, the excitement and good will continues. The sense of community stays high, for a while. Like winning, though, losing stays. Attitudes sour. Just as excitement stays collective after wins, the down mood lingers after losses. Investment in the collective identities lessens. Residents cited wins and losses as factors in ballot initiatives. People credit winning for successful bond initiatives and blame losing for failed bonds. The community benefits, or doesn't, with wins and losses to Canton McKinley. Collective bonds strengthen or weaken depending on who takes the Victory Bell.

The Rivalry: I guess they're your neighbors (Russell)

My first night in town, I had looked up the schedule for McKinley Week on-line. I found MassillonProud's schedule, but it had no information on the Food Fight. I kept looking for the Food Fight information – where to donate,

sponsors, etc. I found my info the website of 94.1 FM/1480 AM, the apparent primary sponsor. It listed the two high schools, the Pro Football Hall of Fame, and the "Finale Rally" as the Food Fight drop off locations. I hadn't heard about the rally before then, so I put it in my schedule.

I go to Giant Eagle to pick up some food to donate. It's raining pretty consistently. I pick up some cereal (Rice Chex), pasta, and pasta sauce (Paul Newman's). I head to the lawn of the radio station where the rally is supposed to take place. Still raining, there's no sign of a rally and I am on the lawn of the radio station. As I drive around downtown Canton seeing if it was moved, I'm listening to 94.1, a mix station. No mention of the rally, but I hear "Allison Road" by the Gin Blossoms then "Low" by Flo-Rida. I turn to 990 AM sports radio, Ray Jeske's ESPN affiliate station. National host Dan LeBatard is talking about the Washington professional football team. Gradually, more broadcasters and journalists are refusing to use the epithet in their jobs. LeBatard talks about the US Patent and Trademark Office has repeatedly denied further applications. He calls the owner, Dan Snyder, "tone deaf." After half an hour of rain and futility I decide to head over to the high school drop off site, Washington High School. I can probably get into the open house. It's a little early, but I imagine it's okay to get in.

Pulling into the parking lot of the high school, the rain has picked up. I feel better than when I did for the Booster Club meeting. At least I'm in the right spot and I see a fair number of cars, lights on, and people inside. I walk in and see the walls of the school papered with construction paper signs. The stairs have orange and black streamers above them and more signs and a giant orange 'M' on the stairs themselves. I look for the drop off spot. I see a "Food

Fight"-marked bin and it's full of food.

I walk around the main area, presumably the cafeteria, looking at the different clubs with tables. Most tables have some food or tchotchke for sale. It seems like there are fewer booths than last year. As I walk around, I pass the Wall of Champions. Most are football players, but not exclusively. I notice this female shot-putter. The Paul Brown portrait is slightly, yet clearly, larger than the other pictures. I remember noticing that last year. I keep walking around, admiring the signs and appreciating the sheer volume of decorations, the time and dedication. (see Figures 14 and 15) I pass a strange 'M' on the floor, the three legs all stemming from a common point. I pass more signs, one of which is for the Village Idiots.

I see the symbol from the floor as in 'VI' not 'M', only I had it upside-down. A kid walks by painted from his waist up in orange and black, face included. I'm



Figure 14: Open House - Decorated Hallway

guessing it's a Village Idiot. I slip out to my car and grab the food. It's a constant drizzling rain. The lights of the stadium are on and I hear the sounds of the freshmen game.

On my way back into the building, I see a kid (13-ish) walking in in a red and black striped shirt. I mind that pretty odd given black and red are McKinley colors. I have the fleeting private moment of humor imagining him as some spy infiltrating the enemy. I walk into the office and let the older

and says, "Welcome ladies and gentlemen. It's Showtime!" The mic or speakers are set way too high. It is disturbingly loud. Drummers enter tapping their sticks together in unison. The brass section follows, receiving cheers from the audience. Woodwinds are next. Not so much cheering – very little. The majorettes, drum major, and Obie enter to big cheers. Everybody loves Obie. (see Figure 16)

The conductor leads the band in the Star-Spangled Banner. A young man in the front row, standing on the floor, makes large motions like he's leading the band, but not with the conductor.



Figure 16: Band Concert - Obie Entertains the Crowd

The band plays the some standard pre-game material – "Eye of the Tiger" and "Seven Nation Army." "Conductor" is still at it with energy. He's really into it. The band director says that the opening sequence of the band hasn't changed since 1935 – "Fanfare" followed by "Tiger Rag" followed by "Carry On." Everyone stands and many sing with Carry On, the alma mater. Yep, Conductor is still at it. I struggle to figure out why I find him so compelling. The band director talks about the debut of the Glenn Miller Band on 9-16-38. As tribute to the 75th anniversary of both the Glenn Miller Band and the Tiger Swing Band, they play Little Brown Jug. The dates don't match up. (During dinner with

Eric, I ask about the discrepancy and he told it wasn't a swing band before 1938. OK.) A young boy on the floor by the entrance to the gym is dressed in a full-body Obie costume. (I have the impulse to snap a photo or two, but something feels wrong about it, so I don't. It's a little creepy.) Band goes into "Pennsylvania 6-5000" and "In the Mood." Young girls dance on the floor by the cheer squad. One of the girls is 4-ish in a full cheer outfit hopping around. The band plays a tribute to Chicago with "Rock Band" and "25 or 6 to 4." After, I cut out to meet Eric's family. (10-31-13 fieldnote)

Views of the Massillon-McKinley rivalry tend toward the romantic or poetic. People dress it in grandeur and lore. The history of the programs and personal experience form the foundation of the rivalry. Employees at MassMu, as the primary repository for the physical artifacts that document and circulate history, tend to take the rivalry on the whole. Also, the Booster club specifically documents the McKinley rivalry and the celebrated parade that takes place the night before the game. Long-term residents approach the rivalry based on individual personal histories. In this section, I contextualize the rivalry in its history and ambivalences people express about the town. The rivalry reenacts the struggles people handle regarding how they understand their collective, civic identities. McKinley gets cast as poor, city school while Massillonians strive to preserve their small town ethos and to keep fighting against economic setbacks. The history of the McKinley stands above all others in importance for residence. Residents label other teams (Perry and Austintown-Fitch) as rivals, but the history of Massillon-Canton football benefits from its deep history. The high school losing its first five games from 1894-1903, the 1906 game that ended professional football in Massillon for the next twenty years, to the success under Paul Brown all deepened the rivalry. The people involved also magnify its importance; the Canton football history includes

football and sports greats such as Jim Thorpe, Marion Motley, and Alan Page. Canton is also home to the Pro Football Hall of Fame; thereby granting a more prominent position in professional football.

Massillon Washington High School students and team boosters often discuss the team as it relates to Canton McKinley, their biggest rival. The entire year builds to the annual clash. The game is always the last regular season game of the year, taking place either the last Saturday in October or first in November. Massillon first played Canton in 1894. For the first three decades, team organizers paid the athletes, making the football professional and unattached from high schools. The rivalry began during this professional period. A February 2012 article in *Sports Illustrated* calls the 1906 game the "First Super Bowl." The name refers more to the magnitude of the game than the event we know today, starting almost six decades later. The article claims that rampant corruption surrounding the games culminated during the 1906 clash. The article argues that the scandal damaged professional football until the formation of the National Football league in 1920 in Canton. Massillon was not a part of the NFL. Residents reiterate the narrative that Massillon chose not to participate. Marshall sids, "What you probably didn't know is Massillon football is – even before the high school started, we had a pro team down here. And it was big time too. They won the world championship and that. We elected not to go to the NFL. We were invited in, but at that time..." Marshall trailed off without further explanation. I did not find the *Sports Illustrated* article in the Booster Club archive.

The rivalry generates fervor and competitiveness both from and for the residents of both town. Massillon residents attach great meaning and significance to the game. The Booster Club keeps two binders related to the McKinley – one on the rivalry and games, the other dedicated to the McKinley parade. The "McKinley Rivalry" binder contains mostly articles from outside the local newspapers and "fact sheets" covering each game and other

statistics spanning the entire rivalry. I also found articles about Massillon football without specific connection to the rivalry. These articles share the trait of originated from outside local media coverage. Also, a few, select games merited wider documentation from the Booster Club.

Three fact sheet provide a wide range of statistical perspectives on the game. One fact sheet, titled "Massillon Tiger a Canton McKinley Series 1894-2009," goes through year-by-year numbering each game and listing years with no game. The list covers the location of the game, the year, the score, each head coach, and attendance figures. The sheet also keeps a running win-loss-tie tally. At the bottom of the sheet, totals gives points scored by each team the overall record (which also gets listed on the line for the 2009 game), and total attendance. According to the sheet, over one million seven hundred thousand people attended the games. Given the 110 games, the average attendance is 14,360 people. Two things stand out on this fact sheet; first, McKinley won the first eleven games of the series, and, second, the 1918 game was canceled due to influenza. The game-by-game overview provides a cumulative accounting I did not know before looking at the fact sheet.

The other two fact sheets include ancillary numbers with some crossover. One, written in the *Independent* in 2009, lists overall record and points, but also others such as the longest win streaks, the scores of the games when both teams were undefeated, best winning percentages for coaches from each team, and biggest crowds. The third, with both written and photocopied information, includes some of the aggregates over record and total points, but also total wins for each team, the number of state championships for each team, and the number of playoff appearances. The bottom of the page, includes a list of numbers and the significance of those numbers. For example, 115 years in the rivalry, 117 games, 20 Massillon wins by shutout, 21 McKinley wins by shutout, and 5 ties. The list lack organization and includes interesting, but arbitrary, statistics.

Most articles concerning the rivalry focus on the length of the rivalry and the meaning residents attach to it. The archive includes an article, written by Ben DiCola (who currently writes for *Akron Life Magazine*), without a date or source. In it, he refers to the "pups" for the McKinley Bulldogs. This stands out because "pups" is the derogatory term used in Massillon to refer to the team. While he also uses "Bulldogs," he only identifies the Massillon mascot as "Tigers." In 1993, *USA Today* wrote a story on Massillon-McKinley for the cover story of the Sports section. While the fervor may not differ between the two towns, the amount of decoration does. Massillon displays their commitment and enthusiasm more than Canton.

The most extensive narrative of the rivalry begins with a written cover page on graphing paper. "Ohio's Bitterest Gridiron War," written in 1977 by Bob Sudyk of the Cleveland Press, begins with an account of the 1938 game when future Pro Football Hall of Famer Marion Motley was uncharacteristically held to 28 yards rushing and later knocked out of the game by Massillon's Lin Houston deep in Tiger territory. Sudyk uses this game to establish two points. First, the hit between two football greats and the outcome remains in the lore of the game. The "classic" tackle remains shrouded in controversy. According to Sudyk, a Canton booster claims that Massillon paid off Motley to throw the game. Second, the "bone-bending collision" represents the great history of the two teams coming head-to-head. Sudyk goes on to write about both the national status and local significance of the game. Sudyk wrote, "It isn't a game. It's a happening" (McKinley Rivalry). While Sudyk doesn't know the origins of the game, he provides a theory. "Historians will tell you that Massillon stole the canal away from Canton, but that Massillon lost the county seat to Canton (McKinley Rivalry). While that may not necessarily result in a bitter rivalry, Sudyk also attributes the histories of greatness of both programs also contributes to a sentiment of bettering the other. Sudyk includes many more stories that he describes as "lore," including stories of femme fatales and tiger attacks. He writes about the traditions of each school in

preparation for the game. He concludes the write-up with him at the 1977 game. He writes, "Through the din McKinley sends up a recorded bulldog growl loud enough to make you turn around just to be sure it's not live. Sirens sound and trumpets herald the arrival of the Bulldogs pouring onto the field via a red carpet. The referee's whistle blows and the game is on." Sudyk continues the romanticization of the rivalry.

Four games garner more documentation than most. A photocopied picture from the 1934 game includes a hand-written list of the players in the picture in addition to the score (a 21-6 McKinley victory). The photo is credited to Lou Young, but from Linda Young Miller. The Booster Club frequently gets artifacts and other archival material from people after a loved one's passing. Three photos accompany an account of the 1940 game, Paul Brown's last as Massillon coach. Two photographs are aerial views of the parking lot showing an impressive number of cars. The pictures seem an attempt to corroborate the claim of twenty-two fans in attendance. A page of hand-written notes claims this was "PAUL BROWN'S GREATEST TEAM" that "SMASHED THE BULLDOGS 34-6." The game marked the 6th consecutive state championship and the 33rd consecutive victory. Another photo that appears to have been clipped from a newspaper shows Jim Thorpe mid-pep talk to the McKinley Team with the Heading "Boys, you can beat Massillon."

The "McKinley Rivalry" binder also includes a 1955 interview of Ed "Chief" Conner recalling a Massillon-McKinley game he officiated.⁴ Conner describes a game with the stands so full that spectators stood on the sidelines. The crowds crept onto the field. During the closing minutes of a tied game, a Massillon player was running toward the end zone with blockers. However, spectators were so far onto the field that Conner lost view of all twenty-two players. A few seconds later, a Bulldog emerges from the crowd with the ball running the other way into the end zone. Conner did not make a call at the time. Instead, he says he would

⁴ The article did not indicate the year of the game. Further research showed it took place in 1945.

return to his hotel under police escort and give his ruling there. He gave the touchdown, and the game, to Canton. Conners says that the accumulated wealth of the two towns were wagered on the game. The story goes that McKinley may have won, but that all bets were off. However, the game with the most coverage took place in 1994, which is tagged as the 100th Massillon-McKinley game. The Canton Repository briefly recaps the history and provides an overview of the rivalry. Writer Bob Stewart could not resist the poetics of the game. He writes,

Legends are piled upon sagas but are wrapped in lore that contains tales so tall a Horace Gillom punt couldn't reach the top.

