CHEERLEADERS AND ADMINISTRATORS BETWEEN 1945 AND 1999: A STUDY OF EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES IN TULSA, OKLAHOMA

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

Although American high schools have been investigated from many perspectives, few studies have assigned any significance to cheerleaders and the activity of cheerleading as related to administrators and the administration of the schools. By relegating cheerleaders to an ancillary position, studies of high schools in the latter half of the twentieth century actually concealed cheerleaders' fluctuating relationship to administrators. During this time administrators found themselves facing dual tasks as they sought means of maintaining school control while providing citizenship preparation and social training.

Two eras deserve particular scrutiny as sources of problems for administrators when dealing with cheerleaders for social training and school control mechanisms. In the period from 1945 to 1972, the selection procedures, parental involvement, and social equity highlighted problems cheerleaders presented to high school administrators as administrators sought to maintain control in their schools and to train their students socially. Beginning in 1972 with the passage of Title IX, high school cheerleading as a

school control mechanism collided with female athletics. Increasingly administrators lost one mechanism for controlling their schools while social training continued.

Although the cheerleading selection process was originally designed to discriminate teenagers according to specific physical and social criterion, by 1945 administrators had developed mechanisms of selection that were intended both to make everyone, including parents and students, happy and satisfied with the results and to help administrators control their schools. Regardless of the concerted efforts to place an apparent fair mechanism of selection in place, the consequence of the process was discordance between parent and school and between student and student. The selection process created social inequity through the visibility afforded to those selected as cheerleaders and produced a lower status of those rejected. This inequity was exacerbated by the commercialization of cheerleading; costs increased in ways that denied access to some.

The era following the passage of Title IX produced interesting and far-reaching changes. As cheerleaders became athletes coaches now determined the selection procedure. Coaches selected teams based on their team needs and the potential athletic contributions of the members. They established athletic associations that were accompanied by the safety of their rules and regulations. Moreover, the late 1970s also saw the development of pom pon squads adding dance routines at the high school level. These changes meant that administrators no longer selected cheerleaders and that cheerleaders could no longer be used to help control schools.

Problem

In order to investigate the dynamics of the relationship between administrators and cheerleaders, this study examined three questions:

1. What was the perceived role of cheerleaders from 1945 to 1972 and from 1972 to 1999 in Tulsa, Oklahoma?
2. What was the perceived role of school administrators from 1945 to 1972 and from 1972 to 1999 in Tulsa, Oklahoma?
3. Can these perceived roles be analyzed using social training and school control?

The methods used to answer these questions are described in Appendix A.

CHAPTER 2

SETTING THE CONTEXT: ADMINISTRATORS AND CHEERLEADERS

This chapter provides a context for understanding the period from 1945 to 1999. It discusses Progressive education, extracurricular activities, social control relating to cheerleading, and female cheerleaders.

Progressive Education and Social Training

In the early years of the twentieth century educational leaders grasped the basic tenets of Progressivism. Often led by John Dewey, the progressives accepted Horace Mann's belief on public education: "Universal education would be the 'great equalizer' of human conditions, the 'balance wheel of the social wheel of the social machinery,' and the 'creator of wealth undreamed of.'" (Cremin, 1964, p. 9). Thus, these educational progressives believed poverty would disappear, taking with it "the rancorous discord between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots,' that had marked all of human history" (Cremin, p. 9). Such an idea fired the imagination of many Americans (Cremin, p. 9).

The education of free men must transcend the intellectual realm to raise questions of values. However, the introduction of values raised other problems. America's diverse populations had impressed Mann who worried that possible conflicts of religious, political, and class values might tear the various populations apart rendering them powerless. Mann sought a common value system within which this diversity might flourish regardless of background or persuasion; he found this instrument for his sense of community in the common school (Cremin, p. 10). Mann's concerns were compounded by the waves of immigration beginning in the 1880s.

Progressive education became part of the effort to use schools to improve the lives of individuals (Cremin, p. viii). In the Progressives' minds, this improvement conveyed several meanings.

> First, it meant broadening the program and function of the school to include direct concern for health, vocation, and the quality of family and community life. Second, it meant applying in the classroom the pedagogical principles derived from new scientific research in psychology and the social sciences. Third, it meant tailoring instruction more and more to the different kinds and classes of children who were being brought within the purview of the school ....
>
> (Cremin, p. viii-iv).

The Progressives acknowledged that youngsters were deserting the schools in droves because they considered "the schools as irrelevant to the world of here and now" (Cremin, p. ix). The idea that everyone ought to be educated thus provided both the problem and the opportunity for the Progressives. If everyone were to attend school, the Progressives reasoned, "not only the methods but the very meaning of education would have to change" (Cremin, p. ix). But the schools had to have ways of keeping everyone under control as students learned civic values.

Other authors acknowledged the conflict between schools as academic versus socialization institutions. "In the good old days" the aim of the school was to develop the intellect to highest powers, regardless of the social or even the physical needs of the individual. High school principals and teachers had considered it "their duty to crush or restrain these social impulses of the students" (Foster, 1925, p.129). School boards employed drastic measures, and state legislatures passed restrictive laws aimed at curbing social "evils" (Foster, p.129). Such illogical and unsympathetic restrictions of adolescent social impulses had frequently failed. Instead, Foster suggested that students needed social training, a knowledge of conventional customs, and methods to make worthy use of their leisure time. Necessary social skills included "how to carry on a conversation, how to please people, how to come and go without embarrassment" (Foster, p.131). For Foster, the lack of acquaintance with social skills caused self-consciousness; however, exposure to practice and experience would remedy such a deficiency. Observance of and respect for conventional social customs marked individuals as experienced and thoughtful; negligence regarding these same customs was evidence of crudity or carelessness (Foster, p.131). These were benchmarks that distinguished the trained individual from the untrained. Foster suggested that the schools now take the lead in organizing social functions to gain the benefits of social training for the greatest number of students. For some students, Foster felt the only access to social training was available through the schools. [For a different view, see McKown (1929)].

How was such social training to take place? Administrators needed mechanisms to provide preparation for citizens plus training in the social graces. Obviously, some

instruction would take place in the classroom. But Foster was to suggest an even better place.

The Role of Extracurricular Activities

Foster published *Extra-Curricular Activities in the High School* in 1925. He stated that extracurricular activities contributed more to secondary students' spiritual and social development than any other part of the secondary program. According to Foster, most extracurricular activities advanced the virtues of self-control, initiative, courage, self-reliance, vitality, cooperation, respect for the rights of others, loyalty, fair play, courtesy, purpose, self-sacrifice, and devotion to duty. William M. Davidson, Superintendent of Schools for Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, recognized extracurricular activities' prominent place in the development of a complete secondary program (Foster, 1925, p. xiii). Extra-curricular activities thus became part of the socialization process.

With the rapid expansion of extracurricular activities, Foster and Meyer (1926) argued that administrators who recognized activities' pedagogical value should demand methods of guidance and materials for them. Constant and close supervision from the principal or a delegated faculty member was essential for the success of extracurricular activities especially as administrators proposed that high school social functions often should be held after regular school hours. Supervision was so important that Foster recommended the school building as the site for all social functions with the possible exception of school banquets when the school had no cafeteria facilities. He

recommended that administrators encourage student organizations or joint faculty and student social committees to provide the means for students to take the initiative in planning and coordinating social activities. Under proper supervision, students should be responsible for selecting appropriate themes and decorations and for the school orchestra's playing suitable music defined as the right kind of music for dancing (Foster, p. 136). "When they are led to do so and given sufficient responsibility, the results are practically assured" (Foster, p. 136).

Harold D. Meyer (1926), Associate Professor of Sociology and Chief of the Bureau of Recreation and Community Development, University of North Carolina advised all principals to seize opportunities to sponsor and to promote needed activities. Meyer warned that efforts should be taken to avoid forcing activities on teachers and students as such activities will never develop enthusiastic support. According to Meyer, the principal's leadership needed to be firm but not necessarily despotic; it should be invisible leadership. The ultimate value for Meyer became the development of school morale through activities where "the test of value may be made in the degree of production of splendid morale." He wrote that "All these activities should create the best through avenues of happy administration, sympathetic guidance, wholesome leadership, and above all else—in the spirit of youth" (Meyer, 1926, p. xiv). For Meyer extracurricular activities' role reflected the primary *business* of the public school: education in citizenship.

The recognition that institutions had a life of their own permeated extracurricular activities, and school activities promoted self-sacrifice – for the school was greater than its pupils, teachers, and principal. He noted the presence of what he termed constructive

forces in athletics. Teamwork, embodied in the increasingly popular athletic contest, represented cooperation and competition.

Competitive athletics had a different agenda from other extracurricular activities. Foster (1925) suggested that athletics were intended as a safety valve to rid the student body of excess exuberance as "pep" meetings, the "atmosphere" at the games, and organized rooting granted the conditions for the student body to rid itself of its excess spirit instead of channeling its energy into less wholesome activities. Within this context high schools sublimated "fighting," and thus condoned violence only as a part of the cheers supporting the exploits on the athletic field.

C. W. Whitten, the State Manager of Inter-scholastic Athletics in Illinois, also explained the use of extracurricular activities as a safety valve. He argued that athletics united the student body against a common adversary while rallying the entire community around the school. Pep assemblies and the games provided the means to channel the energy of the students and the community into socially acceptable, wholesome activities. However, to avoid an overload, the process must be monitored.

> ... when we permit our inter-scholastic contests to become the avenue of escape for all the neurotic jazz hysteria of the entire community, of the sensational newspapers that usually have no ideals above advertising and income, of commercial clubs and 'boosters' clubs whose highest conception of ethics are all comprehended in the ambition to 'put the town on the map,' of that class of respectable materialists who loudly proclaim that 'nothing succeeds like success,' of the town sports and gamblers, of the hangers-on of pool rooms and smoke shops, who, we overload our safety valve, and our educational engine, instead of blowing off, blows up with tremendous morality to educational ideals and out-comes. And that is exactly what happens when the clamorous, anti-educational sporting elements of

> the community undertake to direct or to exert any appreciable influence upon high school athletics.
>
> (Foster, 1925)

In sum, some educators, in their concern for the well-rounded personality, began emphasizing social training. Foster suggested that schools take the lead in organizing social functions to gain the benefits of social training for the greatest number of students, some of whom would gain only what is available to them through the schools. School functions for purposes of social training required constant and close supervision. Foster recommended that all social functions transpire within the school building under the auspices of the principal or his delegated faculty member or members.

Several more recent studies have shown renewed interest in issues concerning curriculum and student participation in extracurricular activities still pertaining to relationships between administration and cheerleading as an extracurricular activity. In 1981 James A. Vornberg reiterated Meyer's (1926) admonition that the creation and implementation of successful new programs required student interest. Financial consideration remained a problem area as noted by Vornberg (1983) in his journal article entitled "Student Activities: What Are the Problems Now?" Other authors found that hypersensitive areas concerned issues of gender, athleticism, and elitism. In 1987 Eder and Parker wrote "The Cultural Production and Reproduction of Gender: The Effect of Extracurricular Activities on Peer-Group Culture" in 1987 in which they argued that male athletes and female cheerleaders were afforded considerable visibility because the schools' main social events centered around athletic events. This article still equated males as competitive-oriented athletes and females as oriented toward appearance and emotion management. However, these authors also noted that male athletes and female

cheerleaders tended to be members of elite social groups. The issue of an elite was developed further by Evans, Maust, and Quiroz (1995) who suggested that a significant number of school activities actually used selection criteria designed to inhibit or even prevent student participation. Strope (1998) addressed the ten most frequently asked questions generated by secondary school principals where the "hot" topics invariably dealt with legal issues especially writing and enforcing rules.

School Control and Cheerleading

The school as purveyor of a common value system, however, juxtaposed groups with differing definitions of values and agendas. In *The Sociology of Teaching* (1932) Willard Waller framed the social life of schools in sociological terms, observing schools as social institutions. Waller examined human beings interlocked within networks of human relations all clustered around a nucleus of the more relevant academic activity. For him the intricate maze of social relationships was particularly bound into interaction between two groups: the teachers and the students (Waller, 1932, p.12). In the school, for teachers (and administrators) control emanated from "the consent, mostly silent, of the governed" (Waller, p. 12). Teacher and administrator authority was constantly threatened by students and parents; although teachers and parents had much in common, they dwelled in a state of mutual distrust and enmity; they were natural enemies. Both groups attempted to disguise the rift, for neither wished to "admit the uncomfortable implications of animosity" (Waller, p. 68). As a result, Waller argued that

> Parents are particularly unreasonable where their own ego feelings or their own projected ambitions have become involved in the scholastic standing of a particular child.
>
> This fundamental conflict between the school and the parent is accentuated by the fact that parents and teachers are involved in different alignments of group life affecting the child.
>
> (Waller, p.68-69)

Parents understand that schools were designed, under certain circumstances, to correct or supplement parents. But parents often disputed these boundaries. For teachers and administrators, school authority must be pervasive: "Where the authority of the faculty and school board extends is the school. If it covers children on the way to and from school, at school parties, and on trips, then those children are in school at such times" (Waller, p. 9).

One way to resolve this tension was to generate ceremonies that invented a "we-feeling" that would permeate the schools. School ceremonies aimed at generating a "we-feeling" rapidly accumulated in schools. They were relatively easy to contrive and then were readily absorbed into the realm of tradition. To be affective, such ceremonies depended on particular psychological mechanisms.

> There are, first, numerous identification mechanisms which act upon the individual by casting him in a particular role for which he receives group approval or by causing the individual to wish to play such a role because of public praise supposed to be connected with it. Closely allied to these, and in many cases indistinguishable from them, are certain formal expressions of attitudes in which all are required to participate; the underlying philosophy is apparently that there is a tendency to be carried over and made permanent.
>
> (Waller, p.120)

These "collective representations" were impossible to justify on rational grounds. "This is a real world, and there is in these ceremonies and activities a serious meaning that fades out with routine description and analysis; the emotion that clusters here is strong enough to stand attack from without and hardy enough to weather ridicule; what it cannot stand is objectivity" (Waller, p.121).

