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UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

INNOVATION, IMITATION, AND RESISTING MANIPULATION:  
THE FIRST TWENTY YEARS OF AMERICAN TEENAGERS, 1941-1961

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

RONALD S. GREEN, JR.  
Norman, Oklahoma  
1998

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INNOVATION, IMITATION, AND RESISTING MANIPULATION:  
THE FIRST TWENTY YEARS OF AMERICAN TEENAGERS, 1941-1961

A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

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## Preface and Acknowledgments

In researching and writing this dissertation, I have had help from many sources, and I want to acknowledge publicly the people and institutions who enabled me to bring my work finally to this stage. The Graduate Student Senate of the University of Oklahoma gave me a generous research grant that enabled me to obtain a videotape of fifty guidance films aimed at teenagers. The Graduate College at the University of Oklahoma twice provided funds for travel to academic conferences where I presented papers on subjects covered in this dissertation. The resulting interchanges with other students and scholars helped to refine and sharpen my ideas. The Department of History has generously provided scholarship assistance and twice awarded me the A. K. and Ethel T. Christian Graduate Fellowship. The Department has also given me the opportunity to earn money and work closely with several inspiring professors as a Graduate Assistant.

Librarians and archivists in several locations have helped me. The staff of the American Archives of Factual Film at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, provided me with comfortable facilities and considerable assistance over several days of film viewing. The staff at the Kansas University library's Kansas Collection kindly allowed me to view their entire holdings of Centron Film productions. And Martha Harsanyi at the Indiana University film archive

showed exceptional hospitality and kindness as she gathered a large sampling of their collection for me to watch and shared advice about the best Bloomington breakfast and lunch spots and parking places. Thanks must also go to Molly Murphy and the staff of the Interlibrary Loan department at the University of Oklahoma, for so efficiently processing my requests for a wide variety of materials. Finally, for his help with the guidance films, I want to thank Rick Prelinger, whose New York City collection is a tremendous resource for anyone in this field. His knowledge is unsurpassed, and his collections of "ephemeral films" (commercially available on videotape and CD-ROM) provide a distinctive insight into mid-twentieth-century popular culture.

An additional major source of information employed in my research were high school newspapers from various parts of the United States. For their help in giving me access to many years of back issues of these student publications, I want to thank Charles Able of Oklahoma City, Phyllis Forehand at Arlington (Texas) High School, Sandy Ericson at La Jolla (California) High School, Diane Backschies at Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington, and Dave Hansen at Bothell (Washington) High School. The staffs at the Minnesota Historical Society and the University of Pittsburgh library enabled me to get microfilm copies of high school student newspapers from St. Paul and St. Cloud, Minnesota, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The editorial

staff of *'Teen* magazine at Petersen Publishing in Los Angeles generously opened their offices, their archives, and their copy machines for my unrestricted use. And for providing me with food, shelter and companionship over several days of research in some of these locations, I am particularly grateful to Ron and Eleanor Green, Dick and Jan Hunter, and Don and Erin Granvold.

The members of my dissertation committee have been helpful and encouraging. I have appreciated the thoughtful comments and questions of Dr. H. Wayne Morgan and the incisive criticism of Dr. Stephen H. Norwood. Dr. Ronald M. Peters added a non-historian's perspective to the committee, and I appreciated his observations and questions. Dr. David W. Levy has been extremely precise in his careful proof-reading and wonderfully enthusiastic in his enjoyment of what I have written, and he really does not need to immerse himself in Chapter Three to learn how to be popular. My adviser, committee chair, mentor and friend, Dr. Robert L. Griswold, has been with me from the start of my graduate studies and with this project from its inception. His advice and encouragement have been invaluable. He is a thoughtful scholar and a patient teacher. I have appreciated his help and his understanding through some fairly difficult days. His close reading and detailed suggestions for changes have improved my work immeasurably. Of course, what weaknesses remain are completely my own responsibility.

This dissertation has limitations that ought to be noted at the outset. Its teenagers are overwhelmingly white and middle-class. Though issues of race, class, and gender receive some attention, it is primarily through the eyes of the white middle class. The sources from which I draw heavily, the student publications and the advice literature and films aimed at teenagers, have a clear quality of what cultural historians increasingly are calling "whiteness." Working-class teenagers did not staff the student newspapers at the schools I examined. Nor was there a significant African-American or Hispanic or Asian-American presence noted by these publications. I mention these limitations, not as any indication that my research is flawed, but to suggest the opportunities for other students and scholars to pursue in future investigations into teenage culture.

Finally, I would like to express additional appreciation for personal help given me by friends and family. Lynn Sorenson has been my long-distance cheerleader, telephoning from Utah with words of enthusiasm for "the big D." At times she seemed more certain of its completion than I was. She has also proved adept with a red pen, proofing and offering editing suggestions for earlier versions of many of the chapters. I am grateful for her optimism, advice and contagious cheer. I also want to thank my children, Eric and Elizabeth Green, for their interest in this project which has lasted for such a large

percentage of their lives, and their reactions to some of what I have written. I am much indebted to my parents, who provided both financial and moral support through this lengthy process, have done some proof-reading of their own, and have contributed directly to the work itself. The title is based on my father's suggestion, and my mother found out more about the Northwest phenomenon of the "Tolo" than I had known before. Through it all, their love and their assistance has been unwavering, and I am deeply grateful. To them and to my friends who have regularly asked, "How's your dissertation coming?" I am happy to report, it's done.

This study is dedicated  
to my parents, Ron and Eleanor Green,  
to my children, Eric and Elizabeth Green,  
and to the  
Bothell High School Class of 1961.



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## ABSTRACT

Beginning during the Second World War, adolescents developed a distinctive youth culture that grew increasingly autonomous in the decades which followed. Significantly, the word identifying them as a group apart began appearing in print: "teenagers." Because adults competed with each other for teenagers' attention, seeking to direct and control them for the adults' own purposes, young people found that the only consistent standards by which they could guide their own behavior were those determined by their peers. As parents vied with commercial groups appealing to the emerging youth market, and the increasingly influential therapeutic culture of counselors and advice-givers also pursued its own agenda, young people chose from a variety of cultural offerings. Finding no clear direction in the cacophony of adult voices speaking at cross-purposes, teenagers determined for themselves the standards of the culture they created.

Over the twenty-year span of the 1940s and 1950s, a growing sense of separation and resistance to the mainstream culture developed, characterized by distinctive food, slang, music, dress, and sexual behavior. By studying the *morés* of their culture, we understand the impact of consumerism and of the professionalization of advice-giving. The behavior of teenagers became increasingly separate from the mainstream and ultimately

oppositional, leading to the even more overt rebellion of the 1960s.

By looking in particular at the magazines they read and the letters they wrote, as well as the peculiar vision expressed in hundreds of guidance films, we gain new insight into what made their culture work and, by implication, we better understand the changes in the larger American culture at mid-century.

Chapter One  
How to Judge Authorities:  
Magazines, Guidance Films, and Competing Adult Voices

Bill had a problem. A teenager seeking adult guidance in choosing a career, he found only inconsistent advice. Mr. Morley, a local attorney, urged him to study law. Mr. Penner, a noted author and staff member at a research institute, warned of the high failure rate in the legal profession. In frustration, Bill turned to his school counselor, who encouraged him to analyze the conflicting positions and evaluate them systematically. Although this young man was a fictional character, the protagonist in a 1948 guidance film entitled *How to Judge Authorities*, his predicament represented that of American teenagers in the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>1</sup> Faced with the members of a divided adult community who competed with increasing intensity for the attention of adolescents, young people felt confused and frustrated. Not knowing where to find reliable answers to questions on the conduct and meaning of life, they increasingly turned to each other. Thus developed the growing autonomy of a self-consciously separate teenage culture.

Coinciding with the beginnings of a recognizable youth culture among school-age adolescents, the word

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<sup>1</sup> *How to Judge Authorities* (Chicago: Coronet, 1948). Hundreds of social guidance films aimed at teenagers appeared during the fifteen years following the end of the Second World War. A detailed accounting of the phenomenon appears later in this chapter. An annotated filmography of all the guidance films can be found at the end of this dissertation.

"teen-ager" made its initial appearance in print. With or without the hyphen, it became emblematic of the view that adults and the newly-dubbed teenagers lived in separate worlds.<sup>2</sup> Family cohesion and authority had been weakened by the social upheavals of World War II, decreasing parental supervision as adults went to war and to work, and putting more money in the pockets and purses of the young. Postwar prosperity and social mobility continued a social transformation with strong impact on teenagers. Though the concept of distinctive behavior among the young had a long history, the developments of the 1940s and 1950s grew out of circumstances peculiar to that era. Competing adults tried to guide youth in particular ways. Counselors and therapists battled with profit-seeking marketers for leadership. Both groups sought at least to supplement, if not to supplant, traditional youth direction by schoolteachers, clergy, and parents.

Just as psychologists have found that children of divorced parents become increasingly dependent on their peer relations, so the increasingly disputatious tone of the adult discourse seeking teenagers' attention drove

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<sup>2</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary* (vol. XVII, page 713; hereafter *OED*) cites the April 1941, issue of the magazine *Popular Science* as the first example of the use of the word. See Edith M. Stern, "Denver Students Learn Movie Making in the Classroom," *Popular Science*, April 1941, 228. The author quoted a dairy operator who said "I never knew 'teen-agers could be so serious." The notion that certain behavior and attitudes typified teenage cultural patterns existed from the beginning. For more on this theme, see the next chapter of this dissertation, "Typical Teenagers." It should be noted that "teen-age" as an adjective had come into use as early as the 1920s. See for example the regular monthly column in *Parents' Magazine* called "Teen-Age Problems," which began in the July 1934 issue.

young people to rely on each other and to set their own group standards. By promoting such strong age-consciousness, these competing adults unwittingly helped engineer youth's sense of its own distinctive qualities, leading to the development of the self-aware teenage culture.

Certainly, adolescents had attracted adult attention for centuries. As the word *adolescente* was used in early modern Italy, it referred to unmarried men in their twenties and thirties, not yet fully engaged in mature responsibilities.<sup>3</sup> Later it came to mean post-pubescent youth. With the ever younger onset of puberty and the industrial-era growth of the middle class, sexually mature young people spent a longer time living in the homes of their parents. At the beginning of the twentieth century, as researcher John R. Gillis noted, "an increasingly larger minority of the population was finding itself in the demographic and economic situation that produced this new phase of life."<sup>4</sup> Social scientists began to examine the presence and activities of these young people. The publication of G. Stanley Hall's massive book *Adolescence* in 1904 highlighted public awareness of this age cohort.

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<sup>3</sup> Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, tr. Lydia Cochrane (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 96-97. See also Richard Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (New York and London: Academic Press, 1980), 388. The linguistic origins of the word are Latin, "adolescere" meaning both "to come to maturity" and "to burn"--a significant double entendre.

<sup>4</sup> John R. Gillis, *Youth and History: Tradition and Change in European Age Relations, 1770-Present*, expanded student edition (New York and London: Academic Press, 1981), 118.

Setting the tone for much of the subsequent discussion, Hall wrote of youth's need for a temporary withdrawal from adult pursuits, and how "Home, school, church, fail to recognize its nature and needs and, perhaps most of all, its perils."<sup>5</sup>

Hall's blaming of traditional institutions signaled a burgeoning competition among adults for influence over young people. As an early exponent of what became a virtual guidance establishment, Hall encouraged the Progressive-era notion that trained experts could solve personal and social problems more effectively than untutored individuals who directly experienced the difficulties. Child-rearing had its own set of experts, and the advice literature on adolescents originally targeted parents. The monthly *Parents' Magazine* included articles by educators, sociologists and psychologists. Except for a single page on which parents reported methods they had used to get their children (including those in their teens) to change undesirable behavior, the emphasis remained on the expertise of child guidance professionals.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence, Its Psychology and Its Relation to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion, and Education* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1904), vol. 1, xiv. Quoted by Gillis, *Youth and History*, 118. Hall's notion of withdrawal seemed to presage Erik Erikson's later highly influential concept of the psycho-social moratorium.

<sup>6</sup> "Parental Problems and Ways to Meet Them," *Parents Magazine*, July 1930-June 1934, pages varied by issue. Beginning with the July 1934 issue, as indicated in footnote 2, adolescent concerns appeared in a separate "Teen-Age Problems" column, while those involving younger offspring came under the heading "Childhood Problems and Ways to Meet Them."

As therapists and counselors grew in influence over parents and then directly with teenagers, actions taken in pursuit of a professed interest in strengthening family life ironically contributed to the opposite effect. Listening supportively to teenagers alone or in peer groups, providing forums for airing grievances against parents, the emerging guidance establishment thus contributed to a shift in consciousness about the legitimacy and unity of adult authority.

Increasingly in the 1940s and 1950s, adolescent advice literature targeted the teenagers themselves. Even as early as 1936, the classroom magazine *Senior Scholastic* began running a column called "Boy Dates Girl." Written by the pseudonymous "Gay Head," the feature in its earliest years consisted of illustrative short fiction about teenage social life, parables of popularity intended to instruct through example. Teachers from among the thousands of schools with subscriptions reported it the segment most liked by the publication's student readers.<sup>7</sup> By the mid-1940s, the author revised its format to a more conventional advice column, answering letters from readers with problems relevant to other teenagers. In this form and with essentially unchanging principles, the author

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<sup>7</sup> *Teacher's Supplement, Senior Scholastic*, 29 May 1937, A-3; cited, with other information about the beginning of the "Boy Dates Girl" feature, by Beth L. Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 150 (n).



attempted to guide young people's social and moral development for the next twenty years.<sup>8</sup>

Teenagers grew suspicious of the guidance offered by those much older than themselves, thinking it came from a different generation and hence a different culture. As one wrote, "When I read the advice generally poured on the heads of teen-age girls by sweet old ladies who apparently have spent the last twenty years in lace caps and rocking chairs, I laugh--a rather bitter laugh, I'm afraid."<sup>9</sup> The disparity between the proffered advice, in this case a "nice girls don't neck" message, and the reality of the teenage social scene confused and angered her.

These sentiments appeared in the letters column of *Seventeen*, by far the most successful of the magazines written for teenagers. It had a great influence on teenage girls and the youth culture in which they participated. From its premiere issue in September 1944, the publication contributed to the creation of age consciousness and teen solidarity, the commercialization of teenage culture and of the adolescent body, and the promotion of conformity even as the editors occasionally expressed opposition to peer pressure. Though at first

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<sup>8</sup> Gay Head [pseud.], "Boy Dates Girl," *Senior Scholastic*, 11 September 1944, 18; and in ensuing issues of the publication until the final "Boy Dates Girl," *ibid.*, 15 May 1963, 42. Gay Head, whose actual name was Margaret Hauser, continued writing for *Senior Scholastic*, which assigned a new title to her essentially-unchanged column: "Talking It Over." It debuted at the start of the new school year, on 13 September 1963, and continued until the end of the decade.

<sup>9</sup> Letter from "Name Withheld," Larchmont, N. Y., *Seventeen*, September 1947, 7.

*Seventeen* sometimes lauded community activism and could even encourage a feminist consciousness, within a few years of its inception it resolutely promoted a retreat from larger political and social issues and served its readers a large helping of domestic ideology. Indeed, the magazine's internal contradictions and inconsistency of the messages to its readers added to the confusion of what teenagers heard from various adults.

Advice to teenagers appeared in a variety of forums. *Seventeen* included in its first issue a book column that recommended works of political commentary, light fiction, and two recently-published "Growing Pain Cures."<sup>10</sup> One of the recommended authors of advice, Maureen Daly, was still in her early twenties. The image of the slightly older big sister or sympathetic age-mate made the advice easier to heed by young people who felt increasingly alienated from the adult world. Student papers began carrying their own advice columns, and the commercial press sometimes hired their writers. Nancy Mottram wrote "Just Between Us" for her school newspaper, then had it picked up by the *Birmingham Press*. In the fall of 1947, when she was eighteen, her column began national syndication.<sup>11</sup> Those who found success in the advice field sometimes outgrew their audiences, but not always. The mid-1950s author of

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<sup>10</sup> "Books," *ibid.*, September 1944, 6, 88. The political books were by Harold Laski and Walter Lippmann. The advice books were Maureen Daly's *Smarter and Smoother* and Margaret Culkin Banning's *Conduct Yourself Accordingly*.

<sup>11</sup> "Teens in the News," *ibid.*, November 1947, 168.

*Seventeen's* "From a Boy's Point of View" tried to seem not to grow older, as eternal an adolescent as the comic book character Archie Andrews.<sup>12</sup>

Some advice came in the form of answers to readers' letters, posing problems with wide-enough appeal and the opportunity for general guidance. Though *Seventeen* resisted this format for several years, maintaining that such personal problems must be dealt with individually, the policy eventually changed. In 1948 the magazine introduced "Dear Beauty Editor" to respond to queries about grooming and cosmetics, although much of the advice dealt with parental conflicts. When a reader complained that her mother thought her too young to wear lipstick, the columnist urged conciliation and compromise ("a soft rosy shade").<sup>13</sup> By 1954, the magazine finally abandoned its earlier reluctance to publish the intensely personal, and offered an apology: "We now feel that we may have neglected you in one of the most important ways of all. This is in not letting you know that you are not alone."<sup>14</sup>

In fact, *Seventeen* had been promoting a sense of age-consciousness and teenage solidarity since its very

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<sup>12</sup> Jimmy Wescott began writing "From a Boy's Point of View" in the November 1954 issue of *Seventeen*, claiming to be 17 years old. He continued in this role for over eleven years, with his final column appearing in February 1966. The previous author of the column, Peter Leavy, had aged on the job, leaving his position several months after induction into the U.S. Army. For more on the comic book character "Archie Andrews," who made his debut in the same year as the word "teen-ager," see Michael Barson and Steven Heller, *Teenage Confidential* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1998), 30.

<sup>13</sup> "Dear Beauty Editor," *Seventeen*, June 1948, 21. This was the first appearance of the column, soon a regular monthly feature.

<sup>14</sup> "Any Problems?" *ibid.*, August 1954, 24; emphasis in original.

first issue. The advice that appeared in its pages, though not in response to individual letters, contributed to a sense of shared concerns and interests among its readers throughout the nation. From the start, features like "First Date Quiz" portrayed them as part of a distinct culture with specific rules of behavior. Fashion articles and advertisements, categories which tended to overlap and blend, told them what clothes to wear in order to belong, those which were "Reet for Neat Teens."<sup>15</sup> While the exact word choice varied with current slang (and "reet" marked the cited ad as clearly from the mid-1940s), the message remained constant. Correct conduct and proper purchasing could provide the desired group identity.

*Seventeen* played a key role in shaping and reflecting the culture of teenage girls. As with any commercial periodical, its publishers designed it to reach a market that advertisers hoped to tap. Though *Calling All Girls* first appeared in 1941 with similar goals, *Seventeen* quickly surpassed its predecessor.<sup>16</sup> From its first issue

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<sup>15</sup> "First Date Quiz," *ibid.*, September 1944, 4; full page advertisement for Teentimers clothing with headline "Reet for Neat Teens," *ibid.*, 21. For examples of the blurring of the lines between fashion articles and advertising, see for example what seems to be an article: "Mmm...Feels Good to be Back in Fall Clothes," *ibid.*, 34-36, in which captions on drawings and photos of models in dresses include prices, and the concluding text tells the reader "You'll find all these at Scruggs-Vandervoort-Barney, St. Louis."

<sup>16</sup> *Calling All Girls* changed its name to *Senior Prom* in September 1949; a mid-1950s periodical with the name *Calling All Girls* aimed at younger readers. *Senior Prom* ceased publication after only a few issues. For its debut, see the advertisement in *Advertising Age*, 15 August 1949, 33.

in September 1944, it attracted attention from the advertising community and from the teenagers it hoped to reach. All 400,000 copies of that issue sold within a week. Its January 1945 issue carried more lines of advertising than any other U.S. magazine aimed at female readers. Within two and one-half years, one million copies per issue were printed and sold each month.<sup>17</sup> A decade later, one marketing survey reported that "Three issues of SEVENTEEN reach 75% of ALL the Young Women Under 20 in America, the most complete saturation of a market in the magazine field."<sup>18</sup>

The saturation seemed apparent in the high school press. Advertisements for the magazine itself and for clothing stores, with tie-ins to fashion features in *Seventeen*, appeared in many student newspapers.<sup>19</sup> Librarians told reporters that female students particularly liked the publication and praised its quality. One librarian called it "the finest magazine for high school girls I have ever seen. Its smart

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<sup>17</sup> Advertisement for *Seventeen*, *Advertising Age*, 16 October 1944, 55; *ibid.*, 19 February 1946, 61; *ibid.*, 21 April 1947, 59; "Seventeen Is Five," *Newsweek*, 29 August 1949, 47.

<sup>18</sup> Advertisement for *Seventeen*, *Advertising Age*, 25 March 1957, 54; emphasis in original.

<sup>19</sup> Advertisement for *Seventeen*, *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 13 October 1944, 3; *ibid.*, 10 November 1944, 3; *ibid.*, 5 March 1948, 3; letter from Selma Smith, Staten Island, New York, reporting a *Seventeen* ad in *The Curtis Log*, high school newspaper on Staten Island, *Seventeen*, January 1945, 6; advertisement for Fandel's Department Store, *The Tech* (Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota), 17 October 1945, 4; advertisement for The Casual Shoppe, *ibid.*, 21 February 1957, 6; advertisement for Muehling's Young California Shop, *La Jolla Hi Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 6 February 1947, 3.

sophistication has every girl eagerly waiting for the next issue."<sup>20</sup> Another school found a clear identification between reading the magazine and being a full-fledged member of the teen scene. A column entitled "If You Were a Girl at Allderdice" stipulated that among the points of recognition would be "clutching at the latest copy of *Seventeen*."<sup>21</sup> Students saw the image projected by the publication as epitomizing respectable femininity. In an editorial discussing a possible school dress code, one proclaimed "Girls may dress like models featured in '*Seventeen*,' walk, talk, and act with the manners and poise of a well-trained model, but when they change into jeans they suddenly become members of the opposite sex, acting like tomboys."<sup>22</sup>

Although the writer seemed to have confused jeans with genes, the perception of the magazine's influential role prescribing proper gender behavior was quite accurate. Even some of its readers occasionally objected, protesting that "You make us sound like heathenish creatures with no thought beyond boys and clothes. . . . [who] do nothing but have dates and go to parties. . . . Come on, give us so-called grinds, bookworms and longhairs

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<sup>20</sup> "Chi-Chic," *Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 17 October 1944, 2. For other reports of *Seventeen*'s popularity in school libraries, see "Read This And Weep," *Bothell Hi Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 9 April 1946, 2; untitled, *The Tech*, 20 March 1952, 4.

<sup>21</sup> "If You Were a Girl at Allderdice," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 9 March 1945, 2.

<sup>22</sup> "Does Clothing Influence Behavior?" *The Marionette* (Harding Junior-Senior High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 25 January 1957, 2.

a break!"<sup>23</sup> But readership continued to grow, as did the magazine's importance in both shaping and reflecting teenage culture. When the publication celebrated its seventeenth anniversary in 1961, its editor wrote of its founding in a dismal "world in which teen-agers were the forgotten, the ignored generation," and how *Seventeen* had sought to "give teen-agers a sense of identity, of purpose, of belonging." The achievement of that goal had been demonstrated by the fact that "the accent everywhere is on youth. The needs, the wants, even the whims of teen-agers are catered to by almost every major industry." Gladly taking credit for this development, she concluded by proclaiming herself and her staff "prouder than we could possibly say, of you, the generation who made our every wish come true."<sup>24</sup>

Enid Haupt, the editor-publisher who wrote these enthusiastic words, had not even been part of *Seventeen* when the magazine began in 1944. The founding editor, whose initiative transformed a struggling movie-star fan magazine into a publishing phenomenon, was Helen Valentine. Publisher Walter Annenberg, who later experienced even greater success with *TV Guide*, hired her from the staff of *Mademoiselle*, a nine-year-old fashion magazine for young women of college age. In 1944, wartime paper shortages caused many fashion magazines to turn away

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<sup>23</sup> Letter from M. M., Excelsior Springs, Missouri, *Seventeen*, July 1948, 4; Letter from J. K., Bronx, New York, *ibid.*, April 1949, 6.

<sup>24</sup> Enid A. Haupt, "It's Our Birthday ... We've Reached 17," *ibid.*, September 1961, 107.

advertisers. Annenberg saw an opportunity to garner income from eager fashion merchandisers. He could transfer the paper allotment from his ownership of the fading fan magazine *Stardom*. Valentine proposed a total revamping of the format to appeal to many varied interests of teenage girls, including fashions, cosmetics, food, and personal relationships. With its large pages on fine-quality slick paper and high production values, *Seventeen* bore no physical resemblance to the pulp periodicals centered on celebrity gossip that had preceded it in vying for a place in the newly developing teenage magazine market.<sup>25</sup>

During those first seventeen years of *Seventeen*, its three successive chief editors maintained much continuity in format and content, but also displayed some changes in approach. Some of the changes could be attributed to individual editorial preferences, but others reflected social and cultural shifts that affected the magazine's teenage readers. One constant was the focus on fashion. Each issue's table of contents began with a listing of a large number of features under the heading "What You Wear," followed by "How You Look" (soon amended to "How You Look and Feel"). Young models in stylish dresses, blouses, skirts and sweaters filled most of the

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<sup>25</sup> "Seventeen Is Five," *Newsweek*, 29 August 1949, 47-48; Thomas W. Ennis, obituary for Helen Valentine, *New York Times*, 15 November 1986, 36; John Cooney, *The Annenbergs* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), 183. The first issue of *Seventeen*, dated September 1944, was "Vol. 3, No. 9" because it continued the numbering system from *Stardom*.



advertising pages. Cosmetics, soaps, shampoos, deodorants and other personal hygiene products took up much of the rest. They delivered a clear message: buying the right products would bring social success and individual happiness. The articles complemented the advertising in many ways, often adding the advice that a pleasing personality and correct conduct were also necessary.

Yet the magazine showed many internal conflicts between its competing concerns for the aesthetic and the commercial, the individual and the community. Especially during its first six years, advertisements promoting heavy applications of cosmetics appeared in the same issues as advice columns discouraging excess.<sup>26</sup> More significantly, treatments of social concerns larger than dating and parties competed for attention with those that invited readers to gaze lovingly into their own mirrors. For example, an article drawn from the book *Probing Our Prejudices*, emphasizing racial tolerance and inter-group cooperation, appeared in one issue only a few pages before a "Fashion IQ" quiz and advice on applying make-up to a

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<sup>26</sup> See, for example, "If Only She..." *Seventeen*, April 1945, 89: "wouldn't smear that gory red goo on her lips . . . would chip some of that phony-looking paint off her face." Later in the issue, a full-page advertisement for Irresistible Lipstick promoted just what the article deplored (*ibid.*, 145). For more on the subject, see chapter four of this dissertation. That same April 1945 issue carried an article linking boy-girl relations, friendship, the struggle to end gender job discrimination, recognition of the humanity of all groups and people, and the demolition of slums. See "The World is Yours," *Seventeen*, April 1945, 58-59.

"square face."<sup>27</sup> Though they had already begun to decrease, after Valentine's departure in 1950 the magazine carried still fewer articles about the bigger social issues or even about controversies within the teenage culture. The publication under her leadership had campaigned against discrimination and exclusion with "Is Your Club a Secret Weapon?", "What Girls 'Belong' in Your Club?", and "Does Cruelty Stalk Your Corridors?", and had printed a series about teenage life in other countries.<sup>28</sup> An early strong stand linking women's rights to all human rights faded to the soft pink gossamer of feminine domesticity by the 1950s.

In the heady days of the nation's impending victory over Hitler, an article connected that struggle with what lay ahead for its teenage readers:

When you begin to earn your living, prejudice will hit your pay envelope. By accident of being born a girl child, you're going to discover that you get less pay for doing the same work a man does, get fewer opportunities to advance in your job, are discussed and evaluated as an unpredictable problem, are excluded from any policy-making decisions, get fewer raises and smaller ones than a man, can be a male executive's 'right hand' but seldom an executive, are viewed as a necessary evil to do the drudgery men don't like to do.

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<sup>27</sup> Barbara Gar, "What Kind of World Do You Want?" *Seventeen*, February 1945, 60-61; "Fashion IQ," *ibid.*, 67; "Speaking of Square Pegs," *ibid.*, 76-77.

<sup>28</sup> Alice Beaton, "Is Your Club a Secret Weapon?" *Seventeen*, August 1945, 98; "What Girls 'Belong' in Your Club?" *Seventeen*, March 1947, 17; Virginia Stover, "Does Cruelty Stalk Your Corridors?" *Seventeen*, October 1948, 120, 149. The monthly international series began with "British Girls Are Busy," September 1944, 38-39, and concluded with an article on Sweden, "At the Konditeri," June 1945, 96.

Sounds grim? It is grim. A few women overcame all of those things. They're *different* (where have we heard that word before?) But most of us in business succumb to the label. We're 'women,' the 'underfolk' that Adolf publicized so thoroughly in Greece, Norway, Poland, France. You don't like it? It's unfair? The only way to fight this prejudice is to fight prejudice itself.<sup>29</sup>

As domestic ideology suppressed such outspoken feminism, as the editorship passed from Helen Valentine to Alice Thompson and then to Enid A. Haupt, *Seventeen* had no more space for sentiments like these.<sup>30</sup> Femininity triumphed over feminism, and horizons grew narrower. Accounts of international events, of community action, of a world beyond the immediate and personal, dwindled and almost disappeared. Some readers had already expressed a desire for this change, objecting to "articles on world affairs in a magazine that a girl looks to for advice on clothes, charm and personality."<sup>31</sup> As late as 1949, the magazine had run a piece on U.S. teenagers working on an American Friends Service Committee social service project in Mexico. But through most of the 1950s, articles on community action had a narrower focus. For example, the April 1953 issue had four articles headed "You and Others":

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<sup>29</sup> Alice Beaton, "I'm Not Prejudiced, But . . . .," *Seventeen*, May 1945, 34-35.

<sup>30</sup> Owner Walter Annenberg fired both Valentine and Thompson when they objected to his business decisions. Valentine left in 1950 after protesting Annenberg's insistence on running articles and fashions aimed at the "junior" market. Thompson lost her job in 1954 when she told Annenberg of her opposition to his plan to put a *TV Guide* advertising sales office on the *Seventeen* premises. Enid Annenberg Haupt, who took over the magazine's leadership upon Thompson's departure, was Walter Annenberg's older sister. See Cooney, *The Annenbergs*, 241-242.

<sup>31</sup> Letter from J. S., Detroit, Michigan, *Seventeen*, June 1945, 159.

"Benefit Circus," raising money to fight cerebral palsy; "Operation Skywatch," looking for hostile planes with the Ground Observer Corps; "New Kind of Collection," gathering old eyeglasses to help the needy; and "Service Ways," participating in Junior Red Cross service projects.<sup>32</sup> By late 1957, the category had turned even more inward; almost all the "You and Others" articles in one typical issue dealt with etiquette and personality issues, although they also included a regular monthly column on activities of the 4H Club and a short piece on a UNICEF-sponsored Halloween window-decorating contest.<sup>33</sup> The emphasis had shifted from "You and Others" to "You and Others," from giving and helping to seeking approval, from altruism to narcissism.

A related shift came as the magazine and the culture increasingly idealized domesticity. With the decline in the average age of marriage, *Seventeen* advertisers began to include purveyors of hope chests and silverware, seeing their potential customers as brides in training. In 1946, only thirty-six of seventeen hundred advertising pages had been for home furnishings. Ten years later, this ratio had increased to one hundred sixty-four out of fourteen

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<sup>32</sup> *Seventeen*, April 1953, 44, 58, 64, 70.

<sup>33</sup> "Share! Not Scare," *Seventeen*, October 1957, 56; "Seventeen Salutes 4-H in Action," *ibid.*, 113. 4-H and UNICEF activities received frequent coverage in the magazine's pages during the last half of the decade. The United Nations got a respectful multi-article treatment early in 1959, though the cover headline seemed almost self-parodying in its attempt to pander to what the editors considered their readers' overriding concern: "A Boy-Girl Tour of the United Nations." (*Seventeen*, March 1959, cover, and six articles, 14, 27, 44, 89, 90, 128).

hundred.<sup>34</sup> The editorial content showed some confusing inconsistency. Despite what demographics and the advertising indicated, advice columnists and article writers unwaveringly advised against going steady, the era's dominant pattern of heterosexual interaction among teenagers, and against early marriage.

Yet the magazine strongly endorsed marriage as the most important goal in its readers' lives. Editor-publisher Alice Thompson called partnership with a man and making a home "your basic career. . . . Although it was very fashionable a few years ago to belittle these things . . . there is no office, lab or stage that offers so many creative avenues and executive opportunities as that everyday place, the home."<sup>35</sup> When a reader whose goal was to practice law wrote for advice, she got a typical response: "Nearly every girl dreams of at least one career, marriage. . . . You are just one of the extra-special young women who seem to need two careers to fulfill their personalities. . . . Set your goals sensibly. . . . Inform yourself of the problems and the rewards of a dual career."<sup>36</sup> Interviews with successful women seemed designed less to provide role models than to reinforce the same cautionary advice. Television producer Phyllis Adams

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<sup>34</sup> Dwight Macdonald, "Profiles: A Caste, A Culture, A Market," *New Yorker*, 22 November 1958, 83. By this time, fifty percent of all women marrying for the first time were under the age of 20, equalling 500,000 each year (*ibid.*, 84).

<sup>35</sup> Alice Thompson, "How to Be a Woman," *Seventeen*, July 1951, 71.

<sup>36</sup> Claudia Hatch, "Any Problems? Dates and Ambitions," *Seventeen*, October 1955, 87.

declared herself "'violently opposed' to the typical career woman," and insisted on the primacy and "greater satisfaction" of marriage and family.<sup>37</sup> Business executive Jacqueline Cochran, the only woman director of a major airline and a former test pilot herself, justified her company's refusal to hire female flyers: "Just when the average woman would reach her greatest usefulness as a pilot, she'd marry and have children."<sup>38</sup>

Some teenagers seemed to have internalized this attitude completely. One wrote, "I know that girls with talent dream of careers. I have a talent in music, but I can see myself at fifty, too old and fat to sing any more or to 'catch' a husband. The only singing I want to do is lullabies."<sup>39</sup> Others seemed confused by the conflicting messages they heard. A college bound senior, "asked if she wants a career, . . . says, 'I think I do.' But she also wants marriage and four children."<sup>40</sup> And adult advice stressed the importance of setting their sights low. Should a teenage girl with strong skills and desire to become a physician pursue the demanding course of study to achieve her goal and apply her talents fully? Perhaps it would be better, wrote the gently-discouraging advice givers at *Seventeen*, to consult a career counselor who

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<sup>37</sup> "Problems Unlimited," *Seventeen*, August 1952, 96.

<sup>38</sup> Beth Haber Levine, "Interview with the Future," *Seventeen*, May 1954, 104-105.

<sup>39</sup> Letter from C. P., Marietta, Georgia, printed in Jimmy Wescott, "From a Boy's Point of View," *Seventeen*, April 1955, 40.

<sup>40</sup> Irene Kamp, "Meet Miss Young America in St. Louis," *Seventeen*, February 1955, 108-109. Emphasis added.

would "help you channel them into other satisfying fields-- medical researcher, laboratory technician, doctor's assistant."<sup>41</sup>

The only true constant in pronouncements of adults seeking to guide teenagers was inconsistency. Trying to reconcile social and economic realities with the demands of domestic ideology became increasingly difficult. One writer acknowledged that

Many of you have given up the old-fashioned notion that you can count on holding a job for only three or four years and then, when you marry, retiring permanently to the comfort of being 'just a housewife.' Of course, you have not abandoned hopes and plans for a happy husband and hordes of children. But you realize that your future marriage could demand a working wife, the pooling of two pay checks to buy groceries and furniture, to cover the cost of a car and a house in the suburbs.<sup>42</sup>

Two years later, *Seventeen* began a "Looking Ahead to College" feature, subsequently retitled "Looking Ahead to College and Careers." The title clearly indicated the middle-class orientation of the targeted readership, ignoring those teenagers whose working lives would begin without the advantages of higher education. And the careers described tended to be quite gender specific, such as social worker, stewardess, dietitian, and travel agent.<sup>43</sup> When the column considered anything less

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<sup>41</sup> "Career Experts Can Help Chart Your Future," *Seventeen*, August 1955, 161.

<sup>42</sup> "How Long Will You Work?" *Seventeen*, February 1957, 38.

<sup>43</sup> Dr. Charles A. Bucher, "Looking Ahead to College," *Seventeen*, April 1959, 28. This was the first appearance of the monthly column, which added "and Careers" to the title in November 1960. Each column contained some general advice about admission procedures, financial aid, etc., and a profile of an individual

traditional, the novelty had to be noted explicitly. Late in 1959, architecture was designated as "a fairly new field for your sex."<sup>44</sup> And the context of these articles showed that much had not changed. The next item after "Looking Ahead to College and Careers" in *Seventeen's* June 1961 table of contents was "A Diamond Says It All," with details on engagement ring etiquette and grades of gems.<sup>45</sup> But as the new decade dawned, there was a freshly awakened recognition that many teenagers had more varied ambitions than total domesticity, and for them a diamond did not say it all.

When *Seventeen* gave advice, its readers paid attention. Their letters showed they did not always agree, but they responded. Occasionally the magazine published letters from adults, the parents and teachers of teenagers. Their reactions varied widely. Some wrote urging the editors to "please continue to help our girls grow into modest, moral women, and mothers everywhere will join me in wishing you success."<sup>46</sup> But others seemed more doubtful, concerned that the publication might be fostering entirely too much youthful independence. Though

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college or university, as well as a description of a particular career. Social work was highlighted in May 1959, the work of a stewardess in June 1959, dietetics in August 1959, and travel agency work in July 1961. There seemed to be little attempt to match the college chosen for a particular column with the career. For example, the academically demanding liberal arts colleges Reed and Carleton were paired with career surveys of the jobs of stewardess and travel agent, respectively.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, November 1959, 16.

<sup>45</sup> Table of Contents, *Seventeen*, June 1961, 3; "A Diamond Says It All," *ibid.*, 130.

<sup>46</sup> Letter from Mrs. E. B., Logan, Utah, *Seventeen*, November 1954, 4.



usually *Seventeen's* dispensers of advice encouraged teenagers complaining about parental restrictions to win their parents' good will through obedience and cooperation, some adults felt the very airing of teenage criticism undermined their authority. As *Seventeen* competed with them as a locus of power, it provoked objections.

An early feature called "I Love My Parents, But..." generated a strong outcry. The article listed teenage gripes against parents in twenty forceful paragraphs, mostly focused on young people wanting to be treated with greater respect. The opening and closing paragraphs typify its contents. The composite teenager began by wishing that "mother would understand that even people under eighteen have a code about confidences, that privacy is not a commodity reserved for parents alone. There are some things which belong just to me." The final paragraph expressed the desire "to get credit, once in a while, for doing my own thinking. How will I ever learn to make the right decisions? After all, I am their daughter, and so I must have inherited some of their good sense."<sup>47</sup>

One parent responded angrily, "Articles like that poison their mind--my child told me things she never had

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<sup>47</sup> "I Love My Parents, But...", *Seventeen*, November 1945, 72-73. The magazine also ran a provocatively-titled series called "Why Don't Parents Grow Up?" from the first issue in September 1944 until its final appearance in May 1950. Its demise coincided with the departure of editor Helen Valentine. The series consistently stressed conciliation and acquiescence to parental wishes as a way to keep family peace and to get what the teenage reader wanted in the long run.

before reading that awful thing." Another protested fiercely against "this hate you are instigating in children against their parents" and threatened to "forbid my children to buy your magazine."<sup>48</sup> Social critics and historians debate whether the magazine shaped teenage attitudes or simply acted as a messenger, publicizing trends already present in the culture. Regardless of that assessment, such acrimonious division between at least some parents and the publishers of a very popular teenage magazine demonstrated the disunity displayed by the adult world in contending with the young.

The magazines focused at first primarily on a female readership. The dominance of *Seventeen* among middle-class teenage girls persisted from the time of its first issue. Other publications trying to reach the same readers had little success. *Deb*, *Miss America*, *Senior Prom*, and a teenage edition of *Harper's Bazaar* faltered and disappeared after a few years.<sup>49</sup> Teenage boys had nothing comparable. Such exclusive gender attention reflected cultural assumptions about girls and women as purchasers

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<sup>48</sup> Letter from "No name," Flushing, N. Y., *Seventeen*, January 1946, 160; letter from Mrs. H. DeC., Bayside, N. Y., *ibid.* Most teenagers who wrote praised the article; the strongest demurrer came from F. R., Newark, N. J., who asked "why doesn't someone give three cheers for parents like my dad who understand kids?" (*ibid.*)

<sup>49</sup> "Teen-Age Magazine," *Life*, 29 October 1945, 77-80; "Teen-Age Market: It's 'Terrif'," *Business Week*, 8 June 1946, 72; "Seventeen Cosmetics Increases Advertising," *Advertising Age*, 14 October 1946, 55; "Calling All Girls Graduates to Senior Prom," *Advertising Age*, 15 August 1949, 33. After a few years of separate existence, beginning with the October 1945 issue, *Junior Bazaar* survived only as a few pages inside the parent magazine, *Harper's Bazaar*, beginning with its June 1948 issue and continuing through October 1957.

and yet also as outsiders, a distinct audience and market in a male-dominated society. Boys were taken for granted as the cultural norm, a given, needing less special guidance.

At least some of the boys missed having publications aimed at their teenage interests. One wrote a letter to the editor "sadly lamenting the fact that there are so many magazines for girls and none for boys--not like SEVENTEEN, that is. So change it just a little bit, puleeze, with advice for boys. Why not a column 'When a Boy Becomes a Beau' with a little up-to-the-minute date advice. O.K.?"<sup>50</sup> His hope remained unrealized. Ten years later, a faithful reader praised the magazine, and added a similar regret: "Thanks from the bottom of my heart for the most exciting magazine I know. Everything is just about as perfect as it can be. Too bad there isn't one just like it for boys--it sure would simplify life!"<sup>51</sup> Though she may have been hoping for more fashionably-dressed schoolmates and dates, it seems more probable that she wanted them receiving advice not on clothing but on interpersonal skills and group dynamics. She and her female contemporaries could draw on a variety of material aimed at them, shaping it to their own needs, but teenage boys had much more limited opportunities to look to the printed media for guidance.

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<sup>50</sup> Letter from R. B., Roseburg, Oregon, *Seventeen*, January 1945, 6.

<sup>51</sup> Letter from B. R., Atlanta, Georgia, *Seventeen*, February 1955, 6.

Publications such as *Boys' Life* and *Hot Rod*, with large adolescent male readerships, specialized in content apart from most major concerns of teenage culture. *Boys' Life*, the official monthly magazine of the Boy Scouts of America, dealt with single-sex, outdoor-oriented activity, not the youth culture.<sup>52</sup> The car culture promoted by *Hot Rod* became an increasingly important aspect of teenage life, but the magazine never went beyond its very narrow focus to reach a broad spectrum of young readers. A comparably limited approach at *Seventeen* would have resulted in entire issues about a certain style of clothing. Classified by many as a fashion magazine, *Seventeen* was clearly much more. *Hot Rod*, *Motor Trend*, and *Car Craft* gave the reader only what their titles indicated. *Calling All Boys*, the brother publication to *Calling All Girls*, never achieved even the modest success of what could be considered the pioneering teenage girl magazine. Advertisers who wanted to reach teenage boys did not generally do so by identifying them as part of their age group or through their romantic aspirations or interpersonal concerns, as they regularly did with teenage girls. *Mad*, a humor magazine which began publication in

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<sup>52</sup> For a survey of the contents of *Boys' Life* in the 1940s and 1950s, see Marc J. Richards, "Recruitment in the Nursery: Mobilization of Children for the Cold War" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Davis, 1998). The magazine sought to attract advertisers by claiming "One out of every two boys in the United States joins the Boy Scouts of America at some time during his Scout age years. And BOY'S LIFE [sic] is read by more boys, Scout and non-Scout, than any other magazine, youth or adult." (Advertisement, *Advertising Age*, 20 May 1957, 23.)

mid-1955, had a large adolescent male readership, and it carried no advertising at all.

The same year that *Mad* transformed from a comic book to a magazine, newborns from the early years of World War II became teenagers. Publishers seeking to reach an untapped part of this rapidly growing market tried approaches differing from the format established by *Seventeen* and its imitators. They began to pay attention to previously ignored teenagers, including boys and working-class youth of both genders. New magazine titles appeared on the stands, reflecting these approaches, publications called *Dig*, *Modern Teen*, and *'Teen*. Sharing some of *Mad's* sly, skeptical tone, they brought new self-awareness to a broader, more diverse teenage culture.

Late in 1955, *Dig* began the second wave of teenage periodicals. Drawing its name from teenage slang, derived from musicians' argot meaning to understand and to appreciate, *Dig* displayed a deliberately irreverent attitude. The staff listing was headed by "Trajan X. Wunderleigh, Janitor," and letters from readers appeared under the title "Letters to the Janitor." Articles on young motion picture performers and musicians had a more conventional feel and could have appeared in any fan magazine. More confrontational articles proclaimed teenagers' need for drag strips and complained about the unfairness of school administrators and parents who forced the removal of boys' long haircuts and sideburns. Many

pages of readers' letters aired numerous other grievances. The fashion features covered only a few pages, and included styles for both boys and girls. The magazine made a strong effort to appeal to both genders, occasionally offering "Bull Session" and "Hen House" sections for nominally gender-specific topics.<sup>53</sup>

*Dig* served as the first in a long line of mid- to late-1950s teenage magazines. The same publisher brought out *Modern Teen* in the spring of 1957. At that time, other periodicals were in the planning stages, with seven or eight anticipated to appear in the next several months. The editors of *Dig* gladly took credit, writing "We're happy DIG's popularity has helped in making this reality possible, and that we originated a new publishing field. It's a break for you teenagers. . . . now there will be magazines edited exclusively for you, and that's something *you did not have before* DIG."<sup>54</sup> *Seventeen* could dispute this claim to primacy, but *Dig* accomplished something different. Downplaying fashions and appealing to both sexes, the magazine also reached a more working-class and lower-middle-class audience than the resolutely upper-middle-class *Seventeen*. While *Dig* did not survive the

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<sup>53</sup> Articles described above that typify the magazine's content for the life of the publication can be found in *Dig*, May 1957. The first issue appeared in December 1955. The year also marked the beginning of the rock and roll era, with "Rock Around the Clock" becoming the number one record, and the release of the best of the teenage problem movies, *Rebel Without a Cause*. 1955 was also the beginning of a sharp increase in the number of teenagers, as the first of the 1942-43 mini-boom of wartime "good-bye babies" turned 13.

<sup>54</sup> "We're Flattered!" *Dig*, May 1957, 8. Emphasis in original.

next decade, it prepared the way for a similar publication which did.

'Teen first appeared in the summer of 1957, a few months after the *Dig* sibling *Modern Teen*. 'Teen also sought to reach some of those readers untouched by *Seventeen*, especially boys and more déclassé youth. Publisher Robert E. Petersen had already had some success in selling to young men and teenage boys with several specialized magazines, including the above-mentioned *Hot Rod* (begun in 1948) and *Motor Trend*, *Motor Life*, *Rod & Custom*, and *Car Craft*.<sup>55</sup> This background was evident in the cover art for the first issue of 'Teen, featuring a photograph of a young man lying on his back working beneath a stalled jalopy with a gleaming exposed engine, next to a sign pointing down the road with the words "Drag Races Today." A young woman with a pony tail and slightly annoyed expression watched from the passenger seat. Two other photographs commanded the reader's attention, one of runners clearing hurdles in a track meet, the other of the late actor James Dean, whose fame and fan devotion had reached their greatest heights after his 1955 death in a race car. And in the middle of this montage appeared a provocative headline in large type: "GOING STEADY IS NOT FOR ME!"<sup>56</sup>

This June 1957 premiere issue seemed to offer something for almost every teenager, just as the

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<sup>55</sup> "Hot Rod and Publisher Petersen," *Printers' Ink*, 7 June 1957, 82.

<sup>56</sup> Cover, 'Teen, June 1957.

publishers had promised potential advertisers. A few months earlier, they had run a full color page in the leading national advertising industry publication, boldly asserting "ONLY 'TEEN COVERS THE ENTIRE TEENAGE MARKET! 'TEEN Magazine puts all teenage activities and interests together in one professionally produced magazine." Recognizing objections by some adults to perceived anti-authority stances in other teenage periodicals, the new magazine promised to be non-controversial: "Parents and teachers throughout the country will welcome 'TEEN because it is the only publication for all teenagers with an editorial approach that is 100% constructive."<sup>57</sup>

The formula seemed to work. By 1960, circulation figures for 'Teen had surpassed those of its older rivals *Dig* and *Modern Teen*.<sup>58</sup> But during this same period, it had almost completely abandoned its attempt to appeal to teenage boys and girls alike. Of thirty-six letters printed in the September 1959 issue, only four were from boys, one of them complaining about the lack of stories on male fashions.<sup>59</sup> Articles with a presumably masculine

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<sup>57</sup> Advertisement for 'Teen, *Advertising Age*, 25 March 1957, 21.

<sup>58</sup> Charles H. Brown, "Self-Portrait: The Teen-Type Magazine," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 338 (November 1961): 20. Monthly circulation for each: 'Teen--245,000; *Dig*--171,000; *Modern Teen*--121,453. Brown contrasts these figures with the much larger numbers posted by the Scout periodicals *American Girl* (670,000) and *Boys' Life* (1,790,000), as well as the classroom publication *Scholastic* (2,200,000). *Seventeen's* circulation had reached the million mark in 1947, and was 1,088,967 by 1961. See *Magazine Circulation and Rate Trends, 1940-1965* (New York: Association of National Advertisers, Inc., 1966), 98.

<sup>59</sup> Letter from Bill Davies, San Diego, California, 'Teen, September 1959, 8. That issue included a fashion feature showing nineteen females and six males. See "Clothes for Cool Campus Cats," *ibid.*, 34-41.



appeal, focusing on topics such as sports and cars, no longer appeared in the magazine's pages.

The most successful and the longest-surviving of its type, *'Teen* epitomized the teenage magazine of the mid-1950s. It differed from *Seventeen* in significant ways. Although both depended on a growing youth market, the newer magazine aimed at readers uncomfortable with the upper-middle-class polish of its predecessor. The focus was much less on fashionable clothing, and much more on celebrity fan news. Both types of publications offered advice about personal problems and printed reader contributions, but the pages of *'Teen* had many more letters and a less genteel tone.

Pennsylvania State University Professor of Journalism Charles Brown surveyed the field in 1959 and 1960, and determined that what he called "the teen-type magazine" (including *'Teen* but not *Seventeen*) had a readership composed of the children and grandchildren of the readers of true-story, confession magazines: women whose class background and life experiences made them feel "ill at ease in the middle class atmosphere of the slick service-type magazines for women." He identified several periodicals in addition to *Dig*, *Modern Teen*, and *'Teen: Teen World*, *Teen Time*, *Teens Today*, *Teen Parade*, *Flip*, and *Hep Cats*.<sup>60</sup> Although he did not name it, this time period

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<sup>60</sup> Brown, "Self-Portrait: The Teen-Type Magazine," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 338 (November 1961): 14. The women's service magazines to which he refers included *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Woman's Home Companion*, and *McCall's*.

also witnessed the debut of a magazine explicitly playing on the *Seventeen* name and aiming at a readership not only younger but with lower aspirations, called simply 16. Brown explained that the teen-type magazines had two major themes in common, the "confessional," centered on "relationships with the other sex and such personal problems as how to be attractive, how to overcome shyness, and in general how to be popular," and the "cultic," featuring the iconography of "young and handsome rock-and-roll musicians and movie and television players." In Brown's judgement, less sanguine than in his conclusion, "The articles deal with the most intimate of matters to such an extent as to constitute an almost morbid preoccupation."<sup>61</sup>

Brown recognized how the magazines served as competing centers of authority, a phenomenon earlier experienced by some adult readers of *Seventeen*. Demonstrating the dismay that some adults felt at the publications' apparent encouragement of teenage defiance of parental norms, he quoted at length from a mother's angry letter that accused *Modern Teen* of encouraging a neglect of homework and household chores, a precocious sexuality, and an idolizing of depraved rock and roll musicians. "Any fan of yours spends his time failing at school, talking back to his parents, sharpening his

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Both *Mademoiselle*, which began in 1935, and *Seventeen* (1944) seemed to be junior versions of these publications, though with an emphasis on fashion more similar to *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*.