These are high schools with bloodlines. Last time we looked, Massillon was second and McKinley fourth among the high school football teams in the U, S, of A in total number of victories.

Never mind the Mayflower, if your ancestors played in a Canton-Massillon game, you are a bona fide blueblood of football. (McKinley Rivalry)

The lure and lore of the game appear are ascribed essential qualities.

I find one other aspect of the game most interesting – it may not have been the hundredth meeting. In his article "Oops, this year's game may be No. 102," Rollie Druessi points to 1896 when Canton dropped "McKinley" so as not to get confused with the president at the time. New accounts, then, show two additional games between Canton and Massillon (McKinley Rivalry). The celebration of the 100th game was now misplaced. Massillon still celebrated the occasion as if it were No. 100. The history of the rivalry and lore of its games contributes to the energy and emotion of the week.

The emotion of the rivalry plays out for local and non-native residents. Liz provided a broad view of the rivalry with her perspective originating as someone not growing up in Massillon. She said,

I think the thing about Massillon and the reason that it's so ingrained is that, you know, those seeds were sown, you know, in the 1890s when they started playing here. And, you know, the 1904 and 1905 teams are kind of like the thing that they look back to because Massillon and McKinley had professional teams and that was really where the rivalry started was in the pro version of the tigers and the bulldogs.

It's been such a rivalry ever since and I'm not sure what exactly pushed it to such, uh, an epic proportion, but, you know, that's still the thing that they – they look to is Massillon and McKinley and football. Like I said, the Paul Brown era being such a highlight and that they had such a great season and I think that's what they all still want to live up to. You know, it's Paul Brown Stadium, there's a statue of Paul Brown. They all pray at it before every game. You know, that's really where they're trying to live.

The history of the football program often gets viewed as the history of Massillon-McKinley. Liz also referenced the nostalgia fostered by during McKinley Week. Invoking Paul Brown in the rivalry means invoking the Depression and what Brown meant to the community helping the children. The core of the rivalry centers on the narrative of struggle against economic hardship.

The experience of Massillon-McKinley surpasses the intensity and importance experienced by others who moved into the area. Stacey said,

I mean like from where I'm from you didn't go to a high school game unless you – you were a parent or you had an aunt or a uncle or your kid was in the band or something. And coming from somebody that previously dated someone that went to McKinley... um, I didn't say that...

I mean even between it was the big rival even between the two I think

Massillon's just got this, like, win or lose, you know, it's – it doesn't – I mean you can go to Spring Hill where we've got nothing to do with football and they're still like "Oh hey, do you – hey do you know about Massillon football?"

As Liz and Stacey illustrate, discussions of the rivalry often turns to discussions of the overall program. The assumption is that long-term residents are more invested in the team and the rivalry. They are less familiar with the tradition; they are less-rehearsed in the spectacles and rituals.

Long-term residents often describe the rivalry on an emotional level. Danny's experiences echo those expressed by others. Danny said,

I was a third-generation Tiger and... I played defensive end. 19. We played '86, '87, '88. Just to be a part of it. I mean you're – as a kid to go to a Tiger game, 12,000, 15,000 on a regular night in the stands and all the hoopla, and to dream that one day you're gonna get your chance. And, of course, the band and the pageantry and, you know, of course the McKinley game. We – they're our rival. To see all the balloons.

I mean it's – the game has changed quite a bit, but it's still a physical rivalry – to want to be part of that and then finally get your chance. But, speaking for myself and I know several others – there's better opportunities in other communities maybe for jobs and whatnot, but if you have a son that might want to play for the Tigers, you're gonna stay around at least till he gets to experience that and go through that if he chooses to play football, if he wants to play.

Rivalry week most clearly demonstrates a primary distinction between long-term residents and those who did not grow up in the rivalry. Residents often recognize that the Massillon-

McKinley game reveals such distinctions. Danny said,

There would be kids that would transfer in... and the thing that irked me about that, they automatically gave them, in my opinion, a little extra time to develop or a little extra reps in practice to see if he's gonna be the starter. Just because you moved in doesn't mean you're the next best thing, I mean. And kids – and it's a fact in high school football now, kids transfer a lot to other communities.

And Massillon – it has just bothered me over the years there may be an athlete that transferred in with great outstanding talent, but he doesn't get it as far as being a Tiger. And that usually stands out in the McKinley game. You know the kids who were born, raised here, had a dad or brother that played, it always shows in the McKinley game 'cause that's the kid that's running around the field with – like his hair's on fire, but you don't get that with a kid that transferred in 'cause he didn't live it like we did.

According to Danny, the game means more and elicits greater effort from players who grew up in town. Danny emphasizes the local orientation to the game. His comments suggest that newcomers are less important than long-term residents. Danny, Liz, and Carrie each spoke of nostalgia. Danny expressed the desire for the small town in which he grew up. They tie McKinley to the nostalgia of better times. However, the better times of the Paul Brown era were during the Depression and still in the aftermath of the Great Flood of 1913.

Danny and Gavin, among others, represent the end of a spectrum of opinions regarding the emotional importance of the rivalry. The end-view of outsiders reaches its highest intensity regarding McKinley. Some resist the lengths to which people go in enacting the rivalry. Russell rejected that extremity when he said,

I guess they're your neighbors. My brother lives in – his family raised – he

moved over to Canton and his kids grew up through McKinley, so the – there is a lot of relationship between the communities and you're always bumping into somebody from Canton and they're bumping into somebody from Massillon. So the competition is great, as long as it's just a game. Some people go overboard and it's, I think.

When I pressed him on how people go overboard, Russell responded, "Well, the – I know people that won't talk to or won't want to deal with somebody from Canton, just because they're from Canton. Then I think it's mainly the rivalry that the two have, or I guess it gets outside of the competition of the game and this is how it goes overboard." He acknowledged that the rivalry means more than a game. The build-up of the "us" of Massillon and "them" of Canton exceeds the Tigers versus the Bulldogs.

In addition to the extent of emotional investment, both good and bad, Russell also pointed to a sense of the genetic lottery, where children get born to parents in either town outside of their control. James expressed this view most succinctly when he describing how he came to love Massillon football. He explained,

I would have to say probably just being born in Massillon would be my event, you know, and if I would have been born in Canton, would I have been grown up a McKinley fan? Probably. I think it's – I think my path was as a citizen of Massillon was chosen when my parents decided to move here. I was born in Massillon, but they lived outside of Massillon.

When they decided to make their home, when I was one years old, I think that just kind of [*inaudible*] it from there and the fact that they had an interest in the success of the talent of football and they exposed me to that, because football is really what I love about Massillon. As I get older I love more about this city, but football is my first love.

Love of city and love of football become inextricable possessing essential qualities. The narrative of Massillon versus Canton invokes anxieties Massillonians negotiate about their collective, civic identities. The nostalgia associated with the rivalry evokes the small town ethos. Massillon is a town where Canton is a city. Outsiders lack appreciation for the required emotional investment. Disparaging newcomers highlights the desire to stay small. The nostalgia of the rivalry points to a better times – a “better time” when Massillon faced economic crisis and industrial reorganization. The nostalgia tied to Paul Brown marks the heights of team success and turning the rivalry against Canton. Paul Brown also embodies the struggle against the Depression and dedication to bettering the lives of children. The narrative of struggling to overcome hardship contrasts to the few people in the stands at games or in the bars who talked about the “poor kids” from Canton, essentializing their economic status.

The Week: He played like “Tiger Rag” 187 times (Marcus)

I leave my hotel while it’s still dark outside, just after 6am. I missed the breakfast last year because I could not find it. I had driven around to as many area churches as I could find before giving up. I am skeptical this year, but it's on the schedule again, so away I go. I show up to the Canton Baptist Temple and see a ranging empty parking lot. No signs of activity inside. I drive around the building in hopes that some cars are somewhere around. Nope. I sit in my car for a couples minutes to figure out what I need to do. I get out to take a couple pictures to document my return visit effort and fail. I see a man pushing a cart across the parking lot. He asks me if I need help in a “what are you doing here' vibe. After telling him that I was looking for the Prayer breakfast, he points across the street to the CBT Activities Building. Yep, sure enough, cars in a parking lot with lights on in the building. Not a full lot, but enough cars to indicate something is going on there. I have no doubts that I

missed that last year. Well, crap. It's hard to say if I never saw the lot or saw it and didn't appropriately process the information. I thank him and get back in my car and drive all the way to the Activities Building parking lot. At least I'm here.

The first things I see on entering are two state troopers in full dress, definitely nicer than I recall seeing them out in cars and traffic stops. As I look around the room, I see some kitchen workers around and a few men mingling. The men are in full suits, so I feel under-dressed in my jeans and button-up shirt. Two banners cover the full back wall behind the dais – two massive banners for Canton McKinley and Massillon. I then notice that the entire banquet room has been split down the middle with orange and black on the right side and red and black on the left side. An aisle between the two sides seems like a clear “neutral zone” separating the two side. The room looks like any number of other multipurpose rooms in a church with a service window and entrance into a kitchen and large nondescript room.

I walk up to a table with one younger guy manning it. Mike tells me this is a ticketed event (well crap) but it's alright to buy a ticket. I pony up the \$10 and get my ticket. I talk with Josh and Steven, who goes by Sam. Sam tells me that this is the 20th annual prayer breakfast and points out a banner equal in size to the other two along the side wall. A walk around looking for a place to sit, but all the tables are reserved for different groups. Not see a table I would fit with, I go back to Mike, tells me I can sit at a table reserved for CBT members and guests. My table sits next to a table reserved for bus drivers. Other tables are reserved for the teams and cheer quads, the local medical care facility Aultman West, a downtown Ford dealership, a host of other sponsors,

all of whom are listed in the program. Most of the servers are in non-team-specific colors. Two young boys (pre-teen-ish) are repping the Tigers.

The Massillon cheer squad enters, followed almost immediately by the Canton cheer squad and players. Since the Massillon cheerleaders haven't sat and the Bulldogs have, the Massillon side looks bare, not a single chair filled. A couple minutes later, the Massillon football team enters through the side door. Shortly thereafter, the emcee (turns out is the youth minister for CBT) call for everyone to sit so the breakfast can get started with an awareness that the students still have to get to school. He welcomes everyone to the 20th Annual CBT Prayer Breakfast. I get a brief that of "Cool, I'm here for an anniversary." Not sure it amounts to anything, but cool. The minister says that they "appreciate you guys" and the players. He picks up a red foam football branded with the name of the breakfast on the side. Singling out the students, he appreciates that there may be "a great temptation to throw these" but urges them to resist. "Please don't throw them." Some polite laughter in recognition of the attempt at a joke. He points out a pamphlet entitled "One Yard Short." "Please put it in your pocket and look at it later." It's a short discussion of the ministry at CBT and the importance of faith. A bit of their own recruiting tool. I think I should be somehow offended for the proselytizing, but I'm not. I get it. They host the event, in part, to spread the teachings of Christ. It is a church. "Spreading the Word" is kinda part of their mission. The pastor introduces the high school sports director of CBT and the lead pastor. He points out a "gift" of the New Testament from the Gideons in the church. He introduces the rest of the dais and other guests: coaches, principals, athletic directors, one assistant athletic director, Massillon mayor Katie Catazaro-Perry, lead pastor

as Massillon Baptist, county sheriff and his deputy. He points out key sponsors, like Aultcare, Busybee Auto Sales, and Hostetler Auto Sales.