The ordinary pep meeting, the most common of all high school ceremonies "is also one of the best adapted to its ends" (Waller, p.124). For here loomed a crisis situation against which the group must be mobilized with The Team acting as the group's defender. Team members were presented as heroes standing between the school and certain dishonor. The pep meeting called into play all the collective representations of the group. The cheerleader, whom Waller envisioned as a male, urged the student body to make noise for "the increased effect of synchronized cheering" (Waller, p. 125). The cumulative effect of mobilization was to provide "the student body an enemy to hate that is not on the faculty" (Waller, p. 125). Waller contended that "players usually profess to be entirely unconscious of the cheering;" therefore, he surmised "that the main effect of organized cheering is the effect produced upon the spectators" (Waller, p.125).

The mechanisms from organized cheering facilitated these exhibitions of "we-ness." However, the wild enthusiasm was not matched by intellectual content.

> there is nothing in the cheer which suggests the faintest residuum of rationality. The tendency, indeed, is for the cheer to go over into the ludicrous, to take refuge in nonsense syllables and patent absurdities, and it must be that the element of the utterly mad in these cheers which are repeated by the multitude has something to do with the psychic thrill which they make it possible for the spectators to experience in the game.
>
> (Waller, p. 126).

High school and college yells required an inordinate amount of preparation time to produce the revered "euphonious or cacophonous array of syllables having a certain rhythm lending itself easily to group expressions" (Waller, p. 126) and thus having the desired effect on the crowd.

The selectivity of the position of cheerleader meant politicking was required.

> In most schools the position of cheer leader is a coveted one, and is obtained only after considerable effort and some wire-pulling. The cheer leader is often carefully trained in the antics which he is supposed to perform in order to wring a greater volume of noise from the crowd; these antics have been out through the group experience as means of loosening the inhibitions of the crowd. Associated with organized cheering in recent years has been a great deal of pageantry and the display of gorgeous colors; all this has its meaning in terms of the logic of emotions.
>
> (Waller, 1932, p. 126)

A few years later, gender was added as a control mechanism when female cheerleaders became "popular."

Waller (1932) concluded his discussion of ceremonies with the recognition of "Military or quasi-military ceremonies whose function is the regulation of social relationships" (Waller, p. 128). He saw that such ceremonies were employed whenever it became necessary to organize for control of collective movement such as fire drills, passing between classes, and filing out of classrooms. These ceremonies helped teachers and administrators exert control through ritualistic behaviors.

Waller noted that teachers felt the need for control because they perceived that communities failed to receive teachers into their midst as human beings. He characterized the community's perception of teachers as young, mostly single, well-educated, and

transient strangers to the community. Teachers, thus felt the necessity to form cliques of their own with other teachers whom they considered to be friends and equals. Waller then argued that the tendency to form cliques " is increased by the fact that all the teachers in a system are engaged in a common struggle against those enemies of the social order, the students" (Waller, p. 56).

Students also rallied behind groups of their own in what Waller termed "a desire for group allegiance" for the purposes of recognition and response (Waller, p. 158). He considered this a wish for loyalty to a group or cause to allow the loss of one's own identity "in something greater than one's self" (Waller, p. 158). Waller argued that this "finds expression in all the impassioned loyalties of school days and displays itself most strikingly in the ethnocentrism of the young" (Waller, p. 158). This, he believes, is the source of competitive athletics' popularity. "The loyalty of the school child reaches ecstatic fulfillment in those school ceremonies and moments of collective insanity when the entire group feels and acts as one" (Waller, p. 158). Cheerleaders led many of these ceremonies.

The Shift of Cheerleading Male to Female

Although considered a novelty in the 1920s, girls also were serving as high school cheerleaders. In 1924 *Literary Digest* included a quote from Ohio's football coach concerning his state's high school girl cheerleaders. He observed

> these one-half dozen girls controlled high-school audiences better than boys. I do not believe this would be the case in college .... [Most of these girls] are fine-looking, bobbed-haired, rhythmic, well-formed individuals who are just outstanding physical girls. They seem to have a better sense of rhythm than most boys, and get splendid results by occasional intensity of action.
>
> (Hanson, 1995, p. 20).

Although some administrators expressed concern, girls continued performing as cheerleaders in the 1930s. According to Hanson (1995), high school cheerleading took on a different function as it sought to perform socializing and character-building functions. In 1937 an Assistant Athletic Director from Connersville, Indiana, organized a cheering section "to spread the gospel of good sportsmanship among the students [and] the Public." (Hanson, 1995, p. 22). Their slogan was: "We don't boo—Do you?" (Hanson, p. 22). Members also acted as a court to try students for unsportsmanlike conduct (Hanson, p. 22).

The number of girls in high school increased significantly during the 1940s. Hanson (1995) argued that there was now an additional rationale for female cheerleaders. She referred to a *Life* (1941) story that stated: "To anyone acquainted with mass psychology the superiority of girls over boys in the delicate art of cheerleading is axiomatic. Yet it is only lately, perhaps because of the world's belated acceptance of coeducation, that the girl cheerleader has bounced into her own" (Hanson, p. 23). The double entendre of "bounced" suggests not only athletic skill but also sensual activity. Cheerleaders led ceremonies seeking to unite students and did so as desirable women.

Summary

This chapter has outlined education's transition from a solely intellectual realm to a more social one. As the Progressives began to use schools to improve the lives of individuals, schools began to exhibit the tension between the institution's function as an academic institution versus a socialization institution. Extracurricular activities gained the role of advancing the accepted values within the socialization process. In this shift, roles involving supervision were critical. Creating school morale became important. Schools were to produce the well-rounded individual who became a factor of social training and school control. Since administrators increasingly turned to athletics as a mechanism of affiliation, social activities were built around athletic events. C.W. Whitten (1925) proposed that athletics and their trappings become a safety value to channel student energy. As issues of academics, social training, and school control merged, athletics and their accompanying ceremonies bridged the inherent state of distrust between faculty and students. School ceremonies helped defuse the tension between faculty and students by creating group loyalty through what Waller (1932) termed "a feeling of 'we-ness'" as they mobilized the students and the community against an outside, "athletic" enemy. In the early twentieth century, an increase in girls attending high schools coincided with this transition within education, and females gradually took their place on the sidelines in support of the male athlete.

CHAPTER 3

CHEERLEADERS: 1945 – 1999

By the second half of the century cheerleading was such an accepted school function that it had achieved the protected status of tradition. The justification for its existence was no longer subject to debate. This chapter will examine how cheerleaders from 1945 to 1999 saw themselves. In particular, did they see themselves as instruments of social training and school control? The role and results of Title IX will also be investigated.

This chapter deals with the following topics: the commercialization of cheerleading; recollections of cheerleaders from the 1940s and 1950s as cheerleading began to be redefined; social consequences of cheerleading; and the next generation of cheerleading, 1972-1999.

The Rise of Cheerleading as a Business

By the 1950s cheerleaders began to incorporate gymnastics as Lawrence "Herkie" Herkimer's influence began to prevail. Herkimer had been the head cheerleader at

Southern Methodist University in 1947 and 1948 (Hanson, 1995, p. 44-45) where he originated the Herkie jump, a standard "for the cheer conscious" (Hawkins, 1991, p. 23). Herkimer and Aaron Spelling, also a former Southern Methodist University head cheerleader and now a television producer, brought tumbling into the mainstream with displays of gymnastic prowess (Hawkins, p. 23).

According to John Hawkins (1991) *The New York Times* first credited "Herkimer with changing the role of cheerleader to one that is now synonymous with leadership, motivation, achievement, and honor" (Hawkins, 1991, p. 24). Hawkins (1991) then argued that "As the role of cheerleader grew to include other positive aspects of the human condition, so did the aura of popularity it cast on its chosen few. The new allure was only starting to gain steam" (Hawkins, (1991), p. 24). Herkimer and others also redefined the characteristics for what determined the qualifications of the good cheerleader and what constituted the proper actions for the good cheerleader. In addition to beauty, athletic qualifications were gradually and increasingly becoming associated with female cheerleaders.

Under Herkimer and other professionals, camps and clinics for high school cheerleaders proliferated and prospered during the 1950s and influenced the caliber of techniques and styles. Cheerleading squads now required additional training and supervision. A professor at Sam Houston State arranged "Herkie's" first clinic for high school cheerleaders. Professors controlled the clinic: an English professor taught diction, a physical education instructor directed the gymnastics, and "Herkie" conducted the actual cheerleading sessions (Hanson, 1995, p. 45). The following summer Herkimer ran the clinic replacing the professors with cheerleaders (Hanson, p. 45). He arranged other

clinics at area colleges that gladly rented dormitories to paying occupants during the summers (Hanson, p. 45).

In 1955 Edgewood High School of Ashtabula, Ohio, produced a Saturday clinic for area cheerleaders featuring Herkimer as the guest instructor covering such topics as "effective motions, crowd psychology, sportsmanship, qualifications of a cheerleader, boosting school spirit, and raising funds for cheerleading activities" (Hanson, p. 45). The 600 girls who attended wore their own uniforms while enjoying lunch, mass practice sessions, and discussions. They also had the opportunity to hear a principal discuss "What the Administrator Expects of a Cheerleading Squad" and Edgewood's head coach describe "What a Coach Expects of a Cheerleading Squad" (Hanson, p. 45).

Herkimer founded the Nation Cheerleaders Association in 1948. Camps and clinics became such a thriving business that, according to the *New York Times*, in 1972 Herkimer grossed $5 million in registration fees from 75,000 participants of which he returned $4.5 million to the college sites (Hanson, 1995, p. 45). Lawrence Herkimer is still considered to be the founding father of the cheerleading industry which by the 1990s approached a $50-million-a-year business.

The "Slow" Redefinition of Cheerleading

By the 1940s cheerleading came to represent a socially acceptable mechanism for females to release excessive energy accompanied by the modest admission of some acrobatic talent. In the 1950s the job gradually required increased athletic talent. A

woman who was a cheerleader in junior high, high school, and finally for Iowa State University from 1946 to 1950 stated, "Now the interesting part is I had no ability. You needed no ability to be a cheerleader. We did not turn a cartwheel, although I could. But we did not. Now, today, you have to be a gymnast" (Mrs. Fargo, cheerleader). She noted a second contrast: her peers actually led the crowd in cheers as opposed to today's cheerleaders who must meet performance standards for cheerleading competitions: "We did not do one thing but, you know, extend our arms out and back and actually lead the crowd in a cheer. So they could watch our arms. And all we did was that and jump. So, couldn't anybody do that?" (Mrs. Fargo, cheerleader). Mrs. Fargo felt cheerleading required no special skill in her day. She noted, however, that today's cheerleaders really have to be gymnasts because cheerleading has become so competitive.

She also related another incident that focused attention on her because she was not paying attention to the squad. The squad was performing "Let's Go South" pointing the crowd in the direction the team was carrying the ball. However, she was pointing north while performing the cheer. Her error was noted. She admitted that she was so totally focused on the crowd and getting it to respond that she ignored attempts to correct her mistake. She had accidentally drawn attention away from the squad as a whole. This defeated the squad's purpose.

Reflecting further, she noted that getting the job required little competition. In fact, for reasons of her own, she just assumed she would be a cheerleader; it was her place. Although she was unsure of the details of the competition, she remembered that they tried out at the football stadium. She was sure of her own level of confidence; she never imagined she would not make it. She simply visualized herself as a cheerleader. "I

just, kind of was and assumed I was going to be [a cheerleader]" (Mrs. Fargo, cheerleader). Although those were her feelings, today she would not repeat the experience. "Today I wouldn't consider being a cheerleader because I think it is kind of a dumb thing .... I watch cheerleaders, and I'm pretty uncomfortable with it" (Mrs. Fargo, cheerleader).

However, her early life was small-town comfortable. She was the cheerleader who married the quarterback. Now she finds it amusing that her grown children gag at the idea of their mother's being a cheerleader. However, she had more positive feelings toward the experience. She remembered that the girls on her squad were cute, nice, solid, practical people who performed in little pleated skirts and nice sweaters that they took in and let out and handed down from squad to squad: "It wasn't a showy, glitzy thing ... nothing glamorous, like today .... We were more practical .... Now everything is just getting bigger and better and showier..." (Mrs. Fargo, cheerleader).

She described her era as seeming simple and uncomplicated. In that world, the cheerleaders actually led the crowd with cheers. They had a predetermined purpose, and they very deliberately fulfilled that expectation.

> We weren't out there trying to put on a show .... We were out there ... so the crowd came across so the team really knew that they were cheering. Now it is sort of an extravaganza. But then it was simply we were very coordinated with the crowd ... we were trying to keep a beat ... now, they're trying to probably to send a message.
> (Mrs. Fargo, cheerleader)

Fulfilling expectations was a significant part of the cheerleaders" role. It was never a question of their having aspirations; they served a function for the school and for the teams – they were to cheer for all sports. Instead of many squads with many students

being involved, squads were kept small and were required to attend every sporting event. Eight cheerleaders covered all sports. She compared this to the current system with different squads covering football, basketball, and winter sports. "Which really, I kind of think is good in that a lot of people get a chance to participate" (Mrs. Fargo, cheerleader).

In her era cheerleaders concentrated on their job. They had been selected to do this and it was their responsibility to get the job done in a businesslike manner: "That was our duty and we'd been chosen [to] get the job done ... The crowd's not doing this ... We were pretty businesslike... Where today, they sit and they worry about how they look and that never entered our heads, obviously or we would have looked better" (Miss Fargo, cheerleader).

Those selected were "good kids" who did a conscientious job of leading the crowd. For some, cheerleading became an outlet for the girls' energy when nothing else athletic was available. This former cheerleader confessed that given today's world, she would be an athlete. "The only reason I think I was a cheerleader is because I was athletic .... I would never be a cheerleader again. I would be ... playing in sports .... It [cheerleading] was a way for a girl to express herself in sports. The only way ....What else could I have done?" (Mrs. Fargo, cheerleader). Cheerleaders represented socially acceptable examples who willingly surrendered their own energy into recognizable school spirit.