<sup>61</sup> Brown, "Self-Portrait," 15.

switchblade for the next gang fight, wearing sensual, revealing clothing, and . . . [being corrupted by] the temptations . . . of your lewd and demoralizing publication."<sup>62</sup> The charges seemed nonsensical to Brown, who characterized the typical reader as shy and withdrawn. Ultimately, the article concluded that readers made positive use of the magazines in ways suited to their individual needs in negotiating with the demands of both the adult and teenage cultures.<sup>63</sup>

The publishers of the magazines and the advertisers seeking buyers for their products formed part of an ever-growing, ever more visible youth market. The role of this market in shaping teenage culture created some controversy. Those parents who fretted about growing teen autonomy found plenty to blame in the marketing strategies, much as the letter writers quoted above had lambasted the magazines. The bourgeois society that valued both family life and economic expansion found itself caught in an internal contradiction that seemed to victimize its adolescent children. "The trouble with teenagers began when some smart salesman made a group out

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<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-21. The final page of the article, a "Special Editor's Appendix" apparently written by the editor of this issue of *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Thorsten Sellin, makes the argument that the shy (presumably female) reader can resist peer pressures for premature sexual activity by following the magazine's precepts which counsel, in effect, "To thine own self be true."

of them in order to sell bobby sox," charged one contemporary critic.<sup>64</sup>

A more recent social historian has found the exact opposite effect, claiming that adult worries about teenage rebellion and juvenile delinquency receded as the youth market grew, and the newly respected young consumers were seen as social assets, not dangers.<sup>65</sup> The dependence of youth on marketers in shaping their culture has been disputed by teenagers and business alike. They pointed to examples such as the shop that invested heavily in promoting fake leopard skin vests and had no sales at all. A leading business monthly cautioned its readers by quoting one young Californian, "Natch! We go for fads once in awhile, but we like to rattle them up ourselves instead of copying what the stores push our way."<sup>66</sup>

The youth market had indisputable economic impact. By the late 1950s, eighteen million American teenagers spent ten billion dollars a year. *Life* magazine devoted eight pages to exclaiming over the phenomenon, leading off with a full-page photograph of a gigantic assemblage of typical teenage purchases, including cars, clothes, Cokes, records, and heaps of toiletries. The caption writer described it thus: "Tower of baubles for dancing teen-

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<sup>64</sup> Karin Walsh, "What Is the Press Doing to Teen-Agers?" *National Parent Teacher* 51 (September 1956), 4. Quoted (though cited incompletely) in Barson and Heller, *Teenage Confidential*, 22.

<sup>65</sup> James Gilbert, *A Cycle of Outrage: America's Reaction to the Juvenile Delinquent in the 1950s* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 196-211.

<sup>66</sup> Betty Betz, "Gold in Them Jeans," *Nation's Business*, January 1953, 58.

ager types contains, from top to bottom, samples of favorite items in sports, fashion, food, entertainment, furniture, locomotion, cosmetics and toiletries." According to the "best available surveys," the caption continued, "One-and-one-half million of them own cars. Last year girls spent \$837 million on back-to-school clothing. Teen-agers buy more than half of all single records: spend \$300 million on toiletries and cosmetics."<sup>67</sup>

A major source of the surveys mentioned was Gilbert Youth Research, founded by nineteen-year-old Eugene Gilbert in 1946. Recognizing the potential importance of the developing youth market, he established a business paying a thousand high school students in a hundred cities to conduct marketing surveys among their classmates for such clients as Marshall Field, United Airlines, Sears, Roebuck, and Army Recruiting.<sup>68</sup> Years before the 1959 *Life* feature, Gilbert and other marketers had helped make the business community well aware of the potential money to be made. Gilbert's audience became even larger in the 1950s, as he began to write for and be the subject of interviews in the general interest press.<sup>69</sup> His surveys of teenagers

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<sup>67</sup> "New \$10 Billion Power: The U.S. Teen-Age Consumer," *Life*, 31 August 1959, 78-85.

<sup>68</sup> "Teen-Age Market: It's 'Terrif'," *Business Week*, 8 June 1946, 75; James Gilbert, *A Cycle of Outrage*, 206.

<sup>69</sup> Eugene Gilbert pointed out some of the statistics behind the mid-1950s increase in teenage consumer spending in a letter to the editor: "Income has increased 346% for the teen-age boy and 310% for the teen-age girl. In 1944, 17% of the eligible schoolboys held afternoon jobs; today, 31%. In 10 years boys and girls both cut a year off the average age which they considered 'old enough to date.' By 1953 this had dropped to 14 for boys and to 13.4 for girls. The

went beyond market research, and beginning in the fall of 1956, his syndicated column "What Young People Think" appeared in nearly three hundred newspapers every week.<sup>70</sup> An interview of Gilbert by cultural critic Dwight Macdonald appeared in two parts in the *New Yorker* in 1958. Their meeting seemed a symbolic confrontation of two diametrically opposed views of teenage culture. What Gilbert celebrated as beneficial to both youth and business, Macdonald saw as the worst manifestations of manipulation by a commercial elite, a frightening indicator of mass culture as cultural suicide.<sup>71</sup>

Macdonald did not stand alone in his view. Not only was it characteristic of the Frankfurt School's negative interpretation of mass culture, but it represented a major theme of much of the public criticism of teenagers. In a tone reminiscent of some of the anti-media sentiments already cited, a reader of *Life* attacked the world of teenage consumerism displayed in the magazine's August 31, 1959, issue. "At the risk of undermining the economy," he wrote, "I protest that cultivation of the adolescent as a

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average age for a girl marrying in the 1940s was 22. By the 1950s it was 20." (Letter from Eugene Gilbert, *Life*, 25 January 1954, 11.)

<sup>70</sup> James Gilbert, *A Cycle of Outrage*, 207-208. The column appeared not only in large metropolitan papers such as the *Chicago Sun-Times*, but also in more remote, smaller publications as the *Norman (Oklahoma) Transcript*, where it ran for more than three years, starting with the issue of 30 August 1956. James Gilbert identifies the first appearance of the column as the *Sun-Times*, 6 September 1956 (though a typographical error in his endnote puts it two years later, "6 September 1958"). *ibid.*, 248 (note 27).

<sup>71</sup> Dwight Macdonald, "Profiles: A Caste, A Culture, A Market," *New Yorker*, 22 November 1958, 57-94, and 29 November 1958, 57-107; James Gilbert, *A Cycle of Outrage*, 209-210.

separate class contributes significantly to the emotional disturbances of contemporary youth." The teen years had ceased being a time of passage, as "[a]dolescents are no longer treated as normal human beings in transition from children to adults, but . . . as a special race of incomprehensible beings with needs, customs, morals, even a language, all their own." This creation of a separate culture, which he blamed on excessive commercialism, threatened social unity. "Many sociologists agree that isolation from the main stream of life is the root cause of our acute youth problems."<sup>72</sup>

Exactly where the "main stream of life" ran in the 1940s and 1950s seemed difficult for teenagers to determine. Disputes raged between Macdonald and Gilbert, between many of their parents and the editors of teenage magazines, between traditional youth leaders and newer dispensers of psychological advice. Wartime disruptions weakened family authority. The difficulty of being "normal human beings" in such abnormal times did not disappear at the end of the war. Adults sought to bring order out of chaos, but cultural fragmentation caused them to speak in many conflicting voices. Perplexed and

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<sup>72</sup> Letter from Norman Peach, New York, N.Y., *Life*, 21 September 1959, 19. For a relevant analysis of the contradictions of capitalism as a system promoting values such as hedonism, instant gratification and social fragmentation, contrary to what the system needs to sustain itself, see Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1978).

perturbed by the dissonance, young people turned to each other.

Adults who recognized teenage autonomy could decry it, but that accomplished little to establish communication or exert influence. Advertisers seeking sales had developed an entryway into the world of teenagers by paying sympathetic attention to the folkways of the young. Those who sought to understand and guide them for other than commercial purposes also felt a need to reach them effectively. As one writer noted, based on her experience conducting youth forums, teenagers "do not want to be told what to do; they want facts and opinions; they recognize the opinions of someone who has lived more years, done more study, and had more experience. But they want to make up their own minds."<sup>73</sup> The author of these words, Alice Sowers, represented an important role in postwar adult society, acting as an ambassador to the kingdom of the kids.

As director of the Family Life Institute at the University of Oklahoma, Sowers spoke to audiences of both parents and teenagers. Every week she wrote a newspaper column and presented a state-wide radio broadcast. Her

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<sup>73</sup> Alice Sowers, "Children Want Facts, Opinion But Not Orders From Parents," in her weekly "Families First" column, *Norman (Oklahoma) Transcript*, 8 April 1954, 18. The column was syndicated throughout the state, appearing in approximately ninety-five newspapers in the mid-1950s. See "Education for Family Living," *University of Oklahoma Extension Review* 7 (April 1955), 1; on file in the University Archives at the Western History Archives, University of Oklahoma (hereafter designated UA), in Record Group 44/00, Box 18, Folder 20.



topics dealt with family issues and often focused on adolescents. Once a month the radio program included several high school age guests talking about issues of particular concern to them.<sup>74</sup> Sowers regularly traveled to conduct forums at school assemblies where a panel of students would join her on stage to discuss topics raised by members of the teenage audience. She published the questions they asked, hoping to help parents understand the world to which their children belonged, the world of teenagers that seemed more powerful than the family. She appeared to view her job as a mediator between two opposing forces, enabling them to understand each other so that there might be a semblance of peace. Wherever she went, she found groups of parents eager and anxious to talk about their family problems and to get her guidance in dealing with them. She reported that teenagers responded eagerly to the opportunities she gave to voice their concerns about peer relations as well as those inside the family.<sup>75</sup>

Sowers's role has importance beyond just the boundaries of Oklahoma. Not only did her own work reach

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<sup>74</sup> "Listening and Discussion Guide on 'It's Up to the Home,'" Family Life Radio Forum pamphlet, 1946-47, in UA, Record Group 44/06, Box 12, Folder 13. The broadcasts, carried on only two stations in 1946-47, by the mid-1950s could be heard on twenty-six, including two in other states. See "Fifteen Years of Service: A Report from the Director of the Oklahoma Family Life Institute to the Trustees of the Institute and to the President of the University of Oklahoma" (Norman: Family Life Institute, 1954), 15, in UA, Record Group 45/18, Box 10, Folder 22-1. See also "Education for Family Living," 1.

<sup>75</sup> "Fifteen Years of Service," 10-11.

farther, as she traveled and conducted forums elsewhere, but she represented a larger phenomenon. Not a native Oklahoman, she had received her Ph.D. in "Family Life" at Cornell University and brought what she had learned there and in six subsequent years as a specialist in parent education for the National Congress of Parents and Teachers (P.T.A.) to the job she began in Norman in 1938. She never married nor had children of her own. Her position as a family expert to whom others turned for guidance came less from personal experience than from study and observation. In one radio interview, she spoke tellingly of parents' desire to learn from professional expertise:

Just as people welcome new ideas about farming, business, industry, and housekeeping, so do they want to know what has been learned about families --about the less tangible things such as personality development, relationships with others-- . . . everything connected with child care and guidance and family relationships.<sup>76</sup>

As a family expert, Sowers typified the trained professional who wrote and spoke to adults and teenagers during this era. Increasingly her focus turned from the parents to the young. In 1946-47, she estimated that she participated in public meetings with ten thousand adults and eighteen hundred high school students. On average she had met with approximately that many adults each year of the previous five, but a total of only seventeen hundred teenagers, less than three hundred fifty per year. By

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<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 10. Transcribed from a broadcast by WNAD Radio, Norman, Oklahoma, 29 January 1954.

1952-53, her adult audience had dropped to just over five thousand, and in that same school year she met in public forums with nearly thirty-five hundred teenagers.<sup>77</sup>

One series of Sowers' youth forums in Florida involved eight thousand students from one hundred high schools in sessions meeting in eight cities. The promotional brochure featured an emblematic quote which made the underlying philosophy explicit: "If parents have not yet found a vocabulary in which to talk with their children about matters of great personal importance, good teachers and counselors should assume this responsibility."<sup>78</sup> Sowers enthusiastically cast herself in this role, printing up lists of teenagers' frequently-asked questions showing "bewilderment, confusion, indecision, unhappiness, resentment . . . [and] a general and acute awareness of problems on the part of young people and their need to talk with some understanding and objective person about them."<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> "Fifteen Years of Service," 15. The figures are not anomalies, but represent an apparent trend: 1938-41--59,970 adults, no high school students; 1941-46--60,000 adults, 1700 students; 1946-47--10,000 adults, 1800 students; 1947-48--10,250 adults, 1850 students; 1948-49--10,500 adults, 1925 students; 1949-50--11,000 adults, 1875 students; 1950-51--12,000 adults, 2960 students; 1951-52--4693 adults, 3135 students; 1952-53--5385 adults, 3465 students. These figures include only her work inside Oklahoma.

<sup>78</sup> "Your Children Discuss Their Own Problems In Public Forum and Panel," brochure printed by the University of Florida General Extension Record, Vol. 28, No. 5; in UA, Record Group 45/18, Box 1, Folder 16. The quote was identified as originating in the December 1946 issue of *National Parent-Teacher*.

<sup>79</sup> "Representative Questions of High School Youth from Ten Florida Counties," typed list of 192 questions, General Extension Division, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida; in UA, Record Group 45/18, Box 1, Folder 16. A similar list from Oklahoma forums was distributed by the Family Life Institute under the title "One Hundred Questions of High School Students." See the University of

Though Sowers and her counselor counterparts regularly expressed their desire to strengthen families, their assumptions and their activities can also be seen as having a rather different effect. By providing teenagers with a sympathetic ear away from family ties and in the company of their peers, in what could be seen as gigantic group therapy sessions, the professionals of the counseling movement promoted alternative perceptions of authority. Even though their particular approach did not become every teenager's guiding philosophy, their presence created another competitive force, vying for the attention of the young.<sup>80</sup> Marketers, counselors, parents, all wanted adolescents to listen to them. Together they created cultural cacophony.

The career of Alice Sowers continued into the late 1950s, cut short by a debilitating automobile accident which ultimately forced her early retirement. One noteworthy project of hers needs examining. While still at the peak of her activity, she participated in the creation of two remarkable documents that illustrate an intersection of teenage culture and adult desire to mold it: the 1947 guidance films *Shy Guy* and *Are You Popular?*

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Oklahoma Extension Review, vol. 5, no. 2, September 1952, in UA, Extension Division Papers, Box 18, Folder 17.

<sup>80</sup> For a survey of the rise of the psychologist as expert and the growth of a therapeutic establishment, see Christopher Lasch, *Haven in a Heartless World: The Family Besieged* (New York: Norton, 1977), 118-133 and *passim*. For an account of the acquiescence of many parents to the advice givers, see the representative account of Angelo Patri, as analyzed by Robert L. Griswold, *Fatherhood in America: A History* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 108-115, 119-126.

Sowers served as "educational collaborator" for both these Coronet productions. She provided information to the scriptwriters and approved the final draft, then traveled to the Chicago area and participated in the casting, costuming and shooting. Finally, she wrote pamphlet study guides which circulated with the finished films.<sup>81</sup> Aimed at adolescent audiences which presumably needed their lessons in living, the films became best-sellers in the educational market and set the tone for a whole wave of similar films which followed. After recounting the development of the guidance film genre, this chapter will examine the specific content of these two landmark works.

Shown by schools and youth groups, the hundreds of guidance films made between the mid-1940s and early 1960s reached a large proportion of teenagers. Offering advice in the guise of dramatic presentations and plot-driven character studies, they provided instruction in correct conduct in matters of manners, school standards and rules, and relations with parents and peers. Although each of the films had some variation in emphasis, they mostly

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<sup>81</sup> For background on Sowers's involvement in the planning of "a teen-age problem film," at the time still unnamed, see letters from Thurman White to Frank Grover, undated but surely from late March, 1946, and one dated March 27, 1946; also letters from R. Boyd Gunning to G. L. Cross, March 22, 1946, and from Alice Sowers to Frank Grover, April 5, 1946, UA, Extension Division Collection, Box 60, Folder 4. White and Gunning were University of Oklahoma administrators; Cross was University President. Grover worked for Coronet Instructional Films, which produced the projects. For an account of Sowers's participation in the making of the film *Shy Guy*, see untitled brochure from a Family Life Institute program in Ada, Oklahoma, October 14-16, 1947, in UA, Record Group 45/18, Box 1, Folder 16. For the "Teachers' Guides" to both *Shy Guy* and *Are You Popular?*, see UA, Record Group 44/01, Box 14, Folder 14.

presented a world in which teenagers interacted most importantly with one another. Even those stressing good relations with adults tended to depict peer relations as predominant. Despite the heavy emphasis that many of the films put on the wise counsel and commentary of coaches, school administrators, and omniscient narrators with resonant voices, the teenagers stood at stage center. Though the scripts aimed at instructing youth in adult-defined proper behavior, the lessons learned could often be somewhat different, reinforcing the increasing sense of autonomy within the teenage culture. Their importance in both reflecting and instructing teenagers warrants a detailed examination of their origins and development.<sup>82</sup>

Motion picture films for the classroom had first been produced during the silent era of the 1920s, but "personal guidance films" were something new. A monthly magazine serving educators and industry members had first begun publishing in 1922. In the October 1943 issue of *The Educational Screen*, a high school principal called for "Visual Aids for Mental Hygiene" to complement the growing number of school courses in "psychology, personal problems, and human relations." The author saw a great need for such programs because "The increasingly prevalent lack of concentration, emotional instability, and uncertainty about the future among high school students

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<sup>82</sup> Many of the guidance films are described individually in some detail at various places in this study. The annotated filmography at the end of the dissertation covers each of the guidance films made for and about teenagers during this era.

nowadays indicates a need for increased effort to help adolescents keep up their morale." He proposed making films using teenage actors in familiar settings, such as school or soda fountain, illustrating the good and bad effects of various kinds of behavior. The only film on his admittedly "meager" list of existing titles that fit these criteria was "Courtesy Comes to Town," portraying good manners with scenes of students opening doors for classmates carrying armloads of books. Clearly, more needed to be done. The article served as a clarion call for producers to make and schools to show guidance films.<sup>83</sup>

In the years immediately following World War II, classroom film use increased dramatically. The wartime experience certainly contributed to that change. The widespread, effective use of instructional films for members of the military had received considerable public attention. The motivational "Why We Fight" series produced by Frank Capra for the Army had even been released for civilian exhibition. Most military audio-visual personnel returned to similar work in education after the war. The skills that made the war propaganda films so effective transferred easily into the new kind of motivational film. All states of the union except one had school audio-visual programs in 1945, most with plans to

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<sup>83</sup> John G. Geisel, "Visual Aids for Mental Hygiene," *The Educational Screen* 22 (October 1943): 289-291, 294.

buy more needed equipment, primarily 16mm sound motion picture projectors.<sup>84</sup>

The influential role of Coronet Instructional Films, the company that made and distributed *Shy Guy* and *Are You Popular?* deserves special attention. Though not the first to enter the field, Coronet set the tone for much of the genre and epitomized the style of the guidance film. Coronet also had its origins in war-era concerns. Founder David Smart, publisher of *Esquire* and *Coronet* magazines, learned during the 1930s that U.S. schools owned fewer than a thousand 16mm projectors, compared with sixty thousand in the schools of Nazi Germany. He funded an Indiana University survey of American educators' audio-visual needs, and the results motivated him in 1939 to start Coronet Films and build a studio near Chicago, in Glenview, Illinois. Between 1942 and 1945, the company's principal output consisted of twenty-five films for the U.S. Navy, while it also turned out several films for classroom use, including titles such as *Sulphur and Its Compounds* and *Hopi Indian Arts and Crafts*.<sup>85</sup> In the first year of post-war production, it made twenty-eight more films. *How To Study* and *It's Your Library* started a

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<sup>84</sup> Alvin B. Roberts, "Audio-Visual Education in the Post War Period," *The Educational Screen* 24 (September 1945): 283-286.

<sup>85</sup> "Coronet Films Celebrating 10th Anniversary In Instruction Field," *Film World*, November 1949, 582. Some other Coronet film titles from this era: *Paper Making* (1941), *I Never Catch a Cold* (1942), *The Seventeenth Century* (1944), *Camouflage in Nature through Patterns* (1945). These films are held today by the film archives at Indiana University, one of the two best academic repositories of educational films in the United States, along with the American Archive of the Factual Film at Iowa State University.



series of academic guidance films for developing study skills. Later examples included *How to Write Your Term Paper*, *How to Judge Facts*, and the film described at the beginning of this identically-named chapter, *How to Judge Authorities*. Coronet's thorough involvement in behavior-oriented productions attempting to shape teenage culture began in 1947. That year's fifty-nine films included the two previously-mentioned Alice Sowers projects, *Shy Guy* and *Are You Popular?*<sup>86</sup>

Other companies had preceded Coronet into the guidance film business, but none of them had such a prolific output or widely-felt impact. Forum Films released the above-cited *Courtesy Comes to Town*, and Young America Films made *How Do You Do?* Simmel-Meservey contributed *Let's Give a Tea*, *Dinner Party*, and *Junior Prom*. All these films used teenage actors to illustrate proper etiquette, from opening doors to making simple introductions to navigating more complex social situations. In each, a narrator told exactly what was right and wrong about the actors' behavior.<sup>87</sup> In

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<sup>86</sup> "Coronet Films Celebrating 10th Anniversary in Instruction Field," *Film World*, November 1949, 615; catalog of the University of Indiana film archives.

<sup>87</sup> *Courtesy Comes to Town* (Forum Films, 1943); *How Do You Do?* (Young America Films, 1946); *Let's Give a Tea*, *Dinner Party*, *Junior Prom* (all three Simmel-Meservey Films, 1946). In 1945 the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency produced *Good Grooming* for Pond's cosmetics. A high school health teacher wrote in her review that "This film will be valuable to show to high school girls in their Hygiene classes as it brings out points which we stress in these classes, such as elimination of nervous habits (nail-biting, chewing pencils, toying with beads, etc.); cleanliness as the basis of good grooming; moderation in the use of cosmetics; good posture as an aid to attractive appearance; proper food and amount of sleep as necessities to improvement in appearance, and the importance of

subsequent films, the topic expanded quickly beyond the niceties of table manners and social introduction patterns. The first to take this step was the Young Men's Christian Association, an organization long involved with youth guidance. The YMCA and its motion picture unit, Association Films, joined *Look Magazine* to produce the "Art of Living" series, starting with two 1946 releases, *You and Your Family* and *You and Your Friends*. These films examined larger questions of personal relationships by staging several possible outcomes to situations involving conflict.<sup>88</sup>

Omniscient narrators pretended to give the audience an open choice between alternative courses of action, but the scripts made the expected answers obvious. In *You and Your Family*, when the teenage son came home late from a date and the father asked him why, the actor performed three alternate responses: telling a convoluted and unbelievable tale about a friend's accident; angrily refusing to answer on the grounds that "I'm grown up;" and offering his calm apology for losing track of the time, then accepting a previously agreed-upon penalty of no socializing for one week. Should the teenage daughter wanting to attend a dance respond to her parents' refusal

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selecting clothes and hair style according to the occasion, the type of face, figure and age." (Louisa May Greeley, "Reviews of Health Films," *Film News* 7 (January 1946): 16.) See also "J. Walter Thompson Sees Great 16 mm. Boom," *Film World*, November 1945, 366-367.

<sup>88</sup> *You and Your Family* (New York: Association Films, 1946); *You and Your Friends* (New York: Association Films, 1946).

by pouting, raging, sneaking out, or politely suggesting inviting her friends to the house?<sup>89</sup>

Although the messages lacked subtlety, these films and their successors provide significant insights into teenage culture and the ways it interacted with the adult world. Adults wrote the scripts, but they sought to communicate with the teenagers of the intended audience by making the situations seem as authentic as possible. Though the earliest examples seemed to be saying primarily "Defer to your elders," even they contributed to a heightened awareness of adolescents as a group apart.

Adapting to that group, although allowing for some wise adult involvement, became a major focus of guidance films with the release of *Shy Guy*. The title character's father gives suggestions on how to "fit in" with "the crowd" at Phil's new school. Changing his suit for a sweater and his distant manner for a friendly concern about the interests of others, this once-shy guy finds acceptance. Except for the father's offering of advice to his solitary son and then of refreshments to the boy's new friends, adults are largely absent from the teen-centered world portrayed in the motion picture. Even the resonant-voiced male narrator who opens and closes the film

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<sup>89</sup> *You and Your Family*. Among the situations presented in *You and Your Friends*, the viewers are shown two ways of breaking a date and asked which is preferable: dishonestly, telling a lie in order to go out with someone else, or kindly and truthfully explaining the conflict of family obligations. For more details on the content and messages of these and other guidance films, see the Appendix at the end of this dissertation.

relinquishes the voice-over through much of the movie to Phil's interior monologue.

*Are You Popular?* also deals with a new student in school, though not from her point of view. Her acceptance by the group comes early and easily, "because she looks well, is friendly with everyone, and is considerate of their feelings." Much of the remainder of the film focuses on instructions in dating etiquette. Still, Alice Sowers and Coronet cautioned discussion leaders "to develop group opinion rather than to dictate conclusions."<sup>90</sup> They recognized the power of the teenage culture to set its own standards, and sought only to have some respectful attention paid to the advice they offered.

Both films had an important impact. Reviewers praised them enthusiastically. Teachers used them widely and found a positive response from their students. *Shy Guy*, which became one of the best-selling films in Coronet's history, was employed by at least one university to instruct teachers in the effective use of guidance films.<sup>91</sup> The continued interest in *Are You Popular?* led

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<sup>90</sup> *Shy Guy; Are You Popular?*; "Shy Guy: Teachers' Guide to Class Preparation;" "Are You Popular? Teachers' Guide to Class Preparation;" all issued by Coronet Instructional Films, Chicago, 1947. As stated in a previous footnote, the Teachers' Guides can be found in UA, Record Group 44/01, Box 14, Folder 14.

<sup>91</sup> "Teacher-Committee Evaluation of New Films--*Shy Guy*," *The Educational Screen* 26 (October 1947): 440; "Teacher-Committee Evaluation of New Films--*Are you Popular?*," *The Educational Screen* 27 (May 1948): 230; Grace Brandenberger, "What an Audio-Visual Aid Did for My Class," *Audio-Visual Guide*, April 1950, 18-19; "Schuller Demonstrates Class Use of 'Shy Guy,'" *Audio-Visual Guide*, February 1949, 41; telephone interview with Mel Waskin, retired executive of Coronet Films, 22 October 1994.

Coronet to remake it under the same title eleven years later, with up-to-date clothing and customs.<sup>92</sup> The success of the two 1947 releases led to the making of many more guidance films. Coronet, the most prolific producer of this type of educational film, saw its market expand from the classroom to newer venues in churches and youth groups.<sup>93</sup> Representative of its output were titles such as *How to Be Well Groomed* (1948), *Act Your Age* (1949), *Developing Friendships* (1949), *Appreciating Our Parents* (1950), *Are You Ready for Marriage?* (1950), *How Do You Know It's Love?* (1950), *Feeling Left Out? Social Adjustment* (1951), *Self-Conscious Guy* (1951), *What to Do on a Date* (1951), *More Dates for Kay* (1952), and *School Spirit and Sportsmanship* (1953).

From 1948 through 1953, the peak production years for the company, Coronet released over one hundred guidance films, along with its large output of other educational motion pictures. However, two major setbacks resulted in severe reductions. Founder David Smart died suddenly late

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<sup>92</sup> *Are You Popular?*, second edition (Chicago: Coronet Instructional Films, 1958). A excerpt from one review gives an indication of the changing times and a growing separation between some adults and some teenagers: "We see an attractive couple doing the right things. Of course, the off-beat, vacuum-headed youth present in most groups will think some of this too 'square' for him, and, indeed, it will be for him." (William S. Hockman, "A-V in the Church Field," *Educational Screen and Audiovisual Guide* 38 (July 1959): 358.)

<sup>93</sup> "Coronet Films Celebrating 10th Anniversary in Instruction Field," *Film World*, November 1949, 615. The potential non-school market for these films had been noted by others. See Paul C Reed, "Toward the Future," *The Educational Screen* 26 (April 1947): 194. This same publication featured a monthly column by William S. Hockman throughout the 1950s called "Church Department," later called "A-V in the Church Field," in which guidance films received more consideration than in any other part of the magazine.

in 1952 at the age of 60. Then a crippling 1954 strike closed production for many weeks. After settling the labor dispute, the company operated on a lower budget and with a much less ambitious production schedule.<sup>94</sup> From 1954 through 1960, only ten more guidance films emerged bearing the Coronet crown. Styles of presentation had changed as well. The relentlessly wholesome, narrator-dominated didactic exercise seemed hopelessly out of date. Some years later, in the 1970s, editors used a self-mocking approach in assembling clips from a great many of the films that characterized the earlier era. They called their affectionately humorous compilation *The Great American Student*.<sup>95</sup>

Though it dominated the field, Coronet was not alone in making guidance films. In addition to the previously-mentioned Simmel-Meservey, the YMCA's Association Films, and Young America Films, major producer-distributors included McGraw-Hill Text Films, Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, and Sid Davis Productions. Some of the most interesting examples of the genre came from Lawrence, Kansas, made by Centron Productions for a series called "Discussion Problems in Group Living." These nineteen

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<sup>94</sup> "David A. Smart Dies," *Film World and A-V World*, November 1952, 617; telephone interview with Ken Smith, 23 October 1994.

<sup>95</sup> *The Great American Student* (Chicago: Coronet Instructional Media, 1978). The company eventually was purchased by a conglomerate and changed hands a few times. Its headquarters moved from Chicago, and at its offices in New Jersey it continues to make and distribute educational videos. The current owner, Viacom, also has several cable television networks, and many of the earnestly enacted moral lessons of the guidance films have ended up in recent years as brief scenes intended for comic relief on MTV, VH1, and Nickelodeon.

films between 1951 and 1959 included the titles *The Procrastinator* (1952), *The Good Loser* (1953), *What About Juvenile Delinquency?* (1955), *What About School Spirit?* (1958), and *The Troublemaker* (1959).<sup>96</sup> Each used actors to present a problem, and ended with a large question mark filling the screen as the narrator asked, "What do you think?" The issues had no tidy final resolution, and the actors were largely untrained and often awkward. Yet this departure from usual audience expectations, along with some very skillful editing and cinematography, contributed to the films' effectiveness.<sup>97</sup>

Sometimes technical and dramatic qualities departed so far from the Hollywood standard or from teenagers' own experience that audiences would laugh at a film. One study guide cautioned adult discussion leaders to be alert to this possibility and to hold viewers' attention to the film's intended points by acknowledging the validity of

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<sup>96</sup> *The Procrastinator* (Lawrence, Kansas, and New York: Centron Productions for Young America Films, 1952), *The Good Loser* (Centron/Young America, 1953), *What About Juvenile Delinquency?* (Centron/Young America, 1955), *What About School Spirit?* (Lawrence, Kansas, and New York: Centron Productions for Young America Films and McGraw-Hill Text Films, 1958), and *The Troublemaker* (Centron/Young America/McGraw-Hill, 1959). All of the films in the "Discussion Problems in Group Living" series were made by Centron, initially for Young America Films. After McGraw-Hill absorbed Young America in 1958, the next five films in the series carried all three company names.

<sup>97</sup> In the context of a different film, the actors' awkwardness was seen by one audience as contributing to its feeling of authenticity. Seeming genuinely unsure of themselves caused them to be perceived as more like the adolescent viewers. See "Evaluation of New Films--Beginning to Date," *The Educational Screen* 33 (April 1954): 152.

their response: "Laughter does not mean the film is ineffective."<sup>98</sup>

The script of *Name Unknown* anticipated mocking laughter from the audience, providing the narrator with some defiant lines to squelch this inappropriate reaction. Describing the action on the screen as teenage Ethel is driven to a deserted spot by Tom, a young man she met on the street, the narrator challenges the viewers, "I suppose about now the horse laughs are starting in the audience. Ethel isn't laughing. She can almost hear all the warnings she never listened to about being picked up by strangers." When the camera shows Tom parking the car and pulling her to him as she resists, the narrator's voice grows increasingly sarcastic and bitter, as if blaming the audience's expected laughter for Ethel's fate: "Here's something really funny." Ethel struggles and reaches for the door handle but cannot escape. A newspaper headline appears: "Schoolgirl Found Unconscious in Hills." The narrator seems almost to spit out "Go ahead, have a good laugh."<sup>99</sup>

Even when the situation, the acting or technical aspects had no potential to distract, the age of a film could create problems within a few short years of its release. As an expert on the use of audio-visual materials in education noted,

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<sup>98</sup> "Who's Boss--Film Discussion Guide," *The Coordinator*, published by the Oregon Coordinating Council on Social Hygiene and Family Life, vol. IV, No. 1 (September 1955): np.

<sup>99</sup> *Name Unknown* (Los Angeles: Sid Davis Productions, 1951).



Young people are quick to point to anachronisms of dress or language in a film that touches upon some of their most intimate problems. Since fashions change rapidly, films are very likely to appear dated in certain ways; and teachers must be careful to check in advance on any aspect that may be seized upon as a convenient escape from the real issue . . . and focus the attention of the group on the important ideas to be learned.<sup>100</sup>

Adult interpretations of the teenage culture would not be accepted by that culture's members without scrutiny. They questioned and sometimes even mocked the films which purported to portray their lives and give them guidance. These ostensibly educational films reached a large audience of teenagers, and even found some acceptance among them. As one more expression of the conflicting adult voices competing for the attention of youth, the 16mm guidance film unintentionally encouraged the self-invention of the so-called typical teenager.

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<sup>100</sup> Edgar Dale, *Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching*, Revised Edition (New York: The Dryden Press, 1954), 406.

## Chapter Two

### Typical Teenagers

Objecting to articles in mass circulation magazines in 1955, a student newspaper editor wrote, "I am sick and tired of reading how much the teenagers are drinking, smoking, using narcotics, committing petty larceny, grand theft, housebreaking, peddling drugs, recklessness. . . ."<sup>1</sup> Adult concern with serious teenage misbehavior, dubbed "juvenile delinquency," first emerged during the social upheavals of 1940s wartime America and peaked in the mid-1950s.<sup>2</sup> Not surprisingly, many teenagers disliked the stereotypical image that seemed to represent their generation to the larger culture:

a greasy, shaggy-haired tough, mouth creased in a perpetual sneer, wearing low-slung, pegged pants, shirt open to the belt line, and a leather jacket inscribed "Stompers," "Sharks" or

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<sup>1</sup> Andy Cosby, "Teen-Age Crime--A Problem?" *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 28 March 1955, 1. He began with the source of his irritation: "I don't know how many of you read Bill Mauldin's article in *Collier's Magazine* some time ago, or the series in *The Saturday Evening Post* or *This Week* or *The Dallas Morning News*, or *Newsweek*." See the five-part series by Richard Clendenen and Herbert W. Bauer, "The Shame of America," *Saturday Evening Post*, 8, 15, 22, 29 January, 5 February 1955, pages vary by issue; "'Get Tough with Us,'" *Newsweek*, 28 February 1955, 32, 34; Bill Mauldin, "Bill Mauldin Asks Today's Teen-Agers: What Gives?" *Collier's*, 21 January 1955, 46-53.

<sup>2</sup> James Gilbert, *A Cycle of Outrage: America's Reaction to the Juvenile Delinquent in the 1950s* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 14. Surveying citations of magazine articles listed in the category "juvenile delinquency" in the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, researcher John Modell found a ratio of 40 per 1000 pages in the 1943-45 volume, a drop to 12 in 1949-51 and 14 in 1951-53, and a sharp increase to 47 in 1953-55, 46 in 1955-57, with a peak of 51 in 1957-59, 45 in 1959-61, then "a sharp reduction back to its late-1930s level." See John Modell, *Into One's Own: From Youth to Adulthood in the United States, 1920-1975* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 393n.

the like. A cigarette dangling loosely from his lips as he idly toys with a gleaming switch-blade. . . .<sup>3</sup>

Not all teenagers looked like that, and even those who did were not all criminals. Not "juvies" or "hoods," they were "in reality, clean-living upstanding, all-American slobs, who wouldn't dream of hijacking a gas station, carving up someone's old grandmother, or 'killing' a pint of whiskey laced with 'goofballs'!"<sup>4</sup> Though a powerful and pervasive image in its time, this was not the only vision held of teenagers. Popular culture defined the adolescent variously as the bobby-soxer, the juvenile delinquent, the hot rodder, the screaming Elvis fan, the young ivy-leaguer, the would-be beatnik, the rebel without a cause, and the faddish conformist. Throughout the decades of the 1940s and 1950s, interesting and important interplay took place between these images and the response of teenagers to the ways in which the mass media portrayed them. Whether the coverage was amused, sympathetic, or fearful, teenagers saw themselves described as a culture apart.

Social disruption resulting from the experience of World War II weakened traditional structures of authority and fragmented communities. As described in the preceding chapter, the voices of adults seeking the attention and respect of teenagers became increasingly divided. Hungry for stability and community, young

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<sup>3</sup> "Soapocracy Or Slob Rule?" *The Colt*, 24 September 1957, 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

people found it with each other, developing their own traditions and folkways to replace those lost in the shattered postwar adult world. Media coverage of the young seemed to alternate between amused affection, implicitly yearning for adults' lost sense of community, and alarm at the teenager as the "other," an uncontrollable monster loose in their midst.<sup>5</sup>

Autonomy brought insecurity, both for the youths who were breaking the bonds of adult authority and for the mainstream society. Teenagers sought reassurance in group solidarity, expressed in distinctive styles of speech, clothing, and popular entertainment. In an age in which much discussion centered on the topic of conformity, what seemed to be teenage "herd mentality" had particular significance. Through the way they talked and looked, the food they ate, the radio and television programs to which they tuned, and the music that excited them, teenagers of the 1940s and 1950s marked their territory and claimed a separate identity.

Included in the definition of a typical teenager and the discussion of the relative virtues of being typical, the debate over teenage conformity must be considered in a larger social context. Throughout the 1950s, adult

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<sup>5</sup> Both James Gilbert and sociologist Wini Breines quote Edgar Z. Friedenberg's observation, "The 'teen-ager' seems to have replaced the Communist as the appropriate target for public controversy and foreboding." See Edgar Z. Friedenberg, *The Vanishing Adolescent* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959), 115; Gilbert, *Cycle of Outrage*, 200; Wini Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable: Growing Up Female in the Fifties* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 8.

society wrestled with the question of conformity. The work of sociologist David Riesman exemplified much of the discussion. His book *The Lonely Crowd* became a best-seller, delineating differences between the traditional "inner-directed" personality, guided by moral precepts, and the newer "other-directed" personality, whose beliefs and behavior were shaped by the current social environment. Each type had its merits and faults, and Riesman urged development of a strong third alternative, designated "autonomous." Not to be confused with either the rigidity of the rule-bound inner-directed person or the autonomy of the subculture which might fragment society into competing groups, Riesman's autonomous individual acted as part of a community that both valued cohesion and respected differences. Riesman's role as a social commentator received a significant imprimatur when he became the subject of a *Time* magazine cover story. Although not specifically dealing with teenagers, his theories informed much of the debate about social conformity during the decade.<sup>6</sup>

Teenagers imitated one another. They drew on information gleaned from media coverage, even as they rejected some of it as absurd and excessive. They also

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<sup>6</sup> David Riesman, with Nathan Glazer and Reuel Denney, *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950). An excellent discussion of the 1950s debate over conformity, highlighting Riesman's role, can be found in chapter seven of Wilfred M. McClay, *The Masterless: Self and Society in Modern America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994).

drew on what they observed and experienced as they gathered together. Teenage group behavior resembled adult conformity in some ways, yet it was not some hypertrophied mutation. Innovating as they imitated, teenagers developed a strong sense of their own group identity that resisted manipulation by adults competing to control them.

Specific folkways and customs defined teenage culture. The persistent point of view that emerges from available sources is white, middle-class, and feminine, though the masculine voice is far from silent or submissive. While appropriating some elements from African-American and working-class youth, teenage culture seemed firmly based in what social historians have begun to label "whiteness."<sup>7</sup> This defining aspect helped lessen the apparent threat to the dominant adult culture and thus made it easier to tolerate. More overtly oppositional elements found increasing expression after the mid-1950s and will be examined in the final chapter of this study.

Much of what defined teenage culture grew from assumptions of economic prosperity and at least middle-class status. Teenagers needed enough money to buy the magazines, the clothes, the food, the records, and the cars to go to the drive-ins. Those less able to afford the price of admission could find themselves

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<sup>7</sup> For a discussion of this issue, see Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable*, 10-18.

marginalized. Though to the casual observer cultural elements rooted in middle-class whiteness might seem trivial, these defining characteristics united millions of American teenagers in a sense of a shared experience and age-based community, a feeling of community otherwise missing from their changing lives.

As with all distinct cultures, youth seemed to have its own language. Typifying explanations for the origins of a separate teenspeak, one writer noted that "slang originates with the experimental young or with such other closed groups as thieves, convicts, soldiers, [and] musicians." It served the function of signifying "an esoteric bond between the users of the particular slang, sometimes in the hope that outsiders will feel like outsiders."<sup>8</sup> Marking what small region of separate territory they could safely claim, reacting self-consciously when adults took much notice of their growing autonomy, teenagers used language to probe the perimeter and keep the dominant culture at bay. By later standards it may have seemed quite tepid, but it helped establish an identity that grew increasingly distinctive.

Periodicals occasionally printed dictionaries translating the odd words and phrases for the benefit of adult readers. The code became less cryptic as the expressions achieved wide circulation and even adaptation into the larger culture. Teenagers had drawn much of

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<sup>8</sup> Theodore M. Bernstein, "Now It's Called 'Watch Your Slangage,'" *New York Times Magazine*, 28 February 1960, 31.

their argot from the slang of jazz and swing musicians. In the 1940s the slang carried the name of "jive talk" and sometimes "Swinglish."<sup>9</sup> The influence of these musicians reflected the growing importance of a separate musical identity for youth, even before the advent of rock and roll. Not only did the translations printed in mass circulation magazines hasten the decoding process, they also helped spread and standardize the speech among teenagers themselves. In 1943 the in-school magazine *Scholastic* printed a booklet called "Hi There, High School," listing and defining over fifty expressions such as "drip" (unpleasant person), "gruesome twosome" (steady couple) and "hep" ("in the know").<sup>10</sup>

Some observers of teenage culture considered such speech sufficiently important and controversial to be grouped with smoking and drinking as a measure of social acceptability. Asking girls what qualities they wanted in boyfriends, pollsters inquired about appearance, intelligence, drinking, smoking, and use of slang. "Slightly more than half" of the respondents preferred "conventional language"--about the same percentage that wanted non-smokers. One of four liked occasional use of

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<sup>9</sup> Richard Williams, "Basic Swing-lish, or How to Know What the Younger Generation is Talking About," *House Beautiful*, February 1944, 27, 94-95. Although articles translating the slang usually focused on teenagers, occasional pieces looked specifically at the speech of the jazz performers. See Elliot Horne, "For Cool Cats and Far-Out Chicks," *New York Times Magazine*, 18 August 1957, 26.

<sup>10</sup> Catherine Mackenize, "Parent and Child: Teen-Age Slang," *New York Times Magazine*, 5 December 1943, 32.



slang, and one of five "went down the line for jive talk."<sup>11</sup>

This divided attitude about slang showed clearly in the student press and in commercial youth-oriented media. Class divisions appeared in fashions in speech as well as in personal appearance. Though some writers used words like "cool" as a normal part of their vocabulary, others employed jive talk with heavy sarcasm. Attacking disorderly schoolmates by associating them with the hipster style, an angry editorialist wrote disdainfully, "Dig This, Cats!"

Do you like to dance? . . . How did you like doing the bop . . . in the midst of shattered streamers and broken balloons? Real cool, huh?!!?

. . . Seriously, hep cats, the clubs that put these dances or mixers on really go to a lot of trouble making and putting up the decorations, and it's a little disheartening if they're torn down about midway through the dance. Why not dig the idea for leaving these crazy things hang, at least until the jig is about at an end.<sup>12</sup>

At another school, a recurring cartoon featured a character with long greasy hair, turned-up jacket collar and low-riding pants, and a vocabulary laden with expressions like "Wow, what a DRAG! School! Man this is NOWHERE!"<sup>13</sup> Such treatment cast jive talkers as "the other," alternately amusing and frightening.

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<sup>11</sup> Eugene Gilbert, "What Young People Think. Here's Word, Men: Girls Don't Go for Jive Talk," *Norman (Oklahoma) Transcript*, 15 October 1959, 15.

<sup>12</sup> "Dig This, Cats!" *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 26 October 1955, 2.

<sup>13</sup> "Robin the Hood," *The Tech* (Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota), 8 September 1959, 2.

The late 1950s ABC network television series 77  
*Sunset Strip* introduced a character whose use of hipster slang and frequent combing of his long hair captured the attention and affection of the teenage culture. Played by Edd Byrnes, "Kookie" worked as a car parker and also made comic comments on the activities of the private detectives who served as principal protagonists. At first a relatively minor character, Kookie soon captured the attention of many young viewers and became the best-known of the program's performers. Byrnes managed to parlay this popularity into a hit record without even attempting to sing. "Kookie, Kookie, Lend Me Your Comb" featured his rhythmic chanting of hipster slang as female singers repeated the words of the title. The success of the record revealed a striking dichotomy, showing both the appeal of the distinctive language of teenage culture and the corresponding distance many young people felt from it. Byrnes's performance fit in a novelty niche, entertaining because of its humor and the way it could be perceived as simultaneously strange and familiar. His teenage fans recognized and appreciated him without necessarily identifying with him.<sup>14</sup>

Some adults sought to discourage jive talk by persuading teenagers that the slang was "*passé* . . . among

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<sup>14</sup> "Kookie, Kookie, Lend Me Your Comb" (Warner 5047, Irving Taylor). The record appeared on the *Billboard* popular music charts for eleven weeks, reaching its high spot of number four on April 27, 1959. See Joel Whitburn, *Billboard Book of Top 40 Hits* (New York: Billboard Publications, 1985), 57.

your crowd."<sup>15</sup> Yet it remained one of the immediately recognizable features of teenage culture. Teenagers complained about newspaper writers who sensationalized coverage of stereotypical youths with headlines like "Jive Replaces English." One expressed her objection in rhyme: "The editor may rant about this wild, delinquent age;/When all my friends don't jive or swoon, how can it be the rage?"<sup>16</sup> Refusing to be stereotyped, teenagers frequently rejected this image of themselves. Yet they protected their language from outsiders. Frequent changes in expressions helped to deter adults from cracking the code and provided a recurring opportunity for the dictionary-type articles printed in the mass media.<sup>17</sup> Teenagers found it particularly disturbing when parents sought to invade their territory, which language so clearly demarcated. They scorned "Mother's unsteady excursions into jive talk" as much as "Pop's ludicrous attempt to jitterbug when the gang's . . . playing records. . . ."<sup>18</sup> One student

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<sup>15</sup> Tess Williams, "That Overworked Inferiority Complex," *Seventeen*, January 1949, 24.

<sup>16</sup> Elizabeth Oppenheimer, "Grownups Who Get in Our Hair," *Seventeen*, June 1947, 100-101. Nancy Fitzgerald illustrated her verses with a cartoon showing imagined headlines proclaiming "Bobby Soxers Wild," "Delinquency Uncontrollable," "Jive Replaces English," and "Swooner Crooner." Both Oppenheimer and Fitzgerald were 18, contributing to the annual "It's All Yours" issue of the magazine.

<sup>17</sup> See "Jelly Tot, Square Bear Man!" *Newsweek*, 8 October 1951, 28; "High School Fads," *Life*, 17 November 1947, 119.

<sup>18</sup> Barbara Moench, "Why Don't Parents Grow Up? (...and Act Their Age?)," *Seventeen*, February 1950, 26. This article was number 61 in a series. The problem examined in each had to do with some aspect of parental interference with teenagers' lives. The recurring theme of the advice stressed the importance of teenagers treating their parents with obedient consideration, promising that the result would be reciprocal respect. Though this seems quite traditional, both the title of the series and the presumption that adolescents could

reporter wrote "Teen-agers have been accused of inventing a language foreign to all adults. This is not true." The writer then proceeded to define several expressions after claiming with seeming irony "These examples are universally understood!!!"

Static in the attic. Unable to concentrate.  
Let's have peace in your valley. Shut up.  
Who pushed your button? Who asked for your opinion?  
You're cruisin' for a bruise. When someone tells  
you this, you'd better run.  
Let's shag out. Let's go.<sup>19</sup>

Teenage speech had noteworthy characteristics in addition to vocabulary. Communicating with each other by telephone, teenagers used technology in a way that created another image of adolescent culture. In January 1945, a long set of rhymed adolescent attributes in a high school newspaper included this couplet: "Phone conversations all night and all day,/Dripping with 'solid,' 'say kid,' and 'okay.'"<sup>20</sup> Telephone company advertisements urged teenage readers not to play the latest Tommy Dorsey record or do homework over the telephone, warning of such possible dire consequences as missing another caller asking for a date.<sup>21</sup>

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help reform their parents' behavior show a break with the past. The therapeutic establishment had begun a shift in alliance.

<sup>19</sup> "Bang Slanguage," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 12 April 1957, 3.

<sup>20</sup> "You Know What!" *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 12 January 1945, 2. The slang word 'solid,' derived from the argot of jazz musicians, had become so recognizably associated with teenagers that the advice column aimed at them in the *Chicago Tribune* from 1943 to 1954 carried the title "On the Solid Side."

<sup>21</sup> Advertisement for Northwestern Bell Telephone, *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 10 November 1944, 3; *ibid.*, 16 January 1948, 4. The text in the latter included this imagined quote: "Don was trying to call me all the time we were doing our algebra over the telephone last night . . . but he said the line was busy so long he finally asked Cissy to the game instead

Appeals to consider needs of the rest the family, although occasionally used, presumably had less effect on members of the increasingly autonomous teenage culture. To get their attention, adults employed humor and references to musicians popular with teenagers, reinforcing young people's sense of their group distinctiveness.

Adult reaction to teenage telephoning alternated between amusement and annoyance. Implicitly recognizing another threat to their control and to family unity, many parents sought to restrict their offspring's use of a device which enabled young people to absent themselves mentally and emotionally from their homes even while present physically. The hours spent on the telephone kept them immersed in the world of their peers. These hours also caused inconvenience to their parents and to adult neighbors who shared the party lines so common in the 1940s and 1950s. Psychologists might interpret this result as passive-aggressive, deliberately inflicting discomfort on an adult world that most young people still lacked the power to challenge more directly.

Viewed in this light, the supposedly humorous treatment of the subject in magazines can be seen as a barbed expression of deep vexation over a covert power struggle. In *Seventeen's* first anniversary issue, a

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of me, darn it!" See also Sheila John Daly, "Telephone Technique," *Seventeen*, June 1945, 26. Daly, still in her teens when she began writing professionally, gave similar advice in her "On the Solid Side" column for the *Chicago Tribune* as well as in the pages of *Seventeen*.

cartoon featured parents casting a rueful eye at their daughter deep in discussion on the family phone and commenting, "Remember when she was a baby how we waited for her to say her first word?" A similar sentiment underlay a caption a few years later, in which a woman told a furniture sales clerk, "I'm looking for a very uncomfortable chair to go next to the telephone stand . . . for my daughter, you know."<sup>22</sup> Entertainment of teenage readers may have been secondary to the editors' didactic purpose and the venting of parental frustration.

Guidance films and books addressed the telephone issue even more directly. When most telephone subscribers shared party lines with other users, the devil-may-care attitude of talkative teens could annoy many outside their own families. Puppets represented teenagers in a 1946 film produced by American Telephone and Telegraph. A literal devil encourages long-winded chatter and playing the juke-box into the phone, telling the teenage boy marionette, "Kid, you're in the groove," as the teenage girl marionette listens at home, lying on the floor. The narrator speaks on behalf of her glowering father, asserting "Now if this chick was hep she wouldn't monopolize things."<sup>23</sup> Advice directed at parents assured them that this behavior served important adolescent developmental needs. The narrator described the protagonist of *Age of Turmoil* in tones that alternated

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<sup>22</sup> Cartoons, *Seventeen*, September 1945, 104; August 1950, 240.