The breakfast portion of the event begins. As the servers walk around, standard stadium rock songs play, including “Are You Ready For This?” (I don't think that is the exact title, but that's how I know it), lots of music with pulsing beats. An older woman in a light orange shirt with an orange tie serves me. Another older woman in a white shirt brings by a basket of biscuits. “I can't give these away. I'm not going back up with these.” The servers pick up some of the foam footballs, including my server coming back and taking all but one (for me). The music seems to bounce back and forth between songs for each team “Eye of the Tiger” for the Massillon Tigers followed by “Who Let the Dogs Out?” for the Bulldogs. An older man with a pitcher of milk comes by. He introduces himself. I reciprocate. He asks me why I'm here. I let him know I'm here for McKinley Week and that I am studying all the events and the pomp and circumstance surrounding the game. He tells me he has volunteered for this all twenty years. He tells me he thought I was a reporter. I ask why the church hosts the event. “Spread the Word of God... not what these kids get on the streets these days.” On the screen behind me highlights of both teams are projected. The music continues, not so much clearly referencing one team or another. Black-eyed Peas' “Hey Now”, Smashmouth's “Shooting Star”, some cover of Tears for Fears' “Shout,” “Hang on Sloopy” by I don't know. As I look around, one Canton player grooves for a moment and a woman on McKinley's also moves to the music. Most adults intently watch the highlights while many students do not. However, several Massillon players nearest the projector

The emcee introduces a minister from New Orleans in full Naval dress who played for McKinley. He served in Vietnam as a lieutenant. He talks about his football exploits. He has fond memories of the rivalry, and it's unlike any other. He says the closest, and it's very close, is the Army-Navy rivalry. He played for Navy and was there Roger Staubach was playing. He remembers one season where they lost early to Penn State in Joe Paterno's second year as head coach of PSU where Staubach had to leave the game. In the back of his mind, after he thought about one thing – beat Army. They went on to beat Michigan and a Syracuse team with NFL Hall of Famers Floyd Little and Larry Csonka. He learned the value of persistence and that it wasn't over until the “race had been run.” He goes on to quote I Corinthians Chapter 9 about the need for self-discipline. The goal is to “go out to win the game.” Everyone wants to win, the difference comes from those with discipline and hard work. He brings up Vince Lombardi's famed expression, “Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing.” he says it is a misquote. (It is.) The quote comes from Lombardi's “winning” speech. The actual quote: “winning is not a sometime thing, it's an all the time thing.” Lombardi was talking about consistency, striving, and making the effort. Not just effort from time to time, but rather a commitment to always doing your best and working to do better. He extols the value of “doing your best,” “giving 100% in making that effort.” He goes back to I Corinthians 9:24 “Know ye not that they that run in a race at all, but one receiveth the prize? Even so run; that ye may attain.” It is about mastery, not some arbitrary (“corruptible”) prize. Mastery is not enough in itself: mastery with temperance and discipline – discipline to work hard in the off-season, discipline for your body because alcohol and drugs hurt the body,

“hurt your name,” and “hurt your testimony.” Drugs and alcohol hurt your ability to serve God and demeans God's Word. He talks more about hard work and discipline, recalling a Mark Twain quote about surrounding yourself with good and positive people. He moves on to talking about setting goals - “setting the banner high.” Despite all the winning one can do in life people should not forget the “most important victory” – Jesus' victory over death. “The one unbeatable foe that all of us will face is death.” For those of faith, that death is not a defeat. He talks about actions. “Sports is what we do.” He contrasts that with salvation – “Salvation is not what we do, but what God does for us.” He cites Romans 6 saying the “heaven is a gift.” He talks about his high school experience. In high school, 30 players came out for the team; in college, 30 tried out for quarterback. He found God in the 10th grade. He was a multi-sport star that year. Then he gave up all sports but one to focus on his grades and football. He talks about value and sacrifice. Later, he says “Everyone here needs what I offer today.”

The emcee takes the mic. He leads the crowd in the Lord's Prayer. There are two important things for everyone to know: “I know that I am a sinner.” and “Take the Lord into your heart.” He asks for a survey, of sorts. He asks everyone to put their heads down and close their eyes. He then asks people to raise their hands if they believe that they are sinners and have taken the Lord into their heart. He then asks for people to raise their hands if they want to hear more or learn more. End of the event. I see a McKinley player take the table decoration after the minister specifically asked people not to. Every McKinley table had a stuffed bulldog, Massillon tigers. After the students left, I took a scan of the tables: most bulldogs were taken, only a couple tigers were

taken. I grab a Sprite to finish. Some mingling afterwards, except for maybe the bus drivers. Turned out, I was the only one at the CBT member/guest table. Not much mingling between sides. Students are ushered away shortly thereafter to get them to school on time. While some mingling continues, I head out and back to my hotel for sleep. (10-30-13 fieldnote)

In this section, I contextualize two prominent features of the football program – the band and Obie – and how their roles in McKinley heighten the valorization and socialization during the week. The band and Obie take a higher profile during McKinley Week. The band plays every celebratory event and has its own concert. Obie’s pervasive presence comes from the increase in Massillon Tiger attire worn, live tiger Obie at events and on a tour of schools, and the human Obie’s attendance at most events. McKinley Week also highlights and promotes an elevated status for the band. Many residents revere the band and its history and assert a social status of members approaching, or equal to, that of football players. The band builds emotional energy, elevating the atmosphere as part of its valorization of the program. They often play to announce the players’ presence or to begin pep rallies and the Booster Club meeting. The band provides a focal point for children and adults not invested in the rivalry. The ritualized performances of “Tiger Rag,” “Carry On,” and “Alma Mater” ritualize participation in its repetition. The band plays those hallowed songs hundreds of times during the McKinley Week.

In so doing, the band takes on a prominent role in the valorization processes, helping to build emotional energy and strengthen ties to the team. Residents often recalled the substantial presence of the band during the week. Diane said,

Oh, have they told you about how on McKinley week the band goes through the town and they walk through? They walk all through town and they

play, and then they go through city hall and they play through city hall. They go through all the elementary schools, all the – they go through the middle school and they play all the fight songs. So they walk around and do that during McKinley week. That's a big deal, so that's fun. The band does that. So and what else does the band does that? I'm sure I'll think of something later.

Diane also alluded to the socialization from the repetition of the songs, especially when three are valued traditions and “Eye of the Tiger” by Survivor fits in name and arena rock sound.

The build of emotional energy also comes from personal connections to the band. The importance of playing during McKinley Week raises the value of playing in the band. Seeing relatives play becomes a source of pride. Marcus said,

McKinley week. That's the biggest rival. It's a whole week of activity. It, you know, like even my son when he was a squad leader in the band. They picked certain people to be squad leaders, so he would be in charge of four or five – he played the trumpet.

The squad leaders on the Friday of the McKinley game the band would have breakfast and then they would spend the whole day, they would be going – they would go through businesses playing the "Tiger Rag". My son kept count. I think he says he played like "Tiger Rag" 187 times.

They'd go in the mayor's office. They'd go through the car wash. They'd come in a store. They'd go in the post office. They going through all these businesses playing this "Tiger Rag" song, and then that leads them into the high school and then they go through the hallways, and then they lead the student body into the pep rally. And just the whole tradition of that to Saturday afternoon. It's big in Canton. It's big in Massillon. They fill the stadium. It's on TV. It's, you know, if you have never experience – I took my wife's – had

some cousins that lived in St. Louis and the one cousin came here for the Massillon McKinley game.

And he just, you know, his high school games there is 500 people and nobody is watching it. This there is 20,000 people there and McKinley is red and black. Massillon is orange and black. Everybody has balloons and just the pageantry of it, he was just he was blown away. He says this is like out of world experience. But when you're from Massillon you grow up with that and you kind of, so I think that tradition.

Playing in the McKinley game, in the band, and on the cheer quad means more during rivalry Week. Liz discussed the events of the week, including one that no one else mentioned. Again, the rivalry discussion gets cast into a larger discussion of the program. Liz said, "The band the Friday before a game will go marching up and down the street to every local business, so that definitely involves the people of Massillon. It used to be that they would close down businesses all over town for the game." The bands works to excite and entertain both adults and children.

The live tiger, on the other hand, serves primarily to increase the socialization of children. The greater presence of the logo on clothes and signs combines with the human mascot's presence and live tiger at events. Kids surround him in his cage during the events, but he also gets brought around to the elementary schools during McKinley Week. Accounts of the tour demonstrate how Obie socializes children, increasing attachment to the team.

Gorrell students believe that nothing tops Massillon football in terms of ferocity and nothing beats Obie when it comes to adorable.

"I think he's really cute," 9-year-old Abigail Decker said. "I really like animals, especially Tigers because they have the cutest faces."

Bethany Elbert agreed that Obie is 100 pounds worth of cute. Although

this particular tiger cub can be a bit rambunctious, she's definitely better than any old Bulldog ever will be.

"I don't like Bulldogs," Elbert said with a grin. "I think they're horrible."

(Pustay)

The visits provide lasting memories and play a critical role in a child's investment into the rivalry. Danny, who dreamed of playing for the Tigers since childhood, identified school visits as his first impact experiences with the football program. He said,

My first – this isn't actually a football game, but my first recollection I think I was in kindergarten or second – first grade, and every McKinley week they bring the Tiger to all the elementary schools. Well, one year we kept the Tiger two years and remember how big it was. It was a full grown Tiger and they had – they brought him out and there's three men on a chain like a fire hose holding this cat back. He probably weighed 400 pounds, 300, 400 pounds. And that was my first. But my first impression about Massillon football when I actually first got to go I was like the numbers at the stadium were so much bigger. Of course things seem bigger when you're small and young.

Danny sets the enormity of the tiger against the enormity of the crowd. Even accounting for the changing perceptions with age, an appreciation for the magnitude of McKinley Week begins as a small child. The magnitude builds thereby increasing both emotional and practical stakes for the game. During McKinley Week, the band and Obie, among other elements, deepen the capacity for valorization and socialization.

The Parade: If you have a tiger car or something like that you can get into it (Marcus)

The considerable time I have spent in the rain has caught up with me, as I am hacking and coughing. I head down to the McKinley parade. It takes a

while to find a parking spot. I find a spot that probably isn't legal, but others aren't legal and I can't imagine the police handing out citations tonight. I'm only a couple blocks away.

The parade starts just past the VFW hall. The drum major and Obie lead the way walking and dancing turning the corner by me onto Lincolnway, the main street through town. (I have a note off of the top of the parade that says, "that's ok nothing to be scared of now." I have felt confident and secure in the recollections, but I can't make any sense of that.) A flatbed goes by with nothing on it. That's random. Each cheer squad march by throwing out candy and small plastic footballs. We're about three minutes in and the kids are already creeping into the street. More people in trucks and groups walk down the street, throwing candy. A local belly dance club go by – the Raja Group. I've seen them in other parades, still interesting. Kids are now in the lane of traffic. Some nice looking cars drive by with no waving or interacting with the crowd, just going by. I hear "Eye of the Tiger" over a loud speaker in the distance.

Some young girls come around the corner doing hand springs – they are behind a banner for a local dance studio. The 8th Grade Girls Volleyball team goes by on a flatbed – no candy. The Tiger Moms follow shortly leading spectators in TIG-ERS call and response cheers. They do it all the way down the route. Three long unlabeled flatbeds with children from young to junior high-ish slowly roll by. The wrestling team. The local nurses organization. The Boys and Girls Club. A truck goes by with a "Pound the Pups" sign with more TIG-ERS cheers. The 990 AM labeled truck plays the station over a loud speaker. We get to catch the opening of the Fairless-Tuslaw game broadcast.

More groups of unidentified kids wave as they walk by. Some adults on a flatbed truck ride by yelling "what are we gonna do tomorrow?" The "Beat McKinley" response mostly comes from those on the truck. A car with a sign that reads "Sarita says Pound the Pups" wheels by. (At this point, I'm really just trying to come up with other ways to say "goes by." It's a parade.) The

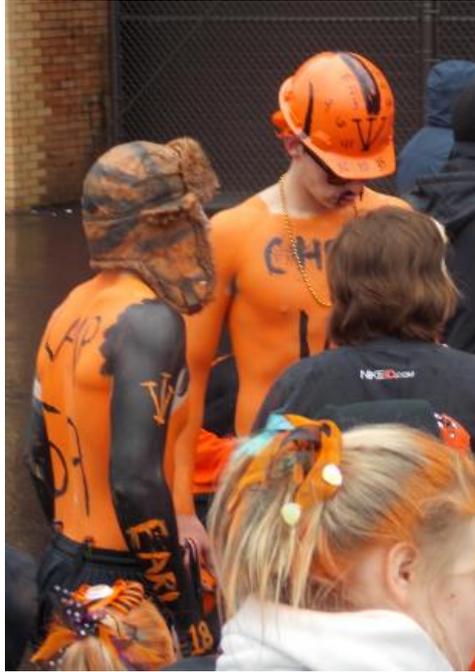


Figure 17: Village Idiots

Girls Tennis Team throws candy as kids have crept into the turn lane in the middle of the street. Faith Lutheran. The Massillon Flag Football Players ride by. That's a new group for me. A Stark County ambulance. People, including a really tall man, walking along side it get a TIG-ERS chant going. Minimal response. I group of high school-aged run around as the make their way along the route. They are all painted up in different costumes and get a better response from their effort at the TIG-ERS. I'm gonna guess they're the Village Idiots. (see Figure 17) Home Depot. A truck with kids in the bed pull an empty trailer behind them. Music emanates from a box truck with kids dancing around it. A truck with live tiger Obie in its cage in the bed precede a truck the calliope. School officials are next in separate cars. Superintendent. Principal. Coach. Booster Club president in an orange and white Camaro. The football players pass by in a tricked out Obie-themed trucks. (see Figure 18) Most are interacting with the crowd, most calling to specific people. Each truck has signs listing the names and numbers of the

people in the cars and trucks. Someone finally walks through telling the kids to get back. Haase Automall. A fire truck. The parade is over. Now, more security urging people off the street. I guess for traffic. I walk down to the bonfire.



Figure 19: McKinley Parade - Tiger-themed Truck

Every time I see the giant inflated Obie, I smile. (see Figure 19) It's just so cool. Two young boys yell TIG with no response from anyone. They try again to no avail. A couple blocks away I hear the band start up. A man driving an SUV down the street amid the

crowd filling the street, trying to get through. People are getting out of his way. He still moves forward. I see the fire. It is big. At least the flames get high. I walk up to the bonfire. It looks larger than the regulated 5' by 5' fire. I don't think organizers would intentionally break the law, but it looks bigger. All of the players are on a stage that rises at least 4' off the ground. All of the seniors address the crowd. Pretty standard stuff. "Beat McKinley." "Got Tigers," keeping the bell stuff. Two players accidentally shout "Beat Massillon" during their quick spiel. They correct themselves, it still elicits laughter from the crowd.