This idyllic picture was a genuine contrast to the real world, for as comfortable and uncomplicated as she portrayed her world, this former Iowa State Cheerleader grew up through the Depression and World War II. Her freshman class at college felt the impact of the returning soldiers who swelled its ranks. These former soldiers were not

typical students, especially college freshmen. She labeled her class as different; the young men had been soldiers and they returned "to all this foolishness" (Mrs. Fargo, cheerleader). Their return was a traumatic experience "for us eighteen year olds, for the guys .... Because you know, you would have a date with one of them, and, 'My God,' it was like we couldn't handle it. We would go back to dating the eighteen year olds" (Mrs. Fargo, cheerleader). However, she remembered that the odds seemed good: one woman to about nine men as the veterans returned to the campus. "And the veterans came back and played ball ... we were definitely a product of the war and the end of it" (Mrs. Fargo, cheerleader). Her husband's friends and teammates reflected this change as most of them were two to three years older than others in his class.

Following the war, her world seemed in order. However, like many of the cheerleaders from the middle decades of the twentieth century, she has reexamined, with the benefit of hindsight, her ordered and clearly understood world. She now acknowledged that an undercurrent of racism hid beneath the guise of order. She remembered that at Iowa State during this time there were no black college football players nor cheerleaders. "No! There was no black anything! And it was a gentlemen's agreement in the Big Six or Eight (whatever that was) that they didn't" (Mrs. Fargo, cheerleader). She recounted an experience her husband had as a freshman football player in 1946. Because of the war freshmen played on the varsity team, and her husband realized his best friend and fellow football player from high school would be an asset to the college team. Although black athletes played on the high school teams of the time, neither she nor her future husband realized that black athletes could not play on collegiate teams.

> His friend had gone to Iowa State Teachers ... so he said "Why don't you come down to Iowa State and play and [friend] said, "OK" .... And so [husband] brought him down to Iowa State and had him talk to all the coaches and he left town and the coach had [husband] in and said: " Why did you have him come in here?" And [husband] said, "He's really good." And he [the coach] goes "We don't play blacks."
>
> (Mrs. Fargo, cheerleader)

She never noted the first appearance of black cheerleaders: "So when black cheerleaders started, I do not know but that would be interesting to know when the first one was" (Mrs. Fargo, cheerleader).

Another cheerleader recalled this era. Bands in the 1950s still marched in military formations outfitted in uniforms emulating martial style.

> The band ... certainly the pride of the school ... was good enough to be invited to march in the Cotton Bowl .... It was primarily military marching, military precision marching .... The uniforms were military .... In my day they were playing the Washington Post March and that sort of thing .... The kids in the band loved what they were doing and were very proud of it, and the school was proud of the band.
>
> (Mr. Boston, cheerleader)

In the 1950s, under the influence of the business of cheerleading, cheerleaders advanced in their acrobatic skills. Mr. Toledo, cheerleader, mentioned that he "needed to learn to do some handsprings or something if I was going to try out." However, his remarks depicted the little formal instruction available because he basically had to start practicing on his own.

> I went to Chaucer High School and to this day I don't really know what possessed me to do it, but I tried out for cheerleader there. Came home from school one day and started learning how to do hand springs ... out in the back-yard on my own and did it and I still don't remember why.
>
> (Mr. Toledo, cheerleader)

Mr. Toledo graduated from high school in 1956 and college in 1962. He taught himself some basic tumbling stunts for cheerleader tryouts. While in high school, his cheerleading squad went to Dallas for a National Cheerleaders' Association competition and won. Because of his performances, Lawrence "Herkie" Herkimer's National Cheerleaders' Association asked him to instruct for them during the summer after his graduation. That fall as a college freshman, he tried out for the cheerleading squad of the university: "... and, then I went to [the university] and because I was cheerleader at Chaucer High School, tried out there. By then I'd kinda had a chance to spend more time on the gymnastics, tumbling, and et cetera. Which was almost mandatory at [the university]" (Mr. Toledo, cheerleader).

By the 1960s, the training within schools still was a matter of passing traditions down to the new squads; however, Herkimer's influence was widening in a system where

> ... like a big family; the older kids trained the younger ones .... In the summertime we would go to a cheerleading camp and learn new things .... Back then there was a national cheerleading organization that was taught by a man named Herkimer—they called him "Herkie." So we went to this camp every summer in Norman ... where we would learn new cheers and new moves and that sort of thing ....
>
> (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader)

As the skills became more difficult and demanding, the squads increased their practice times. " ... we practiced a lot in the summer. We'd start practicing before school started and learned cheers and the older people would teach the more inexperienced and ... a lot of them were just passed down — tradition" (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader). The new cheerleaders were inculcated with the new traditions.

The National Cheerleaders' Association's summer and fall clinics spread the importance of their cheerleading philosophy and skills all over the United States. The male cheerleading instructor spent the summers between college semesters traveling all over the country conducting cheerleading clinics for the N.C.A. At that time the instructors combined cheerleaders and pom pons to teach "gymnastics, crowd psychology, everything dealing with pom pon routines, etc" (Mr. Toledo, cheerleader). Summer camps were one to two weeks in duration and attracted "just anywhere from 50 kids at maybe the smallest to 500 at the largest" (Mr. Toledo, cheerleader). Fall clinics were usually only one day in duration and, although during the school year, well attended.

> In Ohio they must have had like a thousand cheerleaders come in for that one day .... It was ... just myself and a girl and we did lectures and then we would do, demonstrate cheers and of course we couldn't teach any gymnastics or anything like that but we would talk on crowd psychology and motivating a crowd, et cetera ....
>
> (Mr. Toledo, cheerleader)

The fun extended to those who dreamed of and trained for the sidelines. This former cheerleading instructor noted a shift in the gender makeup of the squads. Although the clinics attracted interest and participants, he noticed that only about two-thirds of the squads that attended had male members. The smaller or country schools needed males to participate in sports, " ... so they didn't have that many to go around so it was probably the larger metropolitan schools that had the mixed squads and the smaller schools that were just, you know, women or girls on the team" (Mr. Toledo, cheerleader).

By the end of the 1950s high school cheerleaders led clinics at junior high schools to prepare the younger girls for cheerleader tryouts. One former cheerleader remembered the ninth grade tryouts: "I went to Hastings Junior High School which was also a

downtown school in Tulsa. And so I think we went to Chaucer High School and maybe they did a little bit of training like they do now days, sort of a little clinic. Taught us a couple of cheers. And then we tried out" (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader). She also remembered it was a screening process; however, she could not recall the basis for selection. "And I don't know, I don't remember how they screened it, but I think it was just based on how coordinated you were, maybe ... how you came across" (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader). She was unsure of who actually handled the process, but suspected that the cheerleaders did, especially the older ones, with the assistance of the pep squad and possibly some adults including the sponsors. Most of all she was thrilled to be selected and considered it a good experience. She had only one opinion concerning the selection process: "... I really don't know if it was very fair" (Mrs. Meridian). The selection process was beginning to change as it emphasized athletic skills, but it was still considered fun.

It was also a consequential activity for Mr. Toledo, a former instructor, who not only cheered in high school and college, but enticed his younger sister to follow. His younger sister admitted she became a cheerleader because of him and his popularity.

> ... my brother was a cheerleader, and had such fun doing it .... It was just one of those things, that sound's fun, so I'll do it. And he was so liked, I think it was just a shoe-in for me ....The cheerleaders all had a vote and it was [his] little sister and so they said, "Okay. We'll vote for you." ... And then, see, he was already a cheerleader at The University before I tried out. So he worked with me and helped me on The University yells for tryouts.
>
> (Mrs. Detroit, cheerleader)

She reiterated the vernacular of many of the other cheerleaders as she constantly relied on the word "fun" to describe her experiences as a cheerleader in both high school and

college. Like most of the cheerleaders interviewed, she seemed to revert to high school language and language patterns to explain her experiences.

> And it was a fun way to take trips. I mean, you always traveled. I got so used to being a group, you know, with the cheerleaders in high school. We were always in a group. You never had to worry about a date. And I just liked that. That was fun .... So, at [the university] I thought it would be fun because of the Orange Bowl Games .... So, it was just a fun activity to have. I had five years of that.
>
> (Mrs. Detroit, cheerleader)

Like the former cheerleaders from the 1940s she lived a complacent existence. She knew who she was and was secure in that. She had it all: cheerleader and football queen! "I don't know whether to attribute that to cheerleading or not ... I felt secure. My high school days were wonderful. I guess being a cheerleader and being football queen, you couldn't ask for much more" (Mrs. Detroit, cheerleader). She attributed her security to her family "I just always had a secure family background. My parents were always available...." (Mrs. Detroit, cheerleader). Although cheerleading was her social life and her grades seemed to be of secondary concern, she felt centered on her family and especially her brother.

> I never made straight A's, but I was never embarrassed about my grades. I mean, I didn't have bad grades. And the cheerleading was just an accepted social life for me. I mean, we just went to games, and had tryouts, and went to summer camps. So it was a big part of my life. But I always had my brother there so that was, I guess, even more security. So basically I just felt very secure and happy.
>
> (Mrs. Detroit, cheerleader)

She graduated 1959 with two years of secretarial science, married the university halfback, and had three children. She admitted she was fortunate for she married someone who

could afford to hire help for her and could afford to travel – "It was a fun time!" (Mrs. Detroit, cheerleader).

Cheerleading Becomes Lucrative

Cheerleading was becoming big business. Herkimer and the N.C.A. also realized that in addition to the clinic fees, the clinics provided a ready source of money from the sale of cheerleading paraphernalia. He provided this service at the end of the clinics. One of his former instructors remembered that "the guy that started the National Cheerleader's Association had little books that he had printed and had N.C.A. jewelry. At that time I think it [was] mostly books and pins and necklaces and stuff" (Mr. Toledo, cheerleader). The former instructor noted that by the time he graduated, the National Cheerleader's Association had developed into a huge business eventually including a large manufacturing plant in Dallas that made pom pons, sweatshirts, and T-shirts. Herkimer himself realized the potential and "used to tell a story that if the economy was bad and some dad's little girl wanted to try out for cheerleader and she did and she got it and he needed the money, he would sell his bass boat to purchase her uniform and her pom pons and whatever it took" (Mr. Toledo, cheerleader).

As cheerleaders expanded their athletic skills and paid more dollars for their equipment, cheerleaders gained an even more visible role in the schools. The notoriety did not escape them, nor the ones who dreamed of joining their ranks. "It was just kind of like every little girl's dream was to be a cheerleader" (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader). It was an equally devastating time for those who failed to make the squads.

For many who were denied entrance into this exciting existence, the experience was crushing. Even years later those who made it remembered the experiences of some of those who did not make the squads. With the small squads, few were destined to be selected to cheer regardless of their talent. Those who made the squad usually remained throughout their high school career having been first selected in their sophomore year "... unless you were just totally bad, you usually got reelected for three years. You would try out again every year but it would be pretty hard to get beaten out unless you just really didn't want to do it and weren't doing a good job" (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader). She admitted the process was unfair and tilted to the advantage of incumbents "... it probably wasn't fair the way it was, because ... I did it all three years. Other people probably tried out the other years and probably didn't have much of a chance but no, no it was a big deal" (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader). It was a big deal and it was exclusive.

Mrs. Meridian, 1962 former cheerleader, remained friends with one of the male squad members and his wife, whom she described as "someone I know who is near and dear to me" but never made cheerleader.

> No, she always tried out, but she never got it. I think that was the heartbreak of her ... She did other things, she excelled in other ways. She was beautiful, beautiful and still is a gorgeous girl ... There would be girls that were crushed .... I think girls are hurt all the time, right now over cheerleading ....
>
> (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader)

Nothing replaced the thrill and prestige of being a cheerleader – failing to make the squad was heartbreaking, tantamount to social disgrace and equal to social failure accompanied by loss of prestige.

A young lady who had been a junior high cheerleader in Arkansas and moved to Tulsa volunteered her sense of rejection and failure. For her, the mammoth population of Chaucer High School was absolutely intimidating. Her appraisal of her high school experience, which lasted from 1954 to 1957, began with a passionate, "I hated it! I did, I hated high school!" (Mrs. Newton, non-cheerleader). Her reasoning resulted from a total shift in her perceived social status in Arkansas accompanied by her invisibility in Tulsa. "And of course I'd been in Arkansas and I'd been in a social club there, been a cheerleader, and then I come to Tulsa and I am Nooobody! You know, it's like you want to go say, 'Hey, I was important!' I used to be important! It was terrible!" (Mrs. Newton, non-cheerleader). Her family's move cost her social position which she was unable to establish in the new school. Dominated by the IN-crowd, the cheerleaders' lack of acknowledgment humiliated her. The IN-crowd she longed to join included those at the top of the school's social ladder – the Socs, who basked in popularity. Being a cheerleader meant being a Soc.

To avoid her perceived humiliation, she went out of her way to go to classes by circuitous routes evading their meeting places. She remembered having

> a class ... where I would of had to go from one side [of the third floor] to the other side of the ... [third floor], I would have had to walk through all the Socs and I would walk down a flight of stairs and go over to the other side of the building and go back up to avoid that ... because it was like being invisible. You know, here were all these really cool kids standing around there and ... you were nobody and they looked at you, or they didn't look at you as you passed by because you were nobody!
>
> (Mrs. Newton, non-cheerleader)

Being a "nobody" resulted from not attending the right school, not wearing the right clothes, and not being in "the right place at the right time" (Mrs. Newton, outsider).

She recognized that even the social clubs represented social stratification because certain social clubs were the "good" ones – membership was more prestigious. And prestige was linked to cheerleading. Those who were really right, in a good social club, had a pin to proclaim it. "... you had on your pin ... the pin advertised, 'I'm in one of the good social clubs and you're not in one of the good ones'" (Mrs. Newton, non-cheerleader). The different social clubs even had distinctive patterned honks for their car horns so that their cars could announce their presence in a neighborhood. By Mrs. Newton's senior year, she had begun to discover a mechanism to gain visibility. She even noted the presence of IN-teachers and realized their significance to her.