<sup>23</sup> *Party Lines* (New York: American Telephone and Telegraph, 1946).

between sympathetic and patronizing: "Half an hour after she's left her friends, she's on the phone to them again.

. . . [She] needs talking . . . [as a] constant reassurance of her standing as friend and equal."<sup>24</sup>

Guidance films aimed at teenagers themselves showed a less indulgent attitude. Their protagonists received praise for their remarkably short telephone calls. By implication, such brevity deserved praise because it seemed so unusual. A sternly insistent narrator intoned "Well, that phone call didn't go on for hours. A pretty sensible attitude toward telephone conversations."<sup>25</sup> One advice giver conceded, "We know telephonitis is chronic with Teen-Agers," while another wrote of "that time-worn complaint that teen agers spend too much time on the 'phone," which her adolescent interviewees acknowledged as mostly accurate.<sup>26</sup> Adults usually urged teens to share telephone use more equitably with other family members, though guidance professionals also showed concern that parents should not cut this electronic lifeline so important to the cohesion of the adolescent culture.

Advertisers sometimes even tried to encourage increased telephone use by promoting its usefulness to

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<sup>24</sup> *Age of Turmoil* (Ottawa and New York: Crawley Films for McGraw-Hill, 1953).

<sup>25</sup> *Are You Popular?* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1947). A similar moment occurs in *A Date with Your Family* (New York: Simmel-Meservey, 1950), as the narrator lists the son's exemplary qualities, e.g., "He doesn't spend a lot of time on the phone either."

<sup>26</sup> Edith Heal, *The Teen-Age Manual, A Guide to Popularity and Success* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1948), 133; Marion Glendining, *Teen Talk* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf--Borzoi Books for Young People, 1951), 23.

teenage social life. A large display ad in a 1956 issue of *Senior Scholastic* featured a photograph of a high-school-age girl on the telephone, holding many large balloons, streamers, and crepe paper. She wore jeans, tennis shoes, ankle sox, and a checked shirt. Behind her on a stepladder stood a similarly-dressed boy with a crew cut, nailing up some of the crepe paper, "decorating the gym for the dance tonight." The text directed its readers, "When you've got a big extracurricular job to be done, count on the telephone to get help in a hurry." Offering further social assurance, it continued with this promise: "You'll increase your popularity, too, if you use it to make courteous, thoughtful gestures such as thanking someone for a gift, cheering a friend who is sick, or congratulating a class mate on an honor." Clinching its point, it concluded, "It's smart to use the telephone--and fun, too!" Despite its prominence in a publication distributed in high school classrooms, this ad seems quite anomalous, not substantive evidence that teenagers' use of the telephone had been stimulated by a corporate marketing campaign.<sup>27</sup>

Although direct commercial suasion had little likely impact, recurring mass media images probably influenced as well as reflected teenagers' telephone habits. Motion pictures as distant from each other in time as *Janie* and *Bye Bye Birdie* put the telephone at the center of their

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<sup>27</sup> Advertisement for Bell Telephone, *Senior Scholastic*, 4 October 1956, 2.



adolescent characters' lives.<sup>28</sup> *Life* magazine articles frequently featured phone use. With the lead caption, "Phoning is a Major Pastime," editors devoted an entire page of pictures to what the magazine called a "ritual" in its first major feature on "Teen-Age Girls" in 1944.<sup>29</sup> Phoning even became the focal point of an article entitled "Tireless, Talky Teen-Agers and Toiling Telephones," which included a two-page transcript of one rambling conversation. The three teenage daughters of one Minneapolis family reportedly had a recent weekly count of one hundred eighty-two phone conversations, fewer than usual because of their extra studying during the school examination period.<sup>30</sup> Though the parents approved of the magazine's extensive coverage of their daughters'

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<sup>28</sup> *Janie* (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1944); *Bye Bye Birdie* (Columbia, 1963). One author finds a direct line of inspiration between *Janie*'s telephone use and the elaborate musical production number, "The Telephone Song," in *Bye Bye Birdie*. See David M. Considine, *The Cinema of Adolescence* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company, Inc., 1985), 36-37. Considine's description of the earlier film's title character sums up the perceived teenage cultural norm: "a girl who frequents the drugstore where she buys her malts, magazines, and breaks a heart on the average of twice a week." Her father complains "about 'the horrible music' that Janie and her 'platterbug friends' seem to play relentlessly. . . . he looks upon his daughter as an alien; she speaks differently, acts differently, and seems to live in world with customs and codes totally unknown to him. This, Hollywood claimed, was the typical American home." (*Ibid.*)

<sup>29</sup> "Teen-Age Girls: They Live in a Wonderful World of Their Own," *Life*, 11 December 1944, 98.

<sup>30</sup> "Tireless, Talky Teen-Agers and Toiling Telephones," *Life*, 2 April 1956, 102-109. The interplay between *Life*, motion pictures, and teenage culture can be seen in *Janie*, mentioned in the previous footnote. In that 1944 film, *Life* covers a teenage "blanket party" which Janie attends, documenting adolescent independence and romance, thus outraging parents and perhaps providing a model of behavior for other teenagers to follow. See "Movie of the Week: Janie," *Life*, 21 August 1944, 61.

telephone use, the mother exasperatedly called the conversations "just drivel, drivel, drivel."<sup>31</sup>

Physical contortions completed the picture of the typical teenager on the telephone. Ignoring several generations of prescribed "lady-like" posture and bearing, teenage girls in particular adopted startling new ways of holding their bodies while conversing. Defying their parents and the guidance films which stressed the great importance of "sitting right," these young people found yet another means of asserting their independence and challenging norms that others sought to impose on them.<sup>32</sup> In its coverage of the Nyvall family, described above, *Life* devoted two pages to eight photos of "acrobatic Ginny Nyvall" with feet in the air, sprawled over the arm of a chair, in a variety of peculiar positions with the phone always to her ear. Four years earlier, a photo survey of American teenagers in France had featured "the acrobatics familiar to all U.S. homes." The camera showed a leaning teenage girl propped up by her outstretched arm on the back of the chair, then sitting on that back of the chair with her jeans tight over her hips, lighted revealingly to

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

<sup>32</sup> The 1946 guidance film *Sitting Right* recognized the nature of the battle, showing several teenage girls in exaggerated slumps, slouches, and sprawls, and one on the telephone with her feet on the wall, as off-screen adult voices hector and scold them. Since parental urgings clearly have no power, the narrator offers the inducement of male approval and more dates, and urges the viewers to emulate popular culture celebrities: "Like the movie stars, you'll be sitting with distinction." See *Sitting Right* (New York: Association Films, 1946).

accentuate their contours.<sup>33</sup> She also appeared sprawled over the chair and lying on the floor with her feet in the air against the wall. Though more provocatively posed, this feature echoed the first *Life* images of a similar scene in 1944, nine photographs with the explanatory caption, "Most calls are so long that girls squirm into wonderful variety of stances, postures and attitudes while never once losing the thread of conversation."<sup>34</sup>

Similar images appeared frequently. Advertising for the teen-oriented motion picture *Gidget* featured a photograph of actress Sandra Dee lying on the floor, holding a telephone, with her legs and bare feet propped up on the wall. A guidance book cartoon showed a teenage girl bent over the arm of a chair, with phone and elbow on the floor, her jeaned legs on the chair cushion, as her parents, little brother, and dog watch impatiently. A high school newspaper feature reported about one student: "Susie clad in slimjims lying on the floor with her feet propped on the wall talking on the telephone all day is a picture of contentment. Talking on the phone is her hobby."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> "Wow! Quel Babes!" *Life*, 7 January 1952, 73. This display of tight clothes on adolescent bodies typified much of the era's press coverage, treating its young female subjects as objects of desire. One year earlier, the same periodical illustrated its observation that "girls are devoted to a cult of the body" with several photographs of teenagers in form-fitting swimsuits. ("West Coast Youth," *Life*, 1 January 1951, 46.) For additional examples of the phenomenon, see chapter 4 of this dissertation, pp. 182-183.

<sup>34</sup> "Teen-Age Girls," *Life*, 11 December 1944, 98.

<sup>35</sup> Advertisement for the motion picture *Gidget*, *Seventeen*, March 1959, 34; Glendining, *Teen Talk*, 24; "Hall of Fame," *Marionette*

Some observers saw teenage telephoning as a gender-specific activity. An unhappy male complained in verse:

Fashion not seen on backs  
Is the style of female yaks;  
Day and night on the phone,  
Silence is not ever known.

With involved dissertation--  
Such important information--  
They discuss the latest news,  
Parties, dresses, printed shoes.

Praise be to this invention;  
Just one point we'd like to mention,  
Ever since the time of Bell,  
Incessant talk we cannot quell.

And so the moral of our poem  
Tells of crisis in the home.  
Man no longer rules his spouse--  
The telephone heads the house.<sup>36</sup>

Evidence of the growing autonomy of the teenage culture, this also showed the increasing independence of women. The telephone provided a lifeline away from dominance by parents and husbands, eroding patriarchal tradition and provoking retaliatory misogynous musings.

Others noted that despite its feminine image, telephoning had its masculine component as well. For one thing, boys had the responsibility of calling to ask girls for dates. Though its survey of student phone usage focused mostly on girls, a high school newspaper gave examples showing that "the boys hold their own with the

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(Harding Junior-Senior High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 8 February 1957, 3.

<sup>36</sup> "Yakkity Yaks," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 23 May 1958, 2.

telephone too."<sup>37</sup> Overall, the teenagers surveyed talked on the telephone for an average of ninety minutes a night. The girls did outnumber the boys in both column-inches and telephone hours, including some who raised the average: "While some students don't take full advantage of this small black device and spend their hour and a half each day, others like Jeanette Swan make up for them by keeping the line busy for about two and a half or three hours each night."<sup>38</sup>

In contrast to their rejection of other images for which adults ridiculed or despised teenagers, most young people showed little resistance to being identified as a subculture of telephoners. Selected as *Seventeen's* "Miss Young America" one month, a sixteen-year-old from Lubbock, Texas, enthused "I love everything about being a teenager--clothes, dates, slumber parties, high school, talking for hours on the telephone--the whole wonderful whirl." The same publication offered its readers decorative wallpaper prints asserting their group identity, featuring representations of "sundaes and sodas and flowers and phones . . . and all the things teen-age girls are made of."<sup>39</sup> A reader of the *Life* feature on telephoning teenagers wrote appreciatively and thanked the magazine for showing her father "that I'm not the only

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<sup>37</sup> "Students Tie Telephone Lines Up With Latest Gossip," *Marionette* (Harding Junior-Senior High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 18 May 1956, 3.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> "Meet Miss Young America in Girl Scouts," *Seventeen*, July 1956, 84; "Seventeen Heaven," *Seventeen*, September 1956, 118.

teen-ager who lives with one hand on the phone." However, others objected to the same piece for contributing to widespread misperceptions: "Nearly everyone has a warped idea of what today's teen-ager is really like, and we can only hope that your article has not made matters worse." Calling it "a most unjust and nauseating misrepresentation," another reader protested that "a teen-ager is a human being growing up--not a monkey."<sup>40</sup>

The magazine editors seemed to cast their periodic treatments of teenagers in the form of guides to exotic life forms with amusingly humanoid traits. Readers in the same age cohort as the articles' subjects also read the articles. Alternately annoyed and inspired to imitation by what they saw in the articles documenting teenage culture, many young people found the images irresistible. Enticed by the possibility of personally appearing in print, they jammed the sets for major *Life* opportunities. A student newspaper reported that "A crowd of about 150 Central students packed the boys' gym November 26, hoping against hope their picture would be in a future issue of *Life* magazine." With some puzzled amusement, the reporter noted that the periodical had become "suddenly interested in sock hops and other teenage activities [and] sent [Alfred] Eisenstaedt on his picture-taking journey over

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<sup>40</sup> Letters to the editor from Linda Lee Stroh, Sciotoville, Ohio; Nancy Tuttle and Nancy Reading, Pocatello, Idaho; Sue Campbell, Burlingame, Kansas; *Life*, 23 April 1956, 24. Of three other letters from teenagers responding to the telephone article, two objected to it and one found it accurate.

the United States."<sup>41</sup> The photo-essay which appeared a few weeks later covered teenagers in several parts of the country. Despite the excited anticipation, most of the subsequent printed letters from young readers found fault with its portrayal. One who enjoyed it noted "You are certainly paying plenty of attention to us."<sup>42</sup> The others complained about certain details of behavior that did not match the teenage culture of their own communities. A more telling and fundamental criticism came from a reader in New Rochelle, N.Y.: "I have never read anything so outlandish in all my life! We are treated as socially absurd individuals and we don't like it."<sup>43</sup>

A similar response had greeted earlier *Life* articles on teenage life. The classroom magazine *Senior Scholastic* reported a "storm of protest," hundreds of letters from high school students objecting to the portrait of teenagers as fad-mad and frivolous. As one wrote, "The average teen-ager discusses world affairs as well as the latest crooner, politics as well as the handsome fullback, and future plans as well as the newest dance steps."<sup>44</sup> Others sought to give some historical perspective: "Other

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<sup>41</sup> "Flash Bulbs Flash, Sockers Hop, For Life Photographer," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 3 December 1948, 1. The resulting photograph, adjoining two others from Oklahoma City, appeared as a long shot showing dozens of sock-wearing dancers and a line-up of 28 pairs of removed shoes, nine of them the distinctively teenage two-tone saddle shoes. See "Teen-agers," *Life*, 20 December 1948, 70-71.

<sup>42</sup> Letter from Norma Wodak, New York, New York, *Life*, 10 January 1949, 2.

<sup>43</sup> Letter from Sally Singer, New Rochelle, New York, *ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Letter from Marion Kozelsky, Portage (Pennsylvania) High School, *Senior Scholastic*, 22 October 1945, 42.

generations had fads which seem equally foolish to us--and probably did to their parents, too."<sup>45</sup> Specifically, noted one, "My mother . . . danced the Buggy Bear . . . sighed at the sight of Rudolph Valentino; she fell for a kid who wore a beaver coat and said '23 skidoo!' and 'Oh, you kid!'"<sup>46</sup> Similar sentiments appeared several years later, when a student wrote, "The next time someone sneers at you, ask him about the fads that made him delirious. Your parents probably swooned over that dashing young man who sang through his nose, Rudy Vallee." Concatenating some distinct chapters in popular music history, the writer continued, "Pat Boone may not suit their tastes, but what 'Ooooh's' and 'Ah's' were heard over those young dashing singers Nelson Eddy, Crosby and Sinatra." Teenagers saw scorn and mockery in adults' amusement about the youth culture, and they sought to reciprocate. Adults who made fun of current teenage dance fads were reminded of the peculiarities of the Black Bottom and the Charleston.<sup>47</sup>

Such evocations of the 1920s era of flaming youth connected it with the mid-century reemergence of a publicized, self-consciously distinct youth culture. While observers of youth in that earlier decade focused on college and university campuses, the newer phenomenon centered in the high school and its recently created

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<sup>45</sup> Letter from Helen Brooner, Winfield (Kansas) High School, *ibid.*, 48.

<sup>46</sup> Letter from Marion Doro, Ocala (Florida) High School, *Senior Scholastic*, 29 October 1945, 30.

<sup>47</sup> "Fads," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 22 November 1957, 2.



companion, the junior high school. The Depression-based increase in high school students to include the majority of their age group gave teenagers a social center equivalent to the college campus and numbers far larger than their collegiate counterparts.<sup>48</sup> This encouraged their age-based group consciousness and provided regular opportunities for their interaction and greater standardization of their cultural norms. The large numbers attracted the attention of adults who competed for the role of guides and authority figures, as described in the previous chapter. This struggle for authority further stimulated teenagers' reliance on peer standards and their displeasure with outside attempts to define them.

Objections to mass media portraits of teenage culture grew from one of three premises: that the descriptions were inaccurate, that the tone was condescending and mocking, or that the behavior depicted represented only a small number of teenagers. Protests came not only from youth. Some observers went so far as to deny the very existence of a youth culture. Despite the groundwork laid by Talcott Parsons and accepted by most social scientists, a few sociologists even proclaimed the youth culture a

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<sup>48</sup> For a detailed analytical study of the college-based youth culture of the 1920s, see Paula Fass, *The Damned and the Beautiful* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1977). For the evolution of the American high school, see the three-volume *A Study of High Schools*, especially volume 3, Robert L. Hampel, *The Last Little Citadel: American High Schools Since 1940* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1986).

myth.<sup>49</sup> Though this overstatement had little support among teenagers, many disassociated themselves from membership in the severely stereotyped clique that they saw in the pages of the mass circulation press. Trying to define teenage culture in verse, one high school student posed these questions: "What's a typical teenager? How is he described? / Is there a certain something with which he is imbued?" Given the controversy over teenage drinking throughout these two decades, the malapropism "imbued" instead of "imbued" seems oddly appropriate as well as a better rhyme. The verse recognized the difficulty that teachers, psychiatrists, statisticians, parents and teenagers themselves experienced in finding definitive answers: "It's not a single one of us as far as I can see, / But all of us together, as a group, collectively."<sup>50</sup>

Despite the difficulties that many within the teenage culture expressed in finding universal characteristics, certain features stood out. Cultures have distinctive cuisines, and the food teenagers ate served a socially binding function quite irrelevant to its nutritional value. Indeed, its unnutritious qualities may have formed

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<sup>49</sup> Talcott Parsons, "Age and Sex in the Social Structure of the United States," *American Sociological Review* 7 (1942): 604-616; reprinted in Parsons, *Essays in Sociological Thought*, revised edition (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1954), 89-103. For a challenge to Parsons and his followers, denying the very existence of a youth culture--based on the rather limited research base of twenty fourteen-year-old boys in one Toronto suburb--see Frederick Elkin and William Westley, "The Myth of Adolescent Culture," *American Sociological Review* 20 (December 1955): 680-684.

<sup>50</sup> "Typical Teenager," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 21 November 1958, 2.

part of its appeal. High in fat, sugar, and salt, the teenage diet of ice cream, sweet carbonated soft drinks, hamburgers, French fries, and, by the end of this era, pizza, represented a rejection of adult nutritional standards. This was the sort of food that good parents tried to restrict in providing a healthful diet for their children. Requiring milk shake machines, deep fat fryers, and other commercial equipment rarely found in home kitchens, the preparation of favored teenage dishes made it more likely that they would be consumed in places not under parental supervision. Home-made hamburgers didn't taste the same. What and where teenagers ate signified another separate cultural space. Adults seeking their attention recognized this space and sought to exploit it.

Ice cream acted as a culinary centerpiece. Soda fountains served as commercial social centers for adolescents throughout the 1940s and for much of the 1950s. Surveys by marketers showed ice cream to be a favorite food, and sellers of other products often set their advertisements in ice cream shops as a means of connecting with the teenage culture.<sup>51</sup> A 1947 shampoo ad pictured a satisfied customer sitting in a soda fountain booth, happily eating her banana split with a smiling

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<sup>51</sup> "Food Survey Reveals Teen-Age Preferences," *Advertising Age*, 17 September 1945, 53. Among the many examples of advertisements using ice cream shops as a setting for promoting of non-food products to teenagers, see *Seventeen*, March 1947, 3 (Drene Shampoo); *ibid.*, September 1949, 95 (Singer Sewing Centers); *ibid.*, August 1952, 138-139 ("Soda Set Fashions"); *ibid.*, August 1956, 255 (Dariene sweaters).

suitor. The text promised readers that "Super as Saturday's sundae . . . is the sparkle of your Drene-clean hair! No wonder he likes to take you places!"<sup>52</sup> Nine years later, a similar advertisement showed a couple sharing a drugstore soda with two straws, and tied the food item at once to romance, to the promoted product, and to other material totems of impending adulthood: "When an icecream soda for two tastes like vintage champagne . . . you're ready for Chanel, the most treasured name in perfume."<sup>53</sup> Commercial marketers connected consumption of their products with ice cream as a cultural signifier and simultaneously with sexual attractiveness.

Guidance films made similar associations to promote their ideology to the teenage audience. The beginning of the social breakthrough for the title character in *Shy Guy* comes at the after-school hangout, a drugstore soda fountain, when he sits in a booth with another boy and two girls. In an emotionally-charged moment, one of them gives him enticing eye contact over the fountain drink she is sipping through a straw. From that moment on, he finds new purpose in his life and a reason to learn how to be sociable.<sup>54</sup> In *The Outsider*, a film made four years later, the title character blunders by asking for root beer while everyone else at her table has chocolate ice cream.

Desperately conforming, she changes her order to match the

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<sup>52</sup> Full-page advertisement for Drene Shampoo, *Seventeen*, March 1947, 3.

<sup>53</sup> Full page advertisement for Chanel Perfume, *Seventeen*, August 1956, 5.

<sup>54</sup> *Shy Guy* (Chicago: Coronet, 1947).

others as she hears an angry inner voice scolding "Why are you the one who's always out of step? Is there something the matter with you?" The arrival of her cone sends her running away in anguished confusion. She spends much of the rest of the film trying to understand why she doesn't fit in.<sup>55</sup> In *Shy Guy*, the soda fountain serves as the site of redemption and the beginning of acceptance into the teenage culture, while *The Outsider* finds the locale fraught with fear and danger. Despite these differences, each film shows the centrality of the soda fountain and the consumption of ice cream to the teenage social scene.<sup>56</sup>

Even so clearly a didactic exercise as *Your Thrift Habits* made ice cream a key element of its story. Jack, a

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<sup>55</sup> *The Outsider* (Lawrence, Kansas, and New York: Centron Productions for Young America Films, 1951).

<sup>56</sup> Among other guidance films where some significant part of the action takes place in a soda fountain, see in particular *How Do You Do?* (New York: Young America Films, 1946); *Understanding Your Ideals* (Chicago: Coronet, 1950); *How Honest Are You?* (Chicago: Coronet, 1950); *How to Get Cooperation* (Chicago: Coronet, 1950); *Going Steady?* (Chicago: Coronet, 1951); *Age of Turmoil* (Ottawa and New York: Crawley Films for McGraw-Hill, 1953); *Social-Sex Attitudes in Adolescence* (Ottawa and New York: Crawley Films for McGraw-Hill, 1953); *The Meaning Of Adolescence* (Ottawa and New York: Crawley Films for McGraw-Hill, 1954); *What About School Spirit?* (Lawrence, Kansas, and New York: Centron Productions for McGraw-Hill, 1959). See also *Social Acceptability* (Ottawa and New York: Crawley Films for McGraw-Hill, 1958), in which the protagonist finds moments of hope amid tension in the opening scene in the soda fountain, only to receive grave disappointment later at home, waiting for a telephone call that never comes. The next chapter of this dissertation describes the film in detail. As an example of the positive image of the soda fountain as a wonderfully convivial gathering place, see a 1946 Coca-Cola ad featuring a Norman Rockwell style illustration of teenagers making merry, and this text: "As free and easy as your own front porch, the soda fountain is one of America's most democratic spots. There, over a refreshing Coca-Cola, you stop to pass the time of day and discuss what's doin' in the world. ... Your favorite soda fountain and the American way of life go side by side like apple pie and cheese. Take a breathing spell today for the friendly pause, that refreshes with your neighbors over a Coke at your favorite soda fountain. It's the world's friendliest club--and the dues are only a nickel." (Seventeen, October 1946, back cover).

boy in his mid-teens, eats at least one ice cream sundae every day after school at the neighborhood malt shop. As the film opens, he orders a Peach Super Delight, while his friend Ralph shows more restraint and has only a soft drink. Jack admires Ralph's camera and asks how he managed to buy it. The rest of the film shows how Jack learns to budget his money, giving up the immediate gratification of eating ice cream for the greater pleasure of deferred rewards, saving to buy his own camera. Throughout the film, the sundae recurs as a motif tempting Jack, but his resolve remains strong and he resists. Despite a few unexpected expenses caused by a broken pen and a costly ticket to a football game, Jack has his camera "right on schedule" (as the narrator approvingly intones) by the end of the film. Ice cream had become importantly emblematic. Portraying a key element of teenage culture as representative of frivolity and short-sightedness, the filmmakers contrasted it with the material accouterments of the more mature adult world of bourgeois values into which they sought to guide their audience.<sup>57</sup>

Yet ice cream consumption continued apace. One marketing survey found the soda fountain the most economically dynamic part of the average drugstore.<sup>58</sup> A poll of spending habits of four hundred students at one

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<sup>57</sup> *Your Thrift Habits* (Chicago: Coronet, 1948).

<sup>58</sup> "Soda Fountain Boosting Sales, Survey Discloses," *Advertising Age*, 2 February 1948, 54.

Minnesota high school showed "Cokes, sodas and other products of the corner drug store fountain [as] the greatest expenditures."<sup>59</sup> Businesses selling ice cream products regularly advertised in high school newspapers, promoting their establishments as social centers for teenagers.<sup>60</sup> A Los Angeles-area chain of eighteen ice cream parlors found success selling young people the "Moron's Delight" sundae, a mammoth concoction with a quart of ice cream in eight different flavors, topped with eight varieties of fruit, nuts, and whipped cream. The owners estimated sales at 3200 each week. *Life* magazine documented the phenomenon in a 1947 cover story, featuring several photographs of an attractive teenage couple consuming the confection, then celebrating their accomplishment.<sup>61</sup> Throughout the 1940s and into the 1950s, reports of teen canteen activities, dates, and parties in teenagers' homes documented the importance of the soda

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<sup>59</sup> "Dates, Clothes, Cokes, Shows/Poll Shows Money Goes," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 20 October 1944, 1. In most of the United States, the word "soda" meant a mixture of ice cream, soda water and flavored syrup. Only in the northeast did it denote sweetened, flavored carbonated water without ice cream.

<sup>60</sup> "Come on Gang, Let's get the best SODA IN TOWN at Meyer's Fountain," advertisement, *La Jolla Hi Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 21 September 1945, 4; "Meet the 'Gang' at Our Fountain," *Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 16 October 1945, 6; "Workman's Drug--Meet your Friends at Our Fountain!" advertisement, *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 24 October 1945, 10; "Let's Get Acquainted!--High School Fountain," advertisement including coupon for reduced prices on sodas, sundaes, and milkshakes, *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 7 March 1952, 4; "Meet Your Friends at Terry Wallace Pharmacy," advertisement, *The Colt*, 28 October 1958, 3.

<sup>61</sup> "Mammoth Sundae," *Life*, 19 May 1947, 85-88. The magazine's cover carried the headline "TEEN-AGER'S SUPER-SUNDAE."

fountain, sundaes, malts, and other ice cream products to the youth culture.<sup>62</sup>

A Seattle teenager told *Seventeen* readers in 1946 about the conclusion of a typical date night in her city: "After the dance, sodas, malts, Cokes, hamburgers and fish and chips are the bill-of-fare at a drive-in or fountain."<sup>63</sup> First on the West Coast and later throughout the country, the drive-in supplanted the soda fountain as a teenage hangout. Increasingly by the mid-1950s, the drive-ins sold a new frozen dairy product called "soft" ice cream. Occasionally marketers acknowledged its distinctive qualities by promoting it as "better than ice cream."<sup>64</sup> But its name suggested an improved version of a favorite food, culinary continuity amid change.

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<sup>62</sup> For teenagers' reports of ice cream and soda fountains, see "Teen Canteen Opens Door For Business," *Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 27 February 1945, 1; "Youth Center Proposed," *La Jolla Hi-Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 18 October 1945, 2; "Incidental Reverie Shows Idiosyncrasies of Students," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 3 December 1948, 2; Patsy Wilson, "Teen Tattlers," *Tulsa Daily World*, 11 February 1951, sec 4, p. 11; "Pete Douglass, Proprietor of Redmond Drug, Has Much To Offer High School Students," *Lake Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 20 November 1951, 4. See Anne Cooper Funderburg, *Chocolate, Strawberry and Vanilla: A History of American Ice Cream* (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1995) for a history of the development of the soda fountain, the sundae, and the shift to "soft ice cream" in the 1950s. Unfortunately, the author included no reference to the significance of ice cream consumption to the social life of teenagers, other than one 1941 photograph of young customers at an Olmstead Falls, Ohio, drugstore soda fountain. She also made one brief, passing comment indicating that the Baskin-Robbins chain sought to eliminate the teenage hangout image from ice cream shops. See footnote 71, below.

<sup>63</sup> Letter from B. M., Seattle, *Seventeen*, December 1946, 233.

<sup>64</sup> Advertisement for Polar Queen, *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 28 October 1958, 3.



As the Seattle teenager reported, hamburgers also formed an important part of her contemporaries' diet. In a prescription for budget control, one student declared that "the standard diet, French fries, Hamburger, and a malt, must be ordered by everybody."<sup>65</sup> This standard persisted over time and distance. Fifteen years later and seven hundred miles south, a city newspaper's youth editor writing about teenagers noted that "Left to their own devices . . . they probably would subsist on hamburgers, French fries, and soft drinks."<sup>66</sup> Food preferences deviating from the norm warranted special notice, as in this profile of one school's Homecoming Queen: "To most average teenagers hamburgers and french fries are tops, but not so with Judy. [To her, n]othing is so delicious as shrimp."<sup>67</sup>

For adults seeking to influence teenagers, the accepted diet served as a attention-getting point of reference. One guidance film, intended to instill a sense of patriotic purpose in its audience of military-bound male adolescents, emphasized the theme of protecting a way

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<sup>65</sup> "Dating Manners Tell All There's to Know," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 25 April 1947, 3. The quoted student was a sophomore responding to an English class assignment on dating etiquette and "ten pet peeves about the opposite sex."

<sup>66</sup> Beth Macklin, "What Is a Teenager?" *Tulsa Sunday World*, 14 January 1962, 20.

<sup>67</sup> "Cheering Subjects Hail Central Royalty," *Central High Times*, 17 October 1952, 1. Being chosen Homecoming Queen was in many high schools the highest honor to which any girl could aspire, the pinnacle of popularity, where she would preside over the festivities associated with the most socially important football game of the year.

of life. The narrator listed among the American rights being guarded "the right to earn money" as the camera showed a teenage boy washing windows and putting a license plate holder to a car. When the shot dissolved to him opening the soda fountain door for a saddleshoed teenage girl, then to them sitting at a table, eating and talking, the narrator continued "and the right to spend that money on things you want. The free time to stop for a hamburger and malt. . . . The right to discuss and complain about our government policies."<sup>68</sup> Thus military conscription and consumerism were linked, along with Constitutional principles of freedom of expression. The locus of the link, the axis around which revolved the teenage subculture and the larger culture into which the filmmakers sought to induct them, stood symbolically in the middle of the soda fountain table, a malt-flavored ice cream milk shake and a hamburger.

Just as soft ice cream became popular, other items on the teenage menu shifted in importance. Pizza, formerly considered an ethnic food found specifically in Italian restaurants, began its evolution into an adolescent mainstay. In 1948, *Seventeen* assumed its readers so unfamiliar with this exotic dish that it was necessary to

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<sup>68</sup> *What It's All About* (Chicago: Coronet, 1951). This was the first in a 14-film series released by Coronet in 1951 and 1952 entitled *Are You Ready for Service?* The entire series was aimed at high school age boys, preparing them to be drafted or otherwise fulfill their legal obligations for military service. Nowhere in these films did "the right to discuss and complain about our government policies" explicitly include the draft itself.

explain not only how to make it, but how to say it as well: "Have you ever tasted pizza (pronounced peet'za)? Crisp, chewy crust, baked-on topping moist and flavorful with cheese, tomatoes, anchovy . . . . Pizzeria signs beckon outside restaurants in New York where this dish of southern Italy is a naturalized citizen."<sup>69</sup> By the mid-1950s, writers mentioned pizza more casually. It became familiar as an after-dance snack and a featured dish at social gatherings. A 1960 drive-in advertised its menu of teenage favorites: "Beefburgers, Fish & Chips, Prawns & Chips, Shakes & Malts, French Fries, Sundaes, Pizza."<sup>70</sup> The originally Italian specialty had lost its ethnic identity and joined burgers, fries and ice cream concoctions as a staple of the adolescent diet.

The soda fountain as a site of teenage socializing and courtship stayed strong in the minds of adults and youth alike during the several years of declining patronage and the eventual near-disappearance of the drugstore soda fountain.<sup>71</sup> Popular singer Pat Boone posed

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<sup>69</sup> "Every Crowd Likes Pizza," *Seventeen*, January 1948, 80.

<sup>70</sup> Advertisement for Rad's Drive-In, *Lake Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 29 April 1960, 4. This ad carried the endorsement of a school sports star, further tying it to strong values of the teenage culture. For other examples of the incorporation of pizza into the teen social scene, see Irene Kamp, "Meet Miss Young America in Chicago," *Seventeen*, January 1955, 98; Susie Smith, "Teen Tattlers," *Tulsa Sunday World Magazine*, 5 October 1958, 33. See also Richard Pillsbury, *No Foreign Food: The American Diet in Time and Place* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1998), 179. Pillsbury also briefly traces the history of the drive-in, though without discussing its role as a teenage hangout. *Ibid*, 180-182.

<sup>71</sup> One historian has asserted that the founders of the Baskin-Robbins chain of ice cream franchise stores made a conscious decision to minimize the space and comfort in their establishments, so that teenagers would not hang out there. They considered their

for a 1960 *Seventeen* feature at a fountain counter, sharing an ice cream soda with his teenage interviewer. Making an emblematic identification of this setting with the culture, she wrote enthusiastically of her subject: "He looks and acts like the boy everyone wants to have a soda with. I can't help gloating when I think of all the teen-agers who must envy me because I did have a soda with Pat!"<sup>72</sup> Boone himself early in his career hosted a television dance program for teenagers called "Soda Fountain Set."<sup>73</sup> Such programs, often with similar décor, appeared frequently on local television stations throughout the country in the mid-1950s. In later years only the national network program "American Bandstand"

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presence annoying to adults and families with younger children; running a teenage hangout did not seem good business. See Anne Cooper Funderburg, *Chocolate, Strawberry, and Vanilla*, 154. (Funderburg cited a magazine article as her source for this purported anti-hangout decision: "Thirty-one Flavors," *New Yorker*, 10 July 1971, 19-20. However, no such explanation appeared there. In another source cited earlier by Funderburg, an individual New York City franchise holder stated "We don't want tables for kids to hang around all day." See "The Freeze that Pleases," *Time*, 21 June 1971, 76.) See also Thomas P. Jones, *The Ice Cream World of Baskin-Robbins* (New York: Pinnacle Books, 1975), 21-22. Jones attributes the decline of the soda fountain to proprietors' desire "not to have to hassle with the 'hang-out' crowd." Contrast this attitude with the one displayed in a 1948 *Nation's Business* piece heralding the lucrative potential of the youth market, illustrated with a cartoon of a teenage couple sitting at a soda fountain table, epitomizing the image of the typical teenager. Both are wearing high-cuffed jeans and saddle shoes. The boy's shirttail is out. The girl sips a soda through a straw, and has a magazine open on her lap. On the floor lies a magazine with the title *TEEN*. They are staring into each other's eyes, slouching slightly, an empty sundae dish on the table between them. Peter J. Whelihan, "Jack and Jill Fill the Till," *Nation's Business*, October 1948, 42.

<sup>72</sup> "Hear Your Heroes," *Seventeen*, January 1960, 87. Anne Broderick, 18, wrote about Boone. She was one of six teenagers, each chosen to interview a celebrity. Besides Boone, the interviewees were Senator John Kennedy, pianist Van Cliburn, medical missionary Dr. Tom Dooley, writer James Thurber, and political comedian Mort Sahl.

<sup>73</sup> "Meet the Boys in the Back Room!" *Seventeen*, June 1957, 100-101. The program appeared on a Fort Worth, Texas, television station.

remained vivid in memory. Despite its importance, its format was neither original nor unique.

The soda fountain and later the drive-in provided commercial spaces which teenagers claimed as their own. Broadcasting offered another venue for them to appropriate. Even programs aimed at them only as listeners and viewers, without their direct participation, contributed to their heightened awareness of themselves as members of a distinct group. When they took an active part, the airing of their voices further accelerated their growing sense of autonomy. This participation began with radio.

Throughout the 1940s, many community radio stations included in their program schedules half-hour discussions featuring students at local high schools. Decidedly didactic in tone, they nonetheless offered teenagers opportunities to express themselves on current topics rather than simply to listen to adult experts. Typical of this sort of program, the CBS network's "School of the Air" engaged youthful panels in discussions of issues such as "transportation as a factor in winning the war" and "What Should Be Done with the Axis?" The first segment consisted of a network feed, followed by ten minutes of comments by each member station's teenage panel.<sup>74</sup> Similar

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<sup>74</sup> "Pupils in Radio Program," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allerdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) 11 February 1944, 2; "Timely Subject Discussed in Student Broadcast," *ibid.*, 16 February 1945, 1; "Students Broadcast Views on Future of Germany," *ibid.*, 2 November 1945, 1; "Our Place in the Pacific," *ibid.*, 21 December 1945, 1; "KIRO Bringing Student Program to WHS Nov. 3," *Washington World*

programs appeared on local stations and national networks, with titles like "Youth Views the News," "Junior Town Meeting of the Air," and "Youth Speaks."<sup>75</sup> Such public affairs programs showed a growing awareness of teenage culture as they shifted from subjects borrowed from "Meet the Press" to more specifically youth-oriented discussions. Although topics like federal labor law still found a place on the broadcast schedule, producers increasingly scheduled student discussions of driver licensing age, peer group conformity, and general "teenage problems."<sup>76</sup>

Coinciding with this shift, some radio programs with even more specific teenage focus appeared on the radio dial. The Mutual network carried "It's Up to Youth," sponsored by *Seventeen* "to discuss teen-age problems from a teen-age point of view."<sup>77</sup> "Tomorrow is Yours," a representative local program in Minnesota, broadcast young

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(Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 17 October 1944, 3; "Four Seniors Discuss Youth Opportunities Over WCCO," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 13 April 1945, 3.

<sup>75</sup> "'Youth Views the News' over KOMO By Students Here," *Washington World*, 18 March 1947, 1; "Bothell Students Featured by KOMO," *The Bothell Hi Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 8 October 1947, 1; "Students View Iran Situation," *Central High Times*, 29 February 1952, 1; "Your Listenin'," *ibid.*, 22 April 1949, 2; "Junior Town Meeting Hosted," *The Foreword*, 17 January 1962, 1.

<sup>76</sup> "Clublicity," *The Foreword*, 18 December 1959, 4; "Last Broadcast Planned," *ibid.*, 19 May 1950, 2; "Legal Driving Age is Next Radio Topic," *ibid.*, 2 November 1951, 1; "Seniors Will Preview Radio Broadcast," *ibid.*, 28 March 1958, 1; "Students on Radio," *ibid.*, 23 November 1955. Three students from each of four schools were interviewed on teenage problems by a *New York Times* reporter for later broadcast, according to the last article cited.

<sup>77</sup> "Seventeen Airs Teen Problems," *Central High Times*, 15 November 1946, 1; advertisement: "Seventeen Magazine presents 'It's up to Youth,'" *ibid.*, 4.

voices discussing "problems which will confront teenagers in the future."<sup>78</sup> The students of "Youth Speaks" spoke to an estimated 175,000 families in South Carolina about controversies over high school social clubs, initiations, and going steady.<sup>79</sup> Increasingly entertainment programs featured more light-hearted talk and musical performances by young people. "Teen Age Party" began in 1945 in Philadelphia, "a lively show beamed to bobbysoxers," with features including a quiz on "translation of jive talk . . . [and a] jukebox question bee."<sup>80</sup> The same year, Minnesota teenagers in the Twin Cities listened to "Time for Teens," featuring contests among high school students throughout the area to select their "master and mistress of ceremonies." Desiring access to the newly discovered teenage market, department stores sponsored both the Minneapolis and Philadelphia shows.<sup>81</sup> In San Diego, the sponsoring store linked its "Hi-Debber" fashion council with the long-running "Debber Date" weekly half-hour radio

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<sup>78</sup> "M. Nelson Appears on Radio Program," *ibid.*, 5 December 1947, 3. High school senior Marilyn Nelson earned her spot on the show by writing a letter critical of a previous episode which had discussed "Preparing for Marriage."

<sup>79</sup> "Youth Speaks," *Scholastic*, 13 May 1946, 47.

<sup>80</sup> "Teen Age Party," *Variety*, 14 November 1945, 30.

<sup>81</sup> "Two Central Students Reach Radio Finals," *Central High Times*, 9 November 1945, 3; "John Nelson Wins Radio MC Contest," *ibid.*, 10 January 1947, 1; "Teen Age Program Sets New Time," *ibid.*, 17 January 1947, 3; "Caldwell Stars on Teen Time Radio Show," *ibid.*, 5 December 1947, 1. The Columbia, South Carolina, program mentioned above also had local department store sponsorship, but "on a non-commercial basis"--building good will among the potential teenage customers without advertising specific products. ("Youth Speaks," *Scholastic*, 13 May 1946, 47.)

broadcast.<sup>82</sup> Elsewhere throughout the country, teenagers took to the airwaves with a mix of school news, jokes, interviews and "top tunes," either commercially recorded or performed by student singing groups.<sup>83</sup>

Although these programs had only local audiences, the concept quickly reached the national networks. While the more serious-minded network programs like "Youth Wants to Know" continued, commercially-oriented entertainment features aimed at teenagers also began to appear. NBC's entry "Teen Timer Canteen" debuted in 1945 with department store sponsorship in each of sixty-five cities.

Originating in New York, the broadcast featured singers and bands popular with teenage fans.<sup>84</sup> A program on rival network ABC involved teenagers more directly by choosing performers from among talented youth in the Chicago area. "Teen Town," later called "Junior Junction," included live musical numbers, audience interviews, comedy acts, and short plays scripted by listeners. Serving as master of

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<sup>82</sup> Advertisement for Walker's Department Store, *La Jolla Hi Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 24 October 1947, 3; *ibid.*, 8 October 1948, 2; 5 October 1953, 2.

<sup>83</sup> "'Kangaroo Klippings' Casts Personalities Contests, Hit Tunes," *Lake Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 6 March 1951, 5; "Kangaroo Klippings, LW Radio Show, Heard at New Time," *ibid.*, 5 February 1952, 4; "On the Radio," *The Foreword*, 7 December 1951, 1; "WMIN Meets Radio Students," *Central High Times*, 5 December 1952, 3; "KLPR Features Teens Weekly," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 22 January 1953, 1; "Tune Teen Canteen for News of You," *ibid.*, 25 September 1953, 1; "Techites Produce New 'Tech Time' Radio Show," *The Tech* (Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota), 7 October 1955, 1.

<sup>84</sup> Advertisement for Fandel's Department Store, *The Tech*, 17 October 1945, 4; "'Teentimers' Band Tieup," *Variety*, 21 November 1945, 34. The Fandel's advertisement called the program "Teen Timer Canteen," describing it as already on the air. The *Variety* article referred to it as "The Teentimers Club" and indicated its debut date as coming on November 24.



ceremonies was seventeen-year-old Dick York, whose success as the program's host led to his featured roles in many widely-seen guidance films, beginning in 1947 with *Shy Guy*.<sup>85</sup>

Musical radio programs appealed to teenagers, whose interest in popular music became a defining component of the entire subculture. Radio stations catered to this interest, increasingly in the years after World War II playing hours of phonograph records each day. The proliferation of new station licenses and the shift in network programming into the new medium of television by the early 1950s changed the sound of radio. Recorded music provided an easy, inexpensive way for local program managers to fill the spaces between commercial announcements.<sup>86</sup> To help hold the interest of listeners, announcers playing the records developed strong on-air personalities that contrasted with the anonymous style of earlier broadcasters. The phenomena of the "platter chatter" program and the "disk jockey" transformed the broadcasting world. The disk jockey established the

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<sup>85</sup> "Radio Reviews: 'Teen Town,'" *Variety*, 24 April 1946, 30; Dorothy Reed, "Radio's Teens Take Over," *Woman's Home Companion*, October 1946, 172-173. Coronet, the leading producer of guidance films, had its headquarters in Chicago, the site of the ABC broadcasts from the studios of WCFL.

<sup>86</sup> Charles F. Ganzert, "Platter Chatter and the Doughnut Disk: Developments in Radio Disk Jockey Programming in the United States, 1946-1960," *Journal of Radio Studies* 2 (1993-1994), 154. See also Bryan Kelly Raines, "Of Crooners, Hucksters, Tycoons, and the Lonesome Cowboys of the Airwaves: Oklahoma Musicians and the Broadcast Frontier" (M.A. thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1995), 68-69. The term "disk jockey" went back at least to 1941; the *Oxford English Dictionary* first attributes its use to an article in *Variety*, 13 August 1941. See *The Oxford Dictionary of the English Language*, vol. 4, 727.

closest bonds with his teenage listeners. Part of the reason surely was economic. Meager radio station salaries in all but the largest metropolitan areas forced "deejays" to seek additional income. As schools needed entertainment and music at their dances, a symbiotic relationship developed. Disk jockeys earned money by playing records and joking with the dancers, then discussed their experiences on the air the following day. This generated more interest and more dances. The recorded music from the radio became increasingly interwoven into the fabric of teenage culture through the programs and the dances, and the disc jockeys became local celebrities with a strong teenage identification.<sup>87</sup>

Teenagers' publications displayed clear evidence of the importance of the disc jockey. When one Seattle radio personality hosted a high school pep club sock hop, his appearance generated three items in the school newspaper, including a front-page photograph showing wide-eyed teenagers staring at him in starstruck awe. The event provided him with an amusing topic on the next day's broadcast as he discussed the search for one dancer's missing shoes, further delighting his listeners from the school.<sup>88</sup> Even more revered for their talents as comedians and masters of ceremonies than for their skills selecting records, the djs sometimes presided over entertainment

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<sup>87</sup> Ganzert, "Platter Chatter and the Doughnut Disker," 160-161.

<sup>88</sup> Photograph, *The Bothell High Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 8 October 1954, 1; "Dig This," *ibid.*, 3; "Loose Ends," *ibid.*

provided by live musical groups as well as tunes on wax or vinyl discs.<sup>89</sup> Their radio programs certainly held the attention of the teenage culture. For more than a year, the leading national teenage magazine featured in each issue a "Record Quiz." Four disc jockeys, different each time, submitted photographs of themselves along with their radio station affiliations and questions about the music scene.<sup>90</sup> Individuals like George "Hound Dog" Lorenz in Buffalo received the adulation of organized fan clubs, and their popularity seemed at least to match that of the musical performers whose careers they helped promote.<sup>91</sup>

Beginning in the mid-1940s, teenagers came to consider certain types of music distinctly their own. In the minds of members of the dominant adult culture and the increasingly visible youth subculture, a musical separation grew. Despite the later notion that the phenomenon emerged with the advent of rock and roll in the

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<sup>89</sup> "Alpha Hi-Y Sponsors 'Heart Hop' Friday," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 14 February 1952, 1; "Alpha Hi-Y Sponsors Annual Heart Dance," *ibid.*, 6 February 1953, 1; "Dance To Honor Empress," *ibid.*, 13 March 1953, 1; "AZA Gives Ball for '54 Empress," *ibid.*, 26 February 1954, 3; "Tonight Marks Coronation of Center Dance Royalty," *ibid.*, 1 March 1957, 3; "Torch Sockhop Great Success," *Bothell High Cougar*, 13 January 1956, 2; "Dance Champs," *Atlanta Constitution*, 1 November 1958, 15; "Grubbs Named Valentine Sweetheart At Annual Student Council Dance," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 16 February 1960, 1 ("For the first time, the student council took up the custom many schools have followed and had disc jockey Dick Kemp of KFJZ in Fort Worth as an added feature on the program."); Vicki Henthorne, "Teen Tattlers . . . Social News of the High Schools," *Tulsa Daily World*, 2 April 1961, sec. 4, p. 11.

<sup>90</sup> "Record Quiz," *Seventeen*, each month from December 1955 to January 1957, page numbers vary by issue.

<sup>91</sup> William Graebner, *Coming of Age in Buffalo: Youth and Authority in the Postwar Era* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 29-35.

mid-1950s, the trend had already begun a decade earlier and simply accelerated after the enormous success of recordings by Bill Haley, Chuck Berry, and Elvis Presley. Swooning, screaming teenage fans found intense delight in the performances of Frank Sinatra and Johnnie Ray and alarmed adults several years before the attention shifted to Elvis.<sup>92</sup> Concerts and dances featuring swing musicians captured the imagination of students who reported their excitement in school newspapers.<sup>93</sup> Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, musical preferences received more attention than any other non-school topic in the pages of student publications.

The adult charge that music encouraged misbehavior predated concerns over rock and roll. A student reporter thought it worth polling teenage opinion in 1944 on the question, "Do you believe that boogie-woogie is a contributing factor to juvenile delinquency?" Almost all of those asked seemed simply incredulous.

The most interesting thing about this poll wasn't so much what people said as the looks that came to their faces when asked the question. Most of them didn't believe it was serious, and expressed this in their faces. It seemed practically impossible that any important persons could actually become incensed over a question that to them seemed rather silly.

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<sup>92</sup> Two different writers in *Seventeen* referred to Elvis Presley in his first months of national success as the "'Johnnie Ray' of country music." See "Record Reviews," *Seventeen*, May 1956, 28; Lyle Kenyon Engel, "Record Quiz," *ibid.*, June 1956, 46.

<sup>93</sup> For example, when Benny Goodman performed at nearby Mission Beach, the La Jolla High School newspaper named twenty-four students who attended and "had a neat ole time. . . ." "Scuttlebutt," *La Jolla Hi Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 21 February 1946, 4.

Perhaps the educators' fears could be allayed if they were aware of what kind of unbelief is expressed by the very people whom they seek to protect from such a fearful scourge as boogie-woogie.<sup>94</sup>

Being part of the teenage culture meant being a fan of a distinctive popular music. Many school newspapers carried regular music columns reporting on current hits, and students prominent enough to be featured in interviews and profiles invariably named their favorite singers and records.<sup>95</sup> The identification of youth with a narrowly defined music genre became increasingly difficult to avoid by teenagers who had varied musical interests. Young people who preferred classical music seemed to alternate between being defiant and apologetic, as their tastes marked them apart from their contemporaries. Wrote one teenager,

In some crowds I am considered a 'semi-square' because I enjoy classical music and refuse to do flips over Elvis Presley. I am sure that I'm not the only one who would rather listen to a concerto by Mozart than to a bouncing rock 'n' roll number. I am not a 'solid-square' however, because I do

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<sup>94</sup> "What Do You Think?" *Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 14 November 1944, 4. Eighteen students were polled, and sixteen replied emphatically "No."

<sup>95</sup> See, for example, Brad Hamilton, "Platter Chatter," *La Jolla Hi-Tide*, 13 November 1953, 2; "Personality of the Week," *ibid.*, 5 December 1952, 3; Nancy Ruckman, "On the Downbeat," *ibid.*, 4

November 1955, 5. This Ruckman column marked the final appearance in the La Jolla school newspaper of a popular music feature. Perhaps it was only coincidental that this last piece highlighted rhythm and blues numbers like Chuck Berry's "Maybelline," Etta James's "Good Rockin' Daddy," and Bill Haley's "Rock Around the Clock." But it also seems possible that adult supervisors thought such material too disruptive and thus inappropriate for inclusion in the school newspaper thereafter. Many other newspapers continued their coverage well into the rock and roll era, and certainly the musical favorites of popular students regularly received mention in the pages of the school press.

enjoy many of the popular songs that are recorded.<sup>96</sup>

Seventeen found it newsworthy when two teenage "anti-rock 'n' rollites" made and wore "I Like Ludwig" buttons to celebrate Beethoven and "combat the menace," Elvis Presley.<sup>97</sup> Although all four of the letters published in response seemed to approve of the campaign, the writers showed no particular interest in classical music, and most praised other popular musicians.<sup>98</sup> Implicitly they recognized that music defined their culture. Not a reflection of individual taste or aesthetic merit, musical preferences represented a group dynamic. In the words of one letter writer, implying that any change in the enthusiasm of her peers would sweep her along unresistingly, ". . . if all goes well or if teeners are still as fickle as ever, we might soon dig Ludwig more than 'Mr. Hips'!"<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Letter from J.R., Montpelier, Vermont, *Seventeen*, April 1957, 4. This message and four other letters came in response to one in November 1956, critical of the magazine's inclusion of classical music and opera in its record reviews.