Figure 18: McKinley Parade - Giant Obie

Coach Hall addresses the crowd. More typical stuff. His TIG call brings a huge ERS response, and the response builds with the two subsequent TIGs. He thanks the crowd and encourages them to show their colors at the game. The band, cheerleaders, and Obie all watch attentively. (see Figure 20) They need our energy. We need to drown out the McKinley crowd. He closes with "Everybody's gonna ring that damn bell tomorrow night! Beat McKinley!" Huge response, more huge than the ERSes. Full hoots and hollers. The band plays sections of three songs. Then -poof- they were gone. The crowd slowly disperse as I take the trek back to my car. (11-1-13 fieldnote)

As with much concerning Massillon football, the values communicated through the parade are rooted in its history. While not as prominent as the game, the parade carries its own legacy. In the Massillon Football Museum, a three-ring binder entitled "McKinley Parade" lays out the history of the parade and accompanying bonfire. In a photocopied article dated November 7, 1940, a red pen marks the article as "1st BOOSTER MCK PARADE." The binder documents various parades, with the latest dated 2009. In this section, I articulate how the parade, from its first iterations, have been about the



Figure 20: Bonfire - Band, Cheer Squad, and Obie

celebration of the fans and supporters. With its beginning during the Paul Brown era, the parade's contributes as much to the veneration of the celebratory complex as to "The Greatest Show in High School Football" The parade celebrates the organizational participants in the complex. Spectators cheer the Booster Club, politicians, Tiger Moms, the band, the cheer

squads, the youth teams, and MassMu before they cheer the players.

History informs contemporary conceptualizations. The newspaper report is a brief, five-paragraph description of plans. Two passages show the faded yellow of a highlighter. The emphasis on these passages is consistent with effort to credit the originator and special features within the article. One passage reads, "Charles Hess, president of the Tiger Booster club, is going ahead with plans for a big rally which will include a bonfire and torch light parade." The article acknowledges the plans are not set but reports, "Hess is ordering 1,00 (sic) sticks of red fire, and is publicly appealing to merchants and grocers to send old boxes to Longfellow school grounds Friday, for the bonfire" (McKinley Parade). The article then states that the Boy Scouts will pick up any boxes and that the parade will feature speakers. The next page in the binder provides a timeline for the early parades. According to the handwritten note, the first booster club rally took place in 1939 with no parade and a "gymnasium attendance" near 1,750. The early call for the involvement of local businesses and Boy Scouts points to the nescience of the complex in its early years. The players receive less attention than the celebratory quality of the rally and the contributors.

In 1941, the Booster Club held another torch parade, this time the rally was "Mardi Gras Style." The article under the three-year timeline covers the 1941 parade. The article begins, "Scour the attic and the basement, get out the funniest old clothes or costume you can find, and fall in line at 7 o'clock tonight behind the Washington high band in the Booster club's mardi gras parade and rally as a pep toner for the Massillon-Canton game tomorrow." The article includes greater detailing of this parade than the 1940 parade including the following: two marching bands, the high school and Obie bands; everyone invited to participate in the parade, the parade route from 1st Street SE turning through town to the gymnasium; and, "sticks of fire" provided.

The team was not an active participant in some of the early parades. The 1940 parade

stopped in front of the movie theatre "where the football boys will be easing their nerves by watching a movie." The article says that the doors to the theatre "will be thrown open to hear the cheers." At the gymnasium, the Tiger band will "give the same sensational show" as was held in Toledo the night before. The article writes about the quality of the band when they write: "They had to drop the curtain in front of the band to silence the applause in Toledo. There will be no curtain to drop tonight." The rally was going to conclude with cheer leaders and alumni cheer leaders hyping the crowd leading the cheers, "several short talks," and the singing of the alma mater before ending between 8:30 and 9pm. While the current rivalry week and rally no longer include "sticks of fire" and not everyone gets in the parade, the band concert in the gymnasium, the parade, the cheerleaders, the path down Lincolnway passing the theatre, the importance of the alma mater all inhabit contemporary McKinley Weeks. The parades include the traditions and the band, but the team receives little attention.

The binder contains accounts of many parades and rallies, often brief snippets from newspapers, some brief, handwritten descriptions. Years are sometimes left blank, noting the absence of an account, rather than an absence of the parade. While running through the parades of the 1950s, a square for the 1952 parade is left blank, while the account of the 1953 rally includes a note that the agenda changed, that there was no parade, and that a rally was held Friday night at the stadium. The 1954 rally includes a second page with a continued article and notes from an interview with Pep Paulson (the original tiger mascot). According to Paulson, the 1954 parade was the best attended to date, included fifteen floats (most on flatbeds), two bands, two drum-and-bugle corps, and the hoover calliope played by Paul Ringley. Also, the Booster Club gave each high school class fifty dollars to make floats. The 1955 rally also receives a second page with a lengthy newspaper write-up. The 1955 article includes the prize-winning floats as prizes were first handed out (McKinley Rivalry).

The account of 1967 stands out for two reasons. First, the Booster Club incorporated

two rallies and two parades into the Friday festivities. Both parades started at Washington High School heading to the center of town. The first rally took place in the gymnasium prior to the first parade, while the second rally took place at the stadium following the second parade. The second reason this year's stood out is because it was the first mention of "homeroom decorating." Again, these accounts resonated with how I came to view contemporary practices. Homeroom decorating has grown exponentially to now paper the entire first floor of the high school (see photos). Other practices from 1967 also carry through to today. The high school holds a (second) separate pep rally for students on Friday, the pep band marches through town in the morning playing for the downtown businesses (reminiscent of a second parade), and the 1967 account also describes a more selective parade with city officials and homecoming court in convertibles (rather than the parades from the 40s open to everyone). The article also specifies a "bonfire rally" as opposed to the previous rallies in the gymnasium. More forms from them are recognizable in contemporary practices.

Other acknowledgments include 1971 which was the most widely attended to date and was in doubt when the wood pile suffered "premature ignition" in the pre-morning hours of the day of the rally. The blaze required two fire trucks for the twenty-foot high stack of wood and cartons. The Booster Club worked to rebuild the bonfire throughout the day. (One note: the coaching staff rode in on dune buggies.) The only included record of the 1974 rally, is a captioned picture showing Obie VI on stage at the Wednesday "Beat McKinley" Rally. Also, beginning in the early 1970's, the name "Beat McKinley" for the parades and rallies gets regularized.

Current parades also "celebrate the celebration" of the team. Marcus explained who gets involved when he said,

Like it's like a party. [*laughs*] It's at night. It's Friday night and McKinley game is Saturday afternoon. The parade is on Friday night. So they start at the

high school and they feed the team. They usually have a speaker, and then parade unit comes and then the players are in cars and the coaches are in cars and they come through and it's, you know, people decorate their cars.

And they have the midget school teams and the parochial school teams are in it and it's all the football related entities are in it. If you have a tiger car or something like that you can get into it. Then they come through downtown.

They come down the streets from the high school to downtown.

Marcus described how the parade is a showcase for supporters of the team. The focus of the parade is the celebratory complex.

Residents still view the parade as a key element of their family legacy. Without using the term “socialization,” many describe that as a goal. Gavin views the parade as a critical rite to pass onto his daughter. He said,

McKinley parade. While it's, uh, I think Danny used the best word, it's an event. Um, and it's – and how do – you know it's a small town. You don't have a myriad of things to choose from, you know, to do. There's, you know, Canton next door is significantly larger. There's lots of cultural things to do, but I – I think one, there's almost a sense of obligation. Two, for me, I feel obliged to pass this on to my daughter. I mean yeah, my daughter's never gonna run out there in a football helmet, um, but I want her to have that same sense of community, you know.

To have that feeling that I had growing up and – and really kind of say “Wow, this is my hometown.” You know is Massillon where she's gonna live her whole life? Probably not. But I want her to be able to look back on her childhood and smile and say “Oh wow man, I remember when my dad used to take me to this.”

Cheerleaders were – football players were throwing candy at her, you know. You got to see Obie. You know it's – and when you're six I think it's – it's a larger than life experience. You know when you're a child. At least for me it was and I – you know – getting to see it again through her eyes, you know, it's –

Carrie called the parades “rituals” and critical traditions in Massillon. It builds emotional energy. She said, “It's like an extension of a pep rally.” James took a balanced perspective on the parade. McKinley Week is still important, but the meaning and value of the traditions changes as his role as dad changes. He said,

Prior to last year, [the parade was] really out of control. Last year they kind of took a little bit control and wouldn't let people run out all over the place. I was really fearful for some of the people getting injured before, because everybody gets so excited, but the – I'm sorry, the parades themselves are again, just another family occasion, the big McKinley parade specifically. And just something for everybody to get excited about the upcoming game, but just the parade – the level of parades that we have in the city in general for the holidays and everything are just as exciting.

Adults and families prioritize the parade over the bonfire. As people negotiate their relationships to the team, elevating the prestige of the organizations of the celebratory complex, then, celebrates the team.

The Bonfire: Four years from now it's gonna be this big (Gavin)

While the parades are a crucial part of the celebratory complex the bonfire shifts the focus from the complex to the team. The bonfire that follows the parade has faced both scrutiny and conflicted interest. In the 1980s, the parades gained a higher-profile and became the source of conflict between the town and the State. Whether the conflict was actually

between the City of Massillon and the State of Ohio, the Booster Club clearly frames as such. The Booster Club documented its struggle with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA). The section follows the account of the 1980 rally which merited the front page of the Evening Independent with photos above and below the fold. Before any letter from OEPA, though, the Booster Club included a 1984 letter from the Massillon Fire Department. The body of the letter reads as follows

Permission is granted to have the annual pre Massillon/Canton football game bonfire, November 2, 1984 at 7 P.M. At Agathon Field.

We will have personnel at the fire to light it and assist as necessary

BEAT MCKINLEY!! (McKinley Parade)

It is hand-signed by the police chief and addressed to the booster club. The first mention of authorization of the bonfire is the approval by the city.

The next document is a June 11, 1985 letter from a staff field inspector for OEPA citing state regulations requiring "prior authorization" (underlined in the letter) for "open burning for ceremonial purposes" and lasts no longer than three hours. The letter goes on to relay the procedure for obtaining authorization. The penultimate paragraph includes the following: "The traditions involved before a big game are understandable. However, future violations of this nature cannot be allowed. The letter is addressed to the Massillon Board of Education and goes on to ask the board to forward the letter to "necessary people" including coaches, the athletic director, and "club advisors." The inspector attached a copy of the OEPA regulations highlighting the relevant regulations of ceremonial, 5'x5', no burning for disposal purposes, and ignition material selected to reduce pollution (no mention of the three hours highlighted) and an article dated "FRI. NOV. 1 1985" announcing the bonfire (McKinley Rivalry). Given the date of the correspondence, the article clearly refers to the 1984 bonfire, thereby contextualizing the inclusion of the prior authorization from the city fire chief.

The next reference to the regulations is a 1996 Independent article titled "Tiger spirit is big – even if bonfire is not." The article begins,

Tiger spirit was big in Massillon Friday night.

It was brought downtown by an estimated 20,000 people. It flew over a parade longer than the route, and it was lit by a, well, a puny bonfire. (McKinley Parade)

The article goes on to explain the regulations and the resulting delay in starting the bonfire. The writer sets the regulations against the undefeated season and the largest crowd in almost a decade. The rest of the description of the rally does not mention the regulation or the bonfire until the closing paragraph, "And the air wasn't polluted." The article does undermine the importance of the bonfire by acknowledging the attendance, the orange and black "everywhere on everything," and how the "crowd went wild" at different moments. The loss of grandeur seems important to the author, even if the rally was otherwise successful. The 1996 rally is the last account of the rally referencing the regulations.

Recent years have brought both growth and loss for some with regards to the parade and rally. The parade is still widely attended and highly representative, but the bonfire has experienced a drop-off in attendance. The binder closes with two parades from the 2000s that demonstrate the changes in recent years. According to a photocopied 2005 Independent article, the parade included over two hundred units, likely the most ever, and residents "lined up five and six people deep throughout the parade route." The Booster Club president was quoted in the article as saying the 2005 parade was twice as big as 2004. While the parade hasn't reverted to the early parades that place the fans at the center of the parade, the article quotes an organizer as saying, we have a good handle on the first twenty units. After that, they just show up." The article covering the 2009 parade emphasized the tradition of the rally, writing about the long-standing tradition for some and the newly-passed-on traditions for

others.

On the other hand, by 2005, the bonfire moved to the parking lot of the community center and saw about five thousand people attend. Several people I encountered throughout my stay went to the parade, but not the bonfire. Most cited the limitations on the fire as the reason. Others had small children and the bonfire ran too late. Enthusiasm for the bonfire was clearly down. Kent talked about it with a distinct lack of enthusiasm.

It changed quite a lot, though, actually – fire regulations and stuff. And, of course, the stadium has changed. Where that bonfire was is where our school sits now. But the bonfire's now downtown. Of course, we have the parking lot, so it's a [*inaudible*]. We have EPA to address, so we're limited by the size and stuff. But I mean – that whole parade – everything has changed about it, but we're still doing it [*inaudible*] and they're not anymore. So, yeah, it has changed, but it's still there.