> ...when I got real active in drama I was in some of the plays ... There were even two speech teachers and one of them was more the "IN" speech teacher. And the other was not. And my senior year I got in with that, the one that was sorta IN and I remember that was when I finally started getting to know some of these kids ...and they finally began to recognize me as a person.
>
> (Mrs. Newton, non-cheerleader)

In an interesting contrast, the pep club president who attended Chaucer about five years later, described the same social scene – only she felt she belonged on Soc row; she

was a member of the IN-crowd. She also relied on a teacher/the pep club sponsor. This teacher "was really amazing ... and I loved her. And she loved me. And I just know she would have done anything for me. And I would have done anything for her" (Mrs. Albany, pep club president). The teacher's most interesting help was to write passes. "She used to write me passes all the time because I was like trailing my future husband around. So she'd write me these passes all the time so that I would just happen to go into his class to see something" (Mrs. Albany, pep club).

She went on to describe the same social gatherings in the halls that had intimidated the girl from Arkansas. "And I think about this now and, I just can't even believe we did this. But the third floor of the building was sort of considered Soc row and everybody would get to school early and get their spot and sit on the floor so that the entire hallway was lined" (Mrs. Albany, pep club president). "Everybody" meant the IN-crowd including cheerleaders – no one else merited notice ... "I don't even know what the rest of the school did ... before school. Because I was just so tuned to sitting in one little spot. It's just stupid now that I think about it!" (Mrs. Albany, pep club president). The entire event was carefully choreographed social stratification within the IN-crowd:

> There would be like a section from this classroom door to this classroom door where guys who didn't have girlfriends would all sit. Then there would be a section over here for guys who had girlfriends and they would sit with them. Then there would be a section for one social club whose boys were, you know, something .... And then, I mean, it was just crazy, but it was like the whole hall was just like crammed with people sitting side by side with their legs sticking out there .... I mean that was huge. And there was [the] smoke hole ....
>
> (Mrs. Albany, pep club president)

The smoke hole was the antithesis of the IN-crowd "hang-out," being neither a socially acceptable location for members of the IN-crowd nor a representative of proper companions evidenced by its occupants. The good kids did not go there.

The former pep club president was aware of the different social strata within her school.

> I kind of felt like I was always one of the IN-crowd ... but I think that it would be real interesting to talk to somebody that was, you know, say from the north side. Somebody that was on the out crowd—see how they felt about it. Because, you know, my picture of high school I'm sure is not the same as somebody else that struggled with identity and trying to fit in ... I'm sure that was awful now that I look back on it.
>
> (Mrs. Albany, pep club president)

Her choice of words "struggling with identity and trying to fit in" (Mrs. Albany, pep club president) posed an interesting comparison with the girl who moved into Chaucer district who seemed to know who she was but was not permitted into the groups to which she aspired. Both these women now offered their perceptions of "fitting in." Both brought up social clubs – one interpreted through the eyes of the IN-crowd and one from the perspective of the outside — as markers of inclusion or exclusion.

During these high school years few Socs seemed to examine the issues of inclusion and exclusion. High school was one big party to the pep club president. "Oh, well, I think [I] was one of those people that liked high school more than I liked college" (Mrs. Albany, pep club president). She repeated comments about the fun she had in high school several times. For her, the social clubs were a major part of that fun. However, for other students the social clubs were anything but fun. This was a stratified society in which cheerleaders were key indicators of status.

The former pep club president was familiar with the other social divisions within the school. "And this is really going to sound dumb but at the time ... the whole school was divided, it was a huge school, classes were a lot bigger than they are now but ... basically you had your Socs and your hoods, 'greasers,' and then everybody else" (Mrs. Albany, pep club president).

Chaucer was the wealthy school in the 1950s. "Tulsa Chaucer had all of the money .... [The money] in Tulsa fed into that school and the other high school [Tudor]. One of them was kind of considered the lower class and then Runnymede was just strictly a middle, lower to middle class high school" (Mrs. Newton, non-cheerleader).

These were economic divisions within the white community. The north and south lines were not yet racial as black students still attended a segregated high school. As an outsider explained, "It was economic ... we were there when it was not [integrated] — north Tulsa is the poor section and now the black section" (Mrs. Newton, outsider). Streets and schools divided the city in economic not racial sections.

> If you came from Roses [junior high] you were north side. If you came from Hastings [junior high] you were south side ... It was definitely a north - south ... There was ... a dividing line .... I probably would have been considered a north-sider because ... [of] where we lived ....
>
> (Mrs. Albany, pep club president).

All the divisions were obvious with everybody aware of them. The Socs were not concerned about the others, the outsiders — they did not know nor care what the rest of the school did.

The Socs also commanded the school's social status from their membership in exclusive social clubs. As the former pep club president explained life as a Soc, "I mean it was so social. That was it. That was all we did ... just go to parties ... football games and basketball games ... then a lot of times they had what they called mixers [dances] after certain games" (Mrs. Albany, pep club president). On occasion the school sponsored mixers "but nobody really would come" (Mrs. Albany, pep club president) to them. The pep club officers were required to attend but everybody who was anybody was busy with social club activities and did not attend. Eventually the school quit sponsoring the mixers.

The Socs truly believed that everybody else actually wanted to be included and only participated in other activities as a result of the disappointment from not being selected as cool and as part of the Socs and their social clubs. As the former pep club president reflected:

> There was another organization, the Rainbows .... And this is the really sad thing, but I mean Rainbow to us who were in these other social clubs it was not, you had a really bad image of Rainbow because ... if they didn't get in this [a social club], you know, they just weren't obviously cool enough to be in anything but Rainbow.
>
> (Mrs. Albany, pep club president)

Years later she realized that Rainbow was a national organization with members all over the country, "but at the time I had no idea what it was. And I mean I just thought it was for somebody that didn't get into these other things. That shows how stupid I was" (Mrs. Albany, pep club president).

The Socs assumed that everyone else simply wanted to be a part of their circle and many did. Social clubs were stratified; cheerleaders were an important part of being prestigious. Some social clubs were more prestigious than others. The girl who moved

from Arkansas desperately wanted to belong to a major social club. "And if you were really somebody you got to be in the so-and-so club .... They had Greek letters .... And then there was another level with five other social clubs so if you were really one of the big Socs, you could be in one of the major clubs ... and, of course, I wanted to be in one of those and wasn't" (Mrs. Newton, non-cheerleader). She was never invited to be in one of the big ones and was never a part of "Soc corner." This location was of such social significance that it is still venerated today. She told of a recent encounter:

> I just was at breakfast after church, a couple of weeks ago with somebody who graduated from Chaucer High School the year before I did and I'll be darned if he didn't even bring it up .... I said something about well I didn't like Chaucer very well. And he said, "Well, if you had hung out at Soc corner you would have."
>
> (Mrs. Newton, non-cheerleader)

With the selection processes for social clubs and cheerleading beginning in junior high, for some the disappointment began with rejection by the right social club or with cheerleader tryouts in junior high. "They just wanted it. They just did. But of course, probably, the initial disappointment was the first, you know, when they were in ninth grade and didn't make it. I don't know" (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader). She remembered that many of those not selected would have been good candidates: "But there were a lot of girls at Chaucer that would have been great cheerleaders but just didn't get to. [Friend's name] probably would have been. She would have been a great one because she was athletic. I don't remember if she tried out" (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader).

Pep club became the refuge for many who failed to make the squad. " ... I was so overwhelmed by the size of that school and I thought well there is no way I could be a cheerleader. So I never even tried out. I was in the pep club and ... put on the little

uniform when it was game day and all … I was no dummy. I knew I wasn't going to be a cheerleader" (Mrs. Newton, non-cheerleader).

Pep club represented only one delineation. The entire school was neatly divided into categories. The athletic boys were jocks, " … the jocks were mainly boys, because there was nothing for girls" (Mrs. Albany, pep club president). The majority of the cheerleaders emerged from and in turn defined the ranks of the Socs. Within the pep club, other Socs filled the offices and then carefully maintained the proper delineation within the pep club's squads

> … Socs pretty much held all the offices to everything and then there would be squads. There would be like, you know, somebody would be a squad leader and it would be somebody who was say, fit into the Soc category and so everybody in her squad also would be.
>
> (Mrs. Albany, pep club president).

Other squads were entirely composed of sophomores or juniors all depending upon the whim of the squad leader.

A male high school cheerleader who graduated in 1961 actually became a cheerleader because he saw the visibility as the potential for popularity – a quick way to meet many people. He explained the sense of power he felt when leading the crowd.

> And they were all yelling back at you in unison, you know, with your cheer. Well, the noise was incredible … to have 2,000 kids yelling at the top of their lungs at Skelly Stadium, just straight at you, was an incredible rush. It was just unbelievable …. The favorite cheer for Chaucer High School, always has been "Two bits, four bits, six bits, a dollar. All for Chaucer stand up and holler!" … But if you did that, and everyone stood up and hollered, it was like a bomb had gone off.
>
> (Mr. Boston, cheerleader)

The power was not lost on the spectators representing the opposing teams. "Whoever was across the stadium knew exactly what we came to say. It was coming at them in incredible volume. And we took it all for granted that that was the way it was supposed to be but to see that today would be a shock beyond belief ..." (Mr. Boston, cheerleader).

For some being a part of this power made cheerleader a coveted position. Many aspired to be cheerleaders; few made it.

> Did I want to be a cheerleader? ... I just thought it was something that would just be so much fun and wonderful. And it really was. It was a big deal. Still is, I think, for a lot of kids. So I just wanted to try it and see if I could do it. I'd always been fairly wiry and you know, I could jump around and scream. And smile big. Kick. That sort of thing. So I just decided to do it. It was a neat deal ... at that time ... it was something that you were. That you really wanted to try to do.
>
> (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader)

This former cheerleader who graduated in 1962 attributed other awards and recognition in her high school to her visibility and prestige as a cheerleader.

> I think possibly I was awarded some other things because of cheerleading. Which is probably a bit unfair but it is probably true because I was out in front of people .... It just gives you more visibility so I certainly wasn't a beautiful, you know, gorgeous girl. I was just kinda cute. I was short and a little chubby and cute, you know, and I could smile .... I got to be queen attendant one year, and I got to be football queen one year ... that happened because people knew me. They saw me so I don't think it's, you know, for any other reason. It wasn't for beauty, I know that.
>
> (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader)

In recounting a newly developed cheer, the male cheerleader who graduated in the 1961, explained the precision becoming necessary to cheer. He also pointed out that although their cheer did not meet the physical standards of today's cheers, it far surpassed

the expectations of the old standard of simply standing and waving your arms. The new styles of cheers would demand changes in the selection process. Cheerleading was moving toward athletic capabilities. .

> By today's standards it would be hard to relate but they were very physical. Lots of movement, not just standing around waving your arms up .... Everything had to be perfectly timed, and all the movements had to be together, and the jumps had to be perfectly timed ... everyone had to have an exact, precise look. And so it was very much a timing and precision thing ...
> (Mr. Boston, cheerleader)

Moreover, cheerleading still had to maintain a level of decorum, especially as reflected by the females' costumes. For years the uniforms remained similar, however, in the early 1960s a Chaucer High School squad changed its uniforms for the springtime. The previous uniform, worn for all seasons and all sports, was the traditional skirt and sweater. A megaphone with Tulsa Chaucer and the year decorated the front of the sweater. Red and white saddle shoes were specially ordered to complete the uniform. These uniforms still passed from one generation of cheerleaders to the next. A former cheerleader described their wintertime outfits as little red wool, lined circular skirts worn with white wool, V-necked sweaters. "I don't know where they came from or who made them. But they were passed down from generation to generation of the cheerleading squad ...." (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader). In her junior year, the members of the squad decided they wanted a springtime and indoor uniform for basketball season. They selected red pleated skirts.

> It was really, really scandalous because the school didn't know if they wanted us to wear them to school because they came up above our knees ... but they relented and decided that we weren't too outrageous .... For a while they wanted us just to wear them for our events, then take them off and not wear them

> because they thought it, in the words of my mother, they were afraid it would promote "rowdyism."
>
> (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader)

While not discussed in the interviews, these changes may have been influenced by Herkimer's products and a clear indifference to costs founded on the income level of parents.

Visibility and Expectations

Increased visibility also placed expectations on the cheerleaders and exacted a stiff penalty for noncompliance. To some, remaining on these squads was crucially important. The cheerleader who graduated in 1962 shared an experience. She described herself as "... I didn't ever consider myself a, you know, a killer girl, you know, that boys, I really, I just wasn't that kind of girl. I was pretty square" (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader). Then she explained that although some other people were not up to the same standards, square was the standard for the cheerleading squad.

> ... my partner got into a little bit of trouble her senior year .... She got pregnant .... I'll never forget is trying to cover for [friend] .... The boy that got her pregnant ... came from a very nice family .... That was the end of my senior year and [friend] ... was a real tiny girl but she was wearing clothes that kinda covered it up, but people were talking and I was trying ... to be her loyal friend .... But that was very hard.
>
> (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader)

Visibility also had a price "... if anything, the pressure was for a girl to be straight. And for the boys it was kind of a different standard" (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader).

This former cheerleader who graduated in 1964 continued with a definition of "straight." Nice girls had a particular code; nice girls were not "fast."

> Drinking, smoking, you know, being promiscuous in any way. If you did those things, you were just really looked down on .... You were not considered a nice girl .... There was more pressure ... to toe the line on all those things .... None of my high school friends drank, I mean, you just didn't do that.
>
> (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader)

In order to meet this criteria, the selection system favored those known "nice" girls. However, on occasion circumstances favored girls who otherwise would not have made squads. Opening a new high school offered just such an opportunity.