<sup>97</sup> "Teens in the News," *Seventeen*, August 1957, 312.

<sup>98</sup> Letters from J.S., San Francisco, California ("...we must admit we still like 'The Menace' (Elvis)"); J.G., St. Denis, Maryland ("...the 'I Like Ludwig' slogan could be added to with names like Tommy Sands or Pat Boone"); S.H., Los Angeles, California ("...what's wrong with Satchmo, Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Woody Herman, Benny Goodman?"); H.T., Little Rock, Arkansas; *Seventeen*, October 1957, 4. Only H.T. found no redeeming qualities in her contemporaries' musical tastes, writing "...If America's culture is judged by what is heard daily on her radios, I blush to think what that judgment must be." S.H. suggested a connection of the classical composers with swing musicians beloved by her counterparts only a decade earlier, a link that would probably have confounded them.

<sup>99</sup> Letter from J.S., *ibid.* And this was from someone who proclaimed herself a fan of Elvis Presley.

Evidence of Elvis Presley's role as an icon of teenage culture appeared often in the mid-1950s. Many in the adult world considered him so controversial that his television appearances could be shot only from the waist up, and some editors printed articles about him prefaced with near-apologies.<sup>100</sup> Local merchants recognized his marketability. One small town's principal drugstore covered fifteen years of teenage musical tastes when it advertised in the high school newspaper that it had for sale "Your favorite artists on HI-FI-orthophonic records-- Elvis Presley, Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, Eddie Fisher."<sup>101</sup> A young student in that same community wrote of her excitement in seeing Presley perform at the Seattle baseball stadium, reporting in her diary that she and her friends sat thrillingly close to the stage. The emotional

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<sup>100</sup> Though journalists of the time reported that television camera operators had been instructed to avoid showing Presley's below-waist movements, recent biographer Peter Guralnick found no evidence of such deliberate censorship. See Peter Guralnick, *Last Train to Memphis* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1994), 352. When *Seventeen* first ran a lengthy article on the performer and social phenomenon, they began with this nervous preface: "SEVENTEEN recognizes that Elvis Presley is a highly controversial subject. Critics, columnists, parents, religious authorities, psychiatrists and teen-agers have expressed their various opinions. Aware of the enormous reader interest in Elvis Presley, SEVENTEEN hopes the following informative article will illuminate the background and bring the situation into perspective." Edwin Miller, "Elvis Presley," *Seventeen*, October 1956, 80. The entire letters column two months later was devoted to responses to the article. Of the thirteen letters, three indicated the writers' dislike of Elvis Presley, while the other ten praised him. "Thank You for Your Letters," *Seventeen*, December 1956, 4.

<sup>101</sup> Advertisement for Crawford's Rexall Drugs, *The Bothell High Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 25 May 1956, 4. Miller and Goodman were two star bandleaders of the Swing era, and Eddie Fisher had vied with Johnnie Ray as the leading teenage heartthrob ballad singer of the early 1950s. See "Now It's Eddieeeee!" *Collier's*, 27 June 1953, 64-65; "Teen-age Tizzy," *Life*, 13 September 1954, 185.

intensity of the experience left the normally articulate fourteen-year-old at a loss for any words beyond the enthusiastic exclamation, "Oh it was neater than heck."<sup>102</sup>

Many school newspaper articles featured less fervid references to Presley's music and image. Though most seemed written by fans, some sought to prove that he had less importance to teenage culture than others generally presumed. Yet the regular reports of his pictures in school lockers and of devoted record collectors countered these voices of protest. Sometimes gossip columnists called attention to classmates who through appearance and behavior represented the Elvis image locally. But adults who stereotyped teenagers as screaming Elvis fans and imitators provoked resentful denials. Both the headlines "Elvis Recordings Tops With Teens" and "Most Teenagers Not 'Crazy' Over Elvis A. Presley" showed accurate representations of this aspect of teenage culture.<sup>103</sup> One

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<sup>102</sup> Melinda Dillard, unpublished diary, 1 September 1957, in possession of the author.

<sup>103</sup> "Elvis Recordings Tops With Teens," *Marionette* (Harding Junior-Senior High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 9 November 1956, 3; "Most Teenagers Not 'Crazy' Over Elvis A. Presley," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 21 December 1956. For reports focused on the success of his records, see also "Top Ten," *The Bothell High Cougar*, 9 March 1956, 3; Don McAdams, "Discs by Don," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 23 March 1956, 2; *ibid.*, 4 May 1956, 2; Marv Schumeister, "Live Modern With Music," *ibid.*, 19 October 1956, 2; Cindy Istas, "Teens Favor Music Variety," *ibid.*, 21 December 1956, 2; "Platter Chatter: Presley's Pops are the Favorite Tops," *Marionette*, 30 November 1956, 2; "White Christmas and Blue Suedes," *Sooner Spirit*, 21 December 1956, 2; Sally Brainard, "Top Forty," *The Tech* (Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota), 27 September 1957, 2. For accounts of the devotion of his fans, see Hy Tride, "Spring Fever Strikes Central Again!" *Central High Times*, 13 April 1956, 2 ("Even the Y-Teens stop their meetings to watch him on TV."); "Top Teens," *Marionette*, 13 April 1956, 3; Karen Hemker, "Presley Hobbies Gain Popularity," *Sooner Spirit*, 2 November 1956,



young music critic played it both ways when she wrote of "these days of incoherent, souped-up, Elvis-type sounds -- not that I have anything against the boy, you understand!"<sup>104</sup>

By the time of Presley's induction into the United States Army in 1958, his image had become so established that its controversial edge had diminished. This playful advertisement in the guise of a short news article appeared in a student publication: "Elvis Presley may soon find his prized long hair shorn from his rich brow, as he is expected to be drafted into the army soon. Don't wait until the army gets you. Have your hair clipped now at Vaughan's Highschool Barber Shop."<sup>105</sup> Whatever the tone or the specific content of the various Presley pieces,

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3; "Picture of Idols Seen In Lockers," *Marionette*, 8 March 1957, 2. For reports of the Elvises among them, see "Colt Capers. Elvis Comes To AHS," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 24 September 1956, 2; "Anybody You Know?" *ibid.*, 21 January 1957, 2; Ann Snider, "Chug-Sssprrt! Antique Model T's, Souped Hot Rods Reflect Hours of Hard Work, Careful Thought, Months of Tinkering," *ibid.*, 24 September 1957, 2; "Tickle Tock," *Marionette*, 28 September 1956, 2 ("Sonny Boyles . . . picked by the Elvis Presley Fan Club as the Mad Cat of the week. . . said, 'Cool, Man Cool.'"); "Comic Strip Satire," *Sooner Spirit*, 19 October 1956, 3. For an overt defense of Elvis Presley as emblematic of teenage culture, see "Fads," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 22 November 1957, 2 ("How many nasty remarks a week do you hear from adults about Elvis Presley, rhythm and blues, and rock and roll? Most teenagers are criticized when they listen to records and when they dance."). For pieces disparaging Presley, see "Worst Movies 1956," *La Jolla Hi-Tide*, 8 February 1957, 2; "Don't Blame Television!!!" *Sooner Spirit*, 2 November 1956, 2. Decrying unfair stereotypes, one adult wrote of a jobs program in Phoenix where a "prominent businessman . . . declared that he would not even interview a sixteen-year-old for the job of answering his telephone and typing forms. 'I don't want any little jitterbug raving about hot rods and Elvis Presley around my office.'" See "Youth Employment Service," *Seventeen*, July 1957, 24.

<sup>104</sup> Sally Brainard, "Top Forty," *The Tech*, 1 May 1958, 2.

<sup>105</sup> "Presley to Lose Hair" (advertisement), *Sooner Spirit*, 18 January 1957, 4. Presley's actual induction into the military lay over one year away.

their number and ubiquity clearly demonstrated the incorporation of the Tupelo-born rock and roll singer into the iconography of the teenage culture.

Elvis Presley effectively used the new medium of television. The linkage of teenagers by shared musical preferences, the increasing youth focus of the disk jockey programs on radio, and the documentation of teenage fads in magazines all played important roles in creating a stronger sense of their age group's cultural identity. Television contributed another element of cohesion. Some teen-oriented television resembled the public affairs type of radio discussion programs, featuring young panelists mulling over civic questions on broadcasts with titles like "Youth Wants to Know" and "TV Junior Journal of the Air." Other programs directed their panels to more age-specific issues, as when the adult experts on "It's a Problem" considered "Boy-Girl problems: Dating, going steady, Dutch treats, curfews, popularity, morals."<sup>106</sup> Often the local programs of this type, such as St. Paul, Minnesota's, "Time Out for Teens," would combine various elements--"panel discussions, debates, and displays of

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<sup>106</sup> "Youth Wants to Know," carried on the National Broadcasting Company television network, featured teenage panelists asking questions of government officials, e.g., Assistant Secretary of Defense John Hannah. CBS had a similar program called "Youth Takes a Stand," and the Dumont network carried "The New York Times Youth Forum." See "Teens Ask Questions," *Seventeen*, May 1954, 52. "TV Junior Journal of the Air" was a local program in Bridgeport, Connecticut. See "Teens on TV," *Seventeen*, September 1954, 97. "It's a Problem" appeared on NBC, and devoted four programs during August, 1952, to teenagers. See "Problems Unlimited," *Seventeen*, August 1952, 96.

talent."<sup>107</sup> The most successful in attracting an audience were those connected to popular music, including network shows such as "Paul Whiteman's TV Teen Club" and local broadcasts with titles like "Rate the Record."<sup>108</sup> Of these, an increasing number began to feature dancing to the latest popular music by young people from the studio audience.<sup>109</sup>

Though most of the dance programs were local, one made the leap to a television network and became a national phenomenon. What had been a televised dance party in Philadelphia reached teenagers all across the country as "American Bandstand." Beginning locally in 1952, the program found a national audience of some twenty million starting in August, 1957. Dick Clark, the disk jockey who had hosted the program since 1956, became a recognized celebrity. And the "regulars," the teenagers recruited by the show's producers to insure somebody would be there to dance, achieved unexpected fame themselves as fifteen thousand pieces of fan mail arrived each week. Eventually many of these previously anonymous Philadelphia

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<sup>107</sup> "Personalities in the News," *Central High Times*, 31 January 1958, 3.

<sup>108</sup> "One World Talent Project," *Seventeen*, May 1952, 86; "Teens in the News," *ibid.*, 192. "Rate the Record" appeared on New Jersey's WATV.

<sup>109</sup> See, for example, "Bothell Featured on Wally's Hi-Jinx," *Bothell High Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 14 October, 1955, 1; "Bothell Students on Wally's Hi Jinx," *ibid.*, 18 November 1955, 3; Bothell on Hi-Jinx; Mrs. Holland Shy," *ibid.*, 25 May 1956, 1; "Radio and Television Listings," *Atlanta Constitution*, 5 May 1956, 18; "Television Party," *Seventeen*, April 1955, 204; "TV Dance Date," *ibid.*, March 1957, 41; "After-school TV Party," *ibid.*, May 1957, 158.

young people became teen idols almost as well known as the musicians featured on each program. Teen-oriented publications ran photographs and articles about them as if they were stars. Millions of teenagers watched each weekday afternoon to observe their favorites dance, to hear the latest popular music, to see two or three performers moving their mouths ("lip-synching") to their records, and to get instruction in the style of dancing and appearance that helped define their culture.

"American Bandstand" served as more than entertainment.

It both mirrored and interacted with its audience as teenagers shaped the social contours of their increasingly autonomous world.<sup>110</sup>

As the teenage culture increasingly moved away from adult control, some charged that it had become tyrannical, demanding rigid conformity among its members. Dick Clark, attempting a defense, ended up acknowledging the accuracy

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<sup>110</sup> For a history of the program and its impact on the lives of both its viewers and participants, see John A. Jackson, *American Bandstand: Dick Clark and the Making of a Rock 'n' Roll Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997) and Michael Shore with Dick Clark, *The History of American Bandstand: It's Got a Great Beat and You Can Dance to It* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1985). See also "They're Having a Ball! Teen-agers Jam Bandstand's Dance Floor Five Afternoons a Week", *TV Guide*, 28 September 1957, 12-13; R. J., "REVIEW: 'American Bandstand,'" *ibid.*, 19 October 1957, 22-23. Evidence of the surprise stardom of the "regulars" can be found in various issues of *'Teen*, for example Pat Molittieri, "My Farewell to Bandstand," June 1959, 10-15, and "Pat's Party Line," a monthly feature which ran from August 1959 through April 1960, and intermittently thereafter in 1960. In December 1959 *'Teen* published an 80-page special edition "book" called *My Bandstand Buddies*, by Pat Molittieri as told to Stephen Kahn. (Advertisement, *'Teen*, December 1959, 60.) See also Charles Laufer, "Why Dick Clark Dropped Pat, Ken and Justine," *'Teen*, February 1960, 12-13. See also the 1997 television documentary "Bandstand Days," shown on the Public Broadcasting System.

of the charge but justifying it: "We are all conformists whatever our age--in what we eat, in what we wear, in what we do for entertainment. When you're young it's natural to exaggerate this conformity a little."<sup>111</sup> Some adults insisted on challenging the apparent stranglehold teenage cultural norms had on individual young people. Advice columnists urged autonomy--not the cultural autonomy increasingly displayed by adolescents vis-à-vis adult norms, but individualism in the face of peer pressure. An article entitled "How Not to Kiss a Boy" told the reader

Only your own standards and feelings should guide you! . . . It's really a question of how you personally feel toward him. . . . This brings us to another way NOT to kiss a boy. Not by somebody else's standards. . . . You must discover what [your standards] really are and live by them . . . but never by somebody else's.<sup>112</sup>

Commenting on this approach, social historian John Modell noted that it sought "to co-opt the youth culture to draw physically safe and morally unexceptionable lines around [peer] standards."<sup>113</sup>

While some teenagers seemed to need protection from the demands of their own culture, others embraced it

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<sup>111</sup> "Dick Clark Talks to Teen-Agers," *Seventeen*, July 1959, 92. Clark's photograph on the cover of this issue made it the first in the magazine's fifteen-year existence to feature anyone other than fashion models on the cover. The most widely known attack on teenagers came in a book written by a husband-wife team, Grace and Fred Hechinger, *Teen-Age Tyranny* (New York: Morrow, 1963). Fred Hechinger was education editor at the *New York Times*.

<sup>112</sup> From an unnamed "teen-age magazine," quoted by Charles H. Brown, "Self-Portrait: The Teen-Type Magazine," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 338 (November 1961): 21.

<sup>113</sup> John Modell, *Into One's Own: From Youth to Adulthood in the United States, 1920-1975* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 224.

wholeheartedly and viewed deviance suspiciously. One group wrote for advice on how to deal with a classmate whose too "proper" and "highbrow" manner and dress confounded them: "She's too polite and perfect for our taste. What can we do to straighten this girl out?" They had already tried excluding her from their parties, to the displeasure of many boys who found her attractive. The guest columnist, himself a teenager, endorsed adult norms and recommended that "you four girls should concentrate more on changing your own actions and straightening yourselves out." As an incentive, he assured them that this would earn them approval and favorable attention from the boys.<sup>114</sup> The promise of sexual attractiveness could be used to sell soap and psychology alike.

Any expectation of sameness as a sign of solidarity could produce serious disagreement. Some adults disputed the legitimacy of teenage culture. Some adolescents questioned peer power and media portrayals. Usually the growth of teen autonomy was acknowledged, but arguments flared over the culture's defining characteristics. *Seventeen's* portrayals of its editors' notion of the typical teen generated letters of protest. Stories of parties and fun brought complaints that teenagers had more serious and aesthetic interests.<sup>115</sup> Reader-written fiction about heartbreak and sorrow elicited objections that such

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<sup>114</sup> Joseph L Cady, Jr., "Any Problems?" *Seventeen*, January 1956, 87.

<sup>115</sup> Letter from M. M., Excelsior Springs, Missouri, *ibid.*, July 1947, 2; Letter from J. K., Bronx, New York, *ibid.*, April 1949, 6.

writing misrepresented teenagers as gloomy and morbid.<sup>116</sup> When the editors ran a series about idealized young women called "Meet Miss Young America in . . . ," each month presenting a different city, some readers denounced the subjects for not being typical teenagers, though others viewed them as good role models.<sup>117</sup>

The need many teenagers had to find role models among their peers gives further evidence of the increasing distance they sought to put between themselves and the adult world. The anger felt at the crude stereotypes described at the start of this chapter was tempered by a sense of unease about their partial validity. Troubled by images that seemed mostly negative, yet accepting them as problems to try to transcend, the associate editor of an Oklahoma City high school newspaper wrote in blank verse:

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<sup>116</sup> Letter from J. W., St. Louis, Missouri, *ibid.*, August 1947, 4; letter from C. T., Madison, New Jersey, *ibid.*, September 1950, 4. The editor responded, "teen-agers . . . seem to find it easier to write about fear, misery and doubt than about happiness." See also the August 1947 response, where the editor noted that some say "young people write of fear, doubt and frustrations because these are basic emotions of youth." In this context, it is worth noting that the publishers of *'Teen* put a very conspicuous apostrophe in front of a word that many others wrote as simply "teen." And one dictionary's definitions of "teen" include "injury, anger, grief." (*Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language* [Cleveland and New York: World Publishing Company, 1957], 1496). The editors of *'Teen* specifically cited a dictionary definition of teen as "injury, pain, anger, vexation" as their reason for using the apostrophe in the magazine title ("We Get," *'Teen*, May 1958, 6).

<sup>117</sup> "Thank You for Your Letters," *ibid.*, November 1955, 4. Six letters appeared here on the "Meet Miss Young America" series which had begun in December 1954. Three disliked it because the subjects were not "typical teen-agers." Three liked it because "Many of us should try to follow the example they set." (L. P., Brooklyn, New York). L. L., Woodburn, Kentucky, wrote, "I wonder if it has occurred to the critics that the Miss Young America girls are interesting to read about and that many so-called 'typical' girls are not?"

Black leather jackets, levis, bop--  
These are the symbols of our world.  
A world that's complicated, fathomless, and yet--  
familiar.  
A world of courting, hot-rods and cutting classes.  
We're just kids--or are we?  
That is what we want to know.  
We grope, we search,  
We look for our identity in all the habitats of  
man,  
From concert hall to pool hall,  
Seeking the answer to our dilemmas.  
The psychologists have theories;  
Our mothers have their dreams--and we?  
We have the draft and marijuana,  
Juvenile delinquency and broken homes.  
This is our plight; this we must rise above.  
It seems impossible;  
But we, the generation of the lost, will find  
ourselves.  
Through all the violence and noise we reach toward  
Hope and happiness.  
The day will come when we will stand as heroes on  
the field,  
Unconquered, brave and free.  
Just give us time,  
And give us strength,  
And give us understanding.<sup>118</sup>

Pleading for adult patience as they struggled with the contradictions, challenges and complexity of the developing adolescent culture, teenagers like the author of these lines recognized the difficulty of their situation. The search for identity she described was a collective one--"our identity," not the plural. The adult figures she mentioned, mothers and psychologists, offer no meaningful answers nor anything of substance, just dreams and theories. The only hope was for this generation to "find ourselves." The customs and folkways they had developed provided a basis and a beginning.

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<sup>118</sup> Frances Marbury, "Black Leather Jackets," *Sooner Spirit*, 27 January 1956, 2.



### Chapter Three

#### "Are You Popular?"

When a Detroit teenager in 1958 wrote to 'Teen magazine, she sounded nearly desperate:

I have a problem. I want to be popular and I don't see why I'm not.

My clothes are super--they're the maddest! I'd rate my personality high in comparison to others. I say 'hi' to all the right people. I have a pretty face and good figure. All my make-up is the latest.

What possible reason could there be for my not being popular? <sup>1</sup>

Advice columnist Jill Curtis responded archly, "Maybe you're just the littlest bit too self-engrossed?"<sup>2</sup> This is doubly ironic--mocking in tone, it also seems to deny the teen-oriented publication's very reason for being, catering to the personal concerns of its young readers.

Indeed, the letter-writer seemed to have learned her lessons well. Among the standards of the youth culture, popularity stood highest. Fashionable clothes and cosmetics, physical attractiveness, and carefully-crafted social skills should have enabled her to join the elect, to become one of the "right people" herself. She might also have mentioned another important criterion, dates with popular boys, boys whose social success derived from their skill in sports and from the cars they drove.

Wanting to be popular put teens in Willy Loman country, seeking not only to be liked but to be well-

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from C. B., Detroit, Michigan, to "Dear Jill," 'Teen, December 1958, 42.

<sup>2</sup> Jill Curtis, "Dear Jill," *ibid.*

liked.<sup>3</sup> Rarely did writers attempt to define the term "popular," even as they advised their readers how to achieve this important, yet elusive goal. An early issue of *Seventeen* looked at the word's etymology: "It's not looks, or clothes, or necking on dates, despite what some say. The word originally meant 'of the people,' and that's what it takes to be popular. Like yourself and like other people, and show them that you do."<sup>4</sup>

Variations of this advice appeared throughout the 1940s and 1950s, urging teenagers to show sincere interest in others. The rather more snide comment by the 'Teen columnist differs only in tone, not substance. Yet teens knew, despite what their would-be adult guides sought to advise them, that looks, clothes, and, yes, necking on dates, did indeed help determine popularity.

Emphasis on popularity is a distinctively twentieth-century phenomenon developing from currents with origins beyond the youth culture. Aging salesman Willy Loman of Arthur Miller's play was certainly no teenager. The values he sought to impart to his sons grew from the "other-directed" character described by David Riesman. Less bound by the intrinsic and desperately seeking the approval of others, the other-directed personality epitomized social relations of the twentieth century.

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<sup>3</sup> Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman* (New York: Dramatists Play Service, 1952), 21. Willy disparages a character who is "liked, but he's not . . . well-liked."

<sup>4</sup> Alice Beaton, "Popularity Has Two Hands," *Seventeen*, February 1946, 104.

Neither communitarian nor egalitarian because of its sense of competitiveness and its elitism, the spirit which underlay the drive for popularity represented the triumph of the values of consumer capitalism. Teenage adoption and adaptation of these principles demonstrated both imitation and innovation as young people maneuvered to create and maintain autonomy.

Much of what signified popularity among youth required full attention and devotion to the consumer society. This meant buying the right clothes, paying close heed to the advice given by fashion boards, even making a personal commitment to serve on such boards, and carefully following the style trends depicted in magazines like *Seventeen*. Specific looks often originated with designers like Christian Dior to be adapted by a bourgeois sensibility. The process depended on Veblenian "conspicuous consumption" to dominate what was on the backs and in the minds of their purchasers. Yet teenagers were able to use this essentially materialist and consumerist stand as a springboard to establish their own distinct culture.

Though it served them in part as a capitalist, consumerist training ground, as a prior generation of 1920s college youth had found their own means of self-preparation for their eventual adult roles, it also marked a breaking point with adult-imposed values. As marketers battled with parents and other traditional leaders, as the

growing therapeutic establishment sought to direct their thinking and feeling, teenagers came into their own. The ad copy and the sales pitches showed attempts at corporate penetration of teenage culture. But a dialectical process produced a whole new consciousness.

Teenage culture contained strong elements of anti-intellectualism, regarding school as a center for social and sports activities rather than for academic endeavors. School athletic contests provided an arena to demonstrate masculine prowess and to dazzle adoring spectators, especially feminine members of the crowd. One of the most important features in determining popularity was dating, ritualized heterosexual pairing that became far more than a personal issue for the two people involved. Teenage social life increasingly depended on having the use of an automobile because of the mobility and separation from adult supervision that it provided. The superficial fragmentation into separate cliques and clubs, even sometimes into organized fraternities and sororities, masked age-based unity. But deeper fault lines of class division separated teenagers from each other. Although occasionally some adults and teenagers questioned the standards by which they measured success, the determining and achieving of popularity focused their attention and directed their lives.

Scarcely anyone disputed dating as a key indicator of popularity. One of the earliest guidance films, Coronet's

*Are You Popular?* provided a primer on dating etiquette. And five years later Coronet produced *More Dates for Kay*, showing a teenage girl how to get out of her "dating slump."<sup>5</sup> High school newspaper gossip columns routinely featured news of dating couples, and nearly as often, fashion reports. Always implicitly, and sometimes overtly, the articles identified their subjects as popular. This appeared in 1945: "Jumpin' into the jumper scene, Nancy Samuels' gray and red plaid and Helen Geisenhoff's soft gray wool merit leading roles in the 'popularity picture'...."<sup>6</sup> Student reporters took care to inform their readers of the important news about "what the slickest guys and gals are wearing."<sup>7</sup> For many years, school fashion columns typically identified the current styles by naming individuals wearing them; by the mid-1950s, they described only the articles of clothing.<sup>8</sup> The same pressures from adult authorities that phased out the gossip columns probably reduced the publication of the

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<sup>5</sup> *Are You Popular?* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1947); *More Dates for Kay* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1952).

<sup>6</sup> "A Flash of New Fashion," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 14 December 1945, 2.

<sup>7</sup> "Fads in Fashion," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 13 October 1949, 5.

<sup>8</sup> These later fashion columns without student names still provided clear prescriptions for proper dress. The following is typical:

"The girls of Bothell High School have blossomed out in their new spring outfits. The most popular of these is the cotton skirt with the short sleeved blouse. . . . Coming next in popularity are the dresses with full-gathered or pleated skirts and hoop petticoats underneath.

"With the boys this spring, it seems to be the new Italian shirts with many bright colors although the linen-like shirts with plain colors are the favorite to many of the boys.

"The biggest fad at present is the Bermuda shorts and skirts with long stockings." ("Fads 'N Fashions," *The Bothell High Cougar* [Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington] 13 April 1956, 2.)

names of individual fashion plates, but the message continued strong: what a teenager wore helped determine his or her popularity.<sup>9</sup>

Local merchants found profitable ways to tap this teenage concern. Macey's, a St. Paul department store, conducted in-school balloting for "the most popular boy" and gave the winner the title of "King" and a job selling shoes.<sup>10</sup> Elsewhere, clothing shops purchased ads in school newspapers featuring "popular seniors" as models.<sup>11</sup> Retail clothing stores throughout the country established teen fashion boards, selecting one or two girls from each local high school to promote their lines of clothing. Hi-Debbers, the group sponsored by Walker's in San Diego, promoted itself as "California's largest teen club," with dances, fashion shows, and a daily radio program featuring hit tunes played by a favorite disc jockey. Members of these boards achieved a certain celebrity status in their schools, and some held other prestigious posts such as cheerleader.<sup>12</sup> When *Seventeen* chose girls from such

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<sup>9</sup> "The growth of scholastic journalism organizations (national as well as--if not more than--regional ones) established standards for excellence in writing, design, coverage, etc. Most of those standards emphasized eliminating gossip columns in favor of objective news or feature coverage--a more professional approach to journalism." Email message from Eddie Blick to author, 6 September 1996. Blick is a professor of journalism at Louisiana Tech, specializing in scholastic journalism at the secondary school level.

<sup>10</sup> "Store Again Will Sponsor King Contest," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 23 February 1945, 3.

<sup>11</sup> "Popular Seniors . . . Gerald Lively and Sherry Crew Get Their Clothes From Dale's Shoppe and Eddie Williams Man's Shop" (Advertisement, *The Colt* [Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas], 1 June 1956, 4.)

<sup>12</sup> *La Jolla Hi-Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 30 November 1945, 3; 24 October 1947, 3; 8 October 1948, 2; 5 May 1950, 1; 5 October 1953, 2.

already elite groups to be on the magazine's national fashion council, school newspapers reported the selections enthusiastically.<sup>13</sup> These special girls' popularity had received a commercial imprimatur at the highest level.

As a further indicator of corporate penetration of the youth culture, advertising aimed at teenagers included more of their heroes and idols. Though celebrity endorsements of advertised products were nothing new, the type of the celebrities began to change. Previously, movie stars and professional sports figures had been featured in ads aimed at young people.<sup>14</sup> Increasingly in the 1950s, the faces of Teen Fashion Board members, cheerleaders, and high school athletes appeared in

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<sup>13</sup> The engagement of the student press in this process is best illustrated by two excerpts from stories on new fashion board members: "Joan Garner, Central junior, is featured in the February issue of *Seventeen* Magazine as a member of the publication's Teen Fashion Council.

"Joan was selected by the girls who work with her at Rothschild-Young Quinlan department store to be a delegate to the Council. Pictures of the Council members from all over the nation introduces a portfolio of spring fashions specially approved for teenagers by the Council.

"In addition to selecting fashions for the high school set, Joan will report to *Seventeen* on the current fashion trends, entertainment, popular fads and school and social events." ("Club Currents," *Central High Times* [Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota], 8 February 1957, 30).

"Tech senior Joan McComb has recently received national recognition in the January issue of *Seventeen* as a member of the teen publication's 1960 national fashion council.

"Pictured in a special feature, 'Our Fashion Experts,' Joan, the council delegate from Fandel's, was selected on the basis of her flair for fashion, good grooming, responsibility and leadership.

"She will act as *Seventeen's* St. Cloud fashion and news reporter." ("Senior Girl Joins 'Seventeen' Board," *The Tech* [Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota], 15 January 1960, 3).

<sup>14</sup> A few among many examples of advertisements featuring celebrity endorsements: movie actress Marguerite Chapman for Max Factor cosmetics, *Seventeen*, March 1947, 188; professional football player Frank Gifford for Wilson Sporting Goods, *Scholastic*, 13 September 1957, 3.

advertising. In February 1951, a full page ad in *Seventeen* featured the five fashion board members from high schools in Madison, Wisconsin, on behalf of International brand silverware. A year later in a similar ad, "Pretty Pittsburgh Cheerleaders pick[ed] their favorite International Sterling patterns."<sup>15</sup> Their personal fame was local but their position in the youth culture represented a more universal prestige. Marketers attempted to co-opt peer culture standards for their own purposes. Sheaffer Pens ran a series of ads in the classroom magazine *Scholastic* during the 1957-58 and 1958-59 school years featuring large photographs of student celebrities promoting the sponsor's ballpoint pen. Among the high school ball players, class officers, and club leaders was New Trier High School cheerleader Ann-Margret Olson from Winnetka, Illinois, foreshadowing her later fame as the film actress and singer known simply as Ann-Margret.<sup>16</sup> Local merchants employed a similar mode of marketing, as drive-in restaurants and teenage hangouts ran school newspaper advertisements featuring photos and words of praise from student athletes. Not only did this

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<sup>15</sup> Advertisements for International Silver Company in *Seventeen*, February 1951, 3, and February 1952, 4. The earliest example found in researching this dissertation appeared in 1950, a half-page advertisement for a blemish-fighting skin cream endorsed by a Philadelphia cheerleader. (Advertisement for Noxzema, *Seventeen*, October 1950, 126.)

<sup>16</sup> Advertisement for Sheaffer Pens featuring Ann-Margret Olson (née Olsson), *Scholastic*, 17 October 1958, 2; repeated 6 February 1959, 3. Similar ads appeared with endorsements by high school athletes, student council officers, other cheerleaders, and Greek-letter social club members, between 7 March 1957 and 8 May 1959.



promote the business, but it also anointed certain youngsters as models for the community.<sup>17</sup>

Even without endorsements by student celebrities, advertising aimed at teenagers strongly emphasized the link between the product being promoted and the goal of popularity. A 1947 high school newspaper advertised a portable phonograph as "Popularity in a Package," illustrated with a photo of a teenage couple standing cheek-to-cheek by the record player.<sup>18</sup> In 1953, student editors in Pittsburgh printed a mock letter spoofing the advertiser appeal to popularity. The writer claimed to have been "an unpopular wallflower without any social life" until discovering the school newspaper. "Through it I learned what the well dressed student was wearing and what the campus wheels were doing. ...[Now] there's nothing at Allderdice I can't discuss--intelligently. You too can become the most sought after boy or girl in your crowd by simply subscribing to the Foreword....[signed] Popular"<sup>19</sup> Perhaps only half-joking, this appeal touched on deeply-felt social anxieties even as it parodied them.

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<sup>17</sup> See advertising for Rad's Drive-In, Houghton, Washington, throughout the 1959-60 school year in the *Lake Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington). Each ad featured a different athlete, or occasionally a non-sports activity leader such as yearbook editor Marjie Bauman (8 April 1960, 4). In the fall, halfback Rob Avery proclaimed "Wow, it's a square deal." (13 November 1959, 3). Later in the spring, these words were attributed to Bob Lambert, holder of the school's high jump record: "It's a Cool Place to Go." (29 April 1960, 4).

<sup>18</sup> Advertisement for Capitol Phonographs, *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 2 May 1947, 3.

<sup>19</sup> Letter beginning "Dear Friend," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.), 13 February 1953, 2.

Advertisers recognized a fundamental precept of the youth culture, that success with the opposite sex provided both a means and a measure of popularity. Clothes, cosmetics and accessories were promoted as "date bait." This odd two-word phrase recurred in articles and ad copy in the 1940s, along with its lesser-used cousin "whistle bait." A dress advertisement exclaimed: "Huba Huba. Super date bait in wickedly demure Dan River cotton...." Several years later, a full page ad headlined "they get that look in their eye . . . when **Date Bait** goes by!" The product advertised was a "midget travel case, bright with school stickers . . . and inside, two long-lasting Dorothy Gray lipsticks fastened to gay miniature felt pennants." The large photograph in this full-page ad showed a young woman wearing a dress and gloves, holding "Date Bait" in her hand, smiling at three shadowy young men as she passed them.<sup>20</sup>

Marketers of a skin cream illustrated their full-page advertisement with a photograph of a teenage couple in formal attire, the boy pinning a floral corsage to the girl's dress as they prepared to embark on an important date. The ad copy stated the notion forcefully: "Was there ever a teen-ager who *didn't* long to be popular? Who wasn't hunting for the *right* guy? Who didn't examine her

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<sup>20</sup> Advertisement for Dan River Mills, *Seventeen*, January 1946, 131; advertisement for Dorothy Gray lipstick, *Seventeen*, August 1951, 21; *ibid.*, December 1952, 175.

face cautiously day after day knowing that a soft, sweet, clear complexion is tempting bait to any fellow?"<sup>21</sup>

Thinking of themselves as bait designed to lure and snare boys, teenage girls must have developed a certain detachment from their own bodies, seeing them as means to an end--becoming part of a couple. The body became objectified and commodified. The sense of inadequacy encouraged by promoters of so-called beauty products increased the desire for change in one's single status. The goal of popularity through heterosexual pairing formed a common theme of advertising and permeated the culture. At the heart of the ideology was the notion that one would be transformed magically by such a bond.

Teen-oriented fiction certainly incorporated this idea of the power of pairing. Maureen Daly's 1942 novel *Seventeenth Summer* spoke to readers who believed its fundamental premise that a romantic attachment would alter all other relationships and a teenager's social standing:

It's funny what a boy can do. One day you're nobody and the next you're the girl some fellow goes with and the other fellows look at you harder and wonder what you've got and wish that they'd been the one to take you out first. And the girls say hello and want you to walk down to the drugstore with them because the boy who likes you might come along and he might have other boys with him. Going with a boy gives you a new identity....<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Advertisement for Noxema, *Seventeen*, April 1956, 175. Italics in original.

<sup>22</sup> Maureen Daly, *Seventeenth Summer* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1942), 60. Quoted by Linda K. Christian-Smith, "Romancing The Girl: Adolescent Romance Novels and the Construction of Femininity," in Leslie G. Roman and Linda K. Christian-Smith [eds.], *Becoming*

Showing the widespread influence of this book and its underlying ideology, school newspapers reported *Seventeenth Summer* as a favorite among their girls, and at least one group of students presented a dramatized version as their 1951 class play.<sup>23</sup>

Maureen Daly's importance as an influence on and a chronicler of teenage culture goes well beyond the impact of her highly successful novel. Born in 1921, she was barely out of her teens herself when *Seventeenth Summer* first appeared. Following its publication, she wrote a teenage advice column for the *Chicago Tribune* during 1943 and 1944, then passed that responsibility to her younger sister, high school senior Sheila John Daly. Maureen Daly covered teenage topics for the *Ladies' Home Journal* during the rest of the 1940s and into the early 1950s, writing advice for "sub-debs" and surveying their activities for adult readers of the magazine. Her "Profile of Youth"

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*Feminine: The Politics of Popular Culture.* (London, New York and Philadelphia: The Falmer Press, 1988), 84-85.

<sup>23</sup> "Read This And Weep," *The Bothell Hi Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington) 9 April 1946, 2; "Library Caters to 'Teen-Agers, Gunning Reports," *Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 18 February 1947, 4; "Book Worms," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 20 October 1950, 2; "Juniors Present Play; Myrtle Bacon Directs: Maureen Daly story *Seventeenth Summer*, dramatized by Anne Coulter Martens," *The Tech* (Saint Cloud Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota), 9 November 1951, 1. The three-act play appeared in 1949. (Anne Coulter Martens, *Seventeenth Summer* [Chicago: Dramatic Publishing Co., 1949]). Indicating the success and wide readership of Daly's book, the twenty-ninth printing of *Seventeenth Summer* took place in 1950, and it continued to appear in new editions, most recently in 1986. It remained in print in 1998.

series found a large readership and appeared later as a book.<sup>24</sup>

A typical Maureen Daly "Sub-Deb" column included a twenty-question quiz, "Do You Have What It Takes to be Popular?" Among the queries for the reader to affirm was "Do you . . . date-dream about an evening with [movie stars] Peter Lawford, Guy Madison, or some local glamour boy?" Dating a prestigious partner, even in one's imagination, carried a cachet that promoted popularity. Another question asked "Do you like doggie roasts?" These outdoor gatherings of hungry heterosexual couples roasting wieners impaled on sticks over an open flame might be subject to deep Freudian interpretation. The less phallogentric might emphasize its wholesome outdoor image and its association with Scouting, camping, and a mythologized pioneer tradition, far removed from the corrupting influence of urban fleshpots. Whatever the symbolic underpinnings, these gatherings' social importance to teenagers in the late 1940s and early 1950s

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<sup>24</sup> Maureen Daly, "Are You Sure You're to the Manners Born," *Chicago Sunday Tribune*, Graphic Section, 21 February 1943, 10; article titles varied as her column appeared each Sunday without a consistent name, though she was identified each time as the author of *Seventeenth Summer*. On Friday, October 22, 1943, the first of her "On the Solid Side" columns appeared, a thrice-weekly feature dealing with etiquette, romance and parent problems. Sheila John Daly took over the column beginning January 16, 1945, and continued writing it until the feature ceased in the summer of 1954. Maureen Daly took charge of the monthly "Sub-Deb" column in the *Ladies' Home Journal* in November 1945 and continued in that role until December 1950. The "Profile of Youth" series, focusing each month on one individual teenager, began in the June 1949 issue. *Profile of Youth*, a book reprinting the twelve articles on individuals as well as the complementary surveys of youth social trends, appeared in 1951.

is certain, as an activity most often done in couples. Here, too, the youth culture linked pairing with popularity.<sup>25</sup>

Evidence of the centrality of the wiener roast to teenage dating can be found in many of the guidance films, such as *Are You Popular?* and *What to Do on a Date*. At the conclusion of *The Nation to Defend*, eighth in the fourteen-part series *Are You Ready for Service?*, designed to motivate adolescent boys for their military obligations, the narrator proclaimed that "when you are called to defend your nation, you are called to defend freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the pursuit of happiness." The camera showed two couples sitting cozily by the fire at a wiener roast to emphasize this final point. When the adolescents in *Make Way for Youth* were stymied in their campaign for a teen canteen, they called an emergency meeting/wiener roast, insuring a substantial turnout. At the end of *Feeling Left Out?*, the formerly "loneliest boy in school" is certified as fully socially adjusted when a friend invites him to that weekend's wiener roast--"and bring your girl!" *Control Your Emotions* opened with a raging blaze as a cautionary visual metaphor and concluded with a scene of seven unpaired teens by a small subdued fire, roasting marshmallows instead of wieners.<sup>26</sup> The adult filmmakers here implicitly

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<sup>25</sup> Maureen Daly, "The Sub-Deb--What's Your P.Q.?" *Ladies' Home Journal*, January 1949, 28.

<sup>26</sup> *Are You Popular?* (Chicago: Coronet, 1947); *What to Do on a Date* (Chicago: Coronet, 1951); *The Nation to Defend* (Chicago: Coronet,

recognized the passionate potential of the wiener roast by offering a dateless, emotionally-damped alternative.

Mentioned frequently in school newspapers, wiener roasts had become a staple of student social life. Reports frequently named the sponsoring group and the guests, often in boy-girl pairs. Publication certified popularity, from association with a prestigious group and by identification as part of a dating couple.<sup>27</sup> Some editors found these events so commonplace that they became less newsworthy. The gossip columnist at a Pittsburgh high school named three couples who had a steak fry in a city park, calling it "something a little different from the usual wiener roast."<sup>28</sup> Though their choice of menu distinguished them enough to gain them additional attention, these six teenagers resembled all the others in successfully seeking public notice and approbation of their social standing.

Whether at steak fries, wiener roasts, movie theaters, or dances, dating played a crucial role in determining popularity. Sociologist Willard Waller had surveyed dating patterns among college students in the

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1952); *Make Way for Youth* (New York: Transfilm for the National Social Welfare Assembly Youth Division, 1947); *Feeling Left Out? Social Adjustment* (Chicago: Coronet, 1951); *Control Your Emotions* (Chicago: Coronet, 1950).

<sup>27</sup> See Audrey Anderson, "Teen Tattlers," *Tulsa Daily World*, 21 November 1948, sec. 4, p. 12; Kay Herwig, "Teen Tattlers," *Tulsa Daily World*, 4 November 1951, Sec. 4, p. 7. Anderson and Herwig were high school students who reported each Sunday on teenage social life for the society section of this metropolitan newspaper.

<sup>28</sup> "Keyhole," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pa.), 17 November 1950, 4.

1930s and observed what he called "the rating and dating complex." He described a social system which measured popularity by material possessions and the prestige of one's dating partners. As he explained it, students dated not to form meaningful romantic attachments, but to establish and increase their social standing.<sup>29</sup>

Beth Bailey's history of twentieth-century courtship noted a significant shift in dating patterns at the time of World War II. The rating and dating system had valued what Bailey called "promiscuous popularity, demonstrating competitive success through the number and variety of dates they commanded." She observed that young adults writing the magazine advice columns for 1940s and 1950s teens had been raised on rating and dating. She also described the shift in dating patterns to going steady, causing a decline in the Waller model. The trend was away from promiscuous popularity to what Bailey termed "play-marriage" as going steady became the youth culture's "parallel convention" to the real thing. But whatever sorts of couples they formed, being part of one remained consistently a key to teenagers' popularity.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Willard Waller, "The Rating and Dating Complex," *American Sociological Review* 2 (1937): 727-734.

<sup>30</sup> Beth L. Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth Century America* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 26-30, 49-50. Throughout Bailey's book runs the assumption that standards of youth culture developed on college campuses, subsequently to be imitated by others, especially by younger teens. For a contrasting point of view, though dealing with an earlier era, see Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986). As the title indicates, Peiss found the origins of youth culture standards and rituals in the working



At once reportorial and prescriptive, the *Ladies' Home Journal* proclaimed the ethos quite directly: "Every boy and girl wants to be popular, and the mark of popularity is frequent dating." Although adults advised against going steady, changing norms within teenage culture made the single partner necessary to achieve this mark. Non-steadies dated less and less frequently. The "Sub-Deb" column from the same periodical certainly emphasized the connection. A promotional paragraph asked, "Want to Be Popular? . . . then get your inside information and personality 'know-how' from the Sub-Deb booklets! Answers on everything from dating problems and popularity posers to smooth hair styles and what to say on a first date . . . ." Increasingly, that first date had become an audition for going steady. Just as in the pre-steady era, dating and popularity were inextricably linked.<sup>31</sup>

Both reflecting and furthering this ideology of dating as essential to social life, theatrical productions written for the high school market provided considerable insight into youth culture. *Too Many Dates* presented a comic situation based on the main character having broken up with her steady boyfriend just before the big wiener

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class. For an interpretation similar to that of Peiss, focused specifically on young telephone operators, see Stephen H. Norwood, *Labor's Flaming Youth: Telephone Operators and Worker Militancy, 1878-1923* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990).

<sup>31</sup> "Profile of Youth--Sex Freedom and Morals in the United States," *Ladies' Home Journal*, June 1949, 48; Maureen Daly, "The Sub-Deb," *Ladies' Home Journal*, January 1949, 28.

roast. She cannot attend without an escort, as one friend explains: "Louanne . . . Do you realize you're without social security again? And we can't allow anyone to come along without a date! A lone wolf female murders a party."<sup>32</sup> The playwrights imply no criticism of the attitude. Expressing what might be called the "heterosexual imperative," this character's line typified a widespread insistence of teenage culture on boy-girl pairs. A single was regarded as a potential predator, a "lone wolf" whose solitary status presaged an attack to steal someone else's partner. Casting members of the same sex in the role of rivals and seeing only heterosexual relationships as meaningful, this ideology restricted alternative approaches to friendship and intimacy. The insistence on dating dominated the quest for popularity.

The supporting evidence in school newspapers, as they promoted the heterosexual imperative, is overwhelming. With giddy breathlessness, the writers of gossip columns heralded each new pairing, celebrated couples' anniversaries, bemoaned breakups, imagined matches, and chided those who resisted the siren call. A few examples illustrate the tone:

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<sup>32</sup> Marrijane and Joseph Hayes, *Too Many Dates* (New York: Samuel French, 1950), 19. I examined two school newspapers which reported productions of this play: "Senior Thespians Lauded by Very Enthusiastic Audience," *La Jolla Hi Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 18 March 1951, 1; Elinor Coleman, "Actors Dramatize Teen-Age Problems," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 2 May 1952, 1.

Jane Warner has been stepping out with our popular ex-football captain, Joe Green, lately. Nice going, kids!

Why doesn't Barton Thompson give some girl a chance? Girls won't bite, Barton.

Nannette Norris and Joe Clayton have reached an all time high. They have been going steady three years. Not many high school kids can say that.

What happened to that budding romance between Bev B. and Bob? We thought that would be a wonderful adventure for both!

We wouldn't claim the title of Cupid . . . but . . . here are a few couples that don't go together that we think would make perfect pairs. . . . Jerry Penk--Mary King [and nine more similarly paired].<sup>33</sup>

Encouragement of the dating-popularity link appeared in several forms in school newspapers. Some printed names of students in the form of a quiz, asking the reader to match the name of each boy in one column with his girlfriend in another.<sup>34</sup> Pairing off seemed a sure way of getting in the newspaper, documenting one's social standing and even one's very existence. Some of the papers printed advice columns, similar to those found in commercial publications. The resemblance of one such piece from Arlington, Texas, was more than ideological:

"Do you have a date this weekend?" That's a question almost every girl at AHS is asked.

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<sup>33</sup> "Kampus Kapers," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 6 February 1946, 10; "Colt Capers," *ibid.*, 24 October 1949; "Soonerosities," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 11 October 1951, 3; "Teen-Age Twitter," *Bothell Hi Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 19 December 1944, 3; "It's Your Deal," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 14 February 1947, 2.

<sup>34</sup> E. g., "Match the Couples," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 7 November 1949, 2; untitled, *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 29 January 1954, 2.

Most of them answer "yes" while others are crying out their unhappy story of "no".

You just sit at home waiting for the phone to ring asking yourself aimlessly "What's wrong with me?" and everytime you think about it you feel more helpless and unwanted.

Do you have any idea of how much a date costs? Going to a show costs around one dollar and a half. Going to the root beer stand and getting something to eat afterwards costs a good half dollar. This money means a lot to a boy so you should be at your best in looks as well as behavior so you he [sic] will have a chance to be proud of you. Remember, a boy can easily go stag and spend half the money he would if he took you along.

Don't let the popular girls fool you. Every girl wishes she were so popular she had to sweep the boys off her doorstep.<sup>35</sup>

Similar sentiments had appeared in numerous magazines before. In fact, many of these exact words had been printed in the *Woman's Home Companion* nine years earlier. Appropriation of that article demonstrated the impact of the commercial press on young people's thinking. It also exemplified youth's use of the mass media for its own purposes. In this instance, by breaking a fundamental rule against plagiarism, the student confounded the standards and expectations of school authorities.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> "Date Tips," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 10 October 1955, 2.

<sup>36</sup> The original article began with these paragraphs: "It's date night again and the whole evening stretches before you, an appalling total of empty hours. You don't know what to do with yourself. You wait for the phone to ring. . . but if it does, you're ashamed to be caught at home. You could join the other dateless Dotties at the corner drug, but the whole town would see you. . . and as for going to the movies with your parents--not on date night. So you spend the whole evening aimlessly asking, 'What's the matter with me?' feeling more hopeless and unwanted every moment.

"Let's thoroughly case this dateless situation. Do you know how much a date costs? Take a movie at the local theater ... two admissions, plus tax, shoot a dollar. . . two sodas afterward take four bits. . . a grand total of one-fifty, which is a big hunk of any guy's allowance. And if you can add, you know that an extra-special date would leave a lad flat-broke for a month. Most boys in

Whatever its origin, the message seemed harshly true to the teenagers who had incorporated it as a fundamental principle of the youth culture: no one ever felt popular enough. This anxiety varied by gender. Teenage girls relied somewhat more heavily on dating as a measure of popularity than did boys, who had a greater range of options to gain recognition. Even the most socially successful teenager held a deep sense of inadequacy and wished for ever more abundant signs of acceptance. Sweeping the boys off her doorstep might help demonstrate to one ever-striving girl and the watching world that she had attained a nearly impossible goal.

Not all the aspiring swains would contribute equally to increasing the popularity of our hypothetical doorstep sweeper. As Waller wrote, several factors went into evaluating how a date rated, including cars, clothes, and the rating of previous dates. Certain factors were gender-specific, including athletic achievement for young men and a higher emphasis on physical attractiveness for young women. Membership in elite social groups, both

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high school don't have very much money to spend and since it costs twice as much to take a girl along, they usually make their fun stag. Of course some boys' parents are extremely liberal and other boys work to hear a jingle in their jeans. But the average boy ekes out a small allowance and if he hasn't the cash to show you a good time, he won't show his face!

"Don't let the popular girls fool you. Every girl wishes she were so popular that she had to sweep the boys off her doorstep. But girls who don't go steady discover they're rushed breathless for three weeks and then for the next three it's calm after the storm." (Judith Unger Scott, "No Date is No Disgrace," *Woman's Home Companion*, November 1946, 158-159. Ellipses in original.)

formal and informal, also boosted the popularity rating and acceptability of a date.<sup>37</sup>

Scholastic achievement and studiousness played no role in determining dating desirability, according to Waller's observations of college students. Among high school students twenty years later, James Coleman found a negative correlation between academic effort and popularity.<sup>38</sup> Teen-oriented fiction also acknowledged this fact of life, as in "Genius Wins Prestige," a short story written for *Seventeen* by an author who was herself a teenager. The main character, a studious girl nicknamed "Genius," lacked dates, and earned respect only through a misunderstanding. When the high school newspaper editor telephoned her about publicizing an upcoming dance, her sister and a friend eavesdropped. Hearing a boy talk to her about the dance, they assumed she had a date, and thus treated her with new regard. The author neither criticized nor resolved the situation.<sup>39</sup> Too high academic achievement brought disdain from the youth culture, though occasionally

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<sup>37</sup> Waller, "Rating and Dating," *passim*. Beth Bailey noted that Waller treated young women's popularity rating as almost entirely "associational," deriving from the prestige of the young men whom they dated. She persuasively contended that this analysis ignored the factors that made these young women attractive as highly rated dates in the first place, including many of the same factors that contributed to the status of the young men. (Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat*, 149n.)

<sup>38</sup> Waller, "Rating and Dating," 730; James S. Coleman, *The Adolescent Society: The Social Life of the Teenager and Its Impact on Education* (New York: The Free Press, 1961), 310.