By my estimates, nowhere near five thousand people attended the post-parade rally, maybe several hundred. Still, a thoroughly impressive experience for me, but nowhere near the newspaper account.

The diminished of the bonfire stands as a sign of a larger loss of tradition for some. Gavin and Danny talked about the recent changes, both regulatory and participatory, which led them to a wider and longer discussion of the loss and tradition. Early in the discussion, Danny acknowledged his age and family have changed, changing his appreciation for the bonfire. He said, “Now we gotta go to bed and first thing Saturday morning we’re up, we’re going – doing what we need to get ready to tailgate or whatever.” They recognize the perspective of age. Gavin placed his hands about eighteen inches apart and says, “(L)ike I say the fish was always this big.” Hands about three inches apart, he says “Four years from now it’s gonna be this big.” He still insists that it’s throttled back” a bit in scope and meaning as

tradition.

The bonfire stands in for a loss in the importance of the football team, especially to teenagers. The exchange continued:

Gavin: (T)he focus on Massillon as far as the football program with some of the younger generations has been lost. I've noticed at the games, um, steadily, you know, and I've been a season ticketholder for 15 years just about. I've noticed that student's participation has progressively –

Danny: Shrunk.

Gavin: Shrunk in attendance from what it used to be. I mean it was Section Two and at least a third of the way up Section Two was filled with kids. You know the lower grades Section One and Two were, you know, the smaller kids that maybe come with their parents or parents would, you know, “You go down there, meet me here after the game” type of thing.

Danny: Yeah.

Gavin: Those were the first five or ten rows and then it was – the Massillon still had junior highs when Danny and I went to school. The junior highs would kinda fill that up and then the high schools would – the high school kids would be there.

Danny: I agree. Chasing over the years it's slowly slipped as far as the student body, enthusiasm I'd say.

Danny recognized some elements of the student boy celebrates the team to the extent he recalls, like the Village Idiots. They fight with the fondness of their experiences against perceived material changes.

Gavin: (T)oilet paper was usually flying around.

Danny: Okay. And I don't know whether it's the administration kinda want to

squelch out some of that stuff, but it just doesn't seem... But like he says, four years from now it might be like we were at the pest pep rally ever. But, in general, I would say that student body's support isn't quite as spirited as it was.

Interviewer: What do you think accounts for that?

Danny: Outside interests. Kids are on their phones.

Gavin: I think there's that. The expectation of winning I don't think is high as it was.

Danny: Or the hate for losing.

Both Gavin and Danny recognize how nostalgia informs how they view past and present traditions, then go back to a fact-based discussion of the changes and loss. The loss of enthusiasm for the bonfire with the continued importance of the parade point to changes in the character and importance of traditions. The bonfire changed as a result of regulations and, despite my experience, many insist the bonfire is lesser. Perception affects people's emotional response and willingness to attend. The week is just prelude. The game is the thing.

Game Day: They blow up about 1,000 balloons (Paul)

Another overcast day with drizzling rain. The last two days of cold and rain, especially the parade last night, have caught up with me. Sore throat, cough, and general achiness. My first inclination is that I am coming down with a cold. No, I, in fact, have a cold. I get a pocketful of lozenges and pop a couple Advil and head to St. Timothy's. I am headed for the game day church service. I know of St. Timothy's, or St. Tim's, because that was the church of Paul Brown. I also know from my visit to Obie's permanent cage at the stadium that St. Tim's does the "Blessing of the Beast" where each Obie gets blessed.

I arrive and see three cars in the parking lot. I am not that early from the

listed time. I hope I got this one right. I knock on the door closest to the parking lot. No answer. I walk around the building trying each door. All are locked; no one answers. As I walk around, I see a historical landmark sign next on the front lawn. I walk back and try again on the door closest to the parking lot. If any door, this one has to be the one. A middle-aged man answers. I introduce myself and tell him I am here for the morning service. He welcomes me in and says that his name is Ryan. Ryan and I share a nice conversation. I tell him about my research and he is happy to talk about his experiences. He is a former player, playing under “Coach Kearn.” I don't recognize the name. He tells me about this being Paul Brown's church and that they held his funeral service here. Ryan says that it was the fullest he has ever seen the church. “There were eight hundred to nine hundred people standing inside and outside the church.” He then points out the roughly dozen Tiffany windows, most displaying two biblical scenes. During the course of this conversation with Ryan I find out one key fact I did not know about the service: it is not a general service, it is only for the players and coaches. He quickly then lets me know that I am welcome nonetheless. The reverend walks up and Ryan excuses himself because he has a lot of work to get in before the game.

The reverend introduces himself. I ask him for permission to attend the service and he welcomes me. I ask him about one particular window, a beautifully colored stained glass window of a haloed Jesus holding a baby sheep – a lamb. He tells me it's the Good Shepherd window. That is a common theme for stained glass windows in Catholic churches. He points to two windows against a side wall and explains how they were broken during a storm in the 70's and were paid for entirely by donations from members. We

talk about the service. He says he has a couple in his pocket to keep some variety from year to year. He excuses himself to finish preparing for the service.

I walk through looking at the different displays. One, in a small passage into the nave I see a series of portraits. They are the church rectors since the civil war. Most of them are drawings, but the rectors' portraits post-WWII are photographs. Lots of mutton chops. As I walk around, in the windows on the opposite side of the church are two renderings of the church. One is "1836-1892," the other is "1893-". Very cool. On a table next to those windows is a map of Massillon dated 1870. It is stamped from the Library of Congress. For the want of better phrasing, I feel the immense history. It is on every wall and in every room. The team walks in. 35 minutes late. I ask Coach Hall for permission to stay for the service, he says sure and welcomes me. That is a level of courtesy I did not expect from someone going into a game of such importance. The team take up almost all the pews on one side of the aisle; however the pews themselves are not full. The players take up the front dozen rows while the coaches sit more dispersed in the remaining seven (or so) rows. I sit in the last pew on the opposite as the team.

The priest walks in wearing full vestments. "Welcome on behalf of St. Tim's." He talk about effort and struggle to succeed. He says that takes place in football, but also in the desire to live in God's love. The effort for both is constant and, at times, challenging, requiring 110% effort. He goes on to talk about the great tradition of Massillon football. "You have 123 years of people watching; you have 123 years of people playing; you have 123 years of people praying." He says they have that tradition and everyone who supports them as

a foundation on which they can stand. He goes on to talk about the power of prayer and that we pray for both personal success and spiritual success. I hear honking horns, a couple short honks followed by a longer one. I assume a car was driving by and saw the bus. It was not “get out of the way” or “you almost caused an accident” or “hey, I know that person” honking. He provides a moment of silence so that we may all pray to the Lord. I was in my head for what may have only been a minute or two. I looked and most players and all the couches looked like they were praying. I saw three players’ heads up, looking around. I prayed myself, but quickly became self-conscious, thinking about praying and recognizing my thinking about praying rather than praying. He closes the service with the Benediction and Dismissal. The Lord's Prayer was in there. I left wondering what kind/denomination of church. Catholic? (I later searched the 'net and found sttimsmassillon.org for the Episcopal church). As I walk through the parking lot, the buses pull out, but head in different directions. I dunno. (11-2-13 fieldnote)

McKinley Week culminates on Saturday with the game. However, the day of the game continues the build to the game. The preparation goes right up to game time. The team attends a church service at St. Timothy's, Paul Brown's church; cheerleaders and several boosters decorate the locker room with balloons and signs of encouragement; and many tailgate, including a morning Kegs and Eggs breakfast. The events continue the renegotiation of individual, team, and civic identities. Valorization and socialization continue, as well. In this section, I walk through the McKinley Week game day up through the game as I witnessed people prepare for the game experience. In preparation, they mediate civic, team, and individual identities, often sublimating the individual for collective experiences. The

desire for collective experiences reaches its pinnacle in the stands. People strive to both connect to fellow fans and distance from rival fans. Many relax interpersonal boundaries as they welcome strangers donning the orange and black. People expend the emotional energy from the week. They literally rise and fall (stand and sit) with the fortunes of the Tigers. Cheers laud Massillon while jeers deride Bulldog fans. While some of the vocal minority can seek individual attention and elevated status in the group, most attend to the game and put aside the desire for individuality.

Also, during the game, I witnessed the results of the accumulation of attachment during the week. I witnessed the expenditure of social capital. Certain fans receive prestige opportunities from their affiliation with the team. Additionally, some play off of the attachment for the betterment of others. They frame non-profit drives as expressions of the rivalry with the announcement of the victor. Some even employ the baser aspects of the rivalry at the announcement of winners. The collective identities carry through. The desire for collective energy wanes as the outcome of the game becomes clearer until winners and losers are decided. The invested emotional energy exaggerates the post-game experience depending on the game outcome.

At St. Tim's, I marveled at the desire for history, both the religious history of the church and secular history of the town. Every parishioner walks through the displays for every service. Certainly, after a time the experience fade becoming innocuous. However, it is there every time. In this case, the team was let in the back door forgoing the full experience of history. The service started promptly as the pastor was aware of the team's full schedule, in addition to its late arrival. The pastor invoked the immense history of the team. Much like the sermon at the prayer breakfast, history takes precedent in how players should understand the rivalry. They follow a legacy of hard work and success. They establish the connection between the two, offering the cause-effect relationship. Bringing it back to faith, hard work and belief

(in the team and in God) are rewarded with victory – one as the ultimate victory. Most players appeared attentive, respecting the experience as part of their role on the team and in the community. A few lost attention and the coach was occasionally distracted with the time. The service functioned as a solemn socialization into both team and church. The format was decidedly Catholic, while the message was non-denominational in that the message could have been the same at any local parish. However, St. Tim's was Paul Brown's church and he takes on the role of a spiritual leader for the team. Players are left to resolve the conflation of faith and team.

My plan is to head to the Firehouse, a sports bar near St. Tim's for a Kegs and Eggs breakfast before the game. With a little under four hours before the game (just after 10am), thinking the team would need to be in their locker room about two hours before the game, I decide to head to Fawcett Stadium to join Eric and his family decorate the locker room. Nothing eventful on the drive over. I pull into a large parking lot across the street from Fawcett, home of the Canton McKinley Bulldogs. Tailgaters already fill at least 2/3 of the lot. Still overcast, it looks like it's gonna rain again. I walk towards the stadium and work my way around. A young man in a golf cart rolls up and asks me what I'm looking for. I tell him the visitors' locker room to help the boosters decorate. He tells me I was heading the wrong way and offers a lift on his cart. Cool. I thank him for the lift upon arrival.

I walk in, glance around and see Eric, Jen, and the kids. We have our "hi"s and some polite small talk. Jen is doing well and Eric is excited for the game. The locker room is basic. I expected nicer, but it is a visitors' locker room, so understandable. Bare cement floor, bare cement ceiling, high school-lie

lockers on three walls, one of those white porcelain drinking fountains where the water doesn't clear that metal guard where against which I always banged my teeth, an adjacent shower room with fifteen shower heads still a cement floor with a big drain in the center of the room. Two strips of fluorescent light hang from the ceiling by the locker. Another two in the shower room. Much of the work has already been done. Orange and black and orange and white signs are taped to the black wall space and Massillon stickers on every locker. The most common sign are the pre-made "Go Tigers Go" sign. Lots of construction paper signs, "Silence the Bark". Multiple Orange "Beat McKinley" bumper sticker with black text on every locker. All the signs are hung and people working helium tanks fill orange and blacks balloons appears all that is left. Mostly socializing going on. I excuse myself to sit on a shellacked wooden bench to fill in my notes from St. Tim's. I didn't write down the minister's name and can't remember it despite hearing it at least three times, including when he was introduced at the prayer breakfast. I start tying balloons to cover the ceiling. Most of the children are helping are helping with the inflation. Jen's kids are too young to help. . More balloon tying. My manual dexterity in not letting the balloons go flying off or deflate impresses me. Go me. Eric excuses himself and his family as he has another duty and Jen goes to the seats with the kids. The door opens and I see three old men tying the end of a large plastic casing with easily over a hundred balloons in alternating layers of orange and black. Still balloon tying. Most of the people have left or are sitting on a bench in front of the lockers watching the few remaining workers, including me. Not long until no more balloons. I meet an older man, Martin, and we exchange pleasantries when Paul walks in. Paul

says they are looking at a new location for the museum, something more permanent, but nothing is set. The museum went from an old elementary school to the basement of the old city government building. A loud “POP” as one of the balloons pop. The cement everything make it louder than it might have been. No one didn't flinch. A few "Ahh!"s. A couple people begin hanging orange and black streamers over the doorway. Nothing left to do so I head back to the car and the tailgating. Drizzling rain. Ugh. (11-2-13 fieldnote)

Earlier in the week, Paul told me about families decorating the team's locker room before the game. He says, "Prior to the game, the McKinley game, they blow up balloons. That becomes a party. Starts at 9:00. Somebody brings donuts and coffee, and they blow up about 1,000 balloons." James also told me about the event and invited me to help. The thousand balloons was certainly an exaggeration, though the hundreds orange and black balloons on the ceiling was impressive. Everyone there was supporting the team, hanging sign and streamers. They used helium tanks to inflate balloons, tied the balloons, and often handed them over to children to release them into the ceiling. The event was also a social occasion for those who may forgo tailgating, people as part of the team unite to help inspire the players. People were fulfilling the desire to contribute, working within the celebratory complex. The event allowed children a way to participate in the complex. Decorating the locker room was a way to valorize the team and socialize oneself and children. People who didn't know me welcomed me and talked about the lives and their appreciation for the team. They wanted to let me know how much the team meant to them. Even towards the end, when the work slowed down and people sat and conversed, they talked about their lives and anticipation for the game. They worked to connect to the team and each other. Orange and blacked surrounded everyone.