> ... it was kind of the thing that everybody wanted to be .... At Tudor I felt like I never had a chance ... When we went to Medieval ... And they picked four that would be juniors and four that would be sophomores ... . The odds weren't so tight anymore. It was just the most exciting thing to me. I just thought it was the most fun .... But I never would have had that experience if I had stayed at Tudor.
>
> (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader)

Although it was fun to make cheerleader at a newly opened high school, the Medieval High School cheerleader, who graduated in 1964, told of her different experience in the recently constructed high school. She was forced to attend the new school because she was a junior; only seniors could remain at their old school to graduate. Students were terribly proud of the old high school. In fact, loyalty to the old school affected many who attended the new school and became the first cheerleaders. She described the first meeting of the two football teams at the All-City Round Robin tournament which proved no contest as the new high school fielded a team of only sophomore and junior boys: "And they put Tudor and Medieval against each other. And

I was a cheerleader. And the words, "Beat Tudor" could hardly come out of our mouths. And I remember the whole cheerleading squad was just in tears ... It was a pathetic sight" (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader).

Her loyalty was so great and her school spirit was so intense that she had planned to attend every football game for her former school while wearing its school colors:

> I told myself I would go to every Tudor football game and ... here I am a Medieval cheerleader and saw Coach _____, who was a football coach for Medieval, and here I am in my red and green ... to root on Tudor. It was real hard to break away. But once that break was made, you know, we became the biggest of rivals ....
>
> (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader)

Loyalty to her new school prevailed. She transferred her school spirit to Medieval. By her senior year, when they played Tudor, everything was reversed. Her new school found tremendous school spirit and enjoyed the change: "Our slogan when we played Tudor that senior year was 'Eat the Turkeys' and we had all the football players wearing these chicken bones in little baggies. You know, with 'Eat the Turkeys' across the top ..." (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader).

Another former cheerleader who was on the squad all three years and captain during her senior year in 1965, explained that her family planned to move between her ninth and tenth grade years which meant she would now attend Medieval High School in the fall. Every day after school that spring, her mother drove her from her current junior high school to the cheerleading clinic at her new high school. She wanted to be a cheerleader because she was athletic and, like the male cheerleader of the 1950s, she wanted a fast way to make friends at her new school. She also realized the benefit of knowing students from other schools.

> It was a great way to meet people ... not only the athletes that you're cheering for but because you are cheering the fans on, there is a lot of interaction between you and the people who come to the athletic events .... You are in a recognizable position and ...you meet [people] from other schools. You know, because you're going to other schools all the time. And you come across those people later on in college. It's real fun!
>
> (Mrs. Seattle, cheerleader)

She benefited in two ways. First, because that was the year Medieval opened, it was easier for a newcomer to try out and to make the squad. Second, she and her mother knew about the clinics and the spring tryouts. With spring tryouts, anyone who moved into the district over the summer or in the fall was too late to try out for a squad. Spring tryouts provided a mechanism to assist current students in filling the few positions on the squads—a form of exclusivity for those already within the school.

Transferring the Social Structure

As the city grew, new high schools opened and they began with remnants of the social order from the school they superseded. This was a very stratified society with imaginary connections to geographic locations. The tense social hierarchy within Tulsa's schools was personified by S.E. Hinton in *The Outsiders* first published in 1967. Hinton defined the terms as she described the dynamics of the relationship between the "greasers" and the Socs in *The Outsiders*.

> We [greasers] get jumped by the Socs. I'm not sure how you spell it, but it's the abbreviation for the Socials, the jet

> set, the West-side rich kids. It's like the term "greaser," which is used to class all of us boys on the East Side.
>
> We're poorer than the Socs and the middle class. I reckon we're wilder too. Not like the Socs, who jump greasers and wreck houses and throw beer blasts for kicks, and get editorials in the paper for being a public disgrace one day and an asset to society the next. Greasers are almost like hoods; we steal things and drive old souped-up cars and hold up gas stations and have a gang fight once in a while.
>
> (Hinton, 1997, p. 2-3)

Hinton included cheerleaders as Socs when explaining the actual animosity between "greasers" and Socs. "So Cherry Vanance, the cheerleader, Bob's girl, the Soc, was trying to help us .... It was hard to believe a Soc would help us ...." (Hinton, p. 86). However, events could eventually influence the social structure.

The opening of Tudor High School changed the social structure and the selection of cheerleaders within Chaucer High School. Chaucer had been a north side and south side division with cheerleaders, class officers, "important people" coming almost exclusively from the south-siders. However, many south-siders attended Tudor when it opened.

> ... our class was one of the first that ever elected officers for anything that really came from the north side .... So we had a lot of our officers and queen attendants ... important people came from the north side. And originally no one ever would have called a north-sider a soc ... but by the time we were seniors, you know, there were some of these social clubs type things that included some of the north-side girls ....
>
> (Mrs. Albany, pep club president).

Social clubs were still a factor in the Tulsa schools in the mid 1960s. For members the social clubs seemed fun, but they were selective and very exclusive.

> ... we had social clubs ... I can't believe we did that because I think that was really a hurtful thing to a lot of kids because everyone wasn't in it, you know, I mean it was real selective .... I don't think social clubs continued to be a big deal at Medieval .... They were a big deal at Tudor. We had a great time. But I realize now we really were exclusive and I'm sure there were many girls who wanted to be part of it that weren't .... But you know, it was just a lot of fun.
>
> (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader)

Looking back on the high school of 1964, a former cheerleader and homecoming queen described the social clubs in terms of fairness:

> I think a lot of kids weren't invited to participate .... I just think there had to be a lot of kids wishing they could be a part of it that weren't .... It wasn't like you only did things with the kids that were in your social [club] ... but you really had a lot of your best friends through that ... so I don't think it was a real healthy thing to have that weren't tolerated that are now. I mean there are just so many diversities.
>
> (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader)

Crossing Social Lines

Mrs. Springfield took this opportunity to compare her role as social club member and its explicit selectivity with her self-analysis of not being a selective person. Her ability to cross social lines provided interesting insight as she outlined the reasons she became the homecoming queen in 1964. "I really liked everybody ... and that's what people would say in my yearbook .... I was chosen Miss Medieval .... I really think it was just because I genuinely can find something [in anyone] .... I'm not selective in who—you know, so I guess that's just part of who I am" (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader). She also described

herself as a dedicated student to whom grades were very important; however, she preferred that this information escaped her peers. "In junior high I remember thinking I didn't want anyone to know that [grades] were real important to me because it seemed like it wasn't cool" (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader). Believing that grades were important was not cool; appearances were important.

The homecoming queen from 1964 was another of the rare students who crossed the various social circles as a social club member. Soc was both an attitude and a social position. Some people maintained the social status without the accompanying Soc attitude.

In 1957 another cheerleader had crossed between the social divisions because she lacked the Soc attitude.

> ... she was a big cheerleader and she ended up being the Queen .... She was not one of the quote – Socs at our high school. [She] was one of those kind of people that was so nice to everybody that everybody liked her .... the hoods liked [her] and the Socs liked [her] and she never really identified with any one group.
>
> (Mrs. Newton, non-cheerleader)

This same 1957 cheerleader, deliberately volunteered her dear friend, the non-cheerleader, for this study as a representative of a contrasting view of the high school experience. It is interesting to note that this cheerleader and non-cheerleader did not become friends until many years after high school when they both were married, lived in another state, and became reacquainted through their husbands.

Attitude and visibility were important factors. Another former cheerleader, who graduated in 1965 from Medieval, described herself as an extrovert who loved people but was "Naïve in a lot of ways about the world. I had rose-colored glasses on, thought

everybody was great and everything was going to come out perfect and all you had to do was work hard and be a good person and everything would work out all right" (Mrs. Seattle, cheerleader).

For many, working hard and being a good person were not enough – they were still invisible. "I guess our sophomore year [1959-1960] there was a black kid that was really a handsome kid. Nobody ever really, I mean, nobody would ever have dated him." (Mrs. Albany, pep club president).

The non-cheerleader remembered her senior year, 1957, when the first black students came to Chaucer and "...there were three, I think, and I felt sorry for them. I just thought how awful to be in a situation in the gigantic school with all this sea of white faces. It was the first year of integration" (Mrs. Newton, non-cheerleader). She had empathy for their plight when they entered the school. However, she exhibited an interesting comparison to the world outside her school. She listed the three high schools in town including Chaucer High School.

> There was Runnymede High School ... one in west Tulsa ... Westminster High School .... West Tulsa was west of the Arkansas River. I do know that division ... maybe I'm trying to think of Buckingham High School .... I guess maybe ... there were four and Buckingham High School was where the black kids went and to me there were only three high schools .... Isn't it funny how you just never think about those things.
>
> (Mrs. Newton, non-cheerleader)

She had never stopped to count the segregated black high school as even existing. The city had three high schools unless she stopped to add and realized that there were actually four high schools.

Although she professed to wearing rose-colored glasses, the cheerleader who graduated from the new high school in the far south section of Tulsa noted integration as another form of exclusivity. She illustrated the exceedingly gradual manner in which the city integrated the schools. Even by the mid-1960s all schools within the system were not completely integrated. She described the times as tense because the schools were not yet multiracial. People anticipated trouble.

> And I remember when we played some of the schools that were black schools, you know, everybody was kind of afraid because they thought there would be an incident or a fight or something. And there was always a little undercurrent of racial tension at the time because the schools were not integrated ... but we always had good experiences with the cheerleaders .... I'm sure that there were incidents .... None of that really applies today.
>
> (Mrs. Seattle, cheerleader)

In summary, from the perspective of students patterns of inclusion and exclusion existed. Socs and cheerleaders were often synonymous. As athleticism evolved into a major criterion for cheerleading, economics favored higher income families who were better able to afford private lessons in cheering or gymnastics.

Cheerleading as a Competitive Sport

High school and collegiate cheerleading competitions began in the late 1970s. Over 500,000 students were participating as cheerleaders from grade school through college by 1975 (Hanson, 1995, p. 28). By the late 1980s cheerleaders had universal standards to follow. "Now recognized as a true athletic form, the cheerleader safety

guidelines outlawed many dangerous tumbling moves, pyramids over two levels high, and the mini-trampoline after several students were tragically injured" (Villarreal, 1994, p.19). The sophistication now visible in cheerleading routines demanded radical changes and new standards in the selection process as the squads redefined their needs. By the mid 1970s prospective cheerleaders began specialized training at ever younger ages with serious contenders beginning gymnastic lessons in elementary school.

The 1990s noted a resurgence in the males' interest in cheerleading (Villarreal, p.19) — joining predecessors who composed the early elite that defined the ideal as collegiate, male cheerleader. Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt (Harvard, class of 1903), Dwight D. Eisenhower (West Point), and Ronald Reagan had all served as cheerleaders. Also in the 1990s cheerleading began capturing the attention of new fans as professional football spread to Europe, Mexico, Canada, and Japan (Villarreal, 19).

In the 1990s attitude was considered important but physical ability was actually of paramount importance. This reflected the change in cheer status from cheerleaders at games to members of competitive squads. The October 1998 (p. 80) issue of *American Cheerleader* carried the column entitled Pep Talk which posed a question as the next issue's topic: "What is most important to you—cheering at games or competition?" The magazine invited readers to send their opinions and a photo for possible inclusion in the results which would be tabulated and published in the November issue.

We've Got Spirit: The Life and Times of America's Greatest Cheerleading Team by James T. McElroy (1999) examined the competitive high school cheerleaders "who strive to move away from the sidelines, to take control of their lives" (McElroy, 1999, back cover). McElroy argued that "today's competitive cheerleading is intense,

athletic, and even dangerous—a sport in its own right that combines the acrobatic grace of gymnastics, the energized dance of ice skating, and the all-American good looks of a beauty pageant" (McElroy, 1999, front flap). His story began in 1997 at the National High School Cheerleading Championship in Orlando, Florida. Much to the crowd's delight, all nineteen members of Kentucky's Greenup County Musketeers executed their standing back tuck simultaneously. The team was once again crowned champion. This high school squad was the consummate representative of the 1900s for it is a juxtaposition of feminism and athleticism: a relational shift that began much earlier in the century. According to McElroy (1999) thousands of high school teams from across the country devoted long hours to practice with the hope of securing a national championship; however, Kentucky's Greenup County Musketeers have taken the title eight times. These team members dressed in "green and gold are adored throughout the country for being pretty, polite, sweet, and sexy—but what Greenup's rivals strive to emulate is the fierce athleticism and competitive spirit that make Greenup the team to beat" (McElroy, 1999, front flap).

Coach Candy Berry performed as a high school cheerleader in the 1960s and returned as an assistant coach in 1973. Two years later she became the coach of Greenup High. In the late 1990s she taught team members the intricacies of partner stunts, which when compared to the older group mounts, were

> ... more difficult and precarious ways to hold girls aloft and display them to the crowd. During a partner stunt, a squad divides into three or more groups of four (three bases and a flyer). Each group of bases lifts their flyer up into the air. The flyers have no one to hold on to for balance. They must simply stand with one foot up the hands of their three teammates, and

> stiffen their bodies to keep from wobbling to the side and crashing to the ground.
>
> (McElroy, 1999, p. 15)

According to McElroy (1999) Coach Berry added the partnering stunts to her team's repertoire after top college programs began employing them ten years earlier. No other high school team used partnering stunts until Coach Berry began adding them to Greenup's routines. To remain competitive, other coaches and teams had to follow her example.

On September 17, 1998, ESPN broadcast the 1998 Universal Cheerleader Association Junior All-Stars Championships. Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida, hosted this event for cheerleaders currently in the ninth grade or younger. Noting the lucrative nature of these competitions, Walt Disney World has become the scene of many cheerleading events, some of which ESPN filmed and broadcast. This particular event featured squads from two age divisions. Although the squads were predominately composed of girls, a few squads fielded two to three boys as members. Interestingly, although the school grade determined the divisions and an announcer noted that the seventh and eighth graders on one squad maintained a squad average GPA of 3.9, the featured cheer squads represented cheerleader gyms instead of schools. One announcer explained that these were established gyms—cheer gyms created for the purpose of training cheerleaders who then fed into the gym's own programs. Cheerleader gyms trained these young girls to be competitive cheerleaders; they were not trained to lead cheering. In fact, the announcer introduced the Memphis Elite All-Stars as one of the few squads at the competition that actually cheers [at games]; this squad cheered for youth football leagues in the area. These gyms selected team members for all-star squads

from across the cities. Some members traveled up to one hundred miles to practice each week and thus comprised regional squads. The association required all these squads to compete at various local levels, then regionally, in order to earn their way into the finals. The levels of competition, hours of instruction, gym time, plus the matching uniforms equaled an expensive activity. The teams raised their own funds with what one announcer noted as strong support in the community. The Memphis Elite All-Stars raised money by working concessions at local sporting events.