<sup>39</sup> Barbara Methuen, "Genius Wins Prestige," *Seventeen*, April 1946, 19. This was one of two reader-written stories in the "It's All Yours" section. The April issue of *Seventeen* for many years was designated as the "Girl Meets Boy Issue."

attention was paid to the love life of young scholars, as in this somewhat condescending item from a school gossip column: "The brains Billy Lockhart and Patsy Murphy have been seen conversing together lately, and I don't think it is about school work!"<sup>40</sup>

James Coleman blamed rampant anti-intellectualism in the youth culture for the difficulty faced by educators in communicating effectively with teenagers. His and others' research showed that athletes who did not put much effort into their studies had markedly higher social standing among their classmates than did non-athletes who worked hard in school. Coleman explained this by noting that the athlete directed his efforts to winning for the group, while the scholastic high achiever appeared selfish in seeking only individual success.<sup>41</sup> Yet an occasional editorial objected to the values elevating sports heroes far above the scholars:

Why is it that many students are excited about activities and indifferent to knowledge? . . . sports receive such tremendous recognition and praise. The intellectual receives very little of either. . . . Maybe our idol of Mr. Touchdown or Miss Activity could be switched for a determined,

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<sup>40</sup> "Soonerosties," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma) 8 October 1948, 3. To put the item in context, it followed a list of thirteen steady couples and a matchmaking proposal: "Wonder why these people don't get together? Penny Smith and Calvin Warden; . . . [three more boy-girl matches suggested]; and why don't Marilyn Rosenfield and Annette Arnold latch on to someone permanently?"

<sup>41</sup> Coleman, *Adolescent Society*, 309-310. He cited the findings of Abraham J. Tannenbaum, "Adolescents' Attitudes Toward Academic Brilliance" (Ph.D. Dissertation, New York University, 1960), as well as the results of Coleman's own surveys of students in ten Illinois high schools in 1957.

long-forgotten, but struggling little guy known as Joe Intellect.<sup>42</sup>

Student athletes sometimes abused their own celebrity, angering their supposed supporters. When lettermen misbehaved, they could find themselves chided in the school newspaper: ". . .they think they are entitled to cause trouble . . . because they are STARS."<sup>43</sup> But such attacks appeared rarely, as exceptions to the general pattern of adulation. Every school newspaper devoted at least one page of every issue to sports news, with photographs of athletes and cheerleaders, reports of recent games and matches, previews of upcoming sporting events, and frequent interviews with the participants. Often the front page also featured sports stories with banner headlines as lead articles.

Male sports stars rated high as dates. Students reported to an adult interviewer that "a 'really popular' girl may end up going steady with a football player, a basketball player and a baseball player the same year, in each one's big season."<sup>44</sup> Yet girls rarely found encouragement or opportunity for their own participation in sports. Some schools had no organized athletic

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<sup>42</sup> Tobe Jensen, "Intellectual Versus Social Butterfly," *Lake Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 28 October 1960, 2.

<sup>43</sup> Letter to the editor from "Susie," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 19 March 1953, 2. An editorial complaint against arrogant lettermen also appeared in the *La Jolla Hi Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 20 March 1947, 2.

<sup>44</sup> "Profile of Youth--Going Steady," *Ladies' Home Journal*, June 1949, 47.



activities for them, while others organized intramural teams through the Girls' Athletic Association, the G.A.A. But participants acquired no celebrity value or passport to popularity there. Social success in this arena came more readily through dating a male athlete or by supporting the teams as a cheerleader or majorette. Clear gender roles defined sports as masculine activities demonstrating the manly prowess of participants in interscholastic athletics. Football, the most gendered activity of all, produced the biggest stars and the most desirable dates.

Another arena of competitive masculine endeavor could be found on the streets and in parking lots and garages. Although getting a driver's license was a teenage rite of passage for both boys and girls, the car culture had a distinctly masculine ambiance, one that directly connected a boy's wheels with his social standing. A 1943 Pittsburgh high school gossip columnist asked a fundamental question about a classmate: "Why is Frank Donnelly so popular after school? Could it be his wonderful personality . . . or his neat car?"<sup>45</sup> With the end of wartime rationing of tires and gasoline, cars became a more significant part of the teenage social scene. A Texas high school gossip column filled with reports of steady couples concluded with this item: "Howdy and his car certainly are popular." Other reports

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<sup>45</sup> Natalie Roth, "Keyhole," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 14 January 1943, 4.

reinforced the important relation of automobiles to dating: "Betty Ann thinks a lot of James Ditto and his '46 Buick;" "whenever a green Dodge is seen . . . you'll find crowds of anxious 'femmes' screaming 'WILBUR'!" "What's in the blue coupe that picks up Jean Forliti everyday after school? . . . Ronny Meehan . . . has acquired . . . a '49 black Ford . . . with radio, heater, white walled tires, spotlight and overdrive. Only thing he's lacking is something cute and blond to sit on the right hand side of the front seat;" "Beverly Muse is lucky to have a boyfriend with a Ford V-8."<sup>46</sup> As several of these excerpts showed, ultimately the identity of the automobile held more importance than that of the often nameless human companion. A high school senior in Dallas remembered with some puzzlement her feud with two other girls over one boy's attention: "I think it all started just because he had an ole green Cadillac convertible. . . I know we didn't all like him that much."<sup>47</sup>

Mixing truth and humor, a school newspaper printed this advice:

- Fellas! Do you want to be a social success?  
Just follow these simple rules.
1. Have a car.
  2. Be a pleasant conversationalist.
  3. Have a car.

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<sup>46</sup> "Kampus Kapers," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 30 September 1946, 3; *ibid.*, 15 October 1946, 7; "Keyhole," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 13 April 1951, 4; "All About You 'n You!" *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 18 January 1952, 2; "Colt Box Chatter," *The Colt*, 6 April 1949, 2.

<sup>47</sup> "Profile of Youth--My Year of Decision," *Ladies' Home Journal*, June 1949, 83. Emphasis in original.

4. Be congenial.
  5. Have a car.
  6. Be a good listener.
  7. Have a car.
- (Numbers 2, 4, and 6 can be omitted if the car is a red convertible.)<sup>48</sup>

Further emphasizing its importance, many school newspapers included a car column, each describing one student's automobile in detail. The information given was heavily mechanical and must have given the readers who understood its technical terms a sense of being part of an in-group.<sup>49</sup> Usually the column featured a photograph of the honored vehicle. Sometimes also appearing in the picture, the proud owner was extensively quoted and praised for his mechanical prowess. But as one paper headlined, "Not Only Mechanics Talk About Autos." The article described cars belonging to girls as well as boys, and focused more on color schemes and styling than on engines and transmissions.<sup>50</sup> The interplay of car culture,

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<sup>48</sup> *The Tech* (Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota), 1 October 1954, np. This item appeared in the same issue which announced the introduction of a required driver training course in the school curriculum.

<sup>49</sup> However, James Coleman found that the car hobbyists became so specialized in their interests that they removed themselves from the mainstream of teen culture, as did the intensely devoted pop music fans. (Coleman, *Adolescent Society*, 129). It is difficult to determine how many teenagers understood and enjoyed a typical car column: "Under the hood Don's running a 59 A block with a 3 5/16 bore, 1/4 inch stroke, Edelbrock 8 to 1 heads, and a Evans 3 pot manifold. . . . Don plans . . . a Weber F 7 cam, headers, 3 3/8 bore and a Harmon and Collins ignition." ("Kar Korner," *La Jolla Hi-Tide* [La Jolla High School, La Jolla, California], 19 March 1954, 2.) In at least one school, students voted to choose the Car of the Year. See "Kar Korner--'54 Merc Rates Rod of the Year," *Lake Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 3 June 1958, 3.

<sup>50</sup> "Not Only Mechanics Talk About Autos," *Marionette* (Harding Junior-Senior High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 19 December 1955, 2.

popularity, dating, and teenage celebrity found significant expression in an article describing two students' customized Fords:

While bragging about getting two girls and all that 'petticoat stuff' in the front seat, [Ronnie] became quite embarrassed when he began to explain how he grabbed one of the girls' legs instead of the gear shift. Should we classify this as a problem? . . .  
. . .three of the cheerleaders noticed the resemblance of Don's car to the one Elvis drove in 'Loving You.' Shaken by the girls' flattery, Don invited them to take a ride. Maybe this is a new way of determining how many can get in the front seat of a hot-rod--fill it with girls!<sup>51</sup>

The car culture increasingly shaped the nature of the adolescent experience in the post-war years.<sup>52</sup> Drive-ins supplanted drugstores as teenage hangouts. "Parking" became synonymous with sexual experimentation. Greater mobility took young people further away from parental supervision, contributing both to greater youth autonomy and a heightened level of adult anxiety. Parents fretted that their sons and daughters drove too fast and parked too much, and in both modes went too far.

Widespread safety concerns generated much discussion by teenagers as well as adults. Less than a year after V-E Day, a California student newspaper expressed concern

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<sup>51</sup> Ann Snider, "Chug-Sssprrt! Antique Model T's, Souped Hot Rods Reflect Hours of Hard Work, Careful Thought, Months of Tinkering," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 24 September 1957, 2.

<sup>52</sup> Every school newspaper examined in doing research for this dissertation contained numerous references to students' cars and driving habits. However, one student who moved to Arlington, Texas, from Rochester, Minnesota, claimed that "the main difference is that here the kids have cars and bring them to school, while in Rochester to bring a car to school is unheard of." ("Connie Colt," *The Colt*, 12 October 1953, 2.)

about "The maniac and idiot drivers on the Viking campus [who] are becoming a menace to local pedestrians. If you wish to stay alive, do not walk in the parking lot in front of L.J.H.S. before or after school." The remainder of the article described individual reckless drivers with some adolescent humorous hyperbole: "Harvey 'El Diablo' Miller holds the record of the school with 32 1/2 pedestrians and 23 accidents to his credit. You will find him driving a 1930 Model A Ford crazily into the asphalt lot almost every morning. Keep your eyes open for this speed fiend in his 'hot rod'."<sup>53</sup>

Anxiety over teenage driving persisted through the rest of the 1940s and 1950s, although some sought to minimize the dangers. A Texas teen noted that only eighteen percent of her schoolmates who drove had been in accidents or received traffic tickets.<sup>54</sup> This percentage may have seemed low to her, but many others continued to express concern. Mass circulation magazines often printed articles about adolescents and automobiles.<sup>55</sup> And student-

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<sup>53</sup> "'Mad' Drivers at L.J.H.S. Too Much for Pedestrians," *La Jolla Hi Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California) 4 May 1946, 2.

<sup>54</sup> Susan Murchison, "What About Teen-Age Drivers?" *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 5 December 1955, 1.

<sup>55</sup> Among the scores of articles in the popular press, many decried the dangers of teenage driving: Ralph Wallace, "Kid Killers at the Wheel," *Collier's*, 28 May 1949, 13, 76-77; Ruth Imler, "#1 Dating Menace, the Automobile," *Ladies' Home Journal*, November 1955, 54; William J. Brink, "Crazy Kids with Cars," *Newsweek*, 2 March 1959, 26-30. Others praised existing programs to improve teen driving: Charles Niehuis, "Help Your Teen-Age Drivers," *Better Homes and Gardens*, May 1953, 250-256, 355; Dan Fowler, "How to Tame Teenagers," *Look*, 25 August 1953, 78-81. Some proposed new plans to help bring up teenage driving standards and highway safety: Arthur Bartlett, "Teach Them to Drive--and Survive," *Woman's Home Companion*, April 1946, 30, 75-76; "Teen-Agers Are Good Drivers,

written editorials hectored their readers to drive more carefully and quietly. Some cautionary tales described imaginary drag races ending with the death of the protagonists, as in "This was dictated from a slab in the morgue." Most chilling were the periodic accounts of actual fatal traffic accidents involving their classmates.<sup>56</sup>

Alarm over the high accident rate among young motorists led to the establishment of driver education courses in high schools. By the middle of the 1950s such courses seemed ubiquitous throughout the country.<sup>57</sup> Beginning in 1952, service organizations such as the Junior Chamber of Commerce sponsored annual "Roadeos" in which teenage drivers competed to win prizes with their

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But . . . , " *Woman's Home Companion*, March 1956, 345; Jean R. Komaiko, "How to Make Teen Drivers Good Drivers," *Parents'*, September 1960, 52-53, 128-132. A number of articles asked teens what they thought of their friends' driving abilities: "Are Teen-Agers Too Young to Drive?" *Senior Scholastic*, 18 January 1950, 8-9, 15; Matt Perry, "As A Teen-Age Driver Sees It," *Parents'*, November 1953, 102; "Teen-Age Drivers: Should They Be Slowed Down?" *Senior Scholastic*, 6 March 1959, 6-7, 26.

<sup>56</sup> Editors often complained about noise and danger caused by thoughtless student drivers. See "Do You Feel Run Down Lately?" *Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 29 October 1946, 2; "Look Outside," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 25 April 1958, 2. For an account of an imaginary deadly drag race, "dictated from a slab in the morgue," see Diana Mozeik, "One Hundred & Twenty," *The Foreword*, 20 October 1961, 2. Real deaths shocked the students, producing articles more sorrowful than scolding; see "In Memoriam," *Washington World*, 30 April 1946, 1; "Accident Stuns Bothell Students," *Bothell Hi Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 11 May 1949, 2.

<sup>57</sup> The American Legion distributed an important promotional tool, the 16mm film *Teach Them to Drive* (State College, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University, 1945), which dramatized a grieving father's campaign to establish driver education in the public schools following the traffic death of his teenage son. At various times between 1948 and 1954, the beginning of such courses was reported by all of the high schools whose newspapers were researched for this dissertation.

safe car-handling skills. Success at the Rodeo brought some degree of local celebrity, with a photograph and article in the school newspaper, or even a place on the *Seventeen* "Teens in the News" page.<sup>58</sup> Student leaders attended inter-school traffic safety conferences to discuss methods of reining in their reckless classmates. In some schools, student-run traffic courts meted out punishment to rule violators.<sup>59</sup> Yet despite widespread condemnation of reckless driving and its attendant evils, a certain image persisted of excitement and daring that was in touch with core values of the youth culture. Unconstrained by parents, controlling powerful machinery at high rates of speed and risking injury or even death was thrilling. It asserted masculine command by the

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<sup>58</sup> "Central Sophomores Win Driving Rodeo," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 16 May 1952, 3; "Matson Proves Adage Misused," *Bothell High Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 27 May 1955, 1; "Jaycees Hold All-City Teen Driving Rodeo," *Central High Times*, 4 June 1956, 7; "Landon Shines at Drivers Contest," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 12 April 1957, 3; "Arlington Youth to Drive for Prize in Jaycees' First Teen Road-e-o Test," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 31 May 1957, 8; "Teenage Road-E-O," *Lake Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 10 April 1959, 1; "Teens in the News," *Seventeen*, November 1953, 168; Janet Sue Mussen, "Thruway to Safety," *Seventeen*, March 1955, 62-64; "Teens in the News," *Seventeen*, December 1956, 128. Mussen, 16, wrote about the Oklahoma state competition. The 1956 national Road-e-o winner, Chris Bayley, 18, was elected King County Prosecutor in his home town of Seattle in 1970.

<sup>59</sup> "Juvenile Violations Handled by Students in Dallas, Texas," *Lake Washington World*, 16 December 1952, 3; "King County Teen-Age Traffic Safety Conference to be Held Feb. 18 at Olympic Hotel," *Lake Washington World*, 9 February 1954, 7; "Teen-age Traffic Safety Conclave February 21," *ibid.*, 14 February 1956, 1; "Safe Teens Meet Feb. 21," *Bothell High Cougar*, 13 January 1956, 1; "Traffic Safety Conference Promotes Teen Councils," *La Jolla Hi Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 8 February 1957, 2; "Students Tried by Driver's Control," *Bothell High Cougar*, 31 January 1958, 2; "Teenage Traffic Talks to be Held April 9," *ibid.*, 10 April 1959, 4.

drivers, whose defiant car handling contained an erotic charge that boosted their popularity. Noting the connection between the major masculine teenage interests of cars, sports, and sexual attraction, a student reporter with a wry tone of quasi-anthropological detachment wrote of "blond 'bombshells' [in the] parking lot . . . the famed place for these gals to meet their true football jackets, basketballs, or those souped-up hot rods with hollywoods."<sup>60</sup>

If neither scolding nor ridicule would discourage daredevil devotees of the car culture, then fear might be the best propaganda weapon. Producers made films showing the ghastly results of traffic accidents and dramatizing the human costs of carelessness on the highway. Probably the most effective and widely seen was a 1950 release, distributed by Lumbermens Mutual Insurance Company, with the ominous title *Last Date*.<sup>61</sup> The film begins in a frilly bedroom where the narrator, a teenager named Jeanie, reads from a letter she has been writing. Just released from

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<sup>60</sup> Lauchette Bygel, "Colt Capers," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 24 October 1955, 2. Bygel had recently moved to Arlington from Rochester, Minnesota, so perhaps her sense of anthropological investigation of unfamiliar customs was genuine. See note 52, above.

<sup>61</sup> *Last Date* (Chicago: Wilding Picture Productions, 1950). The legend at the end of this nineteen-minute film reads "Presented by the Central Automobile Safety Committee of Kemper Insurance through the courtesy of your representative of Lumbermens Mutual Casualty Company." Distributed in both 16mm and 35mm, the smaller film gauge for classroom showings, the larger for theaters, *Last Date* carried no rental charge. It was recommended as "realistic" by the editors of *Seventeen* and by at least one of that magazine's readers, who viewed it in her driver education class. See "Last Date," *Seventeen*, August 1950, 274; letter from J. A., Lockport, N.Y., *Seventeen*, November 1950, 4.



the hospital, she wishes she had died. The camera shows her only from behind, never revealing her face. She hears young voices outside her window, discussing plans to drive to the beach. "I've had my last date," she intones. "Who would want to go out with me now? Not even Larry!" The scene dissolves to a flashback. She and her friend Cathy wait outside the stadium dressing room for the star football players, both Jeanie's boyfriends, Nick and Larry. "It was wonderful to have my choice between the two most popular boys in school." They emerge wearing letter sweaters and compete to offer her a ride home. Nick, reckless and spoiled, owns a new hot rod given to him by his father. Stable, paternalistic Larry drives the family sedan. Of course Jeanie chooses fun-loving Nick over dull, thoughtful Larry, despite Cathy's warnings about "teenicide." The town's favorite radio disc jockey uses the term to mean "the fine art of killing yourself before you're twenty . . . in an automobile." They survive this ride, which Jeanie describes as "frightening . . . and thrilling, too."

Larry, waiting at her house, scolds her for taking such a risk. When she protests "You don't own me," he replies, "No, . . . but I hope to some day." He also assures her that he is not "a square or a killjoy." Impressed by his concern and his masculine mastery, she accepts his invitation to a dance that evening, coyly eluding his attempted kiss of her cheek. But his cautious

driving irritates her, and she urges him to go faster. He turns on the radio with the disc jockey warning about "teenicide." At the dance, Nick persuades her once again to take a ride with him. Now she becomes the one urging caution, as Nick drives madly with a gleam in his eye and a smirk on his face. The voice of the "teenicide" disk jockey plays loudly and repeatedly in her head as the film pace increases, cutting to ever closer shots of her wide eyes and ever faster shots of the hot rod speeding down the winding country road. We see the inevitable crash from Jeanie's point of view, as two headlights come straight toward her and the windshield shatters. The last words she cries before the fadeout and return to the present are "My face! My face!"

Jeanie closes her letter with "It would have been better if I had died in the hospital than to look the way I do. I couldn't even go to Nick's funeral, or the funerals of all those people in the other car. As I said before, I've had my last date. . . ." She rises and walks to the mirror by her canopy bed. Seeing her reflection, she cries and puts her face in her hands, then picks up a hairbrush and smashes the mirror. The final shot holds on the shattered glass as she collapses out of the frame. Never does the camera show her ravaged face, the monstrosity of which is left to the viewers' horrified imaginations. The message came through clearly: here was the true fate worse than death, the loss of physical

attractiveness. No more dating and no more popularity awaited this tragic teenager.<sup>62</sup> The ease with which such superficial attributes shattered demonstrated what a perilous world teenagers inhabited.

In addition to good looks, fast cars, and sports participation and support, as portrayed in the film, fundamental to teenagers' social success was acceptance into the right group, achieving prestige through association. The Detroit teenager quoted at the beginning of this chapter knew well the importance of being acquainted with "the right people." Sometimes these groups were informal, though no less exclusive for lack of a name or written by-laws. Cliques could be just as difficult for outsiders to enter as the more structured clubs, sororities, and fraternities. Criteria for admission varied from school to school, but whatever their standards, these groups constituted effective gate-keepers

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<sup>62</sup> The role of Nick was played by Dick York, who appeared in several of the Coronet guidance films, beginning with *Shy Guy* in 1947. *Last Date* won top prize in the Safety category at the 1950 Cleveland (Ohio) College festival of educational films. ("5 out of 9 Sponsored Win at Cleveland Festival," *Film News*, July-August 1950, 12-13; "3rd Annual Cleveland Film Festival," *Film News*, September 1950, 9.) The film's word made it into student newspapers, e. g., Virginia Paduano, "'Teenicide' Needs Further Prevention; Drivers Education Classes Helpful," *Lake Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 10 March 1953, 3; "Sickler Plus Souped-up Car Equals 'Teenicide' in Action," *The Tech* (Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota, 13 April 1956, 2; "Let's Wipe Out Teenicide!" *Marionette* (Harding Junior-Senior High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 5 April 1957, 2. The word had appeared in print prior to the film's release. See Ralph Wallace, "Kid Killers at the Wheel," *Collier's*, 28 May 1949, 13; "Teen-i-cide," *Senior Scholastic*, 18 January 1950, 15.

for the elite of the youth culture, separating the ins from the outs.<sup>63</sup>

High school fraternities and sororities, many with Greek letter names similar to those on college campuses, had existed since the nineteenth century. Beginning as literary societies, they took on social functions, and their membership policies became increasingly selective and exclusive. During the first half of the 1940s these societies increased in number and influence, with a countervailing oppositional response later in the decade from state and local governments and school administrators. By the end of the 1950s, adult alarm at sensational reports of brutal hazing during initiations and concern over undemocratic implications of secret societies led to the decline of the formal groups and a diminishing of their importance within the youth culture.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Two landmark sociological works examining the dynamics of high school cliques are August B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth: The Impact of Social Classes on Adolescents* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1949) and James S. Coleman, *The Adolescent Society: The Social Life of the Teenager and Its Impact on Education* (New York: The Free Press, 1961). For a guidance film specifically and explicitly aimed at discouraging clique formation, see *Feeling Left Out? Social Adjustment* (Chicago: Coronet, 1951).

<sup>64</sup> The general outline of this battle has been well documented in William Graebner, "Outlawing Teenage Populism: The Campaign against Secret Societies in the American High School, 1900-1960," *Journal of American History* 74 (September 1987): 411-435. Graebner blamed a November 1949 *Ladies' Home Journal* article for linking teenage secret societies with Nazi ideology. In fact this already had been done four years earlier in *Seventeen*, and reiterated in two subsequent articles in the same periodical, before the *Ladies' Home Journal* printed "Teen-Age Cruelty." (Alice Beaton, "Is Your Club a Secret Weapon?" *Seventeen*, August 1945, 98; "What Girls 'Belong' in Your Club?" *Seventeen*, March 1947, 17; Betty Booth, "Next on the Agenda," *Seventeen*, February 1949, 136-137.) However, the fact that one of the elite pep clubs at Central High School in Oklahoma City carried the name "Blackshirts" seems to have occasioned no negative comment!

During their years of influence, the fraternities and sororities held real power in the social scene at many high schools. The nine cheerleaders at the largest Pittsburgh school in 1944 were all members, seven of them in Greek-letter societies. Two of the five boys belonged to Hi-Y, a Y.M.C.A. youth group that had many fraternity-like qualities.<sup>65</sup> The clubs sponsored major social events such as formal dances that otherwise would have been school functions. Enforcement of anti-sorority/fraternity rules ended that link, distressing some students.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> "Know Your Notables," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 8 December 1944, 2. It was not until the next year that racial and religious restrictions were removed from the Hi-Y membership eligibility requirements. ("Restrictions Lifted," *The Foreword*, 2 November 1945, 4.)

<sup>66</sup> "Senior Prom or Fraternity Dance," *The Foreword*, 22 February 1946, 2; "It's the Law . . .," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul Minnesota), 6 October 1950, 1; "Why Don't We?" *Central High Times*, 26 October 1951, 2. *The Foreword* in Pittsburgh is the only student newspaper examined in researching this project that regularly publicized the activities of the secret societies. From occasional references to pledges, rush events and initiations in the La Jolla, St. Paul and Oklahoma City papers, their existence is also evident in these places. In other communities, student newspapers mentioned them only when discussing other schools, although two of the four had chapters of Hi-Y and routinely publicized that group's initiations. In all the schools, the biggest headlines and longest stories came when anti-fraternity/sorority discussions were held and when the administrators issued bans. See "New Social Club for La Jollans," *La Jolla Hi Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 19 December 1947, 1; "Parties 'N Prattle," *ibid.*, 17 February 1956, 3; "Clubs--Keep Off the Campus!" *ibid.*, 27 October 1961, 2; "Keyhole," *The Foreword*, 27 October 1944, 4; "High School Fraternities to be Discussed Before Members of the P.T.A.," *ibid.*, 14 March 1947, 1; "Clubs," *ibid.*, 18 November 1949, 4; "Editor's Notebook," *ibid.*, 5 October 1961, 4; "Hi-Y to Initiate New Members," *Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 26 March 1946, 3; "Blackshirts Announce Pledging of 26 Boys," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 11 October 1951, 1; Rae Leta Greenhaw, "To Have or Not to Have Secret Clubs Presents No Problems to 34 Groups," *ibid.*, 19 March 1953, 1; "Beware the Greeks Bearing Gifts," *ibid.*, 21 September 1956, 2; "Girls Debate Pro and Con of Sororities," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 7 December 1945,

Student opinion on these groups seemed to be divided, with more favorable mention than negative.

An unnamed "dissatisfied subscriber" charged the editors of a Pittsburgh school paper with favoritism: ". . . it is always the sorority sister or fraternity brother of the staff members that gets his article in the paper." Not true, said the editor in response, ". . . only about ten of the staff members belong to fraternities or sororities, whereas twenty-five do not."<sup>67</sup> Left unstated was the position held by each of the select ten. In another school, the anti-sorority editors estimated that eleven percent of the female students belonged. "Surely no girl can believe that these fifty girls are the only successful, happy people in the senior high school." Teachers who were interviewed uniformly opposed the clubs as both undemocratic and a challenge to school authority. Students at the same school expressed divided opinions; those who favored the clubs praised the bonds formed among members and the community services they provided, while opponents criticized them as conformist and snobbish, encouraging superficial values. Insisted one, "There's no reason why girls who have money or good looks should be treated any different than those who are less fortunate!"

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1; "Classroom Curios," *ibid.*, 21 November 1947, 3; "Secret Societies to be Eliminated," *ibid.*, 6 October 1950, 1; "Hi-Y Adopts New System," *ibid.*, 20 October 1950, 1; "In Other Schools," *The Tech* (Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota), 31 January 1947, 2; "Have You Heard?" *Bothell High Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 5 December 1950, 2.

<sup>67</sup> "Partisan?" *The Foreword*, 19 March 1948, 2.

The rejected girls crying in the hallway showed the unhappy difference between what should have been and what was.<sup>68</sup>

To be popular was to be elite. This ironic twist on the original meaning of the word certainly had class dimensions. One major sociological study, *Elmtown's Youth*, demonstrated the importance of family socio-economic standing in the community as a determinant of adolescent popularity. Although subsequent studies deemphasized the family factor, they continued to show the material criteria, the cars and the clothes, which underlay much of the young people's social success. Even James Coleman, whose study also included "Elmtown," acknowledged that in nine of the ten communities investigated, teenagers with higher family economic and educational status had a disproportionate presence in the upper levels of the adolescent society.<sup>69</sup>

Because middle-class sensibilities were so overwhelmingly dominant and hegemonic, an awareness of

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<sup>68</sup> "Secrets Don't Make Successes," "Faculty Poll On Social Clubs," "Student Poll," *The La Jolla Hi-Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 27 October 1961, 2.

<sup>69</sup> Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth*, 439-453, *passim*; Coleman, *The Adolescent Society*, 85-86, 106-112. Though Coleman disputed Hollingshead's premise that family standing far outweighed all other factors, he recognized it as a contributing element. A chart of "the intermediate leading crowd and for the top leaders" in each school showed "overrepresentation of boys and girls with college-educated fathers in all schools but Newlawn." (107) He also found that social class lines had become less rigid in Elmtown by 1957, fifteen years after Hollingshead's 1941-42 study (11); Coleman stated that the overrepresentation of middle-class girls in Elmtown was quite small: "25 per cent of the intermediate leaders and 32 per cent of the top leaders . . . compared with 16 per cent among all girls." (107)

class divisions among the students appeared only occasionally in the pages of publications written by and for them. Scornful mention was sometimes made of misbehaving schoolmates whose dress and manners differed from the solidly middle-class editors of school newspapers and the readers of *Seventeen*. But largely the "grubbies," the "greasers," the "rinks," and the "hoods" remained unpopular and thus invisible.

The makers of guidance films did not often tackle the topic of social class divisions, portraying the world as solidly bourgeois. A teenager excluded from the group suffered personality problems, not class discrimination.<sup>70</sup>

But some exceptional films recognized this issue. In the 1959 release *What About Prejudice?*, a teenager named Bruce Jones appeared photographed only from the waist down, clad in worn, baggy jeans. A written prologue identified him as a symbol; the film deliberately avoided the specifics of his case. Whether because of his skin color, religion or class, he walked "in a shadow of fear and suspicion." His white, middle-class schoolmates shunned him, saying he shouldn't be there. They blamed him for a theft and a fight. Said one, "What can you expect with Bruce's background?" Then he risked his own life to save two of their friends from a burning car. The film ended with some of them on their way to see Bruce,

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<sup>70</sup> See *The Outsider* (New York and Lawrence, Kansas: Centron Productions for Young America Films, 1951); *The Snob* (New York and Lawrence, Kansas: Centron Productions for McGraw-Hill Films, 1958).



critically injured in the hospital. In interior monologues, they reexamined their attitudes and expressed their need to understand the sources of their prejudice.<sup>71</sup>

In *Understanding Others*, a film released the same year as *What About Prejudice?*, the roots of discrimination clearly grew from class divisions. As the staff of the school newspaper met to hear their teacher-adviser announce her selection for the next year's editor, interior monologues and conversation among some of the (all-white, mostly middle-class) students revealed some deep rifts. Bob, who expected to be named editor, looked with scorn at a poorly-dressed student. He thought, "Ben doesn't belong here. Look at that get-up he's wearing. His folks are strictly no-good, father's a drunk, mother a lousy cleaning lady. Family stupid, ignorant." Aloud, he said, "You'd think he'd feel out of place around people like us." The teacher's interior monologue revealed her wish to select the editor based on merit, not personality or popularity, and also her worry that her choice of Ben would not go over well with the other students. Ben himself responded to her announcement of him as editor with disbelief, thinking she must have been mocking him. Bob and his friend Betty called him "a creep . . . a screwball." The narrator intoned, "Many people like Ben,

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<sup>71</sup> *What About Prejudice?* (New York and Lawrence, Kansas: Centron Productions for McGraw-Hill Films, 1959). All of the Centron films cited here formed part of a series entitled "Discussion Problems in Group Living," and each ended with a question mark filling the screen as the narrator asked the audience, "What do you think?"

we reject because they're different." He concluded with no easy solution to the class-based separation and mistrust, instead asking the viewers, "How can Bob and his friends reconcile their view with Ben's new position as head of staff? What can Ben do to increase his chances of success?" Though this begged the fundamental question of the sources of class prejudice and their connection with popularity and social acceptance, the film raised the issue more directly than any of its counterparts.<sup>72</sup>

More solidly in the category of decisively bourgeois values was advice promoting "good grooming." Both in their ignoring of larger social issues to focus on the nearly narcissistic and in their fervor for well-organized cleanliness ("next to godliness"), their underlying world view is unmistakably middle-class. Among the guidance films dealing with popularity issues, this group has a special place. Combining a concern for hygiene with a promotion of cosmetics consumption, these productions promised popularity as a reward for following their dicta. Sometimes the message was mixed, as when *Making the Most of Your Face*, after spending many detailed minutes on the intricacies of hair styling and lipstick application, urged its viewers, almost in exasperation, to "stop thinking about your looks!" Some of the advice reflected standards long since abandoned, as when *Body Care and Grooming* advised washing one's hair (in the sink) every

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<sup>72</sup> *Understanding Others* (New York and Lawrence, Kansas: Centron Productions for McGraw-Hill Films, 1959).

two weeks. However, *Personal Health for Girls* recommended once a week, and the crew cut in *Personal Hygiene for Boys* got shampooed in the shower every day. *Good Grooming for Girls* offered a peer role-model, an elegant teenager who posed for fashion advertisements. Rosemary gladly shared her secrets of style and hygiene with the plain-Jane narrator, who gushed, "She always looks so confident and smooth. I'm glad to have her as a friend, and so are the fellows. She's always so good to look at." After following her tips, the narrator received her reward, a romantic bicycle ride through shady streets with a teenage boy. An almost identical bike ride had been the positive reinforcement for the diligent protagonist of *Personal Health for Girls*, who concluded her narrative by saying proudly, "You've seen my health habits. They're not very unusual, but they get results."<sup>73</sup>

A more chilling and cautionary tale, showing the horrors that befall the poorly groomed and hideously unpopular, *Habit Patterns* warned its viewers not to stray for an instant from the proper path. In a voice both scolding and unctuous, the woman narrator addressed a sobbing girl standing in the wreckage of a messy bedroom (and by implication, of her life): "It's a little late for tears, isn't it, Barbara? Even though you didn't know

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<sup>73</sup> *Making the Most of Your Face* (Chicago: Coronet, 1958); *Body Care and Grooming* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1947); *Personal Health for Girls* (Chicago: Coronet, 1952); *Personal Hygiene for Boys* (Chicago: Coronet, 1952); *Good Grooming for Girls* (Chicago: Coronet, 1956).

it was going to happen today, you've had your whole life to prepare for it. Of course, you've gotten into the habit of not being prepared, and now it's a little late, isn't it?" The scene then flashed back to Barbara's misadventures that day, as she stumbled from one disorganized moment to another. Rising late, she dressed hurriedly in dirty clothes and rushed to school without time for a good breakfast. Even more terrible, when she had a chance to hobnob with the popular crowd, she blundered. The narrator reminded her and the viewers: "Yours is a changing social world and the opportunities to be part of it must be taken when they arise." Dressed wrong, lacking conversational skills, hiding her dirty fingernails, Barbara suffered humiliation and slunk away with nightmare visions of the crowd disdainfully discussing her every misstep. And above it all hovered the hectoring, unrelenting narrator, never letting the viewer or Barbara relax for a minute. It was youth guidance through fear in the German tradition of *Stuwelpeter* or *Max and Moritz*, with mangled social lives substituted for mutilation and disfigurement. Loss of the possibility of popularity was the most frightening threat of all.<sup>74</sup>

Guilt-laden messages aimed at parents of teenagers complemented those directed at the teens themselves, firmly establishing the popularity model as a guide to

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<sup>74</sup> *Habit Patterns* (New York: Knickerbocker Productions for McGraw-Hill Films, 1954).

anxiously correct behavior. The author of "Are You Helping Your Daughter to be Popular?" defined the terms with anguished clarity: "The days of youth are brief and precious. At no time in anyone's life are the possibilities for ecstasy or utter heartbreak greater. And both depend to a large extent on so-called popularity. . . . [P]arents ought to help their daughters have fun and friends. That when girls don't, it is frequently our fault." The article then guided its readers to assist their daughters with clothes, grooming, hospitality, and fitting in with the crowd. Conformity and consumption defined the experience. The only criticism offered by the author came in a prefatory warning not to overdo, as had the mother "so frantic to see that her Betty had more clothes and more beaux than anyone else that she only succeeded in making both herself and Betty thoroughly detested."<sup>75</sup> Social success indeed required perfect balance.

A full-page advertisement for Coca-Cola faced the final page of "Are You Helping Your Daughter to be Popular?", its placement and content surely not coincidental. The illustration, a Norman Rockwell style painting, showed a teenage boy dressed in a coat, vest, and bow tie, sitting on a couch, looking ill-at-ease. A smiling teenage girl wearing a pink party dress stood at the end of the couch holding a tray with two Coke bottles

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<sup>75</sup> Marjorie Holmes, "Are You Helping Your Daughter to be Popular?" *Better Homes and Gardens*, February 1949, 80-88.

and sandwiches. The text read simply, "When a fellow welcomes hospitality." Promoting both a product and an ideology, this ad instructed its readers in gender roles and the path to popularity through correct consumption.<sup>76</sup>

Though occasional articles such as "Too Much Popularity" and "Do I Have to Be Popular?" questioned the ideal and its excesses, the communications media and the culture itself continued to encourage teenagers and their parents to pursue the elusive goal. Books such as *Betty Cornell's Teen-Age Popularity Guide* found eager readers.<sup>77</sup> *Social Acceptability*, a 1958 guidance film aimed more at parents than at youth, used an approach similar to that of "Are You Helping Your Daughter to be Popular?" Stressing the psychological damage caused by unpopularity, the film sought to promote feelings of deep guilt in its principal target audience. The first half of *Social Acceptability* takes place in a drugstore soda fountain hangout, where a resonant-voiced omniscient narrator describes the social standing of several of the young people on view. He identifies the most popular as an athlete with high family

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<sup>76</sup> Advertisement for Coca-Cola, *Better Homes and Gardens*, February 1949, 89. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, Coca-Cola advertising featured teenagers in social settings, in soda fountain and drive-in hangouts, on dates, and at home parties, always including Cokes as part of their fun.

<sup>77</sup> Dorothy Barclay, "Too Much Popularity," *New York Times Magazine*, 19 October 1952, 54; Helene Wright and Jane Miller, "Do I Have to be Popular?" *Good Housekeeping*, June 1956, 17; Betty Cornell, *Betty Cornell's Teen-Age Popularity Guide* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1953). The book originally was published in 1951 as *Betty Cornell's Glamour Guide for Teens*. An addition of forty-six pages on etiquette and dating customs earned it the new title. It went through several printings and was heavily advertised in *Seventeen* and elsewhere.

income and social prestige. Another boy scores points as a "climber," a term the narrator uses without disparagement, who has transcended his "lower class" background with "talent, intelligence, and social skill." A "voluntary isolate" stands apart, peering at his ham radio magazine through thick horn-rimmed glasses. The narrative involves whether Susie Summers, enjoying only mid-level popularity, will invite Marian Ellsworth to her party, despite Marian's marginal social standing. When Marian chooses an out-of-fashion song on the juke box and the climber mocks her for it, her fate seems sealed. But Susie, rushing out, promises to telephone her.

The second half of the film shows Marian at home waiting for a call that never came. Her unsociable, insecure mother receives most of the blame for her plight. Her father pleads, "I'd like to see Marian more like Susie. Marian studies too much. I remember kids like that when I was in school. They didn't seem quite to fit in with the others." The film ends with her crying bitterly on her bed and the narrator mourning, "Marian was rejected today," and telling the viewers that the rejection will leave a mark on her personality. Doomed by her uncooperative mother never to enjoy the fruits of popularity, she has only misery ahead. The film's implications are clear. No social critique, no sense of

irony affected this cold-eyed view. Popularity must be the highest good.<sup>78</sup>

Adult authorities in other guidance films tried to counteract this notion and especially to steer youth away from the heavy emphasis on material things as indicators of popularity. In *Understanding Your Ideals*, teenager Jeff Moore focused so much attention on cars, clothes, and making an impressive appearance that he almost lost his girlfriend. The narrator criticized his false sense of values and pointed out that Jeff's only ideal seemed to be popularity for its own sake. The film offered "sincerity, loyalty, and good sportsmanship" as nobler ideals, which would in turn lead to popularity. Jeff's hero, Ed, earned his popularity not just as a football star, the narrator wanted us to believe, but because of his finer principles. Ed even rode the bus on dates. Oddly enough, even as this film tried to undercut the crucial role that automobiles played in the popularity paradigm, it used a car as its unifying visual metaphor. The film opened and closed with shots of auto lights moving along a dark rural road: "You might say our ideals are like headlights. They light the way ahead."<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> *Social Acceptability* (New York: McGraw-Hill Films, 1958). This is one of a series of films correlated with a psychology textbook by Elizabeth B. Hurlock, *Adolescent Development* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1949). Other films in the series included *The Meaning of Adolescence*, *Physical Aspects of Puberty*, *Age of Turmoil*, *Social-Sex Attitudes in Adolescence*, *Meeting the Needs of Adolescents* (all released in 1953), *Emotional Maturity*, and *Discipline During Adolescence* (both released in 1958).

<sup>79</sup> *Understanding Your Ideals* (Chicago: Coronet, 1950).



Occasionally teenagers seemed to accept the more ethereal values that some adults offered as measures of popularity. But repeated rejections of the supposedly false values only served to emphasize their actual importance in the youth culture. For example, when *Scholastic* magazine asked "What is Popularity," readers responded that it was not "receiving a dozen phone calls every night," nor caused by "good looks, brains, money and a car." "An outstandingly pretty face" wouldn't do it, nor would "ritzy clothes or fancy cars." A boy who had possibly been influenced by the good-grooming films claimed that a popular teenager "doesn't need to have lots of money or clothes. It's more important to keep oneself neat and clean."<sup>80</sup> Though these young people argued feelingly for qualities of character, friendship, cooperation, good manners, and consideration, the consistency of the factors they sought to reject revealed a great deal. Cars, clothes, money, good looks, success in sports, necking--all these were denied, and the editors of *Scholastic* were well-pleased. But the emphatic denials only highlighted the discrepancy between what some adult observers wanted youth culture to be, and the way it actually was. The narrator of the guidance film *Are You Popular?* insisted, "No, girls who park in cars are not really popular. . . not even with the boys they park with

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<sup>80</sup> "Jam Session," *Scholastic* (4 January 1957), 22.

--Not when they meet at school, or elsewhere."<sup>81</sup> The claim had a wishful ring, and its frequent repetition suggested a need to refute a strongly held belief. Similarly, the student contributors to *Scholastic* wrote, in effect, that despite what all those other teenagers thought, popularity had no connection with factors x, y, and z. And yet the same x, y and z kept getting mentioned, indicating some level of recurring importance.

Adults seeking to influence the shape and values of the youth culture spoke in a variety of conflicting voices. Hearing no consistent direction from above, teenagers found ways to shape their own peer-oriented standards. Sometimes young people told their elders what the adults wanted to hear. But teenagers continued being guided by principles they had established for themselves, in response to cultural cacophony and to rapid social and technological change. Issues of popularity continued to dominate the dynamics of the youth culture. Touched on occasionally in this chapter, the closely related question of gender roles needs more careful discussion. The next chapter considers construction of masculinity and femininity among American adolescents.

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<sup>81</sup> *Are You Popular?* (Chicago: Coronet, 1947).

## Chapter Four

### The Gender Factory

In headline type, the cover of the March 1961 issue of *Seventeen-at-School* promised its readers instructions on "How to be a Girl." The monthly publication for high school home economics teachers encouraged them to use material from its sister magazine *Seventeen* as they planned lessons for their students. This issue differed from earlier editions only in the blatant statement of its theme. Though usually more subtly presented, the theme of learning femininity ran through the magazine and throughout much of the curriculum, just as masculinity was being similarly constructed for teenage boys.

Teaching teenagers proper gender role behavior was a long-standing function of the socialization process. Many of the strictures and restraints of "separate spheres" for men and women increasingly broke down in the adult world during the 1940s and 1950s. Meanwhile the rules of the youth culture, imposed from both within and without, seemed to resist these changes, rigidly defining standards of masculinity and femininity. Examining these standards and deviations from them gives insight into some fundamental characteristics of youth as they established increasing autonomy, even as they interacted closely with the mainstream adult culture.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "An eleven-page unit designed to help you teach how to be a girl," *Seventeen-at-School*, March 1961, cover, *passim*. The gender-specific observations included this revealing twist of Tennyson's poetic

Teenage boys and girls occupied the traditional separate spheres, sometimes reinforced and often modified by the exigencies of co-educational institutions. Sitting occasionally in separate classes, signaling their gender roles with distinctive stances and book-carrying techniques, teenagers developed a heightened and exaggerated sense of gender differences that they frequently expressed with hostility. Despite sexual attraction and the centrality of dating, teenage boys and girls expressed considerable mutual suspicion and resentment. Although each gender considered the other less intelligent, girls indicated a strong desire for male partners with superior intelligence. A strong cultural demand for physical attractiveness drove teenage girls to satisfy the demands of the male gaze by purchasing commercial enhancements such as cosmetics and foundation garments. While the roles each sex played in dating delighted some, they also provided ammunition for attacks on the other's gender ineptitude. Rigid definitions of femininity and masculinity generated resentment among teenagers unhappy with expectations they found difficult

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comment about a young man's fancy turning to thoughts of love: "In the spring, a young girl's fancy turns to how she looks." (*ibid.*, 4). This echoes a similar statement in a school newspaper: "In the spring a young girl's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of . . . dieting." ("Thick and Thin," *The Foreword* [Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania], 15 May 1953, 2.) Beth Bailey argued that the rigidity of youth gender roles in dating manners provided stability and security as so much else changed. See especially the chapter "The Etiquette of Masculinity and Femininity;" Beth L. Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 97-118.

to meet. The role reversals during such events as Sadie Hawkins Day dances give evidence of a self-consciousness and a questioning of the social construction of gender. Discovering the psychic costs of slavish adherence to gender expectations, members of the teenage culture increasingly expressed resentment and early signs of resistance.

Adults imposed some gender divisions on teenagers. High school curricula segregated students into separate single-sex subjects, including most typically home economics for girls and industrial arts for boys. Women's traditional tasks of cooking and sewing formed the core of the home ec program, while male-dominated woodworking skills provided the central focus of the shop classes' training of home carpenters and hobbyists. So expected and accepted was this division among members of the youth culture, occasional exceptions to the uni-gender rule became sources of wonder and humor in the high school press. Boys in home ec had to defend against being called sissies; one writer did so by noting that eight of ten boys in enrolled in a Kentucky "Daily Home Living" class were members of the basketball team, with their masculinity thus beyond question.<sup>2</sup> Those schools offering home ec for boys and shop classes for girls often made these into single-sex classes as well. Concern for the

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<sup>2</sup> Altha Roberts, "Our Boys Like Home Economics," *Practical Home Economics*, October 1952, 16. See, also dealing with the "sissy" charge, "Boys Also Enjoy Home Ec. Course," *Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 6 April 1948, 7.

confidence and competence of students entering the other gender's territory led curriculum designers to this continued separation.<sup>3</sup> Boys-only classes often carried names like "Bachelor Living," reinforcing the notion that the skills learned would be of only temporary use before the students inevitably married to be cared for by their wives.<sup>4</sup> Gender role stereotypes abounded in accounts of the classes. Almost every article on girls in wood shop reported that they were building cedar chests and hope chests. Boys who mastered cooking had their motivation in acquiring the needed skills attributed to the novelty of the activity. They were taking "women's places in [the] world." According to one male teacher, girls called the smallest wood plane "the cute one" and used clean-up time for applying fresh lipstick and combing hair. A tone of astonishment and incredulity underlay nearly every

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<sup>3</sup> More evidence can be found of boys in co-ed home ec classes than of girls in mixed shop classes. The schools that offered industrial arts to their female students most often had all-girl classes. The author of "Bring On the Boys" urged teachers to plan the first lesson in a cooking class around electrical appliances to build up the boys' egos: "Instead of feeling irreparably ignorant about cookery, the boys will enjoy being 'one up' on the girls in understanding the mechanics of blenders, waffle irons, electric fry pans, and such." (*Seventeen-at-School*, September 1956, 14). The guidance film *Why Study Home Economics?* (Young America Films, 1955) showed mixed classes and stressed the importance of boys learning homemaking skills, while its companion piece *Why Study Industrial Arts?* (Young America Films, 1956) was all-male. For examples of girls-only shop classes, see "Girls Disprove Long-Time Idea of Being Fragile," *Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 3 April 1945, 4; "Girls Shop Class Work on Projects," *The Tech* (Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota), 19 November 1954, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Westchester High School in Los Angeles offered a class in which "boys who'll be temporary bachelors learn to cook, shop, sew and iron." ("By and for the Boys," *Seventeen*, March 1955, 68.)

student-written article on the gender-switched classes.<sup>5</sup> Two student reporters in St. Paul entered their school's forbidden zone for one day, then reaffirmed traditional roles. The boy visiting a home ec class managed to make adequate biscuits but was "a flop at sewing." He concluded with a reassuring note for "all you husbands-to-be. . . . There still are women left today who actually know how to cook. . . ." The girl who went to wood shop found her ignorance of planers ridiculed, and her attempt to make a square hole with a power drill doomed, as smoke poured from inside the machine. She ended her article by lamenting "I guess this was my way of knowing that girls don't belong in the boys' woodshop, but in the home economics room."<sup>6</sup>

Structures beyond the school curriculum also divided teenagers along gender lines. Although other adult-imposed rules such as dress codes contributed to

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<sup>5</sup> On girls' projects, see an account of a co-ed shop class in Longview, Washington, "X-Changes," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 22 March 1946, 3; "Girls Disprove Long-Time Idea of Being Fragile," *Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 3 April 1945, 4; "Girls Shop Class Work on Projects," *The Tech* (Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota), 19 November 1954, 5; "Femininity Characteristic of Shop Class As Tech Girl Becomes Master Carpenter," *The Tech*, 17 February 1961, 3. On boys cooking, see "Boys Learn Cooking Art," *The Tech*, 10 November 1950, 2; "Boys Take Women's Places In World," *The Tech*, 19 November 1954, 3. The latter article asserted that "it doesn't seem possible to the girls that there will really be men who can cook, sew, do housework . . . ." The condescending teacher is quoted in "Shop Girls Concoct 'Daffy' Vocabulary," *The Tech*, 5 December 1958, 3. Typical of student astonishment is "Highline Boasts Boy Cook; Girl Carpenter," *Lake Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 25 March 1952, 8.

<sup>6</sup> Tom Dixon and Jeanne Jandl, "Centralites Stage Turnabout," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 13 January 1950, 3.

institutional separation, young people devised folkways and customs that no administrator would have dreamed up or sought to impose. For example, they carried their books in gender-specific ways that were virtually universal. In student newspapers and in guidance films, in all pictures of teenagers from the 1940s and 1950s, a typical boy held his books against his hip at the end of a fully extended arm. A girl cradled her books in the crook of one or both arms, holding the stack against her abdomen at or just above her waist. Without attempting to decipher these particular poses, significance can still be found in the distinctiveness of their stances, which proclaimed masculinity and femininity to knowledgeable viewers.<sup>7</sup>

Clear distinctions between proper masculine and feminine body language indicated a significant division between the genders, and expression of this division occasionally occurred in hostile terms. Within the youth

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<sup>7</sup> Photographs showing these gender-specific methods of carrying books can be found in school newspapers, for example, *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 22 October 1947, 9; *The Tech* (Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota), 4 September 1951, 3; *Central High Times*, 19 December 1952, 4, and 18 December 1953, 4; *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 29 October 1954, 2. Scenes from many guidance films include teenagers carrying books in the gender-appropriate manner. See *Belonging to the Group* (Encyclopedia Britannica Films, 1953), *Parents are People, Too* (McGraw-Hill, 1954), *Shy Guy* (Coronet, 1947), *The Snob* (Centron Productions for McGraw-Hill, 1958), and *Social-Sex Attitudes in Adolescence* (Crawley Films for McGraw-Hill, 1953). These films show both boys and girls. Many other films showed only one sex. Though boys never appeared carrying books in the feminine manner, a occasional girl, never more than one per film, could be seen holding a book at the end of her extended arm, as in *The Outsider* (Centron Productions for Young America Films, 1952), *The Procrastinator* (Centron Productions for Young America Films, 1952), *How to Judge Facts* (Coronet, 1948), and *Developing Friendships* (Coronet, 1949).



culture, each gender seemed to form its own sub-culture. Although sexual attraction and the social imperative of heterosexual dating drew teenage boys and girls together, tensions between such sharply separated groups flared into criticism and complaining, as each found fault with the folkways and customs of the other. Sometimes the fault-finding lacked focus, as in a broadside from California in 1945, where the La Jolla "Levis" and "Skirts" objected to this about each other: "Girls who wear their hair on the top of their head . . . who are too loud and conspicuous . . . who always stick together . . . who peroxide their hair . . . A girl who leads when dancing . . . Women in general; Boys who don't know how to dance . . . who are too stubborn . . . who act like sissies . . . who act childish."<sup>8</sup>

If a theme appears in the generalized hostility, it is gender-role based, directed at those who fail to conform to expectations of femininity ("too loud and conspicuous . . . leads when dancing") and masculinity ("sissies . . . childish"). One year earlier, another reporter at the same school had attacked gender-bending boys: "Who are these beetle brain boys who are batty enough to bleach their beautiful hair blond? . . . 'Vanity, thy name is no longer woman.'<sup>9</sup> By implying

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<sup>8</sup> "Vikes' Pet Peeves," *La Jolla Hi-Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 3 June 1946, 1.