I get turned around for a bit. I pass a dumpster painted back with “Go McKinley Beat Massillon” in red and white lettering. I see a McKinley sign on the fence around the field, “We Own This Block.” Five teen girls walk by in Massillon cheer jackets. They point me in the right direction. As I walk back, I think about running back to the Firehouse for the Kegs and Eggs. I quickly dismiss the thought. Lots of tailgating going on and I have a nice parking spot. The tailgating has picked up. More cars, the lot is almost full, more tents and tailgating fun. I get back to the car and write up the notes from the decorating session. The wind and rain pick up. People head back into their cars. Almost all of the activity disappears into the cars and trucks. The two games of cornhole stop. No more tossing around of the football. Some people stay under their tents. All the tents are themed – Pittsburgh Steelers, Ohio State University, and Bud Lite are the most frequent. One guy in front of me remains undaunted. He is hanging his Massillon and Ohio State flags in the midst of all this rain. Only a few minutes – less than 10 – and the rain stops. Wind still is going pretty good. A group of five is joined by more Massillon fans. Hugs and handshakes all around.

I venture out to walk around. I see my breath, but it doesn't feel that cold. I hear radios from a handful of cars. Three are playing the Ohio State football game. Another is probably a tape, as it plays “Eye of the Tiger” followed by Katy Perry's “Roar.” Groups of kids all around tossing footballs around. Some running around like a three- or four-person kid version of football. One catches it and gets chased by the others. Another game is one I played growing up. One kid would throw the football as high into the air as he/she can. She/he

immediate calls out a point value depending on how high and how far the tightly grouped children would have to run to catch it. Point totals get tallied up at some point. (This also has a two-person where it goes back and forth.) Towards the back of the parking lot a family plays a more organized football game with two teams and set end zones. Every player and spectator is pinned with a “Beat McKinley” button. They ask me if I want to play. I decline but talk to a woman painted tiger face with cat ears on her head (**Figure 5.8**). She (I forgot her name) likes the pre-game stuff as much as the game. But she loves being in the crowd with everyone cheering. A handful of McKinley fans (at least people wearing McK gear) mingling with the almost exclusively Massillon tailgating. There are two groups on the opposite end of the parking lot – towards the stadium.



Figure 21: Game Day Tailgating - Woman in Tiger Face Paint and Gloves

I had forgone a jacket, preferring a Massillon sweatshirt. Poor choice as I get colder. I walk back to my car to warm up. I don't know if they are the same girls, but I pass a group of teens, some girls in cheer squad jackets. It hits me that I've seen younger kids and teens with family members, but not a large group of them in the lot. I meet up with a group near my car. (Didn't jot down names.) Four younger adults and a young girl, I presume is a daughter. I was going to ask, but the decorated man in the chairs asks if I want to take pictures of them. I oblige. One of the guys pulls up his short-sleeved shirt

sleeve to show me a Massillon tiger tattooed on his right bicep. We wanted a full tailgate experience, but says that police “told me to put the grill away.” Still cold, so I excuse myself go and sit in my car with the heat up and radio on.

I see it’s about an hour before game time. Large groups begin walking to the stadium; tents are pulled down. I turn to 990AM – the Massillon station – just in time for the pre-game show. He says the Tigers have already made the playoffs, but that doesn't diminish the importance of this rivalry game. He says “Hello” to Tiger Nation and “Welcome to Tiger Nation world-wide.” Ray gives his “Three Keys to the Game.” Nothing groundbreaking. Massillon must stop the McKinley quarterback – who is a high-level athlete and Division I talent committed to Ohio State. They must “win in the trenches” on offense meaning Massillon's linemen must perform better than McKinley's defensive linemen. Massillon must also win the turnover battle. Those apply to every game. More large groups head over to the stadium. Most people have left. I follow suit.

On my way to the game, I pass a group of teen girls, one of whom is in a McKinley jacket. She sees my sweatshirt which read “I BLEED ORANGE AND BLACK.” She says, “That's stupid. I bleed red like normal people.” I can't tell whether it's clever, because McK is red and black, or just mean. Teenagers. I walk to the back of a long, but fast-moving line. Once we get past the gate, the area opens up into a pavilion area with food carts and concession and souvenir stands. While in the lines to get some hot dogs and a soda, the Massillon swing band plays through the pavilion. I don't recognize the tune. The girls at the stand are upbeat and very courteous. It brings a smile out of

me. Enough time before the game, I go around towards the visiting locker room. I see Eric standing next to one of two the plastic sausage casing-like balloon full of orange and black balloons. **(Figure 5.9)** He tells me this is the first year he gets to go out onto the field to release the balloons. The people take the casings out onto the field in the end zone. I see the batteries on my camera are dying. They were new last night. I hate the rain. An older man in a Massillon hat, golf shirt, and jacket walks through yelling everyone to “clear a path” for the football team. And works his way through clearing that path. The large crowd splits and the players in white and orange helmets and uniforms. Cheerleaders hold up a large circular paper “Beat McKinley” banner for the team to run through. The team walks out onto the field next to the group with the balloons. The balloons get released, the Tigers run out **(Figure 5.10)**, no running through the banner. Apparently, a banner is just a banner. I make my way around to my seat. Richard got a ticket for me. (11-2-13 fieldnote)



Figure 22: Game Day - Tube with Orange and Black Balloons

Tailgating is such a unifying experience. People settle around their locations, but most walk around socializing with others. The limited alcohol and lack of grilling, two hallmarks of most tailgating, did not deter the festive atmosphere. They relax the usual interpersonal boundaries to welcome fellow fans. Orange and black become identifiers, though, in this case, the red and black of McKinley marked outsiders more than black and orange marked

insiders. Most people presumed affiliation with Massillon. Even McKinley the rare McKinley fan walking through was welcomed. If they traveled over to the Massillon portion of the parking lot, they were with Massillon fans. They were invited into “our” party and socialize with use. McKinley had its own section away from Massillon group. The festivities brought people closer to an oneness. Team identification strengthened and comradery built.

Tailgating is also a preparation for the game, hence its and other like events’ apropos colloquialism as “pre-gaming.” People leave their daily lives and prepare for the commitment to team. While levels of participation vary, heightened preparation heightens are a function of attachment and inform future investment. People transition into the type of fan they will become at the game. Children are allowed to run around, participating in the pre-game as they see fit. However, they are experiencing the pre-game and socializing into tailgating as preparation for the game. People repeatedly told me the events leading up to the game are a



Figure 23: McKinley Game - Team Runs onto the Field

“parties.” Decorating the locker room is partying according to Paul; Kegs and Eggs include alcohol into the party; tailgating take the party outdoors and closer in proximity to the game. The party preparation of the fans contrasts with the sober preparation of the team I

experienced at St. Tim’s. As a team, players need less inculcation into the oneness of the team. In any case, people prepare for the game experience and that experience is magnified after a week of build-up.

Eric, who runs the MassillonProud social media network and volunteers for other efforts to support the team, received an honored position in his eyes. He gets to go onto the field with other privileged associates. They are part of the transition of the players as they run

onto the field right before the game. Only the cheer squad members are closer to the end of that transition.

Massillon received the kickoff and gets the ball first. As I head to my seat, I go for my ticket to see where I sit. Can't find it. I used it to get in the stadium so I had/have it. I don't see Richard. I look for Jen and the kids. No luck. I find an empty space in the stands and sit there. Over the PA I hear that this is part of the US Marines Great Rivalry Series. Massillon breaks off a long run and a huge "TIG-ERS" chant starts three rows up from me. A score for Massillon and an eruption of cheers. One man, a few rows down from me and a little over, yells loudly with his back to the field. Looking for fans to follow, I have dubbed him "Cheerleader," a man with a tight brown haircut, gray Massillon sweatshirt, black denim Massillon jacket and jeans. As Massillon lines up for the kickoff, players on the sideline and a couple on the field exhort the fans to get louder. I look around, but don't see live tiger Obie or human mascot Obie. I do see Ronald McDonald walking the Massillon sideline. A man in the stands engages him. I can't hear the exchange. Watching the action on the field while scanning the stands occasionally. A Massillon quarterback keeper doesn't gain many yards. I hear a woman's voice calmly say, "He can't run." It's the 1st quarter intermission, Ronald McDonald takes the field with a few other adults. They announce the results of the blood battle: Massillon with 213 pints, McKinley 154. Massillon wins. A few scattered cheers. Not much. The PA announcer says that the 367 pints will help over 1,100 people. He says that the trophy stays with Massillon.

The second quarter progresses uneventfully. On a third down with one

yard to go for a first down for McKinley, Cheerleader stands up turns to the audience, chanting "Let's Go D." Later, a helmet-to-helmet hit by a Massillon defender on the quarterback. A woman, one of the few scattered McKinley fans in our section, yells "You guys did that last year!" A young woman in a Massillon headband ear-warmers replies and orange paw prints on her cheeks, "Yeah, but we beat you. We beat you!" Later in the quarter a woman behind me calls out "TIG," but she doesn't get the "ERS" response. She says, "Oh, c'mon." A loud sound comes over the PA, it takes me a moment to realize it's a bulldog growl. OK?! The PA announcer says it's time to announce the winner of the Food Fight. 16,726 pound of food donated, over 13, 000 from McKinley. Wow. The woman with paw prints on her cheeks shouts, "That's OK. We win Blood Bowl every year. They have more people they need to feed." A third down and Cheerleader starts a "De-Fense" chant. Some smack-talking. Paw Print Lady is smack-talking the nearby McKinley fan. McKinley fan smiles and responds, "You don't want my comeback." A Massillon penalty and McKinley fan says, "I don't know if you saw that." Paw Print Lady points to the scoreboard, showing Massillon winning, and says "They can spell 'T-I-G,' too. They don't spell very well." The PA announcer says the National Chin-up Challenge taking place right outside the stadium. McKinley fans starts a group cheer, but I can't quite make it out. In short order, a big Massillon "Score-Board" chant toward the other side of the stadium. Cheerleader chants "De-Fense" a couple times, a few people join in. With 59 seconds left in the first half, McKinley has the ball on the Massillon 25-yard line. A huge "Let's go dogs" chant fills the stadium. The loudest cheer so far. At :03 in the first half, McKinley tries a field goal. Massillon blocks it and returns the ball for a

touchdown. As the play develops, the Massillon side erupts with cheers. Nothing organized, but lots of screaming. After the touchdown, a huge “TIG-ERS” call and response shakes the stands I’m on. Massive.

Halftime. 14-0 Massillon, Some marines come out with a banner that says “Great American Rivalry Series.” The PA announcer says the induction into the GARS Hall of Fame. Each year, one player from each team who excelled during the game gets inducted. I don’t hear who gets inducted from Massillon, they list his accomplishments, but I can’t make it out. Eric Wright gets the honor this year for McKinley. The Massillon Swing Band comes out. They are oriented to the McKinley side, so we get their backs, except when they turn. They go through their traditional order: “Tiger Rag” to “Carry On” to “Alma Mater.” The drum major elicits a few “Oooh”s with the height he gets on a particularly high baton toss. The band continues with the Imperial March from Star Wars, Glenn Miller’s “In the Mood,” and some tango. McKinley fans start “Let’s go Dogs” while the Tiger band plays. As the band leaves the field, they get some cheers from the Massillon side. I would again call it a “smattering.” The McKinley Band takes the field. The PA announcer says that the band today is over members because over three hundred band alums have come back for the game. The first song – I don’t recognize, I assume it is some McKinley specific song. Then, they perform “Backstabber” by the O’ Jays. The band then marches on the field to spell “Ohio” in cursive or “Script Ohio” as popularized by the Ohio State University marching band. An older woman marches onto the field (I can’t remember the instrument,) to cheers from the McKinley fans as she dots the “I” in Script Ohio. (Dotting the “I” is a great honor in Ohio.) A man near me yells, “Try something original next time!”

Admittedly, that is my response, too. Interesting how “Tiger Rag” and “Carry On” are beloved traditions in Massillon, but Script Ohio is unoriginal for McKinley. Ah well. A woman explains to two young girls that the performance of Script Ohio was impressive. “You don't know. I was [*inaudible*]. It is really difficult to do Script Ohio.” End of halftime. The rain starts.