The announcers vacillated between calling them teams and squads. However, these squads or teams were competitive entities only; the words to their cheers resounded with praise for their home gyms.

CHEER CENTRAL IS THE BEST!
--Cheer Central in Little Rock, Arkansas

They were cheering for themselves!

Cheerleading was evolving into two patterns. On one level cheerleading was becoming purely a competitive province, actually separate from the schools without a genuine cheering function. The second option had cheerleading becoming an athletic event sponsored by the school and controlled by the coach and by state regulations. Although this second group performed as competitive squads, they still functioned as cheerleaders at athletic events.

Several of the cheerleaders from previous interviews had daughters who also became cheerleaders. This offered these women a unique perspective from which to compare their experiences to those of their daughters. Their experiences provided these women as mothers a knowledgeable vantage point from which to compare the shifts. The mothers were a part of the cycle and process during the years from 1945 to 1972. The daughters followed and benefited from the changes during the 1970s to the 1990s.

A cheerleader who graduated in 1962 from Chaucer had three daughters who attended Medieval High School. The oldest one of them had no intention of becoming a cheerleader: "She just thought being a cheerleader was just the worst thing and she would never dream of being a cheerleader. She was an artist and more introspective and she looked down and she thought the cheerleaders were snobs" (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader). However, her middle daughter was a cheerleader in middle school while the mother, the former cheerleader, described herself as an involved parent. She admitted "It was kind of tough ... it was kind of a big business. There's a lot of competition and, of course, middle school girls are at such an atrocious state in their life" (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader). Her middle daughter did not continue cheerleading after middle school.

Her youngest daughter's choice of activities pointed to a new development, the pom pon squad. Pom offered opportunities for more girls to participate. She explained, "It's something they added to give more girls opportunities . . . so I think today's system allows more girls to be involved in it with the pom and cheer. Now I know a lot of schools have A and B squads .... " (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader).

She thought the new system was great, especially in light of reminiscences of her peers who did not make the cheer squad. She recalled a gorgeous friend who always tried out and never made it. The experience was heartbreaking for her. The former cheerleader's own middle daughter had a devastating experience in middle school. It was very hard for her and other kids who did not make it — "It's a disappointment if they don't make it" (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader). As the former cheerleader explained, "There would be girls that were crushed ... I think girls are hurt all the time right now over cheerleading" (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader). She felt that the new more inclusive system was preferable. " ... they try to include more kids now so that nearly everybody in junior high school can do something, maybe be on the B squad but back then there weren't that many people that were chosen" (Mrs. Meridian, cheerleader). Not only were few selected, but once a cheerleader made the squad, she or he usually remained on it throughout high school. Thus others who might have been "great" were denied the opportunity.

Another former cheerleader and 1964 graduate of Medieval told of the selection process implemented for her own daughter, who is currently on the (1997) Hadrian High School squad. The daughter started cheerleading in fifth grade, only because her mother delayed her. Many of her friends started in the first or second grade. The fifth grade squad was composed of fifty girls—anyone who signed up. These inclusive squads continued into the seventh grade; however, the mother pointed out that those who were serious were taking gymnastic classes on the side.

The girls and/or their parents anticipated the competitiveness to come. Her daughter's current high school squad participated in national competitions. It was

designed as a competitive squad. The head of the athletic department said, "Cheering is a sport just like any other sport. The coaches may pick the team" (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader). Teams were now put together based on needs: "And [coaches] may pick according to how many bases they need, how many fliers they need" (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader). The tryout has become a week-long practice session watched by the coaches who then make their decisions based on team needs plus genuine knowledge of the girls' capabilities. "And so it's gone from being totally impartial, people that don't know anything about them, to a group that's choosing that totally knows the girls, they know their work ethic .... They know all of that about them" (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader).

The mother believed that this method relieved stress. "So, if you know that you have given your best, I mean have been cooperative, and had a good attitude, and you have your gymnastics, it's not a real high pressure deal anymore" (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader). This mother argued that competitive squads relieved the pressure on the girls. The good athletes would make the squads based on the determinations of the coaches and the needs of the team. She compared the experiences of her two daughters under the two selection processes. She referred to the older methods of selecting squads where the administration brought in outside judges. Cheerleaders had only one attempt to impress these judges.

> ... they would invite in a panel of judges ... who didn't know anything about the girls. And so you could have a terrible reputation and be a cheerleader. And you could have one bad tryout, and ... you did yourself in if you didn't try to do your back handspring or something and it didn't go well. I mean it was kind of like it was all wrapped up in one big tryout, and

> the girls were nervous wrecks...They have done a total reverse.
>
> (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader)

The tension exacted a terrible toll from mothers and daughters: " ... But even living with it through her .... It was just way too .... It became too big a deal" (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader).

Her older daughter [in 1997] felt tremendous pressure with outside judges brought in for tryouts. "Because it's not like some outsiders are coming in and might not like your style, or something. They don't like your voice or you don't know what they don't like, but you may have just not appealed to them and in one swoop you're out ..." (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader). The older daughter actually gave up cheerleading. The mother was incredulous: "I mean she actually gave it up" (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader).

Her younger daughter was "really a good gymnast. She's very relaxed about it [the tryout week] (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader). In fact her mother admitted that her younger daughter would prefer to compete and not cheer for athletic events.

> And my daughter is one of the ones who doesn't even care about cheering at the games. You know, sorry to admit. What she loves is the competition, if she could just compete and not cheer .... Getting up in front of the crowd for her is not the fun part. It's preparing for competition.
>
> (Mrs. Springfield, cheerleader)

Cheerleading was being realigned around the female as athlete with cheerleading as a recognized sport including the status and trappings of a sport. Neither contemporary cheerleading nor pom pon squads, in sum, looked or acted like their counterparts on the cheerleading squads in 1945. Cheerleaders were no longer limited in athletic skills, were

no longer all Socs, and were no longer bound by finances rather than talent and training. They were another athletic team groomed for competition against other athletic teams.

CHAPTER 4

ADMINISTRATORS: 1945 – 1999

Administrators realized that cheerleading was an area requiring their attention. Yet the nature of that attention was problematic, for cheerleading was now a part of school tradition and thus sanctified. In addition, cheerleaders were a very visible group backed by an inordinate amount of parental involvement. This was an avenue fraught with potential difficulties for the unprepared principal. However, administrators could not be prepared for all the changes to come. Laws and customs were also becoming involved. Throughout this era, cheerleaders were evolving from purveyors of school spirit to genuine female athletes.

Administrators: 1945 – 1972

Cheerleading needed supervision, according to Dean B. Smith, Assistant to the Principal at the Elkhart, Indiana, High School who wrote: "Personally, I coach them [cheerleaders and yell leaders] both as a hobby and in order to give faculty supervision to their program" (Brings, 1944, p. 8).

Many of the most important school ceremonies involved cheerleaders. Administrators termed anything involving cheerleaders a sensitive area because various outside pressures complicated it. When interviewed, a principal during the 1960s noted the touchy nature of dealing with pep squads and cheerleaders. He recognized that both the squads and the sponsors came under an inordinate amount of outside pressure. The emergence of both cheerleading and later pom pon created a huge responsibility for the person in charge.

> That was always kind of touchy because we had what we called the pep squad and the cheerleaders. And that's been a real roller-coaster. There was a lot of outside pressure on cheerleaders starting back earlier in junior high and middle schools and coming up. I always felt the person who had to undertake that responsibility was really under the gun .... I was fortunate .... I had very competent people who were able to handle both — the two different roles.
>
> (Dr. Georgia, principal)

Pressure flowed from many sources. Principals always included parents under the category of pressure. "... if a girl ... didn't make the team then you had not only the child to deal with but parents who were extremely angry" (Dr. Dakota, principal). He admitted that he was "not real crazy about that altercation. I think it's a much to do about very little" (Dr. Dakota, principal).

This administrator, who became principal in 1970, managed a group he labeled as problem kids: "Cheerleaders! The bane of my existence" (Dr. Dakota, principal). He continued to explain why these girls caused him more trouble than the rest of the student body.

> I have made the comment many times, and I told the girls that at the time they were here, that those nine young ladies caused me more grief than all the other students put

> together. And they were sweet as could be. They just always had a boyfriend problem, or they always had a little problem among themselves, or something.
>
> (Dr. Dakota, principal)

The dynamic of this relationship was fraught with tension, for cheerleaders used as mechanisms of school control created a dilemma. They carried the label of "good kid;" but, on occasion, "they slipped." But they were part of what principals termed tradition or custom. Their transgressions had to be justified within the context of "good kid." Principals guarded their language to protect or soften the offense when dealing with the "good" kids who had problems: "I don't want to put them [cheerleaders] down. In a way, they were going along with tradition, you know. And this girl was not a bad girl. She really wasn't .... " (Dr. Georgia, principal).

Finance was another area of contention. Financial decisions occurred because cheerleading was an expensive activity partially supported by the school. The balance was supplied through outside fundraising and the parents themselves. "As far as I know, the cheerleaders bought their own uniforms. The other equipment that they—pom pons or whatever they were, I just do not recall all that. And the school did give some support, but I don't recall what it was. Maybe they paid some of the transportation ... " (Dr. Dakota, principal).

In the early 1970s a teacher at Medieval High School had an opportunity to read one of the letters that was sent to prospective cheerleaders in advance of tryouts. The letter outlined costs along with the blatant admonition that if the expenses were too great a factor, "do not even bother to tryout" (Mrs. Arkansas, teacher).

Cheerleading, in short, was often a tug of war between beleaguered principals and parents. Frequently a sponsor landed in the middle of this tense situation.

There was another source of tension. Teachers and school administrators played a role in sanctioning or forbidding exclusivity within the schools. Although the social clubs were exclusive, schools dealt with them with a mixture of creative ignorance and inaction. For the girl who considered herself an outsider and so desperately wanted into the right group, the schools did little. She was offended by the administration's lack of action concerning social clubs. She wanted a more aggressive response on the part of the administration; she wanted the clubs' actions halted: "I don't know. I mean I wasn't conscious of the school or their attitude. I guess they didn't care or they would have stopped it. I don't know what finally stopped it [social clubs]" (Mrs. Newton, non-cheerleader).

Administrators' apparent failure to act represented a covert response. Their lack of visible action promoted their use of the social club system for their own purposes of school control. When social clubs were openly received in schools, their pledges "had to carry a box of candy around at all times and anytime you saw a member, you had to offer her this box of candy" (Mrs. Albany, pep club president).

By the early 1960s the administration appeared to frown on the social clubs; they no longer allowed the members to wear their pins to school. However, the longstanding tradition of the candy box continued surreptitiously. As the pep club president noted, the schools had to be aware, especially her father who was the dean of boys at her high school. She realized that the administrators chose not to see.

> But the schools tried to play dumb to this, you know, so you were not allowed to wear your pledge pin to school ... so you had to like make pledge boxes out of books so that nobody would notice what it was, you know, I mean incredibly stupid [here she whispered] I just, it just blows my mind. I don't even believe it. You know, that I did that.
>
> (Mrs. Albany, pep club president)

Many students participated in their roles of elites or outsiders with both roles condoned at various levels by the high schools.

Two crucial changes occurred in 1972. First, Congress passed Title IX, a clause in the Educational Amendments of 1972, which took effect on July 21, 1975 (Nuwer, 1989, p. 111).

> No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.
>
> (Nuwer, 1989, p. 111)

Title IX almost immediately increased the support and momentum for athletic opportunities for women. Administrators had to pay attention and appropriate funds to women's athletics. Institutions began to hire more women coaches. Greater cheerleader participation was now required to cover both men's and women's sporting events (Villarreal, 1994, p. 19). Women athletes and cheerleaders were now eligible for athletic scholarships which had rarely been awarded prior to the mid-1970s; in the United States only 200 women's athletic scholarships were awarded in 1971 (Nuwer, 1989, p.111).

The second crucial change occurred in 1972 as Texie Waterman, a former Broadway dancer, created "Broadway-style" jazz dance for the sideline entertainment in response to a challenge from Tex Schramm, General Manager of the Dallas Cowboys

(Villarreal, p.19). Waterman produced a new style for the professional cheerleaders without "sideline cheers, just pure pompon 'Broadway-style jazz dance' for the sidelines. This departure from traditional cheerleading brought with it some major changes to professional teams" (Villarreal, p.19).

> In 1976, at Super Bowl X, a television camera captured one cheerleader's "All American" wink. So many people responded that the phenomenon sent the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders on to international stardom. Soon virtually every professional team created its own team of talented ladies and sent them onto their courts and sidelines to entertain. It's what the public wanted.
>
> The success was incredible. Unlike cheerleaders as we knew it, the latest evolution of "dancing" cheerleaders was born. Big crowds, world travel, TV appearances and media hype meant the girls were polished in every way possible. Today, the Los Angeles Rams cheerleaders are the only professional cheerleading squad performing advanced, elite stunts in a traditional cheerleading fashion,
>
> (Villarreal, p.19)

The new styles also influenced high school squads.

Administrators: 1972 – 1999

What changes did Title IX and pom pon squads bring to school administrators? In 1979 a principal left the metropolitan school system to serve as assistant superintendent in a suburban school where he noted in a staff meeting that cheerleading should be built into the agenda. He suggested, as the staff was building their agenda on a flip chart, "Mr. Superintendent, in the future would you order those flip charts and just have cheerleaders

printed as the top item on every one of them.' Because it was always, always a major topic, always" (Dr. Dakota, principal).