<sup>9</sup> "Tenth Grade Chit-Chat," *La Jolla Hi-Tide*, 1 June 1945, 3. A misremembered Shakespearean quotation substituted one assumed feminine gender attribute for another, replacing "frailty" with "vanity." See William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act II, scene II, line 146.

effeminacy among the targeted boys, the writer stood strongly in support of the distinct gender principles of the teen culture. Yet by criticizing "vanity" in both sexes, the article demonstrated that girls adhering too slavishly to gender conventions such as hair coloring inspired equally firm denunciations.

Youth challenged the concept of gender complementarity. The ideology of separate spheres represents relations between the sexes in terms of "yin and yang," opposites who balance each other to create a cosmic unity. Teenagers took numerous potshots at this notion. An article entitled "Boys Versus Girls" revealed many hostile attitudes, even if cloaked in humor. Asked whether boys or girls were more intelligent, girls replied "Girls . . . because some of the boys act so childish. . . . The boys seem to think they are superior . . . If boys are smarter, they're doing a wonderful job of hiding it." Boys responded "A boy knows more about what's coming off in the world . . . In school work it's about even, but out in the world the men have them beat. . . . A woman's got more intelligence, but a man's got more common sense. . . . Women never have anything important to say." Although one boy preferred a girlfriend "who is a little smarter, because she could help me with my homework," others more frequently expressed the idea that romance depended on male dominance. "I'd go with a girl who is dumber so I could keep her in line. . . . I like a girl

who is dumber because she keeps her mouth shut part of the time. . . . If a girl is smarter than you are, she shouldn't show it." The last of these comments from boys found rueful endorsement from some girls as well: "If a girl is smart, she plays dumb, sometimes. . . . Statistics prove to hold or to get your man never be smarter than he is." Indeed, a prominently featured "pet peeve" elsewhere was "Girls with brains."<sup>10</sup> But when another high school newspaper asked over 900 of its boys "Does it matter if the girl seems smarter than you?" eighty-seven percent answered "No." Yet the girls at the same school by a two to one margin "prefer[red] a boy who is smarter than you."<sup>11</sup>

Although the boys' answers seemed contrary to stereotypes, the wording of the questions revealed persistent traditional attitudes. Boys agreed only to tolerate smarter girls, but girls had to express a preference, leading two-thirds of them to choose a smarter boy. In a national survey, the pattern continued and the gender-division deepened, as "five out of six boys told us they would like their girls to be not quite their equal in intelligence," while three out of four girls wanted "boys who are a lot smarter."<sup>12</sup> It could be argued that such

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<sup>10</sup> "Boys Versus Girls," *The Tech* (Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota), 10 November 1950, 4; "Pet Peeves," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 14 September 1951, 2.

<sup>11</sup> "Terrible 'Truths'!!" *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 14 January 1955, 2.

<sup>12</sup> Eugene Gilbert, "What Young People Think," *Norman Transcript* (Norman, Oklahoma), 8 October 1959, 22; *ibid.*, 15 October 1959, 15.

attitudes fit the common expectations of the male as provider, who needed intelligence superior to that of male competitors. Yet that argument does not explain why wives and girlfriends would also need to be less intelligent. Underlying the desire for a smarter mate may have been a desperate search for some justification of masculine primacy. Girls and women could block the cognitive dissonance resulting from deferring to less intelligent males. They had to believe that their husbands and boyfriends deserved such deference.

Certainly many adults advising teenagers did nothing to discourage such attitudes. A running feature in *Seventeen* entitled "From a Boy's Point of View" kidded, cajoled and scolded its readers into acceptable behavior.<sup>13</sup> The December, 1954, column epitomized this approach. In "The Trouble with Most Girls," writer Jimmy Wescott warned teenagers not to be like six despised stereotypes: "Olivia Offbeat," who liked "novels with no plot and poetry with no punctuation," and, perhaps worst of all, she lectured everybody; "Shirley Simple" with limited

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This syndicated column appeared weekly in newspapers throughout the country. The writer claimed it was based on a large sampling of teenagers nation-wide, but did not state the size of the sample. Sometimes the reported results contained obvious flaws; e.g., "Girls who smoke don't have a chance with about half the boys while some four out of five [boys] see nothing wrong with it." (8 October 1959, 22)

<sup>13</sup> The column appeared in *Seventeen* each month from April, 1950, through September, 1954, under the name of Peter Leavy, then of Jimmy Wescott from November, 1954, at least through December, 1962 (the cut-off point for this study's research). Leavy was reported to be 21 when the column began. From May, 1953, he wrote as "Pvt. Peter Leavy" of the United States Army. Wescott purported to be 17 in 1954.

musical tastes and immersion in celebrity gossip like "Is Debbie Reynolds right for Eddie Fisher?"; "Hilda Hoopskirt," too fluffy and feminine, a whining, helpless doll; "Sylvia Sweatshirt," wearing jeans and no make-up, she opened her own doors, an annoying "example of liberated womanhood"; "Frieda Frothy," a "glamorous sophisticate" with her own telephone line, whose preference for the country club indicated her expensive tastes; and "Carolyn Cozy," a fan of sentimental singers, a hand squeezer, who was already planning a future life with her boyfriend. Wescott's ideal girl wore clothes that fit the occasion, and read and listened to music for enjoyment, not to exclaim over it. Most importantly, "if she is smarter than the boy (which this kid usually is) she is also smart enough not to let him in on the secret."<sup>14</sup> At once flattering and prescriptive, Wescott's column also indicated subdivisions within the dominant youth culture as he tried to steer his readers in the right direction. Though his attitude seemed to border on misogyny, eliciting periodic letters of complaint, the substance of his advice differed little from that offered by other *Seventeen* writers.<sup>15</sup> He and they continued to

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<sup>14</sup> Jimmy Wescott, "From a Boy's Point of View: The Trouble with Most Girls," *Seventeen*, December 1954, 12, 14.

<sup>15</sup> For an example of a reader who objected to Jimmy Wescott's tone, see a letter from J.J. (almost every *Seventeen* letter to the editor was identified only by the writer's initials), Ferriday, Louisiana. She urged the elimination of Wescott's column from a magazine she otherwise liked, and concluded, "Honestly, some of the cracks he makes about girls are utterly hateful." ("Thank You for Your Letters," *Seventeen*, March 1955, 4.)

pronounce similar maxims for several years. Cautioning readers about tender care of fragile male egos, Wescott offered more anti-intellectual advice: "[I]f you've got an awful lot of knowledge stowed away in that pretty head of yours, . . . take it down only when it's needed. In that way, there'll be more chances in the conversation for the fellow to take over and prove that he's the smartest guy you ever met."<sup>16</sup>

Role playing aggravated mutual suspicions. More than one article asked if boys and girls were "Friends or Enemies?"<sup>17</sup> Wescott frequently denounced girls who measured the success of a date by how much money the boy spent. Another *Seventeen* writer urged her readers to forget widespread "stereotyped ideas that all boys are boors, braggarts, or wolves." She also counseled discarding the notion of every boy as a potential beau and encouraged thinking of them as friends, relaxing in their company. But of course there were limits: "By relax we do not mean looking messy as you sometimes do with girl chums: no wrinkled housecoats, stringy hair or chipped fingernails. Be natural, pretty and feminine, but then forget about it!" Although this was written with no

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<sup>16</sup> Jimmy Wescott, "From a Boy's Point of View: Feud for Thought," *Seventeen*, March 1960, 13.

<sup>17</sup> "Enemies 'use' each other, enemies are afraid of each other. Friends . . . admire each other; help each other." ("Friends or Enemies?" *Seventeen*, April 1946, 85.) See also Peter Leavy, "From a Boy's Point of View: Friends or Enemies?" *Seventeen*, December 1951, 40. Leavy asked his readers "Do you like boys or do you merely like getting the best of them . . ." by keeping them guessing, by using tears to get your way, by acting silly and frivolous to get help.

apparent intended irony, it is hard to imagine taking such contradictory advice seriously without stress and confusion.<sup>18</sup>

An emphasis on physical appearance as a definer of gender roles persisted throughout the era. Boys in La Jolla had their masculinity impugned when the school newspaper ridiculed them for dyeing their hair. Girls who did not conform to expectations similarly faced scorn. Boys in Panama City, Florida, protested against girls wearing dungarees by dressing in skirts, and a zealous feminine group from Montreal wrote to *Seventeen* that "to us the sight of a teen-age girl slopping around the streets in jeans and runover shoes is downright nauseating. . . . Girls should be proud they are girls, and they should try to look like girls." To clinch the argument, advice-givers warned the unkempt of the loss of dates: "The boys, when they think of her at all, think of her as a tomboy, which does not make for being asked to the movies." But then again, the same article concluded, "Stressing clothes and appearance beyond all else would be superficial and silly. It's equally silly to look upon clothes as just something to protect you from the

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<sup>18</sup> "Are Boys People?" *Seventeen*, April 1945, 96. This was the annual "Girl-Meets-Boy" issue. The "forget about it" advice is almost identical, and in the same contradictory context, as that given at the end of the 1958 Coronet guidance film, *Making the Most of Your Face*. The film and the article, indeed the entire magazine's editorial and advertising content, placed great emphasis on the intricate details of altering one's appearance to become more attractive. And then the audience was scolded for being so interested in the topic.

elements." What seemed to start as a plea for individualism from one reader becomes more conventional by the end: "A girl should be just what she is. If she's the jeans-and-serious talk kind, I say fine! Somewhere there is a guy who wants just this type."<sup>19</sup>

Guidance from *Seventeen* has to be judged in context; it was above all else a fashion magazine, relying for revenue on advertising for clothes and cosmetics. An article might sigh in dismay over the hundreds of letters the editors had received from readers complaining about the writers' own looks, and reassure them that "Differences make no difference in individual attractiveness, importance and worth." But the magazine also ran series such as "How to Look Like a *Seventeen* Model." And when a reader asked for the right shade of lipstick to wear with her olive complexion, the "beauty editor" advised her to use a rose-colored powder and base to disguise her skin tone. Despite pious pluralistic pronouncements about the delights of diversity, a uniform standard of beauty with racist premises dominated the rules which defined commercially-augmented femininity.<sup>20</sup>

Teen culture adopted cosmetics as a standard of feminine good grooming. Disputes arose over the correct

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<sup>19</sup> "Teens in the News," *Seventeen*, July 1945, 120; Letter signed "Thirteen girls, Montreal, Canada," *Seventeen*, August 1955, 70; "Clothes Quandary--Its Cause and Cure," *Seventeen*, April 1945, 100; Letter from A.B., Chicago, Illinois, *Seventeen*, April 1955, 34.

<sup>20</sup> "The Face of America," *Seventeen*, February 1952, 96; "Dear Beauty Editor," *Seventeen*, April 1955, 30. The "How to Look Like a *Seventeen* Model" series began in the October 1957 issue and continued through July 1960.



extent of their use and the proper age for first application, but the presumed need for some make-up put extra color on nearly every teenage female face. A writer for *Seventeen* defined its symbolic importance in 1951: "Lipstick makes you prettier. . . . It is a sign of coming of age . . . the age at which you begin to be a Girl in earnest. No more scarred knees from shinnying up trees. From now on you're expected to look pretty and conduct yourself to match."<sup>21</sup> Good gender behavior demanded heavy responsibility and serious limitations.

Younger teens frequently complained that their parents objected to their use of cosmetics. Advice columns and guidance films encouraged lighter shades and compromise, portraying the parents' attitudes as somewhat irrational and clearly old-fashioned, quirks to be temporarily tolerated. Family harmony and future privileges depended on young people remaining calm, persuasive, and sometimes strategically submissive. One film advised remembering that insecure fathers were anxious about their little girls growing up, and to include them by asking for "a man's point of view" of date attire. Thus reassured that they still could be part of

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<sup>21</sup> "Learn How," *Seventeen*, January 1951, 56. This initiation into the consumer society transformed its young members' views of themselves, with profound implications for a stratified social order. According to Richard Wightman Fox and T. J. Jackson Lears, "While the few make decisions about managing society, the many are left to manage their appearance, aided by trained counselors in personal cosmetics." See Fox and Lears, *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), xii and *passim*.

their daughters' lives, their resistance to cosmetics would supposedly fade.<sup>22</sup> One father's conversion testimonial was printed as a letter to the editor. Upon seeing the young and "radiantly beautiful" Elizabeth Taylor on a movie screen in *A Date with Judy*, he dropped his previous ban on his daughters' use of eye make-up. "Neither of my girls is an Elizabeth Taylor, but they're making the most of what they've got. And I am thoroughly enjoying the result."<sup>23</sup>

Marketers promoted increasingly heavy use of cosmetics. In the 1940s, advertising and editorial content could be at odds, as the editors of *Seventeen* usually encouraged minimal make-up while adjacent ads in the same issue promoted lavish application of various beauty products. Part of the seeming contradiction had deeper historical and cultural roots. Cosmetics had been used in the previous century first by prostitutes, then stage actresses, then by urban working-class young women perceived as sexually available. These associations

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<sup>22</sup> *Parents are People, Too* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1954). Parents appeared to be people who could not explain their real motives. In *Who Should Decide? Areas of Parental Authority* (Chicago: Coronet, 1958), a father objected to his daughter's lipstick as she was about to leave on a date, his anxiety provoked by the boy's reputation as a bad driver. The implicit lesson suggested that a better choice of friends would allow her more adult privileges. One writer encouraged practicing make-up at pajama parties, in order to introduce uncomprehending, out-of-date parents to "the subtle variety of colorings available in today's cosmetics." (Jean Campbell, "Make a Pretty Face," *Seventeen*, September 1949, 111.)

<sup>23</sup> Letter from M.R.H., San Francisco, California, *Seventeen*, October 1948, 4. To consider the implications of fathers intently turning an objectifying, consuming gaze on their daughters, see the work of Laura Mulvey, especially *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988).

persisted well into the mid-twentieth century, as excessive use of make-up marked a lower-class identification, in the teenage culture as well. One observer noted that middle-class cheerleaders wore much less make-up than did their less affluent counterparts, the majorettes, whose style she described as "gaudy."<sup>24</sup> The dominant pattern in gender role style remained solidly bourgeois. But that style proved malleable.

In contrast with the reluctance of their predecessors, advice columnists at *Seventeen* during the 1950s seldom discouraged use of their cosmetic advertisers' goods. These shifting attitudes have something to do with commerce and with changing personnel on the magazine's editorial staff, as well as larger changes in culture and style. But they show consistency in an important way, acknowledging that the readers throughout this era--members of the youth culture--had continuing, compelling concern with a striking emblem of femininity as defined by the teenagers themselves.

By their resistance, the make-up minimalists provided strong evidence of a contrary practice that lured many of their contemporaries. In *Seventeen's* very first issue, a movie star's teenage daughter testified to the prevalent use of only lipstick and baby oil in her crowd, "the soap

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<sup>24</sup> Jessie Bernard, "Teen-Age Culture: An Overview," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 338 (November 1961), 10. For a history of cosmetics use, including its class biases, see Kathy Peiss, *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America's Beauty Culture* (New York: Metropolitan Books--Henry Holt and Co., 1998).

and water set."<sup>25</sup> The second issue pictured identical twin models posing for the camera to show the contrast between excessive and correct make-up. Four months later, in one of a series of advice columns provocatively entitled "Why Don't Parents Grow Up?" the author listed "wrong" and "right" reasons for using cosmetics. The writer told her readers not to do it if motivated by a dislike of their looks, a sense of superiority to their friends, or a desire to declare independence. The right reasons included making oneself attractive to boys and being like "the other girls in your group."<sup>26</sup>

The near-universal use of cosmetics by teen-age girls following youth culture standards of femininity seemed undeniable. Observers noted the anomaly of its occasional

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<sup>25</sup> "We're the Soap and Water Set," *Seventeen*, September 1944, 46-47. Diana Markey, daughter of actress Joan Bennett, gave celebrity endorsement to good grooming tips. A few years later, her younger sister Melinda demonstrated skill in hosting a teenage party, and her mother published a book called *How to Be Attractive*, promoted in *Seventeen's* pages in the guise of a photo again honoring Melinda. ("Hollywood Teens Have a Party," *Seventeen*, July 1949, 54; "Teens in the News," *Seventeen*, December 1951, 112.)

<sup>26</sup> "Double Take," *Seventeen*, October 1944, 34-35; "Why Don't Parents Grow Up? Handling the Make-Up Situation," *Seventeen*, February 1945, 112-113. Other examples of this discussion abound, veering between encouragement of little make-up and endorsement of complete coverage. A short story made its fifteen-year-old heroine seem attractive to a soldier at the soda fountain by describing her as "beautifully unpainted." (Corrinne Pressman, "He's So Sort of Twenty," *Seventeen*, July 1945, 54.) An ad showing a model wearing darkly purplish "Irresistable fuchsia plum Lipstick" and assuring the reader that "Irresistable lips are dearly beloved" (*Seventeen*, April 1945, 148) would be countered with editorial opposition to the style "which makes you look like you've been eating huckleberry pie (and hating it!)," a lipstick that belonged on the dressing table of "Dracula, feminine version." ("Your Face . . . Its Care, Its Trimming," *Seventeen*, June 1950, 50.) Yet in the same issue, two pages away, this article's advice of lighter shades had been contradicted by a full-page photo of a teenage girl looking attractive and romantic in dark lipstick. ("What Makes a Pretty Girl?" *Seventeen*, June 1950, 48.)

absence or unconventional application. When two Pittsburgh students came to school one day without make-up, the gossip columnist exclaimed in print that they were "avoiding lipstick!"<sup>27</sup> With the gender coding so clear, cosmetics on males provoked nervous laughter. "Just because the girls wear lipstick to school is no reason that the boys should," began one gossip column. Two boys had apparently strayed from the masculine code, though one of them received his coloring from his girlfriend's kisses. The other, who had substituted lipstick for chapstick on a ski trip, found himself scolded but his heterosexual masculinity affirmed with these concluding words: "All along we thought Lynn wore the lipstick in that couple."<sup>28</sup> Elsewhere, a teenage girl reported meeting a boy's mother at the start of a first date, and sadly having displeased the woman by not wearing lipstick.<sup>29</sup>

While still encouraging lighter hues to deceive the boys who disliked make-up, *Seventeen* grew increasingly unequivocal in advocating cosmetics. Even the magazine's book reviewer got involved, criticizing *Betty Cornell's Teen-Age Popularity Guide* for opposing teenagers' use of perfume and eye make-up: "We think highly of both. . . ."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> "Keyhole," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 3 November 1950, 4.

<sup>28</sup> "Corridor Comment," *Bothell High Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 17 April 1953, 3.

<sup>29</sup> Letter to "Young Living" advice column, *Seventeen*, January 1962, 93. Considering the girl "a beatnik," the mother had forbidden any more dates between her and the son.

<sup>30</sup> "On the Book Beat," *Seventeen*, December 1953, 103. See "Small Talk," *Seventeen*, November 1955, 64, for one expression of an attitude exemplified by this quote: "A cross-country survey of

When an 18-year-old whose mother taught in the Belgian Congo asked for beauty tips, magazine staffers met her between planes to administer "eyebrow pruning . . . tinted base . . . rouge, a dusting of powder, and mascara to make Mary's eyes look as large as they are," and of course lipstick and cologne. Mary's reaction: "Is this me? Make-up really matters."<sup>31</sup>

That message found emphasis throughout the youth culture. High schools and youth groups regularly invited lecturers from beauty salons, charm schools, and modeling agencies to instruct the girl students on make-up and other "grooming" topics.<sup>32</sup> Though frequently urging moderation, the dispensers of advice could boldly advise gilding the lily. Reporting on the secretary of the magazine's art director, *Seventeen* lamented that she "wore very little make-up and so passed up a lot of flattery." Preparing to teach her and the article's readers basic beauty techniques, the writer proclaimed a universal

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teen-age girls reveals that most of them think fourteen the proper age to start wearing lipstick. But, they point out, a light color is best because it fools the boys who prefer girls without make-up."

<sup>31</sup> "Dear Beauty Editor," *Seventeen*, January 1955, 64-65. The five hours between flights were used for make-up, hair styling, and putting on a new dress, all approvingly documented with photographs. Yet in the same issue, the third-place winner in the short-story contest criticized its protagonist for wearing eye shadow, high heels, and a tight skirt. (Corrit Weill, "Reba," *Seventeen*, January 1955, 76.)

<sup>32</sup> "The Modern Miss," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 10 November 1944, 2; "Make-up Talk, Popcorn, Feature Y-Teen Party," *La Jolla Hi-Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 12 December 1946, 1; "Y-Teens Hear Glamour Tips," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 24 November 1948, 1; "Clubs Make News," *Bothell High Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 7 March 1952, 1; "Seven Keys for Charm," *Bothell High Cougar*, 13 January 1961, 1.

insecurity principle: "You long to be prettier . . . no matter how pretty you may be now." The solution lay in accepting an odd maxim: "The reason a beauty is a beauty, and not just another pretty girl, is that she knows how to gild the lily." No longer minimalists, the editors of *Seventeen* thus unashamedly endorsed excess.<sup>33</sup>

Whether through use of cosmetics or other illusory devices, appearance and attractiveness constituted a key component of femininity. Although some disliked this emphasis, it dominated the discourse. One unhappy reader complained that *Seventeen* printed "too much about boys. A girl's life is not centered around boys all the time, just pleasing them and living for them. It seems to me that girls have much more fun without boys. . . ." <sup>34</sup> But most seemed to participate unquestioningly in a culture where acceptance found its measure in the eye of the beholder. *Seventeen* made it a matter of maturity to cast oneself gladly in this role. In a multiple choice self-evaluation quiz, the magazine asked its readers to react to a hypothetical scene: "You're sitting on a bus and the boy across the aisle stares at you." Two of the three choices offered, "wonder if your slip is showing" and "become annoyed," earned no points. The correct answer for the

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<sup>33</sup> "Betsy Becomes a Beauty," *Seventeen*, September 1956, 116-117. No irony is evident here. Of course, the aphorism about gilding the lily abhors it, and is drawn from Shakespeare: "To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,/To throw a perfume on the violet,/ . . . Is wasteful, and ridiculous excess." (William Shakespeare, *King John*, Act IV, scene 2, lines 11, 12, 16.)

<sup>34</sup> Letter from L. G., Detroit, Michigan, *Seventeen*, September 1945, 6.

mature miss: "take it as a compliment."<sup>35</sup> Seeking to please the male gaze, teenage girls followed standards that later feminist critics termed objectifying. Whether the experience empowered them, as some analysts argued, or transformed them into commodities and victims, the culture largely judged their femininity by how they looked and appealed to others.<sup>36</sup>

Part of this appeal involved eroticizing the appearance of the female body. Advertisers contributed to teenage girls seeing themselves through imagined male eyes. One full-page swimsuit advertisement showed a woman standing on the beach, hands at the back of her head holding up her hair, posing provocatively for a seated, smilingly appreciative man. The text reinforced the photograph: "designed from a man's point of view." A stocking ad displayed only a woman's leg with three pairs

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<sup>35</sup> "How Mature Are You?" *Seventeen*, October 1957, 96, 167.

<sup>36</sup> An extensive body of literature exists on "male gaze theory," in which women are cast as "objects of the gaze." Laura Mulvey's founding 1975 essay, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," defined the terms of the debate. Mulvey described women's appearances in films, paintings, and advertisements as derived from male fantasies involving sexual desire, objectification and control. The fetishized object of the gaze became a commodity to be consumed. Countering this widely-accepted feminist interpretation, Camille Paglia found feminine power in eroticized images of women from Delilah and Helen of Troy to Elizabeth Taylor and Madonna, a self-derived power that women exercised over men. For a recent survey of the views of several participants in this debate, including Mulvey and Paglia, see Robert Schultz, "When Men Look at Women: Sex in an Age of Theory," *The Hudson Review* 48 (Autumn 1995): 371-387. Mulvey's essay has been reprinted along with later writings in Laura Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988). See also Camille Paglia, *Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); *Sex, Art, and American Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992); *Vamps and Tramps* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994).



of gleaming male eyes ogling it, and the message "You owe it to your audience." Even a local department store advertising in a high school newspaper could use this approach. Promoting a line of dresses, a large display ad showed a smiling young woman posed coyly with one finger on her chin and the other hand on her hip, asking "Did he whistle at me?" The enthusiastic answer: "You can bet your best beau he did! JOAN MILLER JUNIORS are whistle bait from way back. . . ." Such messages reflected and reinforced customs of the youth culture as they sought to sell their products. In turn, the teenage consumers gladly adopted and adapted both the goods and the ideology that the marketers presented.<sup>37</sup>

Other expressions of objectification found their way into print, even in the news and feature columns of the tightly-controlled high school press. Photographs of cheerleaders, baton twirlers, and beauty contest winners wearing abbreviated costumes resembled Hollywood "cheesecake" poses. A picture of two students skimpily attired as chorus girls promoted their school's "Esquire Calendar Girl Show." A photograph of the girls' swim team dressed for competition carried the leering caption "More athletic teams should be like this, eh, boys?" Encouraging participation in an upcoming "Hobo Day," another school paper posed a girl wearing a feed sack

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<sup>37</sup> Advertisement for Shepherd Sportswear, *Seventeen*, June 1946, 139; advertisement for Kayser Stockings, *Seventeen*, May 1955, 80; advertisement for Fandel's Department Store, *The Tech* (Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota), 20 April 1945, 3.

dress seated on a desk, leaning back slightly, her legs crossed and visible from the knee down, as a smiling male classmate stared directly at them. The caption noted that he "seems to approve of these new fashions."<sup>38</sup> Even without photographs, printed observations gave clear evidence of the sexually-charged nature of feminine clothing. One student wrote, "Howling wolves have really something to howl at now, with the fashion being tight skirts and I MEAN TIGHT!"<sup>39</sup>

Corresponding with the style of snug-fitting clothing styles for teenage girls, marketers and advisers to youth extensively promoted undergarments to mold them into

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<sup>38</sup> The chorus girls appeared in an untitled photograph in the *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 7 December 1951, 3. The swimming team photograph, also untitled, is in the *Sooner Spirit*, 20 February 1953, 4. For Hobo Day, see "Junior Hoboes Invade School," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 13 May 1958, 1. Other cheesecake-style photographs of students found in high school newspapers: "Former Vikingette is Runner-up in Contest," *La Jolla Hi-Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 21 September 1945, 1; "Daisy Mae Outpaces Wolf Girl in Red Cross Donations," *Sooner Spirit*, 19 November 1948, 2; "Wow! Whose Little Girl Are You?" *Sooner Spirit*, 18 May 1950, 6; "Colts Majorettes Start Fall Season Ready for Contest in New Uniforms," *The Colt*, 6 October 1952, 1; "Eye Appeal was Plentiful," *Sooner Spirit*, 7 October 1955, 1. Among metropolitan newspapers which covered high school activities, the *Atlanta Constitution* particularly favored photographs of teenage girls with extensive leg exposure. Examples from that paper include "Grady High Band Grooms For Gala Music Festival," 6 May 1948, 14; "Young Atlanta," 7 May 1950, 10-C; "Fashions for Seniors," 1 May 1956, 26; Betty Carrollton, "Bedlam Reigns as Young Politicos Seek State Beta Club Offices," 16 March 1957, 14; "Young Ideas," 30 March 1957, 15.

<sup>39</sup> Dick Norman, "Tight but Cute is Current Fad," *Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 12 November 1946, 2. Not sharing this reporter's obvious enthusiasm, senior class president Gabriel Morelli told him "I don't care for them so round, so fully packed," borrowing his words from a cigarette advertisement. Interplay continued between commercial culture and popular culture, adapting ideas and phrases in ways the marketers never intended, and also demonstrating some concept of classmates as commodities. One wonders if the pun in the article title ("but" for "butt") was deliberate or accidental.

standard shapes. The second issue of *Seventeen* warned its readers not to leave the house without wearing both lipstick and a girdle. Advertisements for girdles and uplift bras reinforced the message.<sup>40</sup> Insisting that a fine figure required confinement, without which boys would find girls unattractive, the magazine staff displayed the love-hate attitude that so often characterized gender relations in this era:

Bless their baby hearts, the boys have really done a splendid job of anti-girdle propaganda. But who is the first to turn thumbs down on a sloppy, uncorseted figure? Who is loudest in admiration of a really trim assembly job? Uh huh. A male, every time.  
. . . the girdle is woman's best friend, and don't ever forget it.<sup>41</sup>

Objecting to the publication's recurring insistence on girdles in articles appearing approximately twice each year, one reader favored exercise, using "muscles to hold in my stomach instead of weakly depending on bones. Hence I say: girdles . . . foey!" Unpersuaded, the editors acknowledged the usefulness of exercise but reiterated the need for the "smoother silhouette" that a girdle provided.<sup>42</sup> When they later ran an article promisingly

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<sup>40</sup> "Good Looks Aren't Born in Heaven," *Seventeen*, October 1944, 66-67; half-page advertisement for "Flower Fresh Diana, the daintiness girdle," *ibid.*, 9; half page advertisement for Gossard's Line of Beauty, *ibid.*, 14: "Smart teen-agers dote on Gossard's hip slimming pantie girdle and dainty wisp of an uplift bra. Start YOUR good grooming course now."

<sup>41</sup> "For a Fine Figger--Or Else," *Seventeen*, January 1946, 98-99.

<sup>42</sup> Letter from K.C., Evanston, Illinois, *Seventeen*, January 1947, 4. She wrote in response to an article entitled "Wear a Girdle" in the October 1946 issue. Even K.C. endorsed a girdle for an older "sagging example of womanhood," but disputed teenagers' need for such figure molding. The editors replied that almost everyone required it, though calling posture and "muscles developed by

entitled "Get Into Shape," it had nothing to do with physical activity, once again describing the latest foundation garments.<sup>43</sup> Advertisements demanded "Don't let nature's shortcomings cheat YOU of glamour!" and promised a "fuller, lovelier bustline without pads or gadgets." Demonstrating a continued shift in the early 1950s away from societal to personal concerns, an underwear manufacturer engaged in teasing word play: "We're all for reform! . . . [to] reform you . . . slim you, smooth you, uplift you, pamper your soul." The same company nearly two years later proclaimed "Suddenly you're wonderful-- Jantzen padded bras." Yet in that same issue, a male advice columnist told readers "*Boys are bored with the tight-sweater brigade. . . . If you dress as if your figure is your only asset, I'm liable to accept your estimation of yourself and believe it.*" In terms reminiscent of a half-century earlier, one advertiser promised a "hand-span waist," emphasizing the point with a photograph of an embracing couple. When a teenager fretted that her bust was smaller than her hips, making her unattractive in a culture valuing "a perfect shape," the Beauty Editor assured her that each person is unique,

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healthy exercise . . . great assets for a teen-ager who wants to be attractive." This emphasis on the benefits of physical activity as an appearance aid continued in a subsequent photo feature on girls in sports, where the text stressed the resulting improvement in their poise, grace and figures. See "We Choose Sports," *Seventeen*, May 1949, 42.

<sup>43</sup> "Get Into Shape," *Seventeen*, January 1950, 26. A similarly-titled article about foundation garments had appeared fifteen months earlier. ("Start Getting in Shape for Fall," *Seventeen*, September 1948, 206.)

that a perfect figure did not exist, and then contradicted all this good advice by asserting that years of growing lay ahead and "your proportions will improve."<sup>44</sup>

A challenge to the exaggerated, stylized curves of the ideal feminine form so dominant in the 1940s and 1950s came with the introduction of the chemise, or "sack dress," early in 1958. This short-lived fashion sensation caused more controversy and comment among teenagers than any other style change of the era, even the sudden twelve-inch drop of hemlines in the fall of 1947. Loose-fitting and unbelted, the chemise did not accentuate the curves of the female figure. It contrasted dramatically with the fitted bodices and waists, the snug sweaters and the flared or tight skirts of the previous several years. All of those fashions had exaggerated the supposed hourglass shape of the ideal feminine body. Introduction of the sack dress directly challenged this iconography, causing much discussion in the general public and among teenagers in particular. Girls who wore it praised its comfort, but some girls and most boys objected strongly to what one student reporter called the "Curve-Camouflaging Craze." The protesters called its straight lines "unfeminine." One boy proclaimed, "I want my girl to look like a girl,

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<sup>44</sup> Advertisement for Peter Pan bra, *Seventeen*, April 1950, 180; advertisement for Jantzen Foundations, *Seventeen*, September 1951, 31; advertisement for Jantzen, *Seventeen*, May 1953, 36; Peter Leavy, "From a Boy's Point of View: Sugar and Spice People," *ibid.*, 56; advertisement for Kleinert's "Waist-In," *Seventeen*, October 1957, 131; Letter from R.L., New York, N.Y., "Dear Beauty Editor," *Seventeen*, March 1953, 61.

not a burlap bag!"<sup>45</sup> Another cried "No! That's like buying a pig in a poke; you don't know what you've got!" Slightly less vehement but expressing a common concern, a male schoolmate said, "They look all right, but, golly, they just don't fit tight enough." A Pittsburgh student expressed dismay in verse:

"The latest fad in far-fetched fashion  
Worn by ladies gay and dashin'  
Does away with curve or crease--  
It's what we call the new chemise.

"'Observe the front without a bump;  
Then note the back without a lump.'  
The model poses. How we gape!  
Alas, alack! She has no shape!

And now to be considered chic,  
The lady must be straight and sleek.  
What is that hanging from her rack?  
No, not a dress, but just a sack."<sup>46</sup>

Boys at one Alabama high school, greatly distressed at their inability to gaze lasciviously at chemise-clad female classmates, organized a protest with coverage by *Life* magazine. Dozens of them wore white shirts with shirrtails out, and held a noisy rally outside the school building. One photograph showed a few of them standing morosely in the hall, with the caption "Tuscaloosa High School boys stare somberly at the slack back of a sack worn by Helen Lemonis." The editors found a *Life* lesson

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<sup>45</sup> Wanda Turck, "Sack Sensation Causes Panic Among Males; Chemised Cuties Attend Easter Parade Alone," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas) 11 February 1958, 2; "Potatoes Left Out As Girls Don Sacks," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 18 April 1958, 2; Turck, "Sack Sensation," 2.

<sup>46</sup> Fifi [pseud.], "Allderdice Views the Chemise," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 14 March 1958, 2.

in all this: "There's not much a man can do these days about the shapeless way things are shaping up." Other adult authorities held more positive views of the fashion. Evangelist Billy Graham praised the sack dress for the same qualities teenage boys disliked: "It has taken the sex out of dress. It's healthy for the morals of the country." In a poll by the Gilbert Youth Research Company, eighty-six percent of the boys and sixty-five percent of the girls said they disliked it. Yet despite this opposition, thirty percent of the girls liked the style well enough to have bought one or more chemises. The reporter of the survey results dismissed them as "slaves to fashion," ignoring accounts of the dress's enthusiastic reception among those who wore it.<sup>47</sup> A cultural battle was being waged over the public presentation of the female body and how sexualized that presentation should be.

The sack dress even inspired a popular song. Gerry Granahan wrote and recorded "No Chemise, Please," expressing the male objections to interference with ogling. Memorable for the insistent refrain, "Take back

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<sup>47</sup> "Schoolboys Whack the Sack," *Life*, 28 April 1958, 66; "'Sack Look' is Praised by Graham," Associated Press wire service story, *Atlanta Constitution*, 9 May 1958, 15; Eugene Gilbert, "What Young People Think," syndicated column, *Tulsa Sunday World Magazine*, 20 April 1958, 41. One student newspaper reported that the school's "female population . . . is going stark raving MAD over 'the sack look.' They can't have enough of it." ("Potatoes Left Out as Girls Don Sacks," *Central High Times*, 18 April 1958, 2.) An article from another school wrote of their "girls' adoration of the chemise. . . ." (Turck, "Sack Sensation," *The Colt*, 11 February 1958, 2.) Seventeen displayed much interest in the style, featuring at least one item on it in each issue from January through June, 1958, peaking at seven articles with "chemise" in the title in May.

the sack,/Leave it hangin' on the rack,/And bring a sweater back," the lyrics explicitly called for a return to form-fitting fashion. The song achieved sufficient success to be listed on national charts of best-selling records and disk jockeys' listener favorites for several weeks in the summer of 1958. Then, even more quickly than the clothing style which it mocked, the disk fell out of public favor.<sup>48</sup> The dress, too, dropped from notice in the press. Surviving the demise of the sack, a variation called the sheath dress persisted for another few years. Described by at least one wearer as "the modified chemise," the sheath had a similar cut in the collar, yoke, sleeves and lower skirt. But fitted tightly at the bodice, waist and hips, it seemed the antithesis of the chemise's straight lines. Its success and the short life of the sack dress testified to the enduring image of femininity as a rigidly defined physique, clearly displayed for male viewing pleasure.<sup>49</sup>

In addition to appearance, gender roles demanded strict standards of behavior. Boys and girls had especially distinct parts to perform in the intimate

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<sup>48</sup> Gerry Granahan, Arnold Golland, and Jodi D'Amour, "No Chemise, Please," *Sunbeam Records* 102; "Retail Disk Best Sellers," *Variety*, 18 June 1958, 47; *ibid.*, 25 June 1958, 59; "Disk Jockey Poll," *Variety*, 16 July 1958, 44; record sales charts, *Billboard*, eleven consecutive weekly issues dated from 9 June 1958 through 18 August 1958, various pages. See also Joel Whitburn, *The Billboard Book of Top 40 Hits* (New York: Billboard Publications, 1989), 185.

<sup>49</sup> "Just Hoppin' Around," *Lake Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 9 May 1958, 3. A photograph of two teenage girls standing outside the school building bears the caption: "Sheath versus chemise: Sharon Eggers and Sharon Whitey model both of these controversial dresses."



interplay of dating. Numerous books, advice columns, and guidance films dictated the rules for correct conduct, masculine and feminine.<sup>50</sup> Some of this advice dealt with issues of sexuality and will be considered in the next chapter. Much of it prescribed what Beth Bailey termed "the etiquette of masculinity and femininity" in her study of courtship and dating.<sup>51</sup> The boy asked for the date, provided the transportation and the money, opened the doors, gave both orders in the restaurant, and in general behaved in a masterful and dominant way that the culture considered masculine. The girl accepted the date and acted both charming and submissive. At its best, it allowed the couple to avoid anxiety by following conventional expectation. According to Bailey, "When the charade did work--when the man was dominant-yet-gentle in his control and the woman felt like a 'fairy princess,' it was just like the movies." But some mutual hostility and suspicion underlay these expectations, as teenage boys and girls maneuvered for control by accusing their intended partners of being insufficiently masculine or feminine.<sup>52</sup> Aware on some level of a battle, one seventeen-year-old told an interviewer, "Femininity is woman's greatest weapon." Downplaying the significance of this, the

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<sup>50</sup> Among the guidance films giving instruction in dating skills: *Dating Do's and Don'ts* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1949); *What to Do on a Date* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1951); *Date Etiquette* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1952); *Beginning to Date* (Wilmette, Illinois: Encyclopedia Britannica Films, 1953).

<sup>51</sup> Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat*, 97-118.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 115-117. The research findings for this study support Bailey's analysis.

reporter continued, "When asked why she needed a weapon, she was startled, then laughed."<sup>53</sup> Despite this dismissal, teenagers consistently learned that playing the gender role correctly gave them greater chances of social success. Many found the rules frustratingly ambiguous and sometimes contradictory.

Both manners and money on dates generated considerable discussion. Those giving advice did not always agree, and dismayed teenagers sometimes disputed their guidelines. Measures of masculine mastery mandated that boys open car doors and that girls sit waiting for their dates to provide this assistance. Anticipating objections, an advice columnist asked rhetorically, "Why should you, who can fix a tire all by your capable, vitaminized self, be helped in and out of a car by a boy?" Her answer summed up the whole dynamic of dating etiquette and the relational nature of gender roles:

Here is your golden opportunity to give a boy extra proof of the most important thing in the world to him--his growing sense of masculinity. By accepting and encouraging the special boy-girl deference involved in car manners, you recognize a boy as a man and as a gentleman. And nothing will make him like you more--though he may not even realize it!<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> "Seventeen! A Happy Time!" *Seventeen*, May 1954, 127. The article featured many large *Life*-type photographs, portraying one teenager, Anne Breukelman of White Plains, New York.

<sup>54</sup> Merry Manners, "Etiquette: Car Manners," *Seventeen*, May 1955, 132. Four years later, a similar protest arrived: "I am sixteen and in perfect health. I swim, ride, play tennis, and regularly beat my beau at golf. Why then--when I'm out on a date--do I have to pretend to be so helpless I can't open a car door!" Again the columnist endorsed the deception and the underlying ideology: "It's a penalty for beating your beau at golf! Actually, it is a pretense--but a nice one. It gives your escort much the same

One reader protested that the artificiality made her feel "so uncomfortable waiting that I end by opening the door myself. . . . I feel stupid just waiting for him."

Insisting that she should "pay the boy the compliment" of sitting passively, another columnist offered this suggestion: "To cover those awkward moments, try looking for something in your purse."<sup>55</sup>

An even stronger objection came in response to a magazine dating quiz that unsurprisingly recommended the same pattern of behavior. A teenager from Trenton wrote, "It's pretty difficult to be gracious when the boy of your dreams sits there behind the steering wheel, looks out at you hesitating on the other side of the car and says, 'What's the matter? Break your arm?'"<sup>56</sup> A Californian "scold[ed] the boys for the decline of gallantry" in the pages of *Seventeen*. Viewing her expectations suspiciously, one had told her, "Every time I open the door for you, Linda, I feel you're using your femininity to gain an unfair advantage."<sup>57</sup> From that side of the

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protective feeling you get taking a child's hand to cross a street. Cater to it." (Abigail Wood, "Etiquette," *Seventeen*, September 1959, 42.)

<sup>55</sup> Claudia Hatch, "Problems in Young Living," *Seventeen*, April 1956, 132.

<sup>56</sup> Letter from B. H., Trenton, New Jersey, *Seventeen*, October 1959, 4. The dating quiz in the August 1959 issue had asked "Do you let him open the car door for you--at least wait to see if he intends to?" The correct answer, of course, was yes.

<sup>57</sup> Linda Wetherbee, "Why Can't BOYS be More Romantic?" *Seventeen*, November 1961, 98, 172. Letters to the editor two months later in response blamed girls for not being feminine enough to inspire the gallantry she craved. Most were from girls; a boy wrote, "We boys desperately want girls to be girls, not he-men who can completely take care of themselves. . . . Making boys more romantic is a girl's job!" (Letter from J.B., Jr., Weehawken, New Jersey, *Seventeen*, January 1962, 4.)

gender rituals, another teenage boy complained about girls who "never give a guy a chance to prove he has good manners. If a fellow takes his date out in a car, she never lets him open the door for her. In a restaurant, she pulls off her own coat and jumps into a chair before he can rush around and begin to help her."<sup>58</sup> To some, the whole routine seemed absurd and demeaning to its participants. A letter from a nineteen-year-old in Peoria expressed this feeling and claimed that boys had become subservient: "Half the girls I know want to be treated nicey-nice and can't open a car door for themselves. . . . While I was in school I hardly ever dated boys for that reason. They bend over backwards to keep a gal happy. . . . I think that manners can be carried too far."<sup>59</sup> Even a guidance film concluded by asking the question, "Is there a danger manners might make sissies out of boys?"<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Peter Leavy, "From a Boy's Point of View: Can This Be You?" *Seventeen*, July 1952, 37. The quote came from Christopher Ryan, 17, of Lawrence, Long Island, New York. Other boys objected to girls "acting older than they are," those who "maul their pretty faces with too much make-up," and those who yelled, giggled, and blocked others' passage in school hallways.

<sup>59</sup> Letter from B. K., Peoria, Illinois, cited in Jimmy Wescott, "From a Boy's Point of View: Out-Going Basket," *Seventeen*, April 1955, 40. Wescott ended this issue's column with a letter from C. P., Marietta, Georgia, who wrote "I believe it is the duty of every girl to keep men happy, to be sincere in all things, and to be willing to make sacrifices. If she does this, when the right man comes along he will respect her and love her."

<sup>60</sup> *Are Manners Important?* (Wilmette, Illinois: Encyclopædia Britannica Films, 1954). This particular film, aimed at pre-teens, demonstrated forms of introduction, table manners, and opening doors for elderly adults. No dating situations were shown. The protagonist was a boy of about 11 or 12. The issue of gender role became most explicit at the end when the narrator asked "Do boys need manners as much as girls do? Or is there a danger manners might make sissies out of boys?" Given the lessons of the preceding ten minutes, clearly the filmmakers did not oppose good manners for

Conflicting attitudes and opinions from experts and peers contributed to continuing confusion. The car-door conundrum symbolized a larger controversy.

Money matters also defined the masculine and feminine roles in the youth culture. In most situations, dating depended on the boy buying tickets, food, and sometimes flowers or other gifts for the girl. He held financial responsibility for the evening. The origins of this custom can be traced to "treating" among urban working-class youth in the first years of the twentieth century, further developed among middle-class college students in the 1920s and beyond.<sup>61</sup> By the 1940s it had become well-established among high school youth as well. Even when the girl shared in the cost of the evening's entertainment, on a "Dutch treat" date, custom required her to give the money inconspicuously to her male companion. A home economics teacher advised the readers of her school's student newspaper, "Buying the tickets is a manly chore and should not be infringed upon by any female, even though it is a dutch party or the tickets are on the girl this time."<sup>62</sup> Even this compromise seemed

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boys. Raising the question rhetorically indicated, however, that this gender-role consideration had a prominent place in contemporary cultural attitudes.

<sup>61</sup> Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), 53-54; Paula Fass, *The Damned and the Beautiful: American Youth in the 1920's* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 201-203, 265-269.

<sup>62</sup> Mrs. Vada Turnham, "Pay Special Attention to Little Things While Dating, Turnham Emphasizes," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 13 March 1950, 2. See also Betty Cornell, *Betty Cornell's Teen-Age Popularity Guide* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1953),

inadequate for those who opposed the Dutch treat date on principle. Though advice columnists sometimes endorsed it as a way to share expenses, teenagers generally reacted negatively to the idea. A poll of the nearly four hundred members of the senior class at one Michigan high school in the early 1940s reported that sixty-three percent never went on such dates, while twenty-three percent "seldom" did. The remaining fourteen percent only "occasionally" went Dutch.<sup>63</sup>

Opinions printed in teenagers' letters to magazines further demonstrated the negative reputation of Dutch dates. Some girls resented the implication that if they

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84. The author described the power relations quite explicitly: "Good manners make it easy for a girl to let a boy feel master of any situation. In a restaurant it is the boy who pays, who gives the order for the two of you to the waiter, who makes arrangements for the table. Even if you have agreed to go Dutch, you can give your date your share of the bill later, in private. At the movies, if you want to pay your own way, it is easy enough to give the boy your ticket money beforehand, inconspicuously."

<sup>63</sup> Opal Powell Wolford, "The Dating Behavior and the Personal and Family Relationships of High School Seniors with Implications for Family Life Education" (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 1948), 192. 397 seniors at Highland Park High School, Highland Park, Michigan, participated in the study, conducted during the 1941-42 school year. Examples of advice columnists advising Dutch treat dates include Peter Leavy, "From a Boy's Point of View: An Old Dutch Custom," *Seventeen*, September 1950, 40-41; Jimmy Wescott, "From a Boy's Point of View: Let's Go Dutch," *Seventeen*, April 1956, 14, 18. Both writers acknowledged widespread hostility to the Dutch date. Leavy disputed the "widely believed" notion that a boy would "lose respect" for a girl who paid her own way, then qualified his own position to say that Dutch treats should only be for informal dates, not special events like the prom. Wescott summarized girls' doubts in these words: "If I offer to help a boy with our dating expenses, his male pride may be hurt, and he'll lose interest." Wescott's reply: "'Humbug.' If a boy's interest in you can be judged by how much you keep his ego inflated . . . , he's not worth spending anything on--particularly your time. So let him get lost." A poll of "in-the-know teen-age editors of hundreds of high school newspapers" at the end of the 1950s revealed that most adolescent girls disliked Dutch treating. See "Cross Country Report on Teens," *Seventeen*, September 1959, 134, 136.

did not pay their own way, they were taking advantage of the boy. One wrote "I am not a 'gold-digger.' My eye is on a boy's personality, not on his pocketbook." Yet she insisted she had no responsibility to pay part of the date expenses: "I feel if a boy is low on funds and can't think up a date that costs next to nothing, he shouldn't ask for a date at all." Others reported strong opposition by the boys they dated. A New Jersey teenager wrote that ". . . the boys I know seem to feel they have to spend an appreciable amount or not go out at all. They'd be insulted if a girl offered to pay her way on a date." Another suffered her boyfriend's ire: ". . . when I try to go Dutch with him, he gets very angry and refuses to let me pay for a thing." In response, the advice columnist to whom she had written insisted she "must give in gracefully or deal a fatal blow to Jim's pride," then offered "a partial solution": to make cookies and cakes and have snacks at the girl's house as her contribution. The writer reiterated her endorsement of deference as important to feminine protection: "Boys still like to look out for their girls--and aren't you really awfully glad that they do?" Dangers awaited those who ignored this principle.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Letter from P.M., New Rochelle, New York, *Seventeen*, November 1950, 4; letter from C. K., Upper Montclair, New Jersey, *ibid.*; Claudia Hatch, "Any Problems? Some of the Things that Keep Boys and Girls Apart . . . and Ideas for Getting Them Together Again," *Seventeen*, February 1955, 105. In another context one year later, Hatch made the same point even more explicitly as she again urged her readers to conceal their own competence: "In a dating

The message, unsurprisingly and frustratingly, lacked consistency. On the one hand, boys wanted girls to let them handle all financial matters. On the other, they resented what they considered girls' expectations of extravagantly expensive entertainment. None of those asked in one article about "ways a girl can help cut down a boy's prom expenses without causing a blow to his pride" could come up with answers, beyond suggesting she eat less or ask for inexpensive flowers. One warned ominously, "Most fellows are pretty proud; any step in this direction may have disastrous results."<sup>65</sup>

Yet elsewhere, boys complained that "Many girls seem to feel it's a boy's duty to take them to the best places every time they date. We become trophies to be shown off, rather than individuals worth knowing better." And another cautioned, "Boys steer clear of a girl who's got a dollar sign for a heart."<sup>66</sup> One school's "Date Tips" columnist chided girls: "Don't ever expect a boy to spend a lot of money on you. . . . boys never like a 'gold-digger.'" Two years later, the column aimed its advice in a different

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situation, it's the boy who likes to feel stronger. And can you blame him--when the world will expect him to act in this strong and protective way later on, as husband and breadwinner? So if you are the strong and superior one, where is he then? Or rather, where are you?" (Claudia Hatch, "Any Problems? Heart of the Matter," *Seventeen*, February 1956, 91.) The implied answer seemed at best to be "alone," and at worst "assaulted"--for without feminine encouragement of masculine protectiveness, the ideology seemed to presume unleashed savagery.

<sup>65</sup> Claudia Hatch, "Prom Primer," *Seventeen*, May 1957, 56.