On the kickoff, the ball comes down for a McKinley player to catch and a pocket of Massillon fans shout “Don't drop it.” A McKinley player on the field near the Massillon side looks over at them and shakes his head. The McKinley offense is near us, deep in their own territory. A louder “De-Fense” chant begins. The pass is incomplete. 4th down. Cheers. People around me stand up. I think it must be a TV camera. A rolled-up t-shirt flies over my head. Wrong. Cheerleaders are shooting t-shirts into the stands. Nothing near me. A deep pass from the Massillon quarterback is caught and down near the end zone by us. Our section cheers. Two plays later, on 2nd down and goal to go on the 2-yard line. A big “TIG-ERS” chant lasts until the next play – a touchdown. Loud cheers. The game is becoming a blowout. With Massillon dominating and the rain, groups of people get up to leave. My sweatshirt is soaked with rain dripping off my face. I see Cheerleader climb up the stands back to his seat. I hadn't realized he was gone. He sits and down and in short order shouts “Let's let 'em know. De-Fense!” Not a lot in the way of fan response. A few plays later a Massillon defender returns an interception for a touchdown. Another rousing “TIG-ERS” call and response comes from the Massillon fans. Paw Print Lady says, “Where's my McKinley gut? Where's my McKinley guy? I owe him.” I dunno. It's 3rs and 7 on the 13 yard line for the Tigers.

Cheerleader screams “TIG.” No one responds. He turns to face the stands and tries again. No response. An “Over-Rated” chants starts a ways down from us, several, but not most, people join in. More people leave, big groups of people this time. Massillon kicks a field goal. The cheers are less enthusiastic. More rain. More groups leaving. Still 2/3 full. Cheerleader tries to get a “Play-Off Bound” chant going. No go. It's the end of the third quarter and I decide to leave. The rain has a lot to do with it.

I am in a steady stream of people leaving the stadium. Most of them are McKinley fans. One young man is yelling profanities, giving McKinley fans two middle fingers, and saying they got “ass whooped.” Massillon and McKinley fans urge him to stop, “cool it” gets repeated. “Knock it off.” He reassures people that everything is OK. He says he is just having fun and alludes to him being in a gang. “Shut up,” is now getting thrown around. I am walking next to an older African American couple when the Jerk points to the man and says {He knows what I'm talking about. He's an OG.} The woman with the older man tells him to ignore the guy. More people are getting involved in trying to get the Jerk to shut up. Some McKinley fans begins yelling at him. Jerk yells “Scoreboard!” a couple times. I am near the road between the stadium and parking lot. It seems pretty clear that a fight is about to break out. I see a police officer across the street. The officer is looking in the opposite direction away from the people who were walking. As I cross the street, I hear “Fuck you!” I look and Jerk has stopped walking and is now face-to-face with a young black man. Other people are standing around. Most people, though, are hurrying away. I am almost to the police officer when a young woman runs up and points to the impending skirmish. The officer runs

toward to crowd and talks into his walkie-talkie. I continue to my car. I am real tired of the rain and cold. (11-2-13 fieldnote)

The game environment stands above all others I experienced prior. Gavin described the atmosphere as follows: "Opening night, everything's just charged, right? Imagine that ten times a year. Actually it's nine. The tenth time, the McKinley game is beyond that. That's nuclear." Gavin asserts that every game in the season builds toward the McKinley game. The experience of the game is an experience of oneness. People may move between investment in the action on the field and an awareness of oneself. Even then, attending to ones place in the stadium or other personal concerns means attention is not on the game. The excitement and energy sharpen focus on the field. The quality of the performances informs the energy. The game ends the week of building energy and attachment, meaning the game is the place and time for the expenditure of the energy. The experience of "us" as one team manifests in group reactions (often spontaneous). Much like the standing and sitting during church services, fans stand, chant, and yell given external cues and embodied knowledge. A touchdown elicits standing and cheering; cheerleaders calling out "TIG" leads to responsive shouts of "ERS"; and perceived injustices from referees and game officials result in jeers. Those who lack the embodied knowledge take physical cues from other fans. Those who lack the investment in the shared identities either forego participation or succumb to perceived pressure to appear as an active participant. Both are religious experiences, giving yourself over to ourself.

During the experience, individual desires arise. The efforts of the man I dubbed The Cheerleader to exhort participation was an attempt to lead the oneness, an effort to alter the largely flattened hierarchy. Fans saw those efforts and largely rejected them. Some fans, in the flow of the game, possess the ability to start "TIG" to the "ERS" response or start the "DE-FENSE" leading others to join in. The key is the flow of the game and the lack of

perceived effort to control responses. Cheerleaders are granted authority to determine terms of participation. Frequently, however, their authority gives way to the oneness of the fans. Fans move fluidly between collective and individual identities. For most, the desire is to experience oneness.

During the game, I saw how the Red Cross and the food bank capitalized on the rivalry. They took advantage of the accentuated intensity of the collective civic experience. Turning the augmented attachment to team and town provided the basis of the blood and food drives. They framed the non-profit efforts as an extension of the rivalry. Additionally, the year prior, the exhortations over the public address system present another example of trying to profit off of the rivalry. At the time when people experience elevated collective identities, they are encouraged to support the school, the home of the football team they want to see succeed. In 2012, people were about to vote on a ballot initiative designed to limit the political power of public employee unions. Throughout the week, the adversarial coaches were featured in a radio advertisement encouraging people to vote against the referendum, including one minutes after the conclusion of the game as fans were in their cars returning to the daily lives. In this case, rather than playing off the competitive spirit of the rivalry, the ad sought to capitalize on the impact of two bitter rivals coming together to fight a common foe. This, along with the myriad other ways that individuals profit from association with teams or the game, demonstrates the expenditure of social capital that is an important feature of the rivalry.

The game also informs meaning-making following the game. People expend energy during the game temporarily sublimating the individual identities. The excitement and energy of the game heightened my emotional experience. In hindsight, my attention to the game was greater than any other game. The return to the stasis of their daily lives contains residual energy and the memories of the experience. They personalize the experience. Residents often

translate the McKinley game experience into their individual sense of self. Personal experiences of the game stand out for people as they remember their childhoods. The memories of the game remain vivid for many residents, if occasionally imprecise. In a discussion of when they became fans, when they got hooked, the members of the Museum Group have the following exchange:

Richard: It's hard to remember.

William: It was 1956 for me. It was a snowstorm. I was watching it on TV.

Scotty: McKinley game.

William: Yeah.

Scotty: It was at McKinley

William: Yeah.

Marshall: No. Fifty-six had to be here.

William: No, it was the McKinley game. Maybe it was '55.

Richard: Fifty-five.

Marshall: Fifty-five.

William: It was during a snowstorm and had a bad snap, and it cost 'em the game in a snowstorm. Yeah. I'll never forget it.

Interviewer: Cost?

William: Yeah. Cost us the game.

Interviewer: And that's the first time you remember.

William: Yeah. That's when I became a fan.

The memories for many remain vivid. They also inform how people remember childhood. When talked about his early experiences of the game, he talked about his dad working for Republic Steel. His dad's employment in the steel industry was relevant to his experience of the game. He talked about the subsequent departure of Republic Steel. Winning and losing

factor into how the game informs the return to stasis. In the next section, I show how the implications of the investment of attachment as it relates to the outcome of the game.

The Stakes: A depression for a couple days (Stacey)

Winning or losing the McKinley game matters to Massillonians. The bombardment of the iconography of the team, from the wall-to-wall signage to the pervasiveness of Obie and the band to the inundation of orange and black, both reflects and builds the importance people attach to the game. The energy builds throughout the week until its expenditure at the game. People transition move between individual and collective identities. The changes inform people's subsequent attitudes and actions. In this section, I point to the emotional and practical stakes resulting from the intensified emotional quality engendered through the events of the week. Massillon losses to McKinley lead to let-downs and lost ballot initiative result (probably).

While many sporting events generate excitement and fervor, McKinley week feels different. Liz explained the difference experiences when she said, "Yeah, it's the only high school game that you can bet on in Vegas which just seems insane. So I think it's just – it's because of those kinds of things it takes it to, you know, this whole new level where people in New York have heard of Massillon before they've never been here or has never met us." That "whole new level" and "insane" perspective from people outside the community is also part of the experience of residents. Expectations reach nearly unidentifiable fervor, as an exchange between Gavin and Danny demonstrates.

Gavin: I mean, given the opportunity a little boy you say "Hey, you can go to the Super Bowl or you can go to the Massillon McKinley game tonight."

Danny: It's – I'm going to the McKinley game.

Gavin: Where? Super where? Nah.

Danny: Is Massillon playing in the Super Bowl?

Gavin: That's really what it meant to me I mean. And like I says it was just a great town to grow up in. I mean it was – you know we grew up it was still a very, very innocent time, you know. It got a little bit shattered as we got –

While most might find this risible and the exchange, most likely, is hyperbole, it still reflects the "fever pitch" generated for the game.

The emotional responses, given the import ascribed to the game, it's understandable. The practical effects may seem unreasonable. Stacey described the emotion and practicality as follows:

(Residents) definitely do get upset and it feels like there's been so many coaches who've come and gone in just my time here. You know if you don't have a good record they're gonna kick you out and that will – they will run you out of town. I know a lot of the local businesses will put up the posters of the – the boys, uh, you know, supporting one player.

Like you says, if they – if they lose (the McKinley game) the town just goes into a depression for a couple days. So, yeah it's very much that everyone's rallying behind you, but they will punch you back if you don't do well.

The history of the football program also illustrates the importance of the McKinley game. Elwood Kammer took the Tigers to a 26-4 record but lost two out of three McKinley games and was retired after his third season, but continued to teach at the school.

Another practical effect of the game concerns school levies. Diane explained,

If it's not a good year everybody is in a bad mood. Yeah, so definitely. I mean there has been stories before about how the winning that McKinley game that one year helped to pass the school levy, so it's that because that win was so big everybody was in such a great mood that – yeah, it affects the community in

that sense.

James recalled a specific instance. He described it as follows:

The, you know, when we built the – people talk about when we built the new high school, we voted – no the vote that was the year after – right after the McKinley game, which Massillon won. And so then Massillon voted to spend the money on the new high school. And you wonder if Massillon had lost if they would have done, you know. I think how the team goes does influence what happens in the city.

This matches my experience. During the 2012 season, a school levy was on the ballot shortly after the McKinley game. Eric doubted that the initiative would pass. When I returned in mid-November for the Tiger Legacy exhibit, officials were still counting ballots. (Rumor was that the levy had passed by a single vote.) It passed, although I could not find the vote totals – and no one knew the exact numbers. It's difficult to be certain in these situations, but the belief that coaches were fired and ballots past due to the result of the McKinley game speak to its import. It also speaks to the meaning-making derived from the game. People understand their civic, team, and individual identities differently following the game. Winning perpetuates a positive environment and good will toward their relationship to the town. Losing diminishes the civic attachment. Football and the game inform how people understand their relationships to the town and school as the home of the team. They act in accordance to those changing identities.

Conclusion:

Football is bred in Massillon (Luther Emery)

Residents in Massillon understand their relationship to the town through the lens of football. Football offers residents a narrative to which they can accede when the popularized narratives of the town fail to appropriately frame their experiences. The construction of Massillon as a blue-collar small town conflicts with historical narratives presented by other local institutions. Re-enacting the football narrative constructs a sense of self that rationalizes civic identities when confronted with counter-narratives. High school football, then, perpetuates the local, blue collar sense of self. By advancing the football narrative, they can claim that racial and class relations are less relevant in their lives because football enacts a classless and colorblind meritocracy. Because black and white players work where only talent matters, race and class are no longer determinants of success and opportunity. The spectacles and rituals of football also inform residents' relationship to the team. They valorize the team and socialize newcomers and children into the embodied performances which create emotional attachments. Attachment has reached such proportions for some that they ascribe a biological or essential quality to football. Former sports journalist and football historian Luther Emery writes,

Football is bred in Massillon. The native citizen has heard it talked about from the time he opened his eyes in the crib, and new residents have frequently bored to tears with the boasts of the old guard until they, too, become convinced that there's something more than usual about the game as it is played here. The whole community enters into the spirit of the thing (qtd. In Shook 13).

The essential quality of the team also gets perpetuated through discourse and practices.

Residents conflate team and town where supporting the team means supporting the town. People enact civic identities as they recirculate the football narrative. Beginning with Paul Brown, an infrastructure supporting the team has grown into a celebratory complex of hundreds of projects and programs. Participation in the complex enhances the oneness of being part of the team. People access the greatness associated with the team by constructing a team identity. Individual, civic, and team identities coalesce during McKinley Week, where residents can combat others who represent what they strive to overcome. The repetition of images and performances ingrains the attraction to the team. Residents use football as a mechanism for meaning-making.

The actions taken by individuals within specific organizations in Massillon on behalf of those organizations contribute to narratives which inform residents' construction and understanding of their collective localized identity. The City of Massillon proffers a narrative of the town that emphasizes the industrial base with small-town sensibilities. City officials suggest a commercial origin of the town as Thomas and Charity Rotch with associate Arvine Wales traveled from New Bedford, MA with a flock of Merino sheep. The narrative notes how commercial interests grew including the opening of the Ohio-Erie canal, or the Port of Massillon, in 1828. Other industries, such as farm machinery, coal, and steel provide an industrial character to the town. The city also highlights local neighborhoods. Residents frequently reiterate the narratives put forth by the city, identifying “mom and pop stores” and neighborliness as prominent values. Iteration and reiteration of official narrative inform construction of collective identities. The wider football narrative of the town incorporates stories of industrialization local interests, namely through the high school as host to the football team.