This principal was concerned with cheerleaders' perceived elite status. His solution was to open the activity to more students; he proposed including anyone who wanted to participate: Anyone versus Everybody. By definition just "anyone" included those outside the elite circle whereas "everybody" was the elite's term for themselves, the important people – "anyone who was anybody." This was an important distinction, and it was lost on the principal.

> Yes, I think it serves far too few youngsters and I think it ruins some of those youngsters because I think they get the feeling that they are the cream of the crop, the elite. And if they don't make the team, it's just devastating .... One of my solutions was to say anyone who wants to be a cheerleader is a cheerleader.
>
> (Dr. Dakota, principal)

He offered a second solution aimed at the elite nature of cheerleading by attacking its exclusivity through encouraging more students to participate. He tried having multiple sets of cheerleaders so "that every sport had its own cheerleaders so you didn't have a set of cheerleaders. You had multiple cheerleaders throughout the year. That tended to make this activity more accessible to more students, and it sort of minimized the elitist concept, the elitist notion" (Dr. Dakota, principal). This approach was also unsuccessful and eventually discontinued.

Cheerleading's social exclusivity did face a challenge. However, the real conflict became the ever increasing athletic demands of competitive cheerleading. Cheerleading would remain exclusive but with different perimeters now set by the needs of competitive

New activities brought additional problems. One principal admitted that he wanted no part of new activities until the State Activities Association sanctioned them with the accompanying constitution that incorporated guidelines and provisions for fund raising. He wanted rules in place and another school to set the example; he did not want to be the first to offer a new activity. The State Activities Association needed to have a section dedicated to that group in place. He wanted them to produce a constitution and means for raising funds to see that they were properly uniformed. He needed rules in order to add the new group successfully "... rather than just wander into it and then try to get out" (Dr. Delaware, principal). His high school added pom pon after he left, but by that time " ... several other schools had formed theirs and there were some guidelines that had been tried. So it came around, but it was after some others had theirs" (Dr. Delaware, principal).

Although cheerleading was not considered a new activity by these principals, it had not always been under the supervision of the activities association. Most of the extracurricular activities "were just assumed to be part of the program with the exception of the cheerleader group which for the most part was an after-school activity until later in the seventies when it was brought into the curriculum ... the schools then began to help with uniforms and sponsors and that sort of thing" (Dr. Delaware, principal).

Thus the seventies represented a major shift as cheerleading entered the schools' curriculum and direct control. Schools assumed some of the financial burden and the authority that attached to the purse strings. However, cheerleading as a means of social control for the school, was in the throes of change as more and more athletic skill was

required. Just being a good kid was no longer enough; cheerleading required good athletes.

> And at one time it [cheerleading] wasn't under the activities association. So we had different organizations doing different things, then all of a sudden they ran into a structure that they weren't ready for. The other extracurricular activities that were clubs and organizations came and went because most of them had either a guideline or set of rules or something else that someone else had tried so that they could have something to go by in order to set up a new club, a new organization. But we didn't. Under the activities association we had no guidelines. It was all new. So they established some new things.
>
> (Dr. Delaware, principal)

Eventually cheerleading fell under the control of the activities association, and the transfer established new ground rules. Areas that had posed great danger to the unwary or unprepared principal, now became the sponsor's responsibility. The principal had a formal buffer in position. Rules afforded protection.

Rules as Buffers

These solutions rested upon a new sense of school control and social training. School control and social training could not be continued if they resulted in "elites." Cheerleading and pom pon became big, expensive activities. These squads now grappled with their future roles in relation to their dilemma over cheering actively at games or becoming entirely competitive. In the fall of 1997, a high school principal had to order the pom pon squad to attend a football game because they had voted to follow the example of

the band which left a football game following their half-time show the night before a major music competition. The pom pon squad had decided to skip the entire game to rest before leaving early the next morning for a pom pon competition. The principal vetoed their absence by reminding them of their purpose according to the rules of tradition: Squads performed at the games and demonstrated support for The Team.

Cheerleading State Association rules were very important to many principals. Following these rules offered a buffer when parents became involved. At these junctures, strict adherence to the state rules rescued the principal, especially when faced with powerful parents. These state rules governed school policy and provided a safety net. One principal recalled an incident involving one of the cheerleaders and the opening-of-school dance during which "according to her story — for the first time in her life had a sip of alcohol. Evidently she had quite a bit, because she passed out in the opening-of-school dance and had to be taken home" (Mr. Virginia, principal). The principal's next move was to defend the girl, "A really neat gal—had been a student leader, just drank too much vodka" (Mr. Virginia, principal). Because of the by-laws, the principal removed her from the cheerleading squad. She had actually signed a contract agreeing that she had read the by-laws and agreed to abide by them or be removed from the squad. Athletes signed a similar document. The principal brought her in and showed her the signed document. "Because she was active at school, she didn't like it and was angry, but she accepted it" (Mr. Virginia, principal).

This principal then cited another example in which a girl's parents became involved. In this instance a girl was caught drinking beer at an earlier event and the

administration suspected that another infraction would occur. They set up a video camera, and they caught her on videotape drinking beer. This was an obvious violation.

> Her parents threw a fit. We suspended her from school because it wasn't her first offense. It went to the board building and was in the newspapers and was big time on the radio. We didn't change. The board supported us. The student body was defiant. We just looked at our stuff and did what we said we would do. If we hadn't been organized, we could never have done that. The parents were very influential, and we would have lost it [the fight].
>
> (Mr. Virginia, principal)

Strict adherence to the state rules provided a safety net, especially with groups who had difficulty following guidelines. One group of parents was particularly hard pressed to follow the rules. At least one principal labeled this group of parents as "wannabes," for he felt that they lived vicariously through their children. "In many instances the mother of the cheerleader was a wannabe cheerleader herself ... and she is living her life through her daughter ...." (Mr. Louisiana, principal). Principals who considered parents as "wannabe" cheerleaders failed to recognize that these parents remembered cheerleading as a passage to immediate popularity and wanted that immediate prestige bestowed on their daughters. Remembering their high school experiences, these parents wanted to provide an advantage to their children. The principal then stated that in many instances this group more than any other group of parents did not want to follow the rules or regulations, although they had often played a role in establishing those very rules. He noted that " ... if you will ask what one group of parents have [sic] a tendency to not want to follow the rules as closely, [it] would be the parents of the cheerleaders more than the athletes or any of the other school sponsored clubs or organizations" (Mr. Louisiana, principal).

Other parents also carried labels. Some were "influential," others were "solid." Categories depended on the parents' use of their community position (both perceived and real) and their ability to reason. According to principals, most parents were solid:

> I never had a lot of trouble with parents. Most of the time in those student organizations, particularly, the leadership comes from parents that are pretty solid, which means they are much more reasonable to talk to than someone who just walks in off the street threatening to whip the first person they talk to.
>
> (Mr. Virginia, principal)

Problems surfaced when dealing with parents who wanted the rules applied to the other children and bent or broken for their own. For example, the cheerleader selection process represented a potentially difficult time for principals. Many principals attempted to set up impartial judging systems, using experts from outside the school community who depended on predetermined evaluation criteria to judge the tryouts. However, even this careful planning could not compensate for discrepancies between parents' perceptions of their child's talent and the judges' expertise. A principal explained his attempts to provide an appropriate means to evaluate cheerleaders.

> How do you evaluate the cheerleaders, the tryouts? What system do you use, who do you use, where do you get them. So, many of us went the extra mile on that. We would try to get someone from the university, someone from another high school .... We would try to have a parent involved. And that was just blind choice. The names were just picked out. And then one other person, the judge, that took care of that. Then they were tallied and then came back for evaluation.
>
> (Dr. Delaware, principal)

Regardless of his efforts, he admitted he saw the problem coming. If the sponsor knew a judge, " ... [the sponsor] could say, 'Well, I'd like to see—well, I know Suzy's talented.'

Well, sometimes Suzy wasn't talented" (Dr. Delaware, principal). This principal did not assist in the actual selection process; however, he attempted "to choose people that did not fit into our community" to act as judges so that "they were apart from it. So we would try to get as unbiased an estimate as we could" (Dr. Delaware, principal).

Tryouts were potential trouble, especially if handled poorly or unfairly. Here, especially, the principal had to rely on the published rules. The rules were the principal's protection against parents who "wanted their daughter to be on the cheerleader squad. See, they didn't make the squad and they wanted me to go back and take somebody else off the squad and put her back" (Mr. Virginia, principal). As far as this principal was concerned, "It started with the girl, of course, going home and saying, 'Mom, they cheated me out of this.'" (Mr. Virginia, principal). Next, the parents would come up to the school; however, when confronted with "the system," they were not happy but they had to say, "I don't like your system but I understand what you've done, and I don't know what I can do about it." (Mr. Virginia, principal). The parents had no recourse against firmly and fairly established rules nor against the principal nor school behind them.

The principal reiterated the importance of having rules in place. Although initially there had been problems, once the parents discovered that by following state association rules the administration was "on top of it and knew what we were doing and that they couldn't just come up there and run a bluff on us and have us change our mind" (Mr. Virginia, principal), problems dissipated. He proposed a combination of expertise, experience, and adherence to clearly established rules plus he advocated listening to the parents. With the rules in place fewer "came by to haggle," for creating "a big ruckus" did not alter the administration's position (Mr. Virginia, principal). Although he realized that,

some of the complaints were merely sour grapes or the result of overprotective parenting, he also realized that some objections were legitimate making them a "hard call" (Mr. Virginia, principal). His best solution was to listen and to prevent a reoccurrence. He told the parents, "You may be right on this, but it is too late to do anything about it now .... I can promise you it won't ever happen to another student. We will fix it" (Mr. Virginia, principal). Although he noted that the parents were not ecstatic, most acquiesced.

Occasionally a group had other plans. According to one principal, after tryouts, mothers actually organized the group of girls who did not make the squads. The existence of this coalition of mothers and daughters jeopardized the stability of the selected squads and the selection procedures. These people "were on the outs with whatever group was in and it made a very stressful situation" (Dr. Delaware, principal). The principal took refuge in the rules with the number of squads predetermined. He wanted to leave no doors open to those he termed "malcontents" (Dr. Delaware, principal).

For the principal, this was all an issue of survival. Once parents and students became involved, "... you couldn't please them all. There wasn't anything that said, 'This is the way it has to be. I know you're unhappy but this is the way it has to be.' And hopefully you'll survive; not always. Occasionally you wound up at the service center [the administrative headquarters that determined principals' assignments to schools or meted out disciplinary action] ...." (Dr. Delaware, principal).

Another potential trouble spot aimed at the principals' survival involved financial matters. Knowledge of and adherence to financial policies was of paramount importance to survive as a principal, especially when groups from within the school took on the added

responsibility of private fundraising. Most principals stressed both knowledge and enforcement of "district policy as far as the handling of money is concerned. It's vitally important! I have seen a number of school administrators at the local school building level and at central office get into difficulty because the student activity funds were not handled appropriately." (Mr. Louisiana, principal).

Strict adherence to financial policy was a high priority; therefore, principals focused on groups that did not adhere to policies or whose assumed independence posed potential problems. Funding for cheerleaders equaled such an issue.

> Cheerleaders always want to raise money during the summertime and that is the most awkward time, because books are closed and they are having car washes all over town and the mothers are in on it and they would bring the money up in a sack and no matter how hard you worked, cheerleaders are a task.
>
> (Mr. Virginia, principal)

Not only did cheerleaders pose problems in raising money, they created problems in the manner in which they chose to spend what money they earned. Fundraising was often undertaken to purchase cheerleading uniforms. Eventually some schools provided one official school uniform, but the cheerleaders wanted separate ones to wear for games and competitions. To be successful in competitions, cheerleaders desired funds and equipment beyond those provided by the school. This meant additional fundraising.

Principals turned to the staff sponsor of the group and the group's constitution to handle fundraising. "But most of the other fund-raising was done by the parent group" (Dr. Delaware, principal). Administrators anticipated problems with parents as fund-raisers. "They wanted total control ... they took the money up, they wanted to spend it" (Dr. Delaware, principal). This attitude posed a problem for administrators who were

very serious about issues of extracurricular activities involving money and raising money; their job was on the line when finances were involved. Raising money usually involved the Student Activity Fund, which had very strict guidelines to follow.

One principal stated that he required extracurricular groups to provide proposed budgets for the following school year including any means of moneymaking.

> Usually every year about this time we would have sponsors appointed for next year. We had them give us a proposed budget for next year. How much they wanted to spend, and what for and how they intended to make it and all that kind of stuff, so we could plan the school budget and then we pretty well held them to their budget.
>
> (Mr. Virginia, principal)

There were even special procedures if groups felt that they needed to exceed their budgets. Principals recognized that cheerleading was an especially costly activity compared to other extracurricular activities. "The last I heard a uniform for the girls was running anywhere from $250 to $300 for their sweaters, skirts ... and their accessories ... so they were not cheap uniforms" (Dr. Delaware, principal). Although affluence within the school district affected participation in activities, according to the principals, a "good" principal attempted to see that activities represented a cross section of students. Nevertheless, economics proved a latent mechanism for controlling entrance to the squads. Therefore, principals relied on their selection mechanisms to remove politics from the system with selection based on ability to perform rather than ability to pay. Regardless of preparation, on occasion administrators still had to face disgruntled parents who tried to wheedle their way around the system.

Although extracurricular activities demanded time and expertise on the part of principals, their proper management required structure and organization. Administrators

could delegate some of the activities' supervision; however, the principal had to be careful to assign these responsibilities to "good" people. Making activities successful involved expertise and experience from the principal exhibited by his selections of assistants and sponsors with their practicing sound judgment.

> ... you just don't realize how much time and effort is involved in extracurricular things .... Most of them are poorly organized. They just kind of happen .... Maybe it is good ... if you had a pretty good assistant principal in that area and a good sponsor, things went well. If you had someone that didn't have the skills they need or a bad sponsor, things tended to go down a little bit. I always felt that was one area that needed a lot of structure, a lot of freedom for kids with certain parameters, but you couldn't just turn them loose and let them go. You would always have problems. So I spent a lot of time organizing all of the extracurricular activities, especially in a new high school.
>
> (Mr. Virginia, principal)

Delegating responsibility to good people did not adequately protect the cautious principal. It was not a matter of knowing if problems would surface, but anticipating when and what kind. To protect himself, the conscientious principal must have constitutions for the clubs and management in place and still remain scrupulously attentive every single day. Principals considered this nasty, especially in areas where students competed for positions. They had to have their acts together.