<sup>66</sup> Letter from W.R., Worcester, Massachusetts (identifying himself as "a member of the spending sex"), *Seventeen*, August 1959, 4; Jimmy Wescott, "From a Boy's Point of View: Let's Go Dutch," *Seventeen*, April 1956, 18.



direction: "Boys, girls are really not gold diggers and they won't think your [sic] a square if you don't buy them a mum. ...[They would] rather be able to go with the boy and have a good time than not go at all. . . ."67 In another two years, the buying of chrysanthemums for football game dates at that school had become so obligatory and expensive that the student newspaper ran several editorials and articles denouncing the practice for exploiting the boys who had to buy the flowers. Calling it a "senseless custom that was probably started by some selfish girl or some lovesick boy," the editors seemed to fall into the "gold digger" mindset. Though a poll of forty girls indicated that most would be willing to settle for flowers "only" at the five home games, letters from some other students indicated strong resistance to cutting back on the custom. Suspicious of the editors' motives, one girl wrote, "Just because your boyfriends don't send you all a mum is certainly no reason we ought to go without them." And a boy expressed his feeling of trapped helplessness: "I would like to quit having to buy mums for my date. But what boy is going to be the first to not buy his date one? Not me, brother!"68 Mutual mistrust continued unabated.

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67 "Date Tips," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 22 September 1952, 2; *ibid.*, 18 October 1954, 2.

68 "Not So Many Mums, Please!" *The Colt*, 8 October 1956, 2; "40 Girls Vote on Local Mum Question, Say So Many Flowers Unnecessary," *ibid.*, 22 October 1956, 1; "'Anti-Mum' Movement?" *ibid.*, 2; letter from R.B., *ibid.*; letter from F.J., *ibid.*

Driving a car on a date remained a masculine duty and privilege. If the boy's own automobile or that of his family became unavailable, he could expect the father of the girl he dated to loan him their family car for the evening.<sup>69</sup> Consequently, many of the warnings about the dangers of unsafe driving appearing in publications aimed at teenage girls presumed their role as passengers. Telling its readers, "You Are the Nation's Worst Drivers," *Seventeen* illustrated the article with several photographs of boys behind the wheel. Only one of the illustrations pictured a girl driving. Proclaiming with alarm, "This Could Be You!" the magazine later featured a large photograph of a teenage girl model pretending to be unconscious or dead in the passenger seat of a wrecked car. The article suggested that girls had the responsibility of restraining their boyfriends' dangerous impulses (once again), and should not contribute to the problem by "cuddling in Johnny's arm."<sup>70</sup> The magazine cited some statistics supporting this approach at the end of the next decade: "There are two and one-half times as many male drivers as female, but they are involved in seven times as many fatal accidents." Editor-Publisher Enid F. Haupt urged her readers to "Speak Up and Live," offering six pointers to tell their dates to discourage unsafe driving. For additional emphasis, she accompanied

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<sup>69</sup> Peter Leavy, "From a Boy's Point of View: Your Father's Car," *Seventeen*, June 1954, 16.

<sup>70</sup> "You Are the Nation's Worst Drivers," *Seventeen*, September 1948, 116; "This Could Be You," *Seventeen*, August 1949, 134.

her article with "Suicide on the Highway," and a piece of florid fiction called "Moment in Time," in which a boy's recklessness killed his date, "shattering her skull with the pulpy sound of a melon being mashed with a hammer."<sup>71</sup> The cultural vision of masculinity held a serious internal contradiction: the chivalrous protector twinned with the reckless destroyer.

Despite the emphasis on girls as passengers and victims, teenagers of both genders took driver education classes and entered contests. The account of two successful participants in a Minnesota Rodeo illustrates some striking gender differences. When Miriam Tschida and Don Salverda each won their sex-segregated division, "Miriam remarked that only eight girls competed, 'making it easier.'" Don made no similar comment about the ten boys in his division, accepting his victory without apologies. The girl's statement appears to be feminine self-effacement.<sup>72</sup> She had learned her lessons well.

With the rules of the role prescribing passivity, some sought a sense of power through devious manipulation. Etiquette columns urged tricking the boy into a masquerade of masculinity. Suggested lines included "Strong man, how

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<sup>71</sup> Enid A. Haupt, "Speak Up and Live," *Seventeen*, September 1959, 121; Frederick A. Birmingham, "Suicide on the Highway," *ibid.*, 122-123, 200, 202; "Moment in Time," *ibid.*, 122-123, 200. *Seventeen* also ran a number of traffic-safety features that were less gender-specific. See "You Get a D for Driving," *Seventeen*, May 1946, 140-141; "Robert Young Would Like You to Stay Alive," *Seventeen*, September 1950, 82; "Safety is No Accident," *Seventeen*, May 1954, 34.

<sup>72</sup> "Central Sophomores Win Driving Rodeo," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 16 May 1952, 3.

about opening doors for the weaker sex?" and "Oh, do order some of that wonderful chicken for me." When these maneuvers failed to penetrate his consciousness, the girl could deceive even more directly by saying "I always thought that I was supposed to do the ordering--and I've just found out I was wrong." Reassuring the dubious reader, the columnist insisted, "He'll love it, for all these rules have a reason, you know! And this one is to make him feel importantly responsible for your welfare."<sup>73</sup> Yet in a peculiar way the writer urged her readers to exercise their own power by stage-managing their dates' performances.

However direct or devious their control of the relationship, teenage girls expected to find a significant part of their identities through their boyfriends. A woman reflecting on her high school days in the 1950s remembered, "For a girl, there was no surer way to popularity, to being at the absolute center of the in-crowd, than dating the right boy."<sup>74</sup> As the boys' prestige correlated with their contributions to their school's sports programs, the girl wearing her boyfriend's letter sweater or jacket felt special pride. A school ban on the

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<sup>73</sup> Merry Manners, "What to Do When (Etiquette)," *Seventeen*, October 1954, 44.

<sup>74</sup> Benita Eisler, *Private Lives: Men and Women of the Fifties* (New York, London, Toronto, Sydney: Franklin Watts, 1986), 110. The quote comes from Carol Cornwell. James Coleman's findings verified this in several of the schools he studied: ". . . a girl who is popular with the right boys has a special position, envied by other girls and fought over by boys." (James S. Coleman, *The Adolescent Society: The Social Life of the Teenager and Its Impact on Education* [New York: The Free Press, 1961], 90.)

practice struck a strong blow to her social standing and esteem. When girls at Lake Washington High School in 1947 were forbidden to wear their boyfriends' letter sweaters, it highlighted gender divisions and the importance of male success in sports to both boys and girls. The coach insisted, "The letter doesn't mean a thing if girls wear them. Why can't anyone wear them if girls do?" The student writer noted that the change "spelled sadness" for LWHS girls.<sup>75</sup>

A similar issue lies at the heart of the 1950 guidance film *How Honest Are You?* Intended to instruct teenagers to examine their ways of determining and expressing truth, and told in characteristic Coronet fashion with a wise coach acting as moderator, the film carried a strong subtext illustrating gender roles in teenage culture. Told in an almost *Rashomon*-style series of flashbacks by several characters, the story concerned suspicions by several basketball players that their teammate Bob had stolen money from one of their lockers. Not certain, they hesitated to tell anyone else. But Rose, the only female character in the film and the most conniving and deceptive, insisted that her boyfriend Terry report the imagined theft. When he appeared reluctant, she went to the coach herself to accuse Bob, the team's

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<sup>75</sup> "Kangaroo Klub Bans Wearing of Letter Sweaters by Girls," *Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 23 December 1947, 9. The article cited other, unnamed teachers who had been "complaining that the sweaters look sloppy on the girls in addition to the fact the girls wearing them brings down the value of the letter and for what it stands."

starting center. She intended to enable her benchwarmer boyfriend to become a star, thus increasing her own prestige and happiness. Her flashbacks are the only counterfactual scenes in the film; through her eyes, we see a theft that never occurred, and a fantasy of Terry's triumph on the basketball court after Bob's removal. She narrates this scene of their mutual glory: "He'll be the star of the team--and I'll be sitting on top of the world." After he scores the winning basket, they embrace as the crowd cheers. The flashback ends, and Rose, having admitted her previous "hypocrisy," stands contritely before the benevolent coach, who forgives and thanks her. The film concludes with a final flashback of Bob at the locker, this time showing what really happened, as he retrieves a whistle needed by the coach.<sup>76</sup> Even disregarding the negative view of a disingenuous Rose, the viewer sees in this film a poignant portrait of the limits that gender roles assigned in the postwar youth culture.

Images of masculinity set the standards of behavioral expectations for teenage boys. More difficult to document because of the relative paucity of materials published for male members of the youth culture, the rules nonetheless

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<sup>76</sup> *How Honest Are You?* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1950). *Rashomon*, the famed Akira Kurosawa film in which the story of a crime is visualized from four conflicting points of view, had its first United States release that same year, so the similarities in technique may be more than coincidental. The Coronet film also shows the influence of Hollywood mental illness dramas from the postwar years. Rose's interior monologues, flashbacks and fantasies resonate with eerie echoes of similar stylistic devices from the contemporary commercial cinema.

delineated a clear gender role for them as well as for the girls. In addition to the issues of manners and dating discussed above, membership on school sports teams carried a crucial cachet. Without it, a boy's masculinity seemed suspect. A girl wrote to an advice columnist about peer pressure on her and her non-athletic boyfriend, as acquaintances teased her for "going out with a sissy. . . . the boys here are noted for being sport-heroes . . . [and] try to pick fights with him. . . ." Excusing him from charges of being unmasculine because of his secret heart problem, the columnist urged her to reveal the secret: "Assume true sportsmen would not want to heckle a boy who can't go out for sports for health reasons," implying that other reasons might well deserve righteous contempt. With no evident irony, she continued, "To think a boy must be a sports-hero, not to be a sissy, is outdated thinking." Though calling it outdated, she showed little sign of leaving it far behind, as she concluded, "Interest in sports, as a spectator, is easy entry to any sport-minded crowd. Doubtless, your friend has many 'manly' interests to share with your group. . . ." <sup>77</sup>

In other schools, consuming alcoholic beverages counted as a measure of masculinity. At least one resentful teenager objected to this perception in a student newspaper editorial: "I'm a 'chicken,' a 'coward,' a 'square,' a 'sissy,' and most definitely a

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<sup>77</sup> Kitte Turmell, "Teen Etiquette," *Tulsa Sunday World Magazine*, 12 December 1954, 33.

'mamma's baby.' . . . a chicken because I always say, 'No thank you,' when the boys are passing out the beer. . . . a sissy because I won't get in a car and rod around with the guys who do drink. . . ." He continued in the same vein for several more paragraphs. The pressure to escape the unmasculine appellation of "sissy" could be eased by imbibing. He thought the names they called him "hard ones to swallow, but not half as hard as that stuff they call the 'product of the brewer's art.'" Relying on standards learned from his non-drinking parents, he nonetheless clearly found the struggle difficult.<sup>78</sup>

Yet the pressures on boys to be masculine hardly seemed as restrictive as the ones faced by girls in meeting the exacting standards of femininity. A light-hearted survey of students at one Minnesota high school produced some revealing results from the gender factory floor. Asked how they would respond to a sudden switch of gender, girls responded positively as they imagined themselves as boys: they said they would "have fun. . . never wash another dish. . . be happy. . . be a bachelor. . . try out for the football team and be a big hero." Boys had great difficulty finding a positive aspect to such a change; transformed into girls, they would "bury my head in the ground. . . enter a beauty contest with Lena the Hyena. . . put my head in a pail of water and drown myself. . . collect skeletons. . . work hard in

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<sup>78</sup> "I'm a Mamma's Baby!" *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 8 October 1956, 2.



school. . . . fall in love with myself. . . . go shoot myself."<sup>79</sup> Clearly the youth culture valued the male experience more highly.

The reference to "Lena the Hyena" indicates the impact of one comic strip on popular culture during this era. Al Capp's *Li'l Abner* appeared in hundreds of daily newspapers across the country and people knew its characters well. Set in a deliriously-imagined hillbilly community called Dogpatch, the strip featured voluptuous, scantily-clad young women such as Daisy Mae Yokum and Moonbeam McSwine. Two notable exceptions to this array of feminine pulchritude were Lena the Hyena, whose ugly visage turned onlookers to stone, and the legendary Sadie Hawkins, so homely that she could catch a man only when her powerful father instituted a race for her benefit. On Sadie Hawkins Day, introduced in *L'il Abner* in 1937, eligible bachelors would be given a slight head start as unmarried young women pursued them in a frantic daylong race. Any man caught before sunset had to marry his captor. Before long, this fanciful event had spread from the comic pages to the youth culture, as colleges and high schools nation-wide adapted some of its concepts to their own social purposes.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> "If I Were a Boy," "If I Were a Girl," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 18 October 1946, 2.

<sup>80</sup> E. J. Kahn, Jr., "Profiles: Oooff!! (Sob!) Eep!! (Gulp!) Zowie!!!" *The New Yorker*, 29 November 1947, 45-57. The title refers to the exclamations Capp frequently put in the mouths of his cartoon characters. On pages 49 and 50, the article pays most detailed attention to Lena the Hyena and to the incorporation of Sadie Hawkins Day into the youth culture. See also Dave Schreiner, "1937:

On Sadie Hawkins Day as observed in some high schools, girls would invite boys to a dance, usually with a hillbilly costume theme. A few schools even observed a variation of the foot race, in which the girls chased and tagged the boys. More often, the girl would observe the usually masculine protocol of asking for a date and making the arrangements ordinarily done by boys. A Pittsburgh student newspaper reported that

girls performed all the customary duties of chivalrous males during the week. They drove the boys around on dates, paid their bills in eating places, and even prepared corsages (of vegetables) to present them at tonight's dance. "The girls," said Social Committee co-chairman Bunny Pappas with a sarcastic grin, "are doing what the boys *should* do. Ladies are becoming gentlemen for a week."<sup>81</sup>

Here lies the most important meaning of Sadie Hawkins and other girl-ask-boy events. Far from challenging the normal social order's gender roles, it acknowledged its practices and assumptions. By ritualized role reversal, participants confirmed normative and proper patterns of behavior. By "becoming gentlemen" temporarily, girls could playfully demonstrate their expectations of masculine etiquette for the boys to emulate during the other fifty-one weeks of the

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Sadie's First Run," *Li'l Abner Dailies*, vol. 3 (Princeton, Wisconsin: Kitchen Sink Press, 1988), 8-9. By 1939, college students had turned the event into "a minor national holiday." See "Girls Chase Boys on Sadie Hawkins Day," *Life*, 6 February 1939, 20-21. The only scholarly book on *Li'l Abner* deals only briefly with Sadie Hawkins Day in the strip and not at all with its incorporation into youth culture. See Arthur Asa Berger, *Li'l Abner: A Study in American Satire* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1994), a reprint of a book originally published by Twayne in New York, 1969.

<sup>81</sup> "Dance Ends 12A 'Dogpatch Week'," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 1 March 1957, 1.

year. And by experiencing some of the unfamiliar stresses of the opposite sex's duties, each could retreat with greater comfort into his or her usual role. A Texas teenager wrote, "Now you girls realize that a boy's date life is not such an easy one. In addition to the money problem, it takes a bit of courage to ask someone for a date. Just be glad that your turn comes only one week out of the year!"<sup>82</sup> Whether it bore the name of Sadie Hawkins, turnabout, Tolo, or TWIRP Week (an acronym for "The Woman is Required to Pay"), the event reinforced traditional gender relations by making any variation seem extraordinary and often humorous.<sup>83</sup>

Despite the intentions of using the role-reversal, girl-ask-boy events for the reinforcement of gender conventions, these social activities also contributed to

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<sup>82</sup> "Girls Take Their Turn At Wheel of Dating," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 5 April 1957, 2.

<sup>83</sup> Every high school examined in the course of research for this study had some kind of girl-ask-boy event, usually called a Sadie Hawkins dance. The student reporters frequently stressed how girls that week behaved as boys were supposed to act the rest of the year. The name of TWIRP week (sometimes explained as "The Woman is Requested to Pay" or "...to Please") sounded just like "twerp," and occasionally appeared with that spelling in student letters to the editor. Perhaps accidental, this homonym nonetheless implies boys would become unmasculine twerps by allowing girls to exercise such initiatives outside of the controlled confines of the once-a-year festival. Tolos seemed to exist only in the Pacific Northwest, and usually were more formal in dress and less playful than the Sadie Hawkins and TWIRP week events (which also took place in the Northwest schools). Sixty-three separate articles give evidence of the ubiquity of these social functions. As an example of the comic potential of the role-reversal, see the play-within-a-play, "If Girls Behaved as Boys on Dates," in Marrijane and Joseph Hayes, *Too Many Dates* (New York: Samuel French, 1950), 74-83. A parallel historical role reversal might also be noted in ancient Rome, when during Carnival slaves and masters exchanged roles for a day. (Credit for this observation should go to my daughter Elizabeth Green, who told it to me while she was a high school Latin student.)

the undermining of the very conventions they supposedly validated. Subversive and carnivalesque, they heightened the sense of resistance to the excesses of rigid gender roles in dating by turning them on their heads. What the sponsoring authorities saw as instructional and harmless entertainment, perhaps with a safety-valve quality, could be perceived quite differently by the participants. Mikhail Bakhtin described the spirit of the carnivalesque as "temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order," which ultimately "offers the chance to have a new outlook on the world, to realize the relative nature of all that exists, and to enter a completely new order of things."<sup>84</sup> Although Bakhtin wrote about a different historical context, the principles of his analysis fit the gender-role-reversal events of American teenagers in the mid-twentieth century quite well.

Contemporary sources give strong evidence of grounds for resistance to gender conventions. A twenty-minute film made in 1961 highlights many of the difficulties faced by teenagers adjusting to sex-role expectations. Evocatively entitled *Katie's Lot*, it tells the story of a girl whose classmates have entered the world of flirtation and dating while she continues to play with an imaginary

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<sup>84</sup> Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, Trans. Helene Iswolsky (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1968), 11, 34. For an in-depth analytical study of social events where gender roles were reversed, see Michael McKernan, "Public Messages of Gender at Leap Year, Sadie Hawkins and Tolo Role-Reversal Social Dances," unpublished thesis, Boston University, 1998.

horse. When Henry tries to carry her books home from school, she challenges him to a foot race instead. She beats him, much to his chagrin. Her mother, snugly attired in a sheath dress, attempts to get her out of her jeans and into a frilly party dress. Katie contorts her face in mockery and disgust, and goes out to a wooded lot to play with her pretend horse. Henry persists in his attentions, making the mistake of beating her father at arm wrestling. When Katie emerges from the lot one evening, Henry challenges her solitary interests. He tries to enter her private world by exploring the lot. She stops him, they struggle and then part angrily. The scene dissolves to a shot of a portable record player, as Katie sits glumly at an all-girl party. The others are fully involved with their gender roles, wearing styled hair and showing animated interest in each other's dresses. One of them, laughing, starts putting mascara and lipstick on Katie, who resists and pulls away. A series of cuts back and forth between her and her tormentor creates a nearly frantic mood. She appears almost in tears, as the other girl laughs at her smeared lipstick.

Katie next sees Henry walking dreamily by her house arm-in-arm with the girl who had launched the make-up attack. She throws a tennis ball at the entranced couple, getting only a brief amused glance in response. Katie's transformation begins. In quick succession, she puts on

the frilly dress, gives away her saddle, pantomimes the untying of her imaginary horse, and accepts an invitation to a party with Henry as her escort. In the final scene, dressed in frills, gloves and tiny high heels, she tries one more romp, racing and leaping from her front door. Henry, standing sternly in coat and tie, gives her a cold look of disapproval. Spirit broken, she approaches him timidly. With masculine mastery, he takes her hand and places it firmly on his arm. As they walk off together, she smiles up at him tentatively, hopefully, searching for his approval. They walk out of the frame as the camera holds on the now-abandoned wooded lot where Katie's childhood joys have died. The film ends on this powerful note, as a subdued Katie faces her woman's lot. Perhaps the filmmakers intended this to be a poignant coming-of-age film, gently accepting what they saw as inevitable, without any serious critique of gender role expectations. But intentionally or not, they produced a document revealing much about the psychic costs of the system.<sup>85</sup>

High school girls expressed their own sense of discomfort with conflicting expectations. From three different student newspapers, similar laments appeared, the first from Oklahoma City's Central High School in 1949:

If you smile at him, he thinks you're flirting.  
If you don't smile, he thinks you are an iceberg.  
. . .  
If you let him make love to you, he thinks you're  
cheap.  
If you don't, he will go with a girl who will.

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<sup>85</sup> *Katie's Lot* (New York: George K. Arthur Productions, 1961).

If you go with other fellows, he thinks you're  
fickle.  
If you don't, he thinks no one will have you.  
Men, God bless them, they don't know what they want.<sup>86</sup>

In St. Cloud, Minnesota, in 1957, a similar feature  
carried the headline "Problem Universal in Schools."

If a girl walks, she's a pickup.  
If she drives, she's a wheel.  
If she stays home, she's a deadhead.  
If she watches basketball practice, she's a flirt.  
If she doesn't, she has no school spirit.  
If she dances with boys in the lower classes, she's  
robbing the cradle.  
If she doesn't, she's a snob.  
If she dates out-of-town fellows, she's too good for  
the locals.  
If she doesn't, she stays home because the locals are  
too good for her.  
Who says, 'It's a woman's world?'<sup>87</sup>

And the Arlington, Texas, student newspaper described  
it this way in 1960:

If a girl speaks to everyone, she's forward;  
If she talks, she's a flirt;  
If she doesn't, she's bashful.  
If she's smart, she's a highbrow;  
If she isn't, she's dumb.  
If she talks about others, she's catty;  
If she talks about herself, she's conceited.  
If she's popular, she's talked about;  
If she isn't, she's a dud.  
If she goes with boys, she's a pick-up;  
If she doesn't, she's a wallflower.  
There just ain't no justice.<sup>88</sup>

Some years before the publication of the landmark works of  
mid-twentieth-century feminism, teenagers experienced and  
expressed the absurdities of conflicting gender

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<sup>86</sup> "If--For Girls," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma,) 11 February 1949, 5.

<sup>87</sup> Pat Mendel, "Problem Universal in Schools," *The Tech* (Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota), 20 December 1957, 5.

<sup>88</sup> Untitled, *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 2 February 1960, 2. Credited to the *Jacket Journal*, Fort Worth, Texas.

expectations. Probably most contested of all, the double standard of sexual conduct deserves the more detailed consideration to be found in the next chapter.



## Chapter Five

### How Much Affection?

Celebrating the end of their eighth-grade school year in June, 1957, a group of young teenagers gathered for a patio party. A diary kept by one of them indicated a strong sexual interest, noting with excitement the presence of several boys from a nearby community and the special attention paid to her by one who "liked me about the middle of the party" when they played a kissing game called "spotlight." Then, she wrote, "Randy and I danced together most of the time wow. But finally my cold caught up with me . . . so I told Randy I better not play because he would catch my cold. Then he sorta lost his likeness in me." Disappointed but undefeated, she turned her interest elsewhere, concluding the diary entry by noting that "Dave was as cute as ever."<sup>1</sup> Dave's recurring presence in the diary over the following several months showed her hope that he would break up with various girlfriends and pay more attention to her. She found great promise in his behavior at a dance a week later, when he twice chose her for his partner during performances of the intensely romantic song "Over the Mountain, Across the Sea" at the evening's end. A few nights later, close to midnight, Dave and four other boys sneaked into a girls' sleepout, an

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<sup>1</sup> Melinda Dillard, unpublished diary, 7 June 1957, in possession of the author. Melinda Dillard, then a student at W. A. Anderson Junior High School, Bothell, Washington, was thirteen years old on the date of this entry. She turned fourteen on 16 June 1957.

outdoor slumber party. She wrote of considerable playful physical contact: ". . . first they all piled on top of Linda K., then on me, and they all ended up laying all over Sharon and Linda L. Jerry was laying on Linda L. with his head on her stomach. Dave was laying on me and Larry was laying on Sharon while she combed his hair." The boys' loud laughter woke parents in a nearby house, and a suddenly switched-on porch light broke up the impromptu gathering. A concerned father with a searchlight found nothing amiss. The boys scattered and the girls went to sleep. At a party two nights later, she took very little part in a game of spin-the-bottle because Dave did not play. Then he chose the record "A Rose and a Baby Ruth" and asked her to dance:

. . . he held me real close and put his head next to mine (oh, I like him so darn much.) Dave and I sat and played records after that. Dave rode home in the car with me, he and I sat in the front seat real close. I was hoping he would hold my hand but he didn't. When we let him off at the Zesto . . . he looked at me with his beautiful blue eyes and said thanks for the party. Wow. . . . Dave is a living doll, oh, I really, really, like him very much. I hope he likes me. The way he danced with me to "Rose and a Baby Ruth" (the one both he and I liked) wow! so darn close!!!<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, June 14, 1957; June 18, 1957; June 20, 1957. The words "so darn close" at the end of the June 20 entry have been crossed out and are nearly illegible. The different color ink of the strike-out lines indicates a later date, and may represent an attempt at self-censorship. The song "A Rose and a Baby Ruth" is a male vocalist's slow ballad with lyrics about a couple reconciling after a "teenage quarrel" when the boy gives the girl a gift of a flower and a candy bar. (ABC-Paramount 9765; composed by John D. Loudermilk. Performed by George Hamilton IV.)

The intense emotion and sexual energy evident in these passages exemplify issues of great concern to teenagers and the adults who sought to shape their behavior. The diarist and the object of her desire were not unique. Powerful feelings impelled young people to seek physical expression. They moved to slow rhythms in tight embraces, held hands, kissed, and caressed each other. They called their love-making necking, petting, courting, making out, and parking. Sometimes it led to "going all the way," though both peer and adult standards set severe sanctions against sexual intercourse. But where to set the limit short of that ultimate step caused much disagreement.

The formation of a sexually autonomous youth culture provoked considerable controversy, as teenagers and various groups of adults competed to set its standards and to police its practices. Although the double standard persisted, allowing greater sexual freedom for teenage boys than for teenage girls, female desire received growing recognition. Patterns of dating shifted increasingly to modes that allowed and encouraged greater sexual intimacy, particularly the growing dominance of "going steady." Intensity of sexual feelings found expression in a way that further marked teenage culture as distinctive and increasingly independent.

In a 1949 article provocatively entitled "Sex Freedom and Morals in the United States," the editors of the

*Ladies' Home Journal* found among teenagers "a vast disturbing difference between what they are 'told to do' by parents and 'what the crowd really does.'" Teenagers interviewed at home, school, and drugstore hangouts told reporters that in the South and West, they called physical intimacies "courting. . . . [A]ccording to the students, the most important part of every 'car date' is the forty-five minutes to two hours spent in 'courting.' As one boy explained, 'With some girls, courting comes *before* or *after* hamburgers. And with some girls, it comes *instead*.'" The older term "necking" still had most common use in other parts of the country. Another magazine noted a few years later that "parking [has become] today's term for necking." Whatever word they used, teenagers quoted in the *Journal* article described it as "'just a lot of hugging and kissing,' 'a little talk, radio music and you know what' or 'making love just as fast and as far as you can!'" And despite adult proscriptions, "students insist it is not a thing that 'some girls do, but nice girls don't'--almost everybody does it."<sup>3</sup>

A growing discrepancy between what adults approved and what young people did on dates created tension. One observer noted that "Feelings of guilt often arise with young people because of the desires which they have but

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<sup>3</sup> "Sex Freedom and Morals in the United States," *Ladies' Home Journal*, June 1949, 48-49, 86. First in the *Journal*'s twelve-part "Profile of Youth" series, the article accompanied a personal portrait of an individual teenager. This pattern continued throughout the series, edited by Maureen Daly. The definition of "parking" appeared in "Going Steady," *Life*, 14 June 1954, 123.

which they feel they should not have."<sup>4</sup> She based her comment on more than speculation, having spent several months surveying and interviewing seniors at one Michigan high school. Her acknowledgment of teenage sexual feelings put her in a minority among adults writing about youthful dating practices. Adult silence on the subject constituted an effective form of denial. Preferring to discuss peer pressures and proper etiquette, many advice-givers avoided mentioning the passions propelling petting even as they advocated limiting physical contact to hand-holding and good-night kissing.

By holding hands, a teenage boy and girl signified at least the beginning of a physical relationship. This level of intimacy usually could be tolerated or even encouraged by adults. Photographs of hand-holding couples appeared frequently in magazines aimed at teenagers and even in high school newspapers.<sup>5</sup> An article on dating advised its female readers on "bringing him within hand-holding range."<sup>6</sup> One boy advised his potential movie

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<sup>4</sup> Opal Powell Wolford, "The Dating Behavior and the Personal and Family Relationships of High School Seniors with Implications for Family Life Education" (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1948), 192.

<sup>5</sup> Photographs of couples holding hands appeared in numerous advertisements in *Seventeen*, including ads for Noxema, May 1956, 167; Chanel, November 1957, 5, and October 1959, 5; Clearasil, January 1959, 10. High school newspapers printing photographs of hand-holding students included *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 22 October 1947, 9; *The Colt*, 22 March 1957, 2; *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 27 May 1949, 2. The latter photo illustrated correct dating behavior, contrasted with an accompanying picture of a couple sitting with arms entangled and eyes smoldering.

<sup>6</sup> Natalie Gittelsohn, "That Old Custom, the Date," *Seventeen*, April 1951, 110.

dates where to sit so that he could hold hands with his left and still have his right hand free for eating popcorn.<sup>7</sup> Reports of hand-holding couples appeared in the gossip columns of many high school newspapers, usually showing approval of the public sign of private romance. Whether "still walking the halls, holding hands," "holding hands at the theater, "look[ing] sweet holding hands--6th period," or "giving each other those dreamy looks as they stroll down the halls hand in hand," these twosomes received notice and peer approbation for their affectionate display.<sup>8</sup>

Many guidance films also showed hand-holding in a positive light. At the end of *Dating Do's and Don'ts*, the young couple correctly concluded their first date by walking hand in hand together to the girl's front door, exchanging smiles and pleasant remarks, in sharp contrast to the previous scene in which the overeager young swain lunged at the very frightened girl, trying to steal a kiss. Making the point clear to both him and the audience, she cried "Don't!" and scurried inside, leaving him feeling foolish and forlorn. Other films about dating made similar points, showing hand-holding as warm,

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<sup>7</sup> Jimmy Wescott, "From a Boy's Point of View: I Was a Teen-Age Pterodactyl," *Seventeen*, March 1959, 52. His date's relative ability to eat popcorn with her free hand received no mention.

<sup>8</sup> "Tasty Tid-Bits," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 3 March 1944, 2; "Katy's Katty Korn," *Bothell High Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 24 September 1947, 3; "Corridor Comment," *Bothell High Cougar*, 23 November 1949, 3; Lila and Barbara, "Soonerosities," *Sooner Spirit*, 5 May 1950, 3.

friendly and affectionate, a safe alternative to more dangerous practices.<sup>9</sup>

Even hand-holding seemed too sexual and therefore threatening to some adult authorities. One football coach proclaimed that at his school "love and athletics don't mix [and] . . . the next one of the team caught holding hands will be sorry." The principal of another high school banned mixed-sex lunch tables, "corridor hand-holding, arm-in-arm walking, lounging and marriage." At his insistence, over seven hundred students pledged to abide by these rules or suffer a five-day suspension.<sup>10</sup> A couple at another high school escaped punishment for holding hands in class when they managed to convince the reprimanding teacher that they were "Indian wrestling." But for most authorities, hand-holding did not cross the line. *Popularity Guide* author Betty Cornell stated the

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<sup>9</sup> *Dating Do's and Don'ts* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1949). Other films of this genre which showed affectionate but properly restrained couples holding hands included *Going Steady?* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1951); *How Do You Know It's Love?* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1950); *Joe and Roxy* (Ottawa: National Film Board of Canada, 1957); *Junior Prom* (New York: Simmel-Miservey, 1946); *Social-Sex Attitudes in Adolescence* (Ottawa and New York: Crawley Films for McGraw Hill, 1953); *Toward Emotional Maturity* (New York: Knickerbocker Productions for McGraw-Hill, 1955); *When Should I Marry?* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1957). In *Is This Love?* (Ottawa and New York: Crawley Films for McGraw Hill, 1957), a couple argued while holding hands, signifying a deep commitment that transcended transitory disagreements. Even films without a primary message about romantic relationships sometimes showed hand-holding as part of the pleasant ambiance of teenage culture, as did *High School: Your Challenge* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1952).

<sup>10</sup> "Tom Foolery," *La Jolla Hi-Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 18 October 1945, 2; "Segregated Sexes," *Life*, 2 June 1947, 143. The *Life* article told how the principal in Whitehaven, Tennessee, took action after a "near epidemic" of eight high school marriages. More boys than girls objected to the new rules, saying that they denied "'what we should have in a coed school.'" (*Ibid.*)

generally accepted limits: "The minute you go beyond holding hands in public you have gone too far."<sup>11</sup>

Considerable evidence suggested that by these standards, many teenagers had indeed gone too far. Public displays of affection, frowned on by advice books and punished by school administrators, nonetheless appeared with increasing frequency. As advice books and columns regularly cautioned against it, the phenomenon persisted. Gossip columns and editorials in student newspapers took note of it, showing a curiously divided attitude. Physical intimacies in public outside of school usually generated reports written with humor and glee. But accounts of schooltime sexuality sent shivers through the student newspaper staff. At first they singled out individuals for censure, as in this gossip column item: "Everyone has told us that courting and all that potent stuff are done in parked cars or in the balcony of the movies. Evidently Sandy Ventress and Mary Ellen Morgan haven't heard of the above as they were very much engrossed in each other before the band door one Tuesday afternoon about 3 p.m."<sup>12</sup> Students in a "Family Life" class agreed with the advice columnists that "courting . . . should be a sign of genuine affection and should not be

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<sup>11</sup> "Keyhole," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 10 March 1961, 4; Betty Cornell, *Betty Cornell's Teen-Age Popularity Guide* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1953), 85. She forbade only public displays; still another set of rules applied to private petting, to be discussed later in this chapter.

<sup>12</sup> "Soonerosties," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 3 December 1948, 3.



cheapened by public display. This included such places as movies, school, and on the streets."<sup>13</sup>

Within a few years, displays of affection in schools had apparently become so frequent that the editorial comments targeted a group phenomenon rather than individual miscreants. One lengthy article quoted the opinions of five students and two teachers on the "current problem of necking in the halls." All but one opposed the lessening of former limits: "spring fever seems to be lasting all year long, and it is no longer a question of holding hands." Some students worried that "our halls look like lover's lanes" and that visitors to the school would get a poor impression. Amused by the entire issue, the sole dissenter made a modest proposal: "The custodian should provide a couch at both ends of the halls, for the students to neck on . . . [and] put up a screen at either end . . . to afford more privacy. . . . Teachers should avoid these ends of the halls so they wouldn't embarrass or disturb the students. . . ."<sup>14</sup> With bitter sarcasm, another student editorialist suggested vitamin supplements for some classmates: "The way they drape themselves around each other, it is obvious they either haven't the strength or mentality to reach the next class

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<sup>13</sup> "Family Life Students Solve Real Life Problems," *Sooner Spirit*, 27 May 1949, 2. The textbook for the class was the evocatively titled *Love at the Threshold*, by Frances Bruce Strain (New York: Appleton-Century, 1939, 1942).

<sup>14</sup> "The More We Get Together," *Lake Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 23 January 1951, 3, 5.

unsupported."<sup>15</sup> A writer concerned about traffic flow complained that "Passage in the halls is becoming congested with these entangled couples. . . ." Finding the spectacle most unappetizing, he/she declared in disgust, "Romeo and Juliette [sic] would be put to shame if they would see some of the fond embraces taking place. . . . entwined students pledge their love in front of the entire student body. And sometimes, right before lunch!"<sup>16</sup> With stomachs turned and eyes unaverted, these student scribes echoed the proclamations of adult administrators and advice givers who decried public displays of affection, at least at school.

When amorous activity appeared elsewhere, more ambivalent attitudes prevailed. Sometimes students chided their classmates for dalliances at dances. Beginning with the oft-repeated refrain, "There's a time and a place for everything," the *Central High Times* reminded one cozy couple that "dances are places to dance, kids." Less personal but still appalled, the editor of the *Sooner Spirit* attended a formal dance and "came to the conclusion that dancing is a lot like wrestling. Except some holds are barred in wrestling." But a post-game tryst got the humorous treatment: "Ellie Edbloom went to get her coat.

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<sup>15</sup> "Vitamin Deficiency Brings on 'Love,'" *Sooner Spirit*, 18 January 1957, 3.

<sup>16</sup> "But We're in Love," *The Colt*, 31 October 1961, 2.

The funny part about it was, she ended up in the boys' locker room. That's funny? No, That's Amore!"<sup>17</sup>

Adult overstatement of teenage romance seemed less amusing to young people. Angry students wrote detailed rebuttals of exaggerated claims by adult authorities. Early in 1945, a well-established sense of separate cultural identity had begun to form among teenagers. When two police officers invaded a Hi-Y dance in St. Paul looking for underage drinkers, they found kissing couples and ordered them to separate. Indignant at this high-handed treatment, a large group of boys surrounded the officers and challenged their authority to take such action. The police called in back-up support, then withdrew without further incident. The next day's Minneapolis and St. Paul newspapers sensationalized the event with hyperbolic headlines such as "Students 'Neck' at Dance" and "Cops Called to Quell Hi-Y Dance Rowdies." Students lamented this response: "For some reason many adults think . . . that anything that teenagers do out of the straight and narrow has its roots in something dark and sinful." Weighing two major adult authorities competing for teenage adherence, the rules of etiquette and the forces of law, a student editorialist concluded

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<sup>17</sup> "Who, Where, When, Why?" *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 25 May 1951, 2; Vera Paisley, "Sooner Skipper: Just Rambling," *Sooner Spirit*, 3 May 1957, 2; "Creepalong Catastrophe," *Central High Times*, 29 January 1954, 2. The popular song "That's Amore," then on the charts, translates to "That's Love."

that "the whole incident was a case for Emily Post rather than the police. . . ."18

Displays of affection away from school seemed to enjoy general peer approval, expressed in amused and delighted tones. One gossip columnist's account of a recent social gathering tantalized readers: "When the lights came on again at B. Nellor's party (out, huh?), some of the guests weren't quite prepared. Need we say more?"19 Movie theaters and drive-ins served as sites for intense physical contact, as described by a ninth-grade girl: "My side is bruised because my boyfriend took me to the movies and there was an armrest between us." One columnist gave the names of "the kids seen smoochin', oops, I mean enjoying the movie" at the local theater. Drive-ins earned the nickname "passion pits." At one, a student reporter identified several patrons and referred to "several more we didn't get to talk to as they were too busy! Watching the show--what else? Silly question." At another, the writer described these "people in love" as "the only movie-goers who thoroughly enjoy seeing two features over four times in one evening. They can also sit in a driving rain for two hours and not once turn on the windshield wipers in order to see."20 Outdoor

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18 "Dance Precipitates Teacup Tempest," *Central High Times*, 23 February 1945, 1; "That Dance!" *ibid.*, 2.

19 "Teen-Age Twitter," *Bothell Hi Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 16 October 1945, 3.

20 "Soonerostities," *Sooner Spirit*, 9 December 1955, 2; "Rumors are Flying," *La Jolla Hi-Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 5 November 1948, 3; "Scuttlebutt," *La Jolla Hi-Tide*, 10 October 1947, 3; "'Passion Pit' Provides Playground for

gatherings like picnics, hayrides and wiener roasts also provided venues for physical intimacy. A sociologist noted the general taboo about discussing this aspect of such erotically charged events. "The 'necking' may be the most interesting, if not the most important thing about the picnic, but, since it is pleasurable and involves sex play, the adolescent ignores this when he says he had a 'swell time'. . . ." <sup>21</sup> Yet references to this activity appeared occasionally in print, even as explicitly as one gossip columnist's reference to a "Hey! Neck! ride." <sup>22</sup>

No doubt existed about the erotic nature of parking. Though the P.T.A. weighed in on the issue, urging mothers to trust their daughters and allow them the privacy needed for conversations with dates in parked cars, most adult dispensers of advice for teenagers discouraged the practice. <sup>23</sup> *Life* magazine illustrated the "don'ts" from

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Patrons, Playboys, Parkers," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 15 April 1958, 3.

<sup>21</sup> August B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth: The Impact of Social Classes on Adolescents* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1949), 289. A girl interviewed for another study also reported "more of it on picnics, weiner [sic] roasts, and things like that." See Wolford, "The Dating Behavior and the Personal and Family Relationships of High School Seniors with Implications for Family Life Education," 198.

<sup>22</sup> "Club News," *Sooner Spirit*, 18 April 1952, 2. Usually the allusions had a bit more playful subtlety, e. g., "James Tucker found a small patch of lipstick on his shirt after a very recent hayride. What about that Jimmy--or Ann?" ("Snooper," *The Colt*, 19 October 1944, 4.) At another hayride, one couple "had a pretty good time and we don't necessarily mean roasting weiners [sic]." (Loa-le Foster, "Soonerosities," *Sooner Spirit*, 19 November 1948, 3.)

<sup>23</sup> Reuben Hill, "National Parent-Teacher Quiz: Girls and Boy Friends in Parked Cars," *National Parent-Teacher*, March 1956, 27-8. The author qualified his support of parking by cautioning that it could turn into a "wrestling match," of which he clearly disapproved. The article specifically addressed mothers of teenage daughters, apparently assuming fathers and teenage boys oblivious to any advice.

one advice book, showing an amorous couple in a parked car as emphasis. In response, an incredulous young reader asked, "Could you please tell me why it is wrong to neck in a car, or to neck anywhere? What would you suggest in its place--giving the Lone Ranger friendship sign?"<sup>24</sup> A sixteen-year-old who called herself "bewildered" criticized anti-necking advice-givers "who apparently have spent the last twenty years in lace caps and rocking chairs" for ignoring "the fact that 'parking' has become an accepted sport by much of the high school crowd." Her friends displayed good manners, went to church, did not smoke or drink, but "none of these girls has any qualm about parking or kissing a boy on a first date." However, her own parking experience had left her feeling "rather ashamed of myself." When she declined a kiss on a date with a boy she "really liked," to her regret "the outcome . . . was 'he loves me not.'" Pleading for a way off "the merry-go-round my mind is on," she identified a revealing

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<sup>24</sup> "Teen-agers," *Life*, 20 December 1948, 75. The "do's and don'ts" came from Edith Heal, *The Teen-Age Manual, A Guide to Popularity and Success* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1948). Letter to the editor from Harvey Joel Engelsher, New York, N.Y., *Life*, 10 January 1949, 2. Heal and the editors of *Life* had considerable company in the attempt to discourage parking. Several guidance films set scenes in parked cars. In *How Do You Know It's Love?* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1950), a teenage girl and her mother discuss parking as representative of an overemphasis on "the physical side of love," a phase to be outgrown. In *Social-Sex Attitudes in Adolescence* (Ottawa and New York: Crawley Films for McGraw-Hill, 1953), Mary's resistance to unwanted caresses takes place in a parked car, earning her the insult "iceberg" from her date. By contrast, her intimacies with her future husband happen on a couch. See also *How to Say No (Moral Maturity)* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1951) and *Gossip* (Los Angeles: Sid Davis Films, 1953).

dichotomy by asking the editors of *Seventeen* to "try to explain where fun ends and morality begins."<sup>25</sup>

In contrast to the anxious emotions expressed in the advice columns, student newspapers treated the subject of parking with wry humor. One high school journalist wrote in comic verse:

If you chance to park on Saturday night,  
We want you to know that it's alright;  
But just watch out--you may receive a jolt,  
Because we will publish it in the 'Colt'!

...  
This younger generation, I've been told,  
Is not so innocent, but quite bold.  
Don, next time you and Norma run out of gas,  
Move over to the side, so cars can pass.

The Bois'darc tree is a popular place.  
There you'll find Charles and Grace,  
Happy as love birds on a June night,  
Well, what do you know...this is December!<sup>26</sup>

Parking seemed to be an accepted fact of life though not often mentioned in print, in deference to the sensibilities of the adult authorities supervising school publications. Yet even a whimsical remark about manicure styles could give evidence of parking's pervasiveness. A Minnesota gossip columnist wrote, "Carla Bryce and Pat White have a new defense for back seats: gigantic fingernails."<sup>27</sup> Others reported "about the boys that found

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<sup>25</sup> Letter from "Name Withheld," Larchmont, New York, *Seventeen*, September 1947, 7. Given the poignancy of her plea, the editorial response seemed rather cursory and incomplete: "Last month 'How to Say No--Nicely' dealt with this age-old problem. We hope it helped."

<sup>26</sup> "Under the Bois'darc" or "Blackmail," *The Colt*, 10 December 1947, 6.

<sup>27</sup> "You'd Better Believe It," *Central High Times*, 3 October 1952, 2.

some parkers and got their cars hit with chains" and girls who went "serenading parked cars."<sup>28</sup>

The centrality of parking to teenagers' social life was further demonstrated by a widespread folk tale. This urban legend provided extra thrills as it warned of parking dangers. According to the story, a homicidal maniac with a prosthetic hook replacing his missing hand had recently escaped from an asylum. When a teenage couple parking on lovers' lane heard strange sounds outside their car, they drove away hurriedly. After arriving at the girl's home, her date walked around to her side to open the door, where he found to his shock and horror a newly detached hook hanging from the car door handle. Tellers of the tale asserted this had happened recently, near-by, to someone they knew personally.<sup>29</sup> Though recounted by teenagers among their peers, the tale metaphorically echoed warnings issued by their elders.

The murderous madman represented the uncontrollable

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<sup>28</sup> Carole Dunn and Barbara Bobo, "Campus Capers," *The Colt*, 30 January 1950, 2; "Who, Where, When, Why?" *Central High Times*, 25 May 1951, 2.

<sup>29</sup> The story has been collected and printed by Jan Harold Brunvand in *The Vanishing Hitchhiker and Other Stories: American Urban Legends and Their Meanings* (New York: Norton, 1981), 47-52, one of his series of anthologies of twentieth-century folk tales, most of which have a supernatural or gruesome quality. In an even more frightening version of the story, the boy gets out of the car to investigate while still parked at the lovers' lane. The girl sits fearfully behind locked doors, waiting for him to return. For what seems an eternity, she hears a strange rhythmic scratching sound on the roof. When the police discover her hours later, they tell her to leave the car and not look back. But of course she can't resist, and sees in horror the source of the scratching sound: her dead boyfriend suspended by his feet from a tree over the car, swinging slowly back and forth as his fingertips brush against the roof. In either form, the story served as a cautionary tale for teenagers planning to park.



passions that might overwhelm, consume and destroy the unwary youth who saw sex as sport. As a popular singer turned advice-giver admonished them, "Kissing for fun is like playing with a beautiful candle in a roomful of dynamite!"<sup>30</sup>

Gaps between peer-approved practices and adult advice appeared in surveys of teenage behavior. A 1949 questionnaire asked "Is it all right for young people to pet or 'neck' when they are out on dates?" Though twenty-three percent of the teenage respondents said "usually" and fifty-eight percent answered "sometimes," almost half reported that their parents' answers would be "never." The replies of boys and girls showed dramatic differences as well. Thirty-seven percent of the males approved of necking as a usual practice, compared to only nine percent of the girls. And over one-fourth of the girls declared it "never" all right, while only one-tenth of the boys gave that answer. Girls also showed greater certainty that their parents would disapprove, believing that fifty-nine percent of their mothers and sixty-five percent of their fathers would answer "never." (Boys' corresponding figures were thirty-nine and twenty-six percent, respectively.)<sup>31</sup> Differences in attitudes between the

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<sup>30</sup> "Pat Boone Boom," *Life*, 2 February 1959, 80. The quote is excerpted from Boone's best-selling advice book, *Twixt Twelve and Twenty* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1958).

<sup>31</sup> H. H. Remmers and D. H. Radler, *The American Teenager* (Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1957), 108. Survey results are drawn from the Purdue Opinion Panel Number 23, October, 1949.

genders provides evidence of the persistence of a strong double standard within the teenage culture.

According to sociologist Ira Reiss, the approved code of behavior within the youth culture by the end of the nineteen-fifties had become "petting-with-affection."<sup>32</sup> More than a decade earlier, an adult advice-giver sought to balance what she considered two undesirable attitudinal extremes by asserting, "It's as ridiculous to declaim 'It's modern to pet' as it is to announce, self-righteously, 'Nice girls don't pet.'"<sup>33</sup> Model turned adviser Betty Cornell instructed her readers, "Whether or not you pet, how far you go is your own private problem." With physical affection, the issues were less of morality than of etiquette: ". . . good manners suggest that a girl keep a 'hands off' attitude until she is sure she has found someone she truly cares about. . . . then what she decides to do is purely personal."<sup>34</sup> Similarly, in an advice column emphasizing "Manners in Love," a writer told teenagers, "As for parking, let your own good sense, as well as your feelings, serve as your guide." She firmly discouraged public displays of affection: "When it comes

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<sup>32</sup> Ira L. Reiss, "Sexual Codes in Teen-Age Culture," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 338 (November 1961): 55. Reiss identified "petting-with-affection" specifically as part of "girls' sexual codes" and noted that boys, fully immersed in the double standard, expected coitus for themselves but restraint for the girls they most cared about. "Thus, the double standard male eliminates many potential sex partners because of the attitude he takes toward such sex partners." (*Ibid.*, 57.)

<sup>33</sup> Betty Booth, "What is a Kiss?" *Seventeen*, March 1948, 112.

<sup>34</sup> Betty Cornell, *Betty Cornell's Teen-Age Popularity Guide* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1953), 85.

to 'double' parking remember that love loses its most precious quality when subjected to too much publicity."<sup>35</sup> This same writer also perceived a gender gap on the issue, with teenage boys desiring public notice of their amorous exploits. A girl who wouldn't kiss her date while parked on a triple date received this reply: "We suspect that Dick was furious not because you didn't kiss him, but because the others knew you didn't." She proposed saving his pride next time by "suggesting a 'talking walk' while waiting for the others to say more affectionate good-nights."<sup>36</sup> Sociologists observed the phenomenon and its links to the double standard, in which girls lost social standing by engaging in the same acts for which boys gained prestige, a code which encouraged males "to tell their friends all of the details of any affair." Not surprisingly, "this characteristic tends further to discourage females from yielding to double standard males."<sup>37</sup>

Whether or not they yielded in any sense, teenage girls could find their reputations threatened by loose-lipped louts. *Seventeen* occasionally printed letters from those suffering such indignities, and in one piece entitled "People are Talking about Me," included several complaints connected to this common theme. One ninth-

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<sup>35</sup> Claudia Hatch, "Etiquette: Manners in Love," *Seventeen*, February 1958, 12.

<sup>36</sup> Claudia Hatch, "Problems in Young Living," *Seventeen*, June 1956, 137.

<sup>37</sup> Reiss, "Sexual Codes in Teen-Age Culture," 57.

grade girl had refused to go out again with a boy after he parked against her wishes. He retaliated by telling false stories about her, and "the boys believe[d] every word." Though implied and understood to mean untrue sexual stories, the nature of the boy's accusations remained unprinted.<sup>38</sup> A guidance film entitled *Gossip* told a similar unsettling story. Intended to warn teenagers of the dangers of spreading rumors, the screenplay also highlighted the power of the sexual double standard. Jean, the attractive new girl in school, found herself envied by girls and desired by boys. When she chose to go out with Jack, "the most popular boy in school," he confidently expected sex play in his new convertible. But she resisted his advances, first with a smile, then with a verbal protest, and finally, when he did not relent, with a slap to his face. Resentful and desiring revenge for this blow to his pride, in the words of the narrator, Jack "sought to build himself up in the eyes of his friends" by telling "a highly colored version" of their date. Implied but unspoken by the narrator, these falsehoods had a strong sexual content. As the stories spread from

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<sup>38</sup> Claudia Hatch, "Young Living: People are Talking about Me," *Seventeen*, August 1957, 32, 34. The following summer, members of a panel of teenage boys confirmed that "a girl's reputation can be ruined for nothing if somebody says something to somebody else just to impress him." ("What Every Girl Should Know," *Seventeen*, July 1958, 58.) A year later, a member of a similar panel of teenage girls offered the only solution she could imagine: "Go out with other boys and show them the gossip is untrue. You may get a reputation for being frigid, but it is far better than having a reputation for being risqué." ("What Girls Think About Sex," *Seventeen*, July 1959, 100.)

delighted boys to spiteful girls, portrayed with a montage of telephones, talking mouths, and a parrot, "Jean's reputation was ruined." Blackballed by the leading social club, where "her kind of girl" was not welcome, and about to quit school, Jean found salvation in the office of the principal, whose omniscience well suited him to serve as the film's narrator and only voice. Wise and authoritative, he summoned Jack to repent and recant, and it all ended happily.<sup>39</sup>

Teenagers who viewed *Gossip* found it authentic and credible. It reflected their own experience with the double standard and the destructive power of a sexual "bad reputation" for teenage girls. Some thought the ending flawed, and argued that it was unrealistic that Jack, "such a big wheel, would be willing to humiliate himself as he did." Others doubted how readily students would in fact accept Jean and admit their own errors in believing and spreading the malicious gossip.<sup>40</sup> But the basic premise, that a boy's bragging of sexual exploits could enhance his reputation while destroying that of his purported partner, produced no dissent. Even the authors

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<sup>39</sup> *Gossip* (Los Angeles: Sid Davis Productions, 1953). The principal/narrator literally provided the only voice heard in the film, as the other actors had no dialogue recorded. This style of filmmaking without synchronized sound had gone out of fashion at other guidance film production companies, but continued at Sid Davis Productions throughout the 1950s.