The work of other tax payer-funded organizations both reveal absences and present counters to the official narrative of the city. In satisfying the desire of Massillonians for

history, MassMu, Spring Hill, and MPL provide elements of the town's past that resist the idea of a blue-collar small town, elements that may suggest a more progressive history. Spring Hill hosts an Underground Railroad reenactment; MassMu archives show a communist mayor who organized the first march on Washington DC, several leaders in the women's rights movement, and the Charity School for orphans; and, MPL documents establish the Rotches as Quakers. In fact, the city narrative misspells both Spring Hill and the mayor Jacob Coxey. The presentation of conflicts demonstrates ambivalences residents experience in how they may want to change in ways that are inconsistent with how they currently construct their collective identity. The small town sensibilities conflict with the desire for population growth; and, the industrial town beset by economic hardship conflicts with both possible current economic growth and the desire to gain businesses and jobs. The ambivalences point to the need for another narrative to resolve those ambivalences.

The Massillon Tiger Football Booster Club organizes many events in support of the Massillon Tiger student-athletes. They organize volunteer opportunities, fundraisers, practical support, and fan development. The Booster Club both comes out of and contributes to the importance of football. The Booster Club "sharpens the focus" of residents on the football team and other supporting elements, such as the band and cheer squads. Emphasis on the football team deflects focus from the ambivalences. The team provides a source of success, allowing residents to maintain underdog status economically; the focus on high school football frames the team in highly local terms; and, the values ascribed to football – such hard work, perseverance, and sacrifice – fits within a blue-collar (or industrial) identity. The importance of football fosters narratives that mediate other conflicting narratives.

In the experience and celebration of football, residents engage in a series of social and cultural performances. One may best understand these performances, and their supporting organizations, as a celebratory complex. The celebratory complex consists of the rituals,

spectacles, and everyday actions related to the football team. The parades, rallies, tailgating, and the game itself, all include ritual and spectacular elements. People wear orange and black, paint their faces, and sing traditional songs in a predetermined order. A giant inflated Obie stands above everyone. The fluid, semiautonomous structure of the celebratory complex facilitates the processes which inform collective identity construction. The complex valorizes the football team and, to a lesser extent, the band and cheer squads. As the object of pep rallies, parades, and booster club meetings, the football team achieves a prominent and prioritized status. Football players get their pictures on light post banners and receive special attention through the Sideliners program. The band and cheer squads have their own booster organizations like the football team; however, they are less prominent than the football boosters. Several programs socialize children into the celebratory complex. For example, children often huddle around the live tiger's cage and call out to the human mascot when walking the sideline or cheering with the squads. Newborns are given footballs in their cribs shortly after birth. During McKinley Week, handlers take live tiger Obie through local elementary schools teaching them about tigers and the rivalry. Youth cheer squads and football teams get children involved at a young age. All of these provide cherished memories for adults as they reflect upon their affinity for the football team. The rituals iterate and reiterate the songs, signs, and symbols for all. Additionally, the codes in the spectacles relay the importance of Obie and the football team. The everyday encounters and interactions between people inform their relationship to the team and each other. For instance, the Obie and orange and black color scheme appear nearly everywhere in town. One would be unable to live or work in town without repeated exposure to Obie. The rituals, spectacles, and everyday actions inform how residents relate to each other and understand those relationships through the "lens" of football.

Framing experience through football presents a principle way through which residents

make-meaning. The socialization and valorization through the celebratory complex shapes the narratives about themselves. Residents understand their experiences, in large respect, through their relationship with football. The resulting football narrative informs how people understand their individual and collective identities. Due in large part to his success, Paul Brown serves as an integral figure in the development of the narrative. People reiterate values they take from Brown's writings, especially his autobiography *PB*. The values of Brown are the values he pulls from football. Hard work, teamwork, perseverance, and discipline are some of the values people take from Brown. Additionally, because residents cast football as the epitome of a meritocracy, success is self-determined rather than subject to other outside concerns. Social and cultural performances rehearse those values. People often rely on the football narrative to explain their behaviors and the conditions of their lives.

The primary narrative football communicates in Massillon is a triumphal story of overcoming adversity. The triumphal story infiltrates other areas of their collective experiences, primarily from the reiteration of the values espoused by and excellence of Paul Brown. Part of the importance of Brown's values leads to, and results from, the veneration of Brown. In volunteering to help Paul Brown Stadium upkeep, I participated in the valorization of Brown and the monument built for him. Volunteerism communicates the need to sacrifice, the value of hard work, and a common effort. The rallies celebrate the history of excellence and projects triumph into the future. Parades celebrates their collective efforts in the pursuit of excellence. All of the elements of the complex gain status and stature by participating in the parade. Within the celebration of each other, people get to celebrate themselves. The celebratory "team" has come together to better each other. The game experience exemplifies Brown's effort to create "The Greatest Show in High School Football." The games has become a community event. People watch as the team work hard and together to achieve success. Residents often talk about respecting the game and the opponents, thereby respect

work and effort. The history of excellence overrides the experience of any individual game or season. The narrative does not change. The expectation is success because they are a successful program. The triumphal narrative covers other aspects of collective experience. The economic struggles the town went through, and goes through, in the narrative that hard work will overcome – that success is a function of effort and merit. In this sense, the football team stands in for Massillon.

The repetition of the football narrative leads to the dismissal and resolution of ambivalences. Teamwork and hard work can overcome the economic losses from the departure of the steel industry. The football narrative creates its own absences. When confronted about representations of race and issues of class in Massillon, residents pointed to the football team as evidence of a colorblind and classblind community. Because black and white players work together on the football team, then race doesn't factor into their lives. Because "first class" matters more than upper- or lower-class, and merit determines success, class is self-determined. Some residents added that considerations of class and race do not factor into the conceptualization of self and town. Because people act in accordance to their beliefs, race and class do not factor into constructions of a localized collective identity. Some residents are sensitive to issues of race and class, but such discussions take place outside of the football narrative.

Sport studies offers opportunities for theatre and performance studies scholars to further articulate values and meaning reflected and constructed during performance. The vernacular performances associated with sport – such as pep rallies, the band, and parades – inform social relationships. They include the elements of theatrical performance in spectacle, staging, representation, and rehearsal, among others. Scholarship on other localized popular performances extend understand understanding of the performance of local, national, ethnic, gender, and class identities. Further scholarship of performativity can articulate the meaning-

making processes in localized performances. Performance studies shift the focus from essential and static meanings of popular performance practices to fluid dynamic constructions of meaning and identity. Because localized identities form in conjunction with, or in contrast to, other constructions, performance studies would benefit from a focus and the role of the local in identity construction. Because popular embodied practices inform the wide array of identity constructions, performance studies can, and should, interrogate them.

Local performances of sports extend beyond the traditional understanding of participation. While not on the fields of play, fans, spectators, and supporters participate in a complex of events and projects. Outside the confines stadiums and fields, the schools, local businesses, and streets include the performance of sport. The time of performance shifts when considering the extension of local sporting practices. Constructions and representations of race, gender, and sexuality inform, and are informed by, localized identities. Local sporting practices implicate success and failure of teams in community identity formation.

Appendix A: Oral Consent

Oral Consent

As a student in the University of Kansas's Department of Theatre I am conducting a research project about local sports teams and community identity. I would like to interview you to obtain your views on your relationship to the football team and the town. You have no obligation to participate and you may discontinue your involvement at any time. I intend to keep your identity anonymous by giving you a pseudonym in the report. However, if you would like to be identified, I can use your real name.

Participation in the interview indicates your willingness to take part in this study and that you are at least 18 years old. Also, I would like to tape this interview. You have the right to decline the recording of this interview. I will have sole access to the recordings, including my transcription of the recording. The recording will be destroyed upon successful defense of this project. The interview should take less than an hour.

Should you have any questions about this project or your participation in it you may ask me or my faculty supervisor, Henry Bial in the Department of American Studies. My e-mail address is jefflist@ku.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call the Human Subjects Protection Office at (785) 864-7429 or email irb@ku.edu.

**Approved by the Human Subjects Committee University of
Kansas, Lawrence Campus (HSCL). Approval expires one
year from 4/24/2012 HSCL # 20082**

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

Initial Questions

1. How long have you lived in Massillon?

2. Please describe the city of Massillon.

3. What advice would you give to someone new to Massillon?

4. What does it mean to you to “be” from Massillon?

5. What are your social interests?

6. What is your association to the football team, if any?
(None) How do you interact with community members, if at all?

7. How did you become associated with the football team (other engagement)?
 - a. Was there a specific event that you remember?
 - b. Can you describe it for me?

8. Do you see any connections between the football team and the town?
 - a. What contributes to that connection?
 - b. (None) Why do you say there is no connection?

9. Do you attend football games?
 - a. (Yes) Please describe them.
 - b. (No) Would you like to share why you choose not to attend games?

10. Do you attend the pep rallies, parades, or other football-related events?
 - a. (Yes) Please describe them.

- b. (No) Would you like to share why you choose not to attend them?
- c. (No) From your perspective, why do they exist? What purpose do they serve?

Intermediate Questions

- 11. Can you talk with me about the history of the town?

- 12. What do you know about the history of the football team?

- 13. What is your draw to the football team (other)?
 - a. Describe your initial experiences with the team (other).

- 14. What would you say accounts for the overall popularity of the football team?

- 15. How did you get involved in with the team (other)?
 - a. Who did you help to get involved?

- 16. How does football (other) inform how you understand Massillon?

- 17. How do you think football (other) informs other community members' understanding of Massillon? Race? Gender? Class?
 - a. (Dissonance) What accounts for the difference?

- 18. As you look back on your experience in Massillon, what incident best represents how you view yourself as a community member?

- 19. How are you influenced by the football team and its popularity?

Ending Questions

- 20. How would you improve the community?
 - a. How would you go about achieving that/them?

21. Is there anything else you think I should know to understand Massillon better? The football team? (Other)?

22. Is there anything you would like to ask me?

Appendix C: City of Massillon Flag Legislation

(from MPL

www.massillonlibrary.org/sites/default/files/Massillon_flag.pdf)

A description of the flag for the city of Massillon from the Codified Ordinances of Massillon, Ohio

CROSS REFERENCES

State standard of time - see Ohio R.C. 1.04
 State legal holiday - see Ohio R.C. 1.14, 5.20 et seq.
 State flag - see Ohio R.C. 5.01

103.01 CITY FLAG.

An official flag for the City is hereby adopted. Such flag shall be of the following description.

(a) The flag design shall feature an orange foreground with a skyline silhouette in orange against a black background. Orange and black are officially the colors of Massillon.

(b) The skyline shall include a church, symbolic of the naming of Massillon for a French churchman, Jean Baptiste Massillon; a canal boat riding the waves of the canal, symbolic of Massillon's early development as the wheat city of Ohio during the Ohio canal days; and the stacks of the City's steel mills, symbolizing Massillon's later industrial development. The ground line of the silhouetted skyline is forty-five percent (45%) of the field from the bottom of the flag.

(c) The City's corporation seal comprises eight percent (8%) of the total flag area and is black letters and wheat shock figures upon a white circle incorporated into the upper left corner of the black background. The date of the City's founding "1826" in white letters is in the upper right section of the black background. The words "City of Massillon" in black are placed beneath the skyline in the orange field flush right with "1826".

(Res. 18-1972. Passed 5-30-72.)



Appendix D: Sideliners Do's and Don'ts

(from "Booster Club – Sideliners, TD Club, and Orangemen")

The "DO'S"

Be positive with him, the Team and the coaching staff

Encourage him to work harder on the field and in the classroom

Invite him to attend some social events, or to your house during the season and the off-season

Try to guide him in the right direction, especially with his off the field activities

Talk to his coach about any special problems he has at home or in school

Come into the locker room to see him after the game

Talk to his parents about any problems in which you can help

Pick up your player on time, and see that he gets home after the meal

Encourage the player to abide by all Team training rules set forth by the coaches

Be good listener try to give him good advice

The "DON'TS"

Don't be critical of your player, Team or coaching staff

Don't encourage him to break training rules or regulations

Don't tell him how to play his position or how great you were as a player

Don't drop him off at a girlfriends house after sideliners meal

Don't complain about the food or take him to some other place to eat

Don't give him expensive gifts or money

Don't ignore him when he needs help or a job

Don't give up on him when he is in trouble or is not playing

Don't ask him for information about the team's other players or force him to talk Football when he is not allowed to respond

Don't try to be his father unless he needs one

Don't be a buddy or pal when he needs your guidance instead

Don't agree with your player when you know he is wrong

Appendix E: Massillon Washington High School Alma Mater
 (from Massillon Washington High School Alumni Association
www.massillonwhsaa.org/pot.htm)

W.H.S. Alma Mater
C.M.Layton

Oh, Alma Mater, Massillon,
 We stand to sing thy praise,
 With hearts that thrill with worthy pride,
 At thoughts of high school days.
 Thy friendships true, thy spirit too,
 A part of us shall be,
 Oh, Alma Mater Massillon,
 We're true to thee.
 And through the long, long years to come,
 Wherever we may be,
 Oh, Alma Mater Massillon,
 We're true to thee.

Oh, Alma Mater Massillon,
 God keep thee ever so,
 Thy sons and daughters stand four square,
 To all the winds that blow.
 And as the seasons come and go,
 We only ask, may we,
 Oh, Alma Mater Massillon,
 Be more like thee.
 And through the long, long years to come,
 Wherever we may be,
 Oh, Alma Mater Massillon,
 We're true to thee.

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