> ... you need all those constitutions and management and principal activity involved and delegated to a good person and stay after it every day and when you let things happen, it isn't a matter of whether you are going to have problems or not. It is when you are going to have problems and what kind are they going to be. Because if you don't, I promise it can get your job. It can get nasty. All those things where it gets so competitive if you don't –grade point, rank all that stuff if you don't have your act together, it can get you.
>
> (Mr. Virginia, principal)

Several principals saw problems. Success required flexibility as they carefully planned ahead while they continued to manage kids. Management required a labeling or classifying system. "Most of the kids were good kids. We didn't have a great number of losers. We had a few and those were pretty well managed most of the time and many of them eventually eliminated themselves and eliminated a special group" (Dr. Delaware, principal). Entire classes were distinguished as good or bad by reputation.

> The population changes. Once class is a great class and one is a sorry class and you say, "I wonder what happened to this group of seniors—they are not worth anything. Last year was fabulous!' that is the way things are. When you get a bad class, you don't handle them the same as a group that is responsible. So you have to be flexible.
>
> (Mr. Virginia, principal)

Flexibility also proved valuable as principals faced new situations such as the addition of ninth graders to the senior high schools and the petitioning for new activities.

Parents petitioned for pom pon squads which appeared as an alternative activity to cheerleading. Eventually the status of the two collided as pom pon became more than a refuge for girls who failed to make the cheerleading squads. Although the two activities eventually competed for participants, the requirements differed in dance versus gymnastic/athletic expertise. By this time principals also found recourse in rules governing the two organizations.

In summary, cheerleaders had been a control mechanism for administrators, thus, the need for their social example and unsullied reputations. However, as the demands for athleticism in the activity increased, different expectations arose. But the development of the state association's rules solved many problems for administrators. Cheerleading was

now an extracurricular activity governed by a state body. Administrators now could pass on the old problems to this new association. The handbook for the association was kept handy in the principal's office.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

In the early twentieth century schoolmen focused their energy on the newly created tension between their traditionally accepted role in schools as academic institutions versus their recently developing role in schools as socialization mechanisms. Recognizing the increasingly popular nature of athletics as avenues of affiliation, administrators turned to athletics and their ancillary organizations as mechanisms of socialization and school control. Administrators constructed social activities around the athletic events, which also affected the status of the athletes and their associates. Simultaneously males were gaining status as athletes while females were gaining status in an auxiliary role as cheerleaders, models of accepted behavior for all the school to emulate.

Progressives in the field of education believed that socialization required accepted values developed through wholesome activities. Athletics provided a means to espouse worthy values while providing a safety valve to channel students' excessive energy into socially acceptable areas and into affiliation to the organization as a whole. School ceremonies were the perfect conduit for acceptability and affirmation. Gradually a symbiotic relationship between cheerleaders and administrators formalized. This relationship was more a function of mutual convenience than a consciously contrived

effort at manipulation. These were good administrators trying to work with good kids for the acknowledged good of the school. Many of the consequences of this relationship were unintended, unplanned.

In their visible position, cheerleaders now presented the school with a unique mixture of uniformity and conformity, as individuality was not their desired norm. For a time cheerleading was even added to the curriculum in some schools. Within the first decades of the twentieth century, cheerleading became such an entrenched activity that it gained the protected status of a tradition.

Looking at the status gained by the cheerleaders and male athletes affords the opportunity to examine their relationship to the labeling of other student groups. By the middle of the century, Tulsa students saw themselves as jocks, Socs, greasers, and hoods, labels which coincided with a role in the social scene. Clothing, accessories, hair, and language also figured into this mix. Cheerleaders and pep club members donned their uniforms, although on occasion conflict arose over the proper length for skirts and the appropriate time to wear uniforms. Jocks wore lettermen jackets or letter-sweaters to school. Few if any other officially sanctioned uniforms appeared in the classrooms. The students' choices of clothing, accessories, hair and language represented carefully selected social markers that told the others how that particular student wanted to be labeled. Students also took on the persona of the chosen social markers; in essence they dressed the part. Interestingly these roles were also attached to physical places demonstrating that a territorial mentality prevailed. The non-cheerleader who carefully avoided Soc hall, the Socs who lined Soc hall, or the hood who frequented the smoke-hole represented the physical and emotional attachment of clothing and role to territory.

However, the role of Soc was slightly more complicated than simply dressing the part. Inclusion was not simply a matter of the proper outfit. Membership required an official sanction or invitation which was often tied to invisible boundaries of economic location for home and school. As the pep club president mentioned, she knew that she was a member of the in-crowd which fostered an elite group including both male athletes and the cheerleaders.

The 1970s signaled two mechanisms of change with the potential to alter the status of girls. The passage of Title IX modified the role of cheerleaders as high schools added more female sports to meet the needs of girls and to implement the law. The cheerleading squads now had to cover more events including cheering for girls' athletics. In addition, formal cheerleading competitions began in the 1970s. For two decades cheerleading had been developing under the auspices of experts such as Lawrence Herkimer and his National Cheerleaders Association. Cheerleading had become a multimillion dollar business. As a result, to be competitive high school squads now required camps, coaches, and expensive cheerleader paraphernalia, all of which Herkimer's National Cheerleaders Association and other newly created national cheerleader organizations could provide—for a price.

As competitive cheerleading demanded more athleticism, administrators found it increasingly difficult to monitor and control the cheerleaders. Being an athlete now took priority over being a good kid. Many cheerleaders openly preferred cheerleading as competition to leading cheers as an accessory for the "real" athletes. The female cheerleader as athlete undermined the old structure as athleticism replaced social conformity.

New investigations must determine where the ability to maintain social control now rests. School administrators must be examined for their role in creating, sanctioning, and destroying school elites, especially since these groups have traditionally been vested with status and social power. At the same time, administrators' involvement needs to be examined concerning their level of cognizance concerning their role in this creation of the school's social system. Work needs to focus on the administration's role in covertly or overtly condoning the development of elites while examining reasons why administrators failed to concentrate serious attention on the experiences of those left on the outside. Other social activities may have been important as socialization and control mechanisms; however, these other activities may have suffered from a lack of visibility resulting in a lack of attention from administrators. Those students left on the outside of the social pecking order may prove the iconoclasts who currently pose the greater control threat for administrators.

Appendix A

This appendix includes brief biographies of cheerleaders, a band member, and a social club member from the early twentieth century. These are followed by the biographies of cheerleaders from 1945 to 1964. The next section includes biographies of non-cheerleaders from 1945 to 1964. Administrators' biographies follow. The biography of a teacher completes those interviewed and included in this study.

The early twentieth century interviews were selected as background. The one social club member from the 1920s and 1930s provided historical information as high school social clubs emulated the college sororities in their activities and their selection process. Cheerleading literature added additional data. Information about the era of 1945 to 1970 came from several cheerleaders who graciously shared their stories. Interestingly several of these later became the mothers of the 1990s generation of cheerleaders and offered a unique perspective of the transitions. Most of the administrators served during the 1960s through the 1980s.

Interviews were conducted in order to illustrate the dynamics within the evolving relationship between administrators and cheerleaders. The interviews were analyzed following general procedures outlined in Appendix A. Former cheerleaders and their peers plus administrators were asked to describe their experiences, roles, and interaction. After an initial request for an educational biography, the interviews revolved around the following three prompts:

Former cheerleaders and students:
1. Please describe your high school experience especially regarding administrators.
2. Why did you want to be a cheerleader?
3. How did you become a cheerleader?

Administrators:
1. Please describe your experience as a high school administrator.
2. Please describe your experience with extracurricular activities.
3. Please describe your experiences administrating one activity: cheerleading.

Subjects were contacted through people who knew cheerleaders from high school. In addition, those interviewed were asked to provide the names of someone who might be interested and be willing to be interviewed. Most were very interested and immediately agreed to an interview. Cheerleaders proved a gregarious group who readily volunteered friends for this study. Administrators were sought through the Tulsa Public Schools' telephone book's listings of retired personnel and other administrators. Many had sought advanced degrees, and all were very willing to help.

For the purpose of anonymous identification, town names are used to designate cheerleaders and students. The title of "Mrs." is added to show the eventual marital status of the females who agreed to be interviewed. State names represent the administrators. Schools are identified through Medieval English references.

Early Twentieth Century Cheerleaders:

- Mrs. Honolulu cheered, against her mother's wishes, for a small Oklahoma town in 1926. Her brothers played on the football team.
- In the early 1920s the superintendent of schools appointed Mr. Spencer to follow as the second cheerleader ever for a small mid-western town.

- Mrs. Fargo was a high school cheerleader from the same small mid-western town who later cheered at a state university from 1946 to 1950.

Early Twentieth Century Band and Social Club Members:

- Mr. Chicago (1911-1997) played in the high school band in that same small mid-western town from about 1928 to 1931.
- Mrs. Milford, who was married to Mr. Chicago for sixty-two years, attended high school in St. Paul, Minnesota, where she was a member of the SoKoMoMo (Society For Keeping Men Mystified) social club. She dated several football players in high school before meeting Mr. Chicago at the University of Minnesota where she was a member of Pi Beta Phi sorority.

Cheerleaders from 1945 - 1964

- Mr. Toledo cheered for Chaucer High School (class of 1956) and a state university (class of 1962). He also instructed during the summers for the National Cheerleaders' Association.
- Mrs. Detroit, Mr. Toledo's sister, also cheered for Chaucer High School (class of 1957) where she was the football queen and also followed her brother as a cheerleader for the same university attended by her brother.
- Mr. Boston (Chaucer High School class of 1961) enjoyed what he termed the immediate and guaranteed popularity and status associated with cheerleading.

- Mrs. Meridian (Chaucer High School class of 1962) was a cheerleader who now has three daughters. Her oldest daughter never considered being a cheerleader, her middle daughter cheered on a junior high squad, and her youngest performed on a high school pom pon squad. She was a classmate and friend of Mrs. Albany.
- Mrs. Seattle attended Medieval High School the first year it opened, 1961. She described her high school years as fun.
- Mrs. Springfield (Medieval class of 1964) left Tudor to become one of first cheerleaders at Medieval. She was also a member of a social club. During her senior year, the student body elected her homecoming queen. Her daughters have cheered for another local high school.

Non-cheerleaders: 1945 - 1964

- Mrs. Newton (class of 1957) was an unhappy non-cheerleader at Chaucer High School who hated high school because she was never allowed into the IN-crowd.
- Although not a cheerleader, Mrs. Albany served as pep club president at Chaucer High School (class of 1962) where she worked closely with the cheerleaders and their sponsor. She was also the daughter of the dean at Chaucer and a professed member of the IN-crowd.
- Mrs. Nicaragua came from a small Nebraska community where all girls had to be cheerleaders. She hated the experience. Girl Scouting was the activity that she felt most important and influential to her.

- Dr. Korea North grew up in Chicago and attended Northwestern University. She earned a law degree before becoming a professor of sociology at a mid-western university.

Administrators:

- Dr. Dakota earned his doctorate from a private mid-western university while employed as a high school principal from 1970 until he left the district in 1979.
- Dr. Delaware received his masters and doctorate from a private mid-western university and originally taught math and science in public schools. He began as an administrator in about 1969.
- Dr. Georgia stepped in as principal upon the death of his predecessor in 1965 and remained through the 1966 school year when he moved to the district's administration center where he worked until he retired in 1987.
- Mr. Louisiana graduated from high school in Arkansas and became a classroom teacher in 1952. Eventually he became a guidance counselor then an assistant principal. He served as principal for three and one half years before working as the director of high schools and other administrative positions until retiring as divisional superintendent in 1990.
- Mr. Virginia earned his bachelors and masters degrees. After working as a teacher and counselor, he worked as a junior high principal and then a high school principal for about six years. He then worked until his retirement as an administrative assistant for an area superintendent.

Teachers:

- Mrs. Arkansas taught at Medieval High School (1970-1976) before taking time off to raise a family. After teaching in another district for one year, she returned to Medieval in 1987.

The interviews were analyzed regarding the perceived roles of cheerleader, non-cheerleader, and administrator using background information from several early twentieth century cheerleaders, a band member, and a social club member. The century was divided arbitrarily to consider the changes that materialized in the 1970s and their affects on the evolving relationship between cheerleaders and administrators.

Appendix B

City of Tulsa Population

1950	182,740
1960	261,685
1970	331,638
1980	360,919
1990	367,302

Figures from *Historic Statistics of the States of the United States: Two Centuries of the Census from 1790-1990.*

Tulsa High Schools

School	Opened
Booker T. Washington	1913
Central	1917
Daniel Webster	1938
Will Rogers	1939
McLain	1959
Nathan Hale	1959
Thomas Edison	1965
Memorial	1962
East Central	1964
Charles Mason	1974

Dates provided by current building principals or their secretaries.

Notes:

- Tulsa Public Schools were desegregated in 1972.
- Booker T. Washington High School became a magnet school in 1973 as part of the district's desegregation program.
- Charles Mason High School was closed in 1979.

Appendix C

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Date:	April 4, 2000	IRB #: ED-00-209
Proposal Title:	"THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ADMINISTRATORS AND CHEERLEADERS FROM 1945-1999"	
Principal Investigator(s):	Martin Bulrlingame Suzanne Renee LaDoux Lee	
Reviewed and Processed as:	Exempt	

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Signature:

Carol Olson

Carol Olson, Director of University Research Compliance

April 4, 2000
Date

Approvals are valid for one calendar year, after which time a request for continuation must be submitted. Any modification to the research project approved by the IRB must be submitted for approval with the advisor's signature. The IRB office MUST be notified in writing when a project is complete. Approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. Expedited and exempt projects may be reviewed by the full Institutional Review Board.

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