<sup>40</sup> "Gossip Film Discussion Guide," *The Coordinator* 4 (September 1955), np. *The Coordinator* was the quarterly journal of the Oregon Coordinating Council on Social Hygiene and Family Life. This issue carried the sub-title "Film Guide Issue," and included comments and discussion questions for thirty-one guidance films.

of a study guide for the film suggested no criticism of this underlying theme, beyond the vague suggestion to consider what the film told "about the whole pattern of relationships between men and women."<sup>41</sup>

This pattern of relationship could be summed up in the often-asked, seemingly innocuous question of whether to kiss on a first date. The frequent discussion of this issue showed that it meant much more than the momentary meeting of two pairs of lips. First-date kisses served as a metaphor, representing the cultural confusion surrounding sexuality and the double standard. As one journalist reported, "Though a girl may kiss a boy a dozen times on a third or fourth date, one kiss on a first date may damage her reputation as a 'really nice girl.'"<sup>42</sup> Another reporter found that "most say they want a kiss to mean something and a first date is too soon to tell." Yet in the group interviewed, "Fellows claim they'll try to kiss a girl because they think she expects it. Some say they always give a kiss, and some girls say they always expect one."<sup>43</sup> Though the advice from adults consistently opposed first-date kisses, the standards within the

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<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* Under this rubric, the guide suggests discussing the idolizing of Jack as an athlete, the importance of his convertible, and Jean's lack of awareness of human nature (!). Also asked, and getting closer to the issue of the double standard: "What is there in our culture which permitted both the boys and girls to 'gang up' on Jean? . . . Jean found no friends in either sex, since both boys and girls spread Jack's story. Is this a realistic portrayal, and if it is, what is back of it?"

<sup>42</sup> "Sex Freedom and Morals in the United States," *Ladies' Home Journal*, June 1949, 86.

<sup>43</sup> Marion Glendining, *Teen Talk* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951), 14.

teenage culture demanded some flexibility, even inconsistency. Males expressed resentment at "girls who won't let boys kiss them good night after they spend three dollars taking them to the show, eating, etc." On the other side of this erotic economic equation, girls found it distressing that "one is expected to pay for an evening's entertainment with kisses."<sup>44</sup> Even though writers of advice columns assured them that they need not "feel that you have to 'pay' for a date by kissing every boy who takes you out," clearly many boys felt otherwise.<sup>45</sup> Themes of misogyny, emphasizing the golddigger image, joined expectations of sexual favors as repayment, as represented tellingly in comic verse that appeared in more than one high school newspaper:

I think that I shall never see,  
A girl refuse a meal that's free.  
A girl whose hungry eyes aren't fixed  
Upon a coke that's being mixed.

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<sup>44</sup> "Things to Do Without," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas, 14 October 1958, 2; Linda K. Christian-Smith, "Romancing The Girl: Adolescent Romance Novels and the Construction of Femininity," in Leslie G. Roman and Linda K. Christian-Smith [eds.], *Becoming Feminine: The Politics of Popular Culture* (London, New York and Philadelphia: The Falmer Press, 1988), 83. Christian-Smith portrayed the ideology of the youth culture's standards for romance as illustrated in novels written for teenage girls. The words quoted are hers, describing the situation in *Sorority Girl*, a 1952 book by Anne Emery. In the article cited above from the *Colt*, a girl objected to "Boys that ask if they may kiss girls good night. Ughhhh!" It was not clear from the context whether she felt repelled by a spoken request, preferring non-verbal communication on the subject, or if the very idea of good night kisses seemed abhorrent to her.

<sup>45</sup> Dorothy Ricker, "Teen-Age Mail: Demand Respect on Dates," *Atlanta Constitution*, 4 October 1955, 22. Ricker warned that too-soon affection would mark a girl as "easy." A teenage panelist reported that in his social set, "The girl may be entirely unwilling and he'll say, 'Gee whiz, I spent so much money on you tonight, that's the least you can do for me.'" ("What Every Girl Should Know," *Seventeen*, July 1958, 58.)

Gals are loved by guys like me,  
Golly! Who wants to kiss a tree.<sup>46</sup>

Jimmy Wescott, *Seventeen's* Everyboy, shrugged off the prohibitions urged by the magazine's other writers: "If I want to try, I try; and if she wants to take me up on it, she takes."<sup>47</sup> The expectations of the exchange of physical intimacies for expenditures had well-established historical roots, as described by Kathy Peiss in observations on "treating" among urban working-class youth early in the twentieth century, and by Beth Bailey in her analysis of "The Worth of a Date." Peiss noted the difficulty of "the balancing act between social respectability, female desire, and male pressures" experienced by the young women she studied.<sup>48</sup>

A similar seeking of balance challenged teenagers two generations later. An eighteen-year-old guest columnist

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<sup>46</sup> "Have You Heard?" *Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 13 February 1945, 4. This parody of Joyce Kilmer's "Trees" appeared in nearly-identical form in a neighboring school's newspaper over twelve years later, with the tag line "Because we don't like to kiss a tree." See untitled sports page filler, *The Bothell High Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 8 November 1957, 4.

<sup>47</sup> Jimmy Wescott, "From a Boy's Point of View," *Seventeen*, March 1955, 41. His comment came in response to a reader's question about first-date kisses: "Do you have more respect for the girl who doesn't?"

<sup>48</sup> Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982), 108-113; Beth L. Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 57-76. Peiss quoted a vice investigator's report on an interview with a dance hall hatcheck girl, showing a concern with first-date intercourse that presaged the first-date kiss discussion a half-century later: "She said it wouldn't be so bad if they went out with the men 3 or 4 times and then went to bed with them but not the first time." (112-113)



gave his personal spin on the usual advice to a girl asking about first-date kisses:

Frankly, when I'm out with a girl for the first time, the thought always lurks in my mind to try to kiss her good night, and most of my friends admit the same. . . . If the invitation is politely declined, I don't get sore at the girl. On the contrary, I respect her a lot more for it, and the next time we have a date we're much more at ease with each other, we have a lot more fun together. When and if she finally does let me kiss her good night, I feel as if I'd really gained something and I know it's a true expression of affection. For if she does kiss me good night on the first date, I can't help thinking about how many others there may have been.<sup>49</sup>

A reader noted the obvious double standard underlying this answer, and wrote to object: "I don't think the boy should try to kiss the girl for much the same reasons. . . . The girl would have more respect for him, and they would have more fun on their next date. Why hasn't anything ever been said about this viewpoint?"<sup>50</sup> The issue hardly entered the discussion by two late-1950s *Seventeen*-sponsored teenage panels on sex and dating, though members of each group noted briefly the fragility of girls' reputations. Only one girl reflected on the injustice of the situation: "What is considered okay for a boy is strictly off limits for a girl. I think a lot of it is unfair but that's the way it is; you can't fight it." Showing little sign of even wanting to fight the double standard, teenagers discussing the issue seemed to accept

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<sup>49</sup> John N. Stearns 2nd, "Any Problems?" *Seventeen*, January 1955, 79.

<sup>50</sup> Letter from J. C., Memphis, Tennessee, *Seventeen*, March 1955, 6.

the division of girls into two categories, based on standards of sexual conduct. Alternating between fascination, pity and contempt, boys described one whose behavior earned her many dates, since "it's a manly thing to go out with [her] because it shows how strong you are. . . . But she's not the kind of girl you'd want to bring home to mother." All agreed that "Nobody would want to get married to a girl like that." Girls appeared even more vehement on the topic. Panelists for *Seventeen* unanimously opposed taking what one called "the final step" outside of marriage, yet most wanted their husbands-to-be to have had prior sexual experience with "girls who don't care what happens to them."<sup>51</sup>

Many teenagers seemed to echo the advice literature's rigid limitation on expressions of women's sexuality. In a nationally-published panel discussion, teenage boys almost unanimously endorsed the notion that the male sex drive was much stronger than that of the female. Though more reticent on the topic, girls questioned the notion without forcefully challenging it.<sup>52</sup> By minimizing female desire, social norms dictated sexual restraint as the primary responsibility of women and teenage girls, allowing sex only within marriage and perpetuating the

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<sup>51</sup> "What Every Girl Should Know," *Seventeen*, July 1958, 58; "What Girls Think About Sex," *Seventeen*, July 1959, 77, 99. The editors described the male panel members alternately as "boys" and "young men," but the female panel consisted of six "girls," nowhere termed "young women." This dichotomy reflected an overall tone of feminine deference to the masculine.

<sup>52</sup> "What Every Girl Should Know," *Seventeen*, July 1958, 58; "What Girls Think About Sex," *Seventeen*, July 1959, 77.

ideology of domesticity. Maintaining respectability, resisting male pressure, and contending with their own feelings of desire presented teenage girls with a three-way balancing act similar to that which had challenged the young urban women of their grandmothers' generation, as described by Kathy Peiss.<sup>53</sup>

Most discussions focused on the first two elements of Peiss's triad, resisting male pressure in order to maintain respectability. This provided the basis of the endlessly repeated no-first-date-kiss advice. In the guidance film *How to Say No (Moral Maturity)*, a group of teenagers considered ways to avoid drinking, smoking and petting. A very agitated character named Lucy, her voice breaking with anxiety, introduced the final topic by asking, "What about the problem of--well, uh--BOYS! Well, their hands, you know. . . ." A flashback showed her trying desperately to elude a lunging Lothario on her front porch, finally fending off his advances by distracting him with well-chosen questions about his favorite subject, himself.

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<sup>53</sup> Elaine Tyler May and George Chauncey each have linked post-war sexual controls directly to Cold War anxieties. May even used the term "domestic containment" to describe the force combating "fears of out-of-control sexuality." See Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988), 14-15, 93, *passim*. Chauncey argued that the post-war sex-crime scare exemplified a general attempt to repress forces of sexual freedom unleashed by the wartime experience. See George Chauncey, Jr., "The Postwar Sex Crime Panic," in *True Stories from the American Past*, ed. William Graebner (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), 160-178. For the negotiation of the three principles affecting young women's social life, see Peiss, *Cheap Amusements*, 112, *passim*.

In another scene in the same film, the girl in the back seat of a car parked for a lovers' lane double date breaks the mood just as her date reaches his arm around her shoulders to pull her close: "Say, is anybody else hungry? How about it, you two? Couldn't we go someplace for something to eat?" Her ploy works but earns her a very disgusted glare from the driver. Even the filmmakers and their characters seem unpersuaded of the efficacy of this tactic, as one observer cries, "Just a minute! I'm not sure those are very good examples. The guy in the front seat of the car sure was mad. . . ." <sup>54</sup>

Similar doubts arose from the readers of advice columns. Encouraged to emerge unsullied from potentially sexual situations with new conversational topics as distractions, some girls found the suggestion less than helpful. Objected one, "he is more likely to kiss you just to shut you up." Responding to a recommendation of a cold-war conversation starter, she sounded even more scornful: "The poor unfortunate girl who attempts to discuss the atomic bomb with the brash young man will definitely get results: He will laugh in her face, and

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<sup>54</sup> *How to Say No (Moral Maturity)* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1951). The film uses humor throughout to lighten its tone and appeal to its teenage audience. The scene of the parked couples and the driver's pained expression regularly produces laughter in 1990s audiences, and has been excerpted by Coronet in a good-natured, self-spoofing anthology of scenes from its many guidance films, entitled *The Great American Student* (Chicago: Coronet, 1978). Current audiences presume they are laughing derisively at something meant to be taken quite earnestly by the troglodyte teenagers of 1951, but in context, the scene probably also seemed quite funny to its original viewers.

she will shortly find herself sitting home every week end reading SEVENTEEN."<sup>55</sup>

This expression of the theme of necking to provide date insurance found an echo in a companion letter also critical of the original "How to Say No--Nicely" article. The writer quoted boys in a bull session: "Yup, she is a nice girl--but who wants a nice girl?" But she insisted personal feelings, not just a wish to please the boy, drew her and her friends to physical intimacy with their dates. "We are actually wicked enough to believe in necking! And hold your hat, I really enjoy it!" Her ironic, defiant tone showed she knew adults did not approve. Yet she also drew a line, holding herself responsible for preventing petting. "Any girl worth her salt can stop matters before they reach these proportions."<sup>56</sup> Other teenagers endorsed this expectation that the girl had the duty to stop intimacies from going too far. Whether because of the greater danger to her reputation or because of her presumed lesser sex drive, this responsibility found nearly unquestioning acceptance. An early advice book

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<sup>55</sup> Letter from J. B., Belle Harbor, New York, *Seventeen*, October 1947, 4. She wrote in response to an article by Jean Campbell, "How to Say No--Nicely," *Seventeen*, August 1947, 144. Of the five letters printed, three commented favorably and one other criticized the article for being unrealistic.

<sup>56</sup> Letter from M. W., Arlington, Virginia, *Seventeen*, October 1947, 4. The distinction between necking and petting usually went like this: "Necking is above the neck and petting is below." See "What Girls Think About Sex," *Seventeen*, July 1959, 77. One of these six panelists received some, though not unanimous, agreement when she said of necking and petting, "I don't think it's wrong, and most of my friends don't--unless the boy is taking advantage of the girl. . . ."

with sufficient authority to be incorporated into school curricula presented the rules and assumptions clearly: "A girl never takes the initiative in starting petting, and she always takes the initiative in bringing it to a close."<sup>57</sup> Boys gladly relieved themselves of this responsibility, and girls accepted it, though sometimes grudgingly.<sup>58</sup>

Some recognition of female desire appeared in advice aimed at teenagers and in the comments of the teenage girls themselves, even though much of the discussion remained couched in "Should I let him?" terms. A character in the *How to Say No (Moral Maturity)* guidance film seems quite human, saying "If you really like a boy, well, you want to be close. You want to hold hands. Maybe a good night kiss, and so on." Smiling and lowering her eyes as if the memory of desire has transported her, she murmurs, "It's the 'and so ons' that are troublesome."<sup>59</sup> Printed advice sometimes captured a spirit of sensuality before forbidding it, as in this memorable selection from an early *Seventeen*: "Your bones seem to have melted away . . . you felt shaken and breathless, and

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<sup>57</sup> Frances Bruce Strain, *Love at the Threshold: A Book on Social Dating, Romance, and Marriage*, revised edition (New York: Appleton-Century, 1942), 168-169. This book's use as an instructional text in high school courses gave it even greater influence and significance. See "Family Life Students Solve Real Life Problems," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 27 May 1949, 2.

<sup>58</sup> "Sex Freedom and Morals in the United States," *Ladies' Home Journal*, June 1949, 48-49, *passim*; "What Every Girl Should Know," *Seventeen*, July 1958, 58; "What Girls Think About Sex," *Seventeen*, July 1959, 77.

<sup>59</sup> *How to Say No (Moral Maturity)* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1951).

somewhat as if you had nibbled on a star." But the next morning, "the star . . . gave you indigestion. You feel unbearably let down. . . . That wasn't love, that wasn't fate. That was necking, and it was all wrong." From this sharply stern and shaming tone, the writer then suddenly shifts course and remembers again the magic of the stardust and the intense feelings of the moment:

"Actually, it wasn't all wrong. What you both felt . . . was as natural and understandable as your desire for food."<sup>60</sup> But these natural feelings needed guarding.

Other advice-givers also sought to encourage self-restraint. One writer advised abstinence. He postulated that girls kissed for date insurance, while boys kissed to prove their popularity to themselves. Thus far, it seemed an emotionless following of the rules of the game. But, he cautioned, kissing led to necking, then to petting, arousing feelings challenging the strongest inhibitions, and "I can't imagine that you want to bury yours that deep."<sup>61</sup> An advice columnist combined this call for restraint with a traditional appeal to social insecurity,

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<sup>60</sup> "Star Dust or Indigestion," *Seventeen*, April 1945, 97. The article appeared in the first of the annual "Girl-Meets-Boy" issues.

<sup>61</sup> Lee Learner, "No for an Answer," *Seventeen*, August 1945, 27. The article is written in the form of a letter home to a teenage girl from her older brother. Some six years later, a feature article by the magazine's editor-publisher advised against premarital sex on the usual grounds of resisting male pressure and maintaining respectability. She made no mention of the possibility that her readers' own sexual feelings might be involved. See Alice Thompson, "How to be a Woman," *Seventeen*, July 1951, 70-71, 106. The "little rewards of womanhood...the new hair-do, the exceptionally pretty dress, the knowledge that someone likes you, just you" could be achieved through chastity before marriage and devotion to homemaking after.

advising her readers to avoid physical intimacies which risked frightening their boyfriends away with too-strong feelings. "Girls are so designed by nature that they often become involved emotionally . . .[and thus] too possessive. This is the point at which so many boys feel trapped . . . and so many girls get dropped."<sup>62</sup> Though this seemed odd advice in the face of evidence from numerous letters written by girls complaining they had lost boyfriends after declining amorous advances, it at least acknowledged the existence and power of female desire.

A male doctor writing on this subject surprised some *Seventeen* readers with his frankness. Seeming to acknowledge the difficulty of the gender role rules in petting, he wrote, "though a girl is expected by herself and others to set the limits, she too has sexual feelings and may have some wish for more affection. And so the girl has a doubly difficult task--that of checking both the boy's impulses and her own." Quickly backing away from any implied challenge to social norms, he continued, "Yet, in a way, this responsibility for checking comes naturally to a girl, . . . aware of her future role as a wife and mother. Somehow she seems to sense that the checking of her desires now will give more meaning to their happy fulfillment later." In this world of odd paradoxes, the constraints imposed by gender roles were

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<sup>62</sup> Claudia Hatch, "Any Problems? Your New Emotions," *Seventeen*, May 1955, 133.



made to seem somehow part of human nature, just as the advice columnist had sought to persuade teenagers that too intense sexual feeling would drive away the object of desire. In a similar way, the doctor maintained that nature dictated that the most effectively suppressed passion could be the greatest. He recognized the mutability of social standards, yet urged his readers to conform to whatever their communities required: "Every girl . . . makes these rules part of her own standard for self-esteem. Thus, a girl who expresses her affection for a boy in ways that her own world doesn't approve will feel anxious and unhappy from her own censure and also from that of her friends."<sup>63</sup> Whether intending merely to observe or emphatically to prescribe such attitudes, he expressed a viewpoint that many social critics in the late 1950s decried as they wondered about the roots of widespread conformity in America.<sup>64</sup>

Teenage boys, too, felt pressures affecting their sexual behavior. Despite the image of lustful abandon some associated with male standards, their own desires

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<sup>63</sup> Edward J. Hornick, M.D., "Sex and Your Emotions," *Seventeen*, July 1957, 101. Four printed letters praised the article, but M.T.V., Albany, New York expressed shock: "Never before have I read an article which condoned necking, much less petting. It's a disgrace to your good name." (*Seventeen*, September 1957, 4.)

<sup>64</sup> Among many examples, see especially these works that express concern for the ways in which excessive conformity and loss of individuality seemed to have negative impact on youth: H. H. Remmers and D. H. Radler, *The American Teenager* (Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1957); Edgar Z. Friedenberg, *The Vanishing Adolescent* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959); Paul Goodman, *Growing Up Absurd: Problems of Youth in the Organized Society* (New York: Random House, 1960); James S. Coleman, *The Adolescent Society: The Social Life of the Teenager and Its Impact on Education* (New York: The Free Press, 1961).

often seemed subordinate to outside constraints. Sociologist A. B. Hollingshead recounted the story of a clique called the "Five F's--'find 'em. feed 'em, feel 'em, f--- 'em, forget 'em," whose cohesive force and social prestige derived from "their real and alleged sex conquests." According to one member, about half of their claimed successes were pretense.<sup>65</sup> Though Hollingshead stressed this behavior as more typical of the lowest two of "Elmtown's" five social classes, other sources showed this pressure to claim sexual triumphs for male prestige existed at other class levels. The middle- and upper-middle-class teenage boys on a 1958 *Seventeen* panel confirmed post-date questioning from schoolmates: "'What did ya get?' 'How far did she go?'" They also admitted to shaping their answers to impress friends "with my prowess, my masculinity," whether or not any sexual activity had occurred.<sup>66</sup>

In addition to curious classmates who encouraged boys' boastful Casanova claims, other pressures came from the girls they dated. Young women expressed preferences for sexually-experienced husbands.<sup>67</sup> Boys at a high school

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<sup>65</sup> A. B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth: The Impact of Social Classes on Adolescents* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1949), 422.

<sup>66</sup> "What Every Girl Should Know," *Seventeen*, July 1958, 58. Even the one panel member who insisted his friends did not act that way admitted that asking and bragging about sexual conquests was part of the culture among boys at his school.

<sup>67</sup> "What Girls Think About Sex," *Seventeen*, July 1959, 77. Despite the boys' panel's unanimous endorsement of the idea that the male sex drive is much stronger than that of the female, all but one of them supported the ideal of premarital chastity for both men and women. Thus they seemed less eager for the sexual experience that

forum complained "Why do the girls always expect us to neck?"<sup>68</sup> In an atmosphere where meeting others' wishes dominated, the individual's own sexual desires seemed subordinated. A teenager in the early 1940s expressed resigned acceptance: "I'll go as far as the girl will. Most girls are disappointed if you don't. Fellows do what they think the girls want or we do what other fellows do." Another boy responded to the same pressures somewhat similarly: "If I have enough nerve and know she expects to be kissed, I do it." But he at least recognized another motive, his own pleasure, albeit mixed with some guilt, by continuing, "Sometimes I think it's fun. Guess the devil gets behind me when I neck."<sup>69</sup>

A survey of nearly 400 of the boys' classmates, all seniors at a Michigan high school, produced these reasons for physical intimacies:

	Boys			Girls		
	Kiss	Neck	Pet	Kiss	Neck	Pet
Date expects it	8%	11%	11%	6%	4%	7%
Like date	58%	59%	43%	72%	84%	81%
Appreciation	8%	2%	8%	19%	7%	8%
Like it	19%	25%	25%	1%	4%	4%
Other reasons	7%	3%	13%	2%	1%	0%

The striking gender differences showed that "petting-with-affection" provided the only acceptable justification for the overwhelming majority of girls, with a substantial

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the girls' panel wanted them to have had. See "What Every Girl Should Know," *Seventeen*, July 1958, 59.

<sup>68</sup> Claudia Hatch, "Any Problems? Your New Emotions," *Seventeen*, May 1955, 133.

<sup>69</sup> Welford, "The Dating Behavior and the Personal and Family Relationships of High School Seniors with Implications for Family Life Education," 198, 199.

minority of them also endorsing "appreciation," repaying the boy for the evening's entertainment. Boys much more than girls acknowledged liking the physical sensations for their own sake. Boys also showed more inclination to kiss, neck and pet because their dates expected it. And a significant number of boys cited "other reasons," especially for petting, possibly thinking of the bull sessions and locker room bragfests where sensational stories would promote their prestige.<sup>70</sup> For both teenage boys and girls, cultural expectations contained and subordinated individual feelings of desire.

Occasional expressions of the strength of that desire appeared in unexpected places. Two mid-1950s guidance films dealt directly with the power of emotion and sexual attraction. An in-depth examination of each shows adult perceptions of adolescent sexuality and the need for its control, and also provides insight into important aspects of teenagers' experience. Both films present a struggle pitting convention and reason against powerful passionate emotion.

*Toward Emotional Maturity* opens and closes with a young couple at a literal and symbolic crossroads. Stopped where the highway forks, they must choose between a left turn leading to Mountain Park and lustful abandon, and going to the right for calm restraint and home. The

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<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*, 192. Wolford defined kissing as "casual kissing," necking as "kissing, fondling, caressing," and petting as "greater fondling, direct sexual stimulation."

script places the entire burden for this choice on the teenage girl, and makes clear the difficulty of her decision as the narrator intones warmly, "Tonight is the most wonderful spring night you ever knew, Sally." The camera shows a high angle of her leaning her head back against the seat, gazing skyward, then cuts to the romantic full moon. "The air is so soft, and Hank--Hank is such a nice guy."<sup>71</sup> Light and shadow combine with soft music to create an intense, sensual mood. The situation seems destined to end in embrace. But the narrator introduces a note of caution and brings on the flashback that makes up the majority of the film. Warning of the danger of uncontrolled emotion, she shows us Sally in several scenes where her fear or her anger caused turmoil and injury. When a teacher brings a snake to class, Sally runs in terror and knocks over a desk. When she sees Hank driving with another girl, her jealous rage causes her to pull sharply on the leash of her beloved pet dog, knocking him off his feet. With a voice dripping with disappointment and shame, the narrator chides her, "You yanked poor Cappy along behind you--the Cappy you love . . . hurt, furious, indignant all at once." Following this scene, we see in contrast the filmmakers' ideal of love, a shot of father lying on the couch with his pipe and newspaper, mother sitting across the room sewing, and

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<sup>71</sup> *Toward Emotional Maturity* (New York: Knickerbocker Productions for McGraw-Hill Films, 1954). The narrator is the same supercilious woman who scolded Barbara throughout *Habit Patterns*, described in the previous chapter.

Sally petting the dog. The narrator tells us that "Loving others and being loved is a good feeling, a feeling everyone wants to share." To further illustrate the approved, gentle, calm form of love, the whole family hangs drapes together.

Emotions out of control dominate the next scene in a frightening way. Shadowy figures holding hands dance madly in front of a raging fire, so enormous it fills the screen behind them. The shot seems to belong in some psychological melodrama, a nightmare sequence about raging demons or souls in torment. We hear that this "was the night your schoolmates shared a different, ugly emotion." Flowing in nearly orgiastic celebration to the front lawn of a teacher's house, the anonymous figures move rhythmically and become increasingly out-of-control and menacing, until they resemble the mob in an anti-lynching film.<sup>72</sup> The climax comes when a thrown rock penetrates and shatters a window. Faster than they arrived, members of the mob scatter, leaving only Hank and Sally, who had kept their "emotional balance and remained rational," to apologize to the puzzled homeowner. Briefly the film flashes forward to emphasize the decision they still face, sitting close together at the crossroads on that tempting spring night, as the unrelenting narrator reminds Sally,

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<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* For prototypical scenes in commercial motion picture features, see the shots of hell in *Dante's Inferno* (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1935) and the lynch mob in *Fury* (directed by Fritz Lang, released by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1936).

"You learned it isn't always easy to think things out in the heat of the moment."

In the final flashback, Sally's frustration in fencing class turns her into an attacking sword fighter, deliberately trying to slash and injure her opponent.<sup>73</sup> Sick to her stomach, she slinks away ashamed. The film dissolves for the final time back to the couple cuddling close at the crossroads, as the narrator at her most didactic guides Sally's thoughts: "No, you never want to feel that way again, Sally. It wasn't easy to learn to stop and think things out when strong emotion possesses you. But that's the real test of whether you are learning to handle your emotions." At the moment of decision, Sally smiles and asks Hank to take her home. He happily complies, making the right turn both literal and metaphorical. As he drives off, the narrator drives her point home as well. "You've learned to experience that no matter how deep the emotion is, you don't have to let it take you over." The car stops at home and they both get out, then walk together hand in hand up a small hill. "You have come to realize that by bringing calm reasoning to emotional questions, your decisions will be what you really want them to be." At the ivy-draped doorway, they hug and kiss, then part with big smiles. "You're starting to think about your emotions, Sally, and you are on the

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* It seems reasonable to infer sexual symbolism in the parried thrusts resulting in frustration and an act of violence, but perhaps it is coincidental.

way toward emotional maturity." She stands briefly in the soft light, the 1950s ideal of visual desirability yet chaste and untouchable in her low-cut sundress. Self-possessed and heroic, Sally has triumphed over strong emotion. The music swells as she waves, then opens the door, and leaves our gaze. The door closes and the film ends. Though it is notable for its recognition of sexual desire in its teenage protagonists, its proposed solution seems both harshly forbidding and impossibly easy.

Difficulties appear more evident in a film released only four years after *Toward Emotional Maturity*. Called *How Much Affection?*, this guidance film made the problems more apparent and almost subverted what seemed to be its own script's basically similar message, counseling calm restraint. The principal characters, a couple named Jeff and Mary, suffer much anguish as they experience intense feelings of desire for each other, complicated by great shame alternating with strong affection. Compared to them, Hank and Sally seem like models from a magazine cover with their well-groomed good looks and easily-decided moral code. Jeff and Mary are neither as pretty nor as self-assured, and hence seem more human. The 1958 film opens with Mary fleeing Jeff's car and breaking into tears, telling her mother that they had stopped to park and because of their "strong feelings . . . we nearly--" and then she asked him to take her home. Mother's advice resembles that of the narrator in the earlier film, though



it is spoken more sympathetically and without such a commanding tone. She warns, "your physical urges fight against your reason. Then . . . fine thoughts of love and affection can suddenly get twisted. . . . Just slow down the rush and pressure of your feelings a little, then judgment has a better chance to take hold and guide you away from wrong behavior."<sup>74</sup>

In addition to her mother's admonitions, Mary finds guidance in the negative example of a former classmate named Eileen who became pregnant, dropped out of school, and married the father of her baby only a few months before its birth. When Jeff and Mary meet Eileen on the street, her interior monologues and flashbacks belie the rosy picture she tries to give them. The audience sees an unhappy couple, stuck in a cramped apartment, despairing of their future and of any happiness together, isolated from their former friends and apparently unable to make new ones. It is a stern cautionary tale, implying that the results of sexual desire can quite thoroughly ruin young lives.<sup>75</sup>

Embarrassed by their own ardor the previous night, Jeff and Mary apologize to each other, and he, simultaneously wistful and intense, tells her, "We have so

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<sup>74</sup> *How Much Affection?* (Ottawa and New York: Crawley Films for McGraw-Hill, 1958).

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* One scene even throws a negative light on the *Toward Emotional Maturity* scene of domestic contentment and love, mentioned above, with mother doing needlework and father enjoying a rest on the couch. In *How Much Affection?*, Eileen sews while casting unhappy looks at her young husband, sound asleep on their sofa. Here domesticity looks like captivity.

much fun together, I'd sure hate to ruin everything." With equal intensity, she agrees, "So would I." They soon encounter severe tests of their resolve, beginning at that night's party. The music becomes slower, the dancers closer. Jeff and Mary look at each other longingly. He gives her his class ring and slides it on the fourth finger of her left hand, where traditionally engagement and wedding rings are worn. They kiss, lips pressed together for several seconds, their emotions clearly aroused. As they part, she gulps audibly, and he dutifully suggests they return to the dancing. A hand turns off the light switch. The camera shows other couples kissing as they dance, or stopping dancing altogether as the atmosphere and their feelings overwhelm them.<sup>76</sup>

The end of the party provides no respite. They give a ride to Marge and Stu, an amorous couple with a plan to go parking. When Jeff and Mary resist this pair's powerful peer pressure, they experience ridicule and scorn. Finally they reach Mary's home, in an echo of the opening scene. This time, she invites him in to the expected safety of her parents' company and conversation. But upon entering, they find a note announcing that her

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<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* The film's portrait of physical intimacies and the sensual atmosphere at a teenage party is unique. Contrast it with a film released just nine years earlier, *What Makes a Good Party?*, in which the highlight of the evening is a rousing group sing-a-long around the piano of "Jimmy Crack Corn." For evidence of the importance of so-called "make-out" parties in the social life of teenagers, see Melinda Dillard, unpublished diary, March 21, 1958.

mother and father won't be back for several hours. Alone in the house, their feelings on edge from an evening of self-conscious restraint combined with a growing sense of desire, Jeff and Mary begin to dance and to talk of food. On the surface, they're discussing what to fix for a snack, but a sensual undercurrent runs through it, as in other literary and cinematic food scenes.<sup>77</sup> They kiss with deep feeling, and then hear reverberating voices of caution from earlier in the film, first that of Mary's mother: "If you'll just slow down the rush and pressure of your feelings a little, then judgment has a better chance to take hold." Still dancing, her head nestled against Jeff's shoulder, Mary looks up and into his eyes. His own voice from earlier in the film warns, "We have so much fun together that I'd sure hate to ruin everything." The last shot of the film shows Mary's wide-eyed, anguished face, her chin on Jeff's shoulder. It is a powerful and telling moment. No note of triumph sounds; whether they resist their desire or not, they feel tortured by the conflict between their strong feelings and social constraints. The film recognizes this reality and acknowledges the power of teenage sexual desire more authentically than any previous product of the guidance establishment.

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<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* The most blatant and obvious example of the food-sex connection is in the film version of *Tom Jones* (directed by Tony Richardson, released by United Artists, 1963), five years later.

Concern expressed by adults about adolescent sexuality increased throughout the 1940s and 1950s, and seemed to coincide with a fundamental change in dating patterns. Dating success and popularity had been measured by the number and prestige of several casual partners, but during and after World War II, the restriction of dates to "going steady" with one person became more prevalent. Previously a stage of courtship that identified a couple as "engaged to be engaged," during the 1940s and 1950s going steady became for teenagers what Beth Bailey called, "a sort of play-marriage, a mimicry of the actual marriage of their slightly older peers." As the age at which people married lowered, Bailey continued, "teen culture developed its more feasible parallel convention." She reported that by 1959 almost half of all brides married before their nineteenth birthdays, and that most fifteen-year-olds went steady.<sup>78</sup> Though primary sources show conflicting statistics about just how many teenagers were going steady, it certainly became the normative ideal of

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<sup>78</sup> Bailey, *From Front Porch to Back Seat*, 43, 49. Bailey explained the beginnings of the going-steady phenomenon as a security-seeking response to scarcity, the wartime man shortage. The findings of Elaine Tyler May suggest that its persistence during the Cold War could be explained as part of the increased emphasis on need for security. See May, *Homeward Bound*, 127-128, *passim*. Bailey's comparison to matrimony can be supported with opinions from the era; for example, at a Y-Teen meeting in Minnesota, the majority of a nine-boy panel opposed going steady on the ground "that it was too much like getting married." See "Male Students Prefer Freedom," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota) 22 November 1950, 1. A gossip columnist used the colloquialism for proposing marriage, "pop the question," in describing an invitation to go steady. See "Hall Hi-Lites," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 15 March 1957, 3. All the evidence found in researching the current study supports Bailey's description of going steady as "play-marriage."

the culture's dating practices. For example, a national poll conducted by 'Teen magazine in 1957 found seventeen percent of the boys and thirty-three percent of the girls currently going steady, but as many as eighty-six percent of the boys and eighty percent of the girls who "would go steady if" they found the right person.<sup>79</sup> As early as 1945, a teenager wrote to object to the recurring advice offered by adults to avoid monogamous dating: "In our school the girls that do go around with a lot of different fellows do not have a good reputation."<sup>80</sup> Even before then, high school gossip columnists had begun celebrating couples who went steady, putting them very much at the

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<sup>79</sup> Franklin Garner, "Going Steady is Not For Me!" 'Teen, June 1957, 9. The title doesn't quite match the poll results for those who "would go steady." Presumably the higher proportion of girls ages 13 to 19 going steady could be explained by their having older partners. Other surveys of going steady participants showed varied results: twenty percent of high-school seniors in 1949 ("Sex Freedom and Morals in the United States," *Ladies' Home Journal*, June 1949, 48); twenty-five percent of high-school students in 1954 in Greeley, Colorado, and "elsewhere," fifty percent ("Going Steady: Teenagers Find It a Happy Guarantee of Dates," *Life*, 14 June 1954, 123); sixty-five percent of students "in some U.S. high schools" ("Debate about Going Steady," *Life*, 9 September 1957, 94). Ninety of 588 high school students polled in one Washington state school were currently going steady early in 1953, while "Nearly all of the students approve of going steady with parental agreement."

("Teenage Poll Taken By Speech Class," *Lake Washington World* [Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington], January 20, 1953, 3). A 1953 survey of 193 undergraduates in a sociology class at the University of Wisconsin revealed that seventy-seven percent of them had gone steady at least once during high school, and that it was the characteristic pattern for dating during their junior and senior years. (Robert D. Herman, "The Going Steady Complex: A Re-Examination," *Marriage and Family Living* 17 (February 1955): 36-40.)

<sup>80</sup> Letter from M. L. G., La Grange, Illinois, *Seventeen*, July 1945, 4. Of five other letters printed in the same issue on the subject, one endorsed going steady, two proposed a modified form with one special boyfriend and occasional outside dates, and two testified that reading Sheila John Daly's article in the May issue had prompted them to break up with their steadies.

center of teenage culture, as discussed in chapter three.<sup>81</sup> Within a few years, mass circulation magazines took note of the phenomenon, and by the mid-1950s, numerous articles had appeared. Most argued, as teen-oriented magazines had tried to convince their readers, that going steady held great dangers for young people.<sup>82</sup> Underlying many of the articles, and at the forefront of some, appeared the concern that seeing the same boy too much would lead to precocious sexual activity. *McCall's* alarmed its readers by asking on the cover of the May 1957 issue "Is Going Steady Going Sexy?" The author of the article concluded that greater teenage sexual activity resulted from the increased intimacy of steady relationships, and blamed them for the increase in young brides and forced marriages

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<sup>81</sup> Examples of pre-1945 gossip column celebrations of steady couples include "Scuttle-Butt," *The Bothell Hi Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 19 September 1944, 3; "It Could Not Happen Here," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 1 December 1944, 2. Early in 1945, teenage girls at one school signaled their status with coins on the front of their loafer shoes: "Penny--desperate for a date/Nickel--looking for a man/Dime--going steady" ("Dust From The Colt Stampede," *The Colt* [Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas], 11 January 1945, 5.)

<sup>82</sup> "Going Steady, A National Problem," *Ladies' Home Journal*, July 1949, 44, 128, 131; Patricia Matthews, "If Your Son or Daughter Is 'Going Steady'," *Good Housekeeping*, December 1950, 53, 255-256; "Going Steady: Teen-Agers Find It Is a Happy Guarantee of Dates," *Life*, 14 June 1954, 123-129; "Jam Session: Going Steady," *Scholastic*, 7 April 1954, 28; Muriel W. Brown, "N.P.T. Quiz: Going Steady," *National Parent Teacher*, September 1955, 27-29; Goldie Ruth Kaback and Margaret Albrecht, "Going Steady: It's Not What It Used To Be," *Parents'*, July 1955, 36-37, 81-83; "Teen-Agers Going Steady," *America* 96 (3 November 1956): 118-19; "Debate About Going Steady," *Life*, 9 September 1957, 94-103; Jane Whitbread, "The Case for Going Steady," *New York Times Magazine*, 14 July 1957, 14, 36, 38; "Going Steady: Pro and Con Discussion," *Senior Scholastic*, 11 October 1957, 5; "Going Steady," *Time*, 11 March 1957, 62, 67; "Jam Session: Going Steady," *Senior Scholastic*, 25 April 1958, 44; Betty Coe Spicer, "If You Don't Go Steady You're Different," *Ladies' Home Journal*, December 1959, 68-69, 94; Natalie Panas, "Go Steady? A Teenager's View," *America* 103 (17 September 1960): 637; "Going Steady at 12," *Newsweek*, 18 December 1961, 90, 92.

due to pregnancy.<sup>83</sup> Similarly, though with more reticence, the guidance film *Going Steady?* touched on the issue by having a parent gingerly, fearfully ask her daughter, "I hope that Jeff doesn't feel that he has the right to (pause) take liberties." The girl, her eyes wide, horrified at the thought, exclaims with dismay, "Oh, Mother!" The film subsequently ducked the issue of sexuality entirely, focusing instead on complaints of being "taken for granted" and on unwanted limitations on other friendships.<sup>84</sup> A light-hearted *Life* magazine feature which focused on one steady couple from Greeley, Colorado, acknowledged without dismay that "they do their teen-age share of 'parking'. . . ." Half of the twenty photographs showed them cuddling, kissing, dancing very close together, or engaged in other kinds of physical contact. The article emphasized the naturalness of it all, the good-humored reaction of their parents, and the approval of going steady by a Colorado judge who saw it as good preparation for stable marriages.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Elizabeth Pope, "Is Going Steady Going Sexy?" *McCall's*, May 1957, 41, 132-133. Basing her premise on the physical proximity of the steady couple, she wrote, "Any adult knows that when it comes to sex, one thing tends to lead to another." Despite the title, Pope made clear in her conclusion that her opposition to going steady derived not primarily from concerns about sex, but from the social pressure to conform that forced the young couple together and made any breakup as traumatic and emotionally difficult as "getting a divorce." (*Ibid.*, 133).

<sup>84</sup> *Going Steady?* (Chicago: Coronet Films, 1951).

<sup>85</sup> "Going Steady: Teenagers Find It a Happy Guarantee of Dates," *Life*, 14 June 1954, 123-129. Three years later the magazine took a much more somber look at the topic, emphasizing the dangers of precocious sexuality and youthful heartbreak, much as the advice columnists had worried about for years. See "Debate about Going Steady," *Life*, 9 September 1957, 94-103.

Sociologists noted that by the end of the 1950s, teenage culture had accepted not only "petting-with-affection" but also what Ira Reiss termed "permissiveness-with-affection," allowing sexual intercourse of a couple in "a stable affectionate relationship." Though he qualified the pervasiveness of this *moré* by calling it a "minor standard" most applicable to "older, college teenagers," his description showed an expansion of sexual codes from the engaged couples of the 1930s described by Paula Fass.<sup>86</sup> Yet he also noted that the principal increase in sexual activity of 1950s teenagers, compared with the previous generation, consisted of petting, not coitus.<sup>87</sup>

Beyond the fear of sexuality, the debate about going steady continued on other grounds. Teenagers who favored it spoke of its emotional security and guarantee of dates for major social events. It cost the boy less money, as

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<sup>86</sup> Reiss, "Sexual Codes in Teen-Age Culture," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 338 (November 1961), 59; Paula Fass, *The Damned and the Beautiful: American Youth in the 1920's* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 275-276. Though Fass's book examined college-age youth of the previous decade, she used the Bromley-Britten and Burgess-Wallen studies from the 1930s as "the earliest reliable evidence available on sexual behavior among college men and women. . . ." (275).

<sup>87</sup> Reiss, "Sexual Codes in Teen-Age Culture," 59. By the late 1950s, the term "petting," which had begun as a colloquial expression for sexual activity without coitus, was used primarily by social commentators and advice-givers, not by youth. Teenagers' favored expression, "making out," had been used by youth of the 1920s and 1930s to describe sexual activity that included coitus. (For a reference to the replacement of "necking" and "petting" with "making out" in teenage vocabularies, see Pope, "Is Going Steady Going Sexy?" *McCall's*, May 1957, 133. The expression had regional currency in New England in the late 1940s. See "High School Fads," *Life*, 17 November 1947, 119. For an example of the transition in one teenager's personal account, see Melinda Dillard, unpublished diary, July 6, 1957, March 21, 1958.)



he didn't need to impress each new girl with expensive outings. And it enabled the two people to know each other much better than they would with the more superficial interchanges of casual dating. Those who opposed the practice stressed the heartaches of breaking up, the limitations on freedom to know and interact with different people, and the difficulty of dating someone new after a steady relationship ended. A teenage opponent of going steady seemed to verify the theories of Willard Waller by insisting that "Half the fun of getting a date is shopping around for an enviable catch."<sup>88</sup>

Though adults writing articles and advice columns continued to discourage teenage steadies, the phenomenon had gone beyond effective control. Some Catholic theologians proclaimed going steady a "proximate occasion of sin" and urged parents to intercede with their teenage children to prevent it.<sup>89</sup> But secular authorities seemed to sigh with resignation. Even as she continued to offer the usual advice about dating a variety of boys, one columnist admitted, "We know this is difficult in a 'going

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<sup>88</sup> Toni Krick, "Stay Single," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 11 February 1949, 2; appearing on the same page was the argument in favor of going steady: Connie Carnes, "Pair Up." See also Carol Heckman, "Going Steady? Yes," *Central High Times*, 14 February 1947, 2, and on the same page of that issue, Betty Cedarberg, "Going Steady? No." See also Willard Waller, "The Rating and Dating Complex," *American Sociological Review* 2 (1937): 727-734.

<sup>89</sup> Pope, "Is Going Steady Going Sexy?" *McCall's*, May 1957, 133; "Current Comment: Going Steady Again," *America* 47 (25 May 1957), 247. Some Catholic schools punished or even expelled students who were going steady. See "Debate about Going Steady," *Life*, 9 September 1957, 98-99.

steady' land."<sup>90</sup> And the same magazines opposing the practice on their editorial pages carried advertising with favorable references to it. A full-page advertisement early in 1955 advised *Seventeen* readers that "If you're 'going steady' it's time for a Lane Hope Chest." And in the same issue, their "Boy's Point of View" columnist broke ranks with the editors and endorsed going steady.<sup>91</sup> Over the next few years, marketers continued to tie their products in with this dominant social phenomenon, selling hope chests, silverware, dresses, shoes, and skin care lotions. Clearasil promoted its anti-blemish medication with a large photograph of a glum girl carrying an armload of books, peering around a tree at a happy couple and lamenting, "He used to go steady with me!"<sup>92</sup> The ad-writers recognized that dating still provided a principal measure of a teenager's popularity, but with one steady partner rather than with many.

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<sup>90</sup> Claudia Hatch, "Problems in Young Living: Why is My Father So Strict?" *Seventeen*, March 1956, 120.

<sup>91</sup> Advertisement for Lane Hope Chests, *Seventeen* (March 1955), 27; Jimmy Wescott, "From a Boy's Point of View," *ibid.*, 41. In fact, the previous author of this column had on two occasions supported going steady, even as the magazine's other writers opposed it. He once called it "a wonderful national institution." See Peter Leavy, "From a Boy's Point of View: One or Many," *ibid.*, April 1951, 50, and "From a Boy's Point of View: Study Steady," *ibid.*, October 1953, 20.

<sup>92</sup> Advertisement for Clearasil, *Seventeen*, January 1959, 10. See also *Seventeen* advertisements for Lane Cedar Chests ("What does **going steady** have to do with **getting ready**?"), March 1956, 23; Noxema ("Go steady with the right beauty cream."), May 1956, 167; DuPont ("Go steady with care-free fashions."), February 1957, 36-37; Fiancees Shoes ("Smart girls go steady with Fiancees."), May 1959, 45; Alvin Sterling ("Ready to go steady? . . . Silver . . . you will 'go steady' with all your life."), May 1959, 61.

Some social historians have postulated that going steady provided for greater exploration of sexuality within the context of respectability, particularly appropriate to the security-conscious era of the Cold War. Elaine Tyler May added to the notion of domestic containment with another term borrowed from contemporary politics, a descriptive metaphor for the line-drawing sexual behavior that stopped just short of intercourse: "brinkmanship."<sup>93</sup> Teenage sexual behavior differed sharply from that which many adults demanded of them. Simultaneously, it was less extreme than some feared, or lasciviously imagined.<sup>94</sup> As in other areas, the conflicting voices of the adult world created the need for youth to determine standards for themselves. The roots of rebellion had begun to grow.

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<sup>93</sup> May, *Homeward Bound*, 128.

<sup>94</sup> Reiss, "Sexual Codes in Teen-Age Culture," 61.

## Chapter Six

### Roots of Resistance and Rebellion

In the lowering California twilight on September 30, 1955, one week after completing *Giant*, film actor James Dean drove his new Porsche Spyder north toward Salinas for the next day's sports car races, accompanied by mechanic Rolf Wutherich. At 5:45 p.m. at the intersection of Highways 466 and 41 near Cholame, they collided with a left-turning 1950 Ford driven by one Donald Turnupseed. Wutherich suffered serious injuries and remained hospitalized for months. Turnupseed escaped with minor cuts and bruises. Dean died of a broken neck.<sup>1</sup>

The death of the young star made news across the country. Headlines announced it on the front page of newspapers from Los Angeles to New York. Executives at the Warner Brothers motion picture studio reacted to the news with alarm. The premiere of *Rebel Without a Cause* stood less than a month away, and bookings and publicity already had been set. Never before in motion picture history had a movie made a profit if released after its star had died.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "James Dean, Film Star, Dies in Auto Crash," *Los Angeles Times*, 1 October 1955, 1; Venable Herndon, *James Dean: A Short Life* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1974), 227-234; David Dalton, *James Dean, the Mutant King* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1974), revised edition, 278-281.

<sup>2</sup> Among the newspapers with front page news of the death in their 1 October 1955 issues: *New York Herald-Tribune*, *Washington Evening Star*, *Chicago Tribune*, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, *Houston Post*, *Tulsa Daily World*, the *Daily Oklahoman*, *Ogden (Utah) Standard-Examiner*, *The Humboldt Times* (Eureka, California), *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Oregonian*, *Tacoma News Tribune*, and *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. The studio concerns about the impending release of *Rebel Without a*

Only twenty-four years old at the time of his death, James Dean had already attracted the attention of teenagers with his anguished performance as a motherless young man despised by his father and struggling to find love in the film version of John Steinbeck's novel *East of Eden*. Those who knew something of actor's life, of the death of his mother when he was only nine and his father's sending him thousands of miles away to live with relatives, sensed a Pirandellian blurring of performer and part. The raw emotion he displayed on the screen had an intensity that felt authentic. To many of his youthful fans, he seemed one of them. Years later, the makers of a documentary of his life dubbed their film and him *The First American Teenager*.<sup>3</sup>

A few weeks after his sudden death, the motion picture that most sharply defined the image of James Dean opened in theaters across the country. The studio promoted *Rebel Without a Cause* with a slogan emphasizing the coincidence of Dean's initials and the film's major topical theme: "JD . . . James Dean! . . . Juvenile Delinquent! . . . Just Dynamite!" A social historian later gave credit to this role for Dean's achieving "instant icon status as the personification of the moody,

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*Cause* were explained in a telephone interview with Leith Adams, Supervisor of the Warner Brothers Archives at the University of Southern California, 5 November 1991.

<sup>3</sup> *James Dean: The First American Teenager*, directed by Ray Connolly (London: Goodtimes Enterprises, Visual Programs Systems Limited and ZIV Productions, 1975). The title derived from a statement by Sal Mineo, who had been a teenager himself when he acted with the twenty-four-year-old Dean in *Rebel Without a Cause*.

unfocused '50s teen."<sup>4</sup> Even more than in *East of Eden*, a period piece set in the 1910s, he seemed to embody the contemporary troubled teenager. The name of his character, Jim Stark, is surely not an accidental choice. Stark in more than one sense of the word, he stands out sharply against the bleak emotional landscape, a lonely young visionary who sees all too clearly the hypocrisy of the adults hovering over him. He does not have the obvious disadvantages of the slum-dwelling classroom troublemakers of *The Blackboard Jungle* or the completely detached-from-domesticity abandon of the motorcycle gang members in *The Wild One*, but the film's middle-class world burdens its young characters with a great sense of longing. Because their lives felt emotionally and spiritually empty, they turned to acts outrightly defiant of their fearful, constricting parents. As one of them tells Jim just before taking a fatal plunge over a cliff in a stolen car, "Ya gotta do something." Buzz, the character who speaks the line, acts as Jim's principal teenage adversary and very briefly his friend. Buzz's statement reminds the viewer that the film's title did not mean that the teenagers rebelled without reason, only that their rebellion lacked a clearly defined goal. Some viewers and critics found in the title an echo of Marlon Brando's response in *The Wild One* to the question "What

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<sup>4</sup> Leith Adams and Keith Burns, *James Dean: Behind the Scene* (New York: Birch Lane Press, Carol Publishing, 1990), 79; Thomas Doherty, *Teenagers and Teenpics: The Juvenilization of American Movies in the 1950s* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 106.

are you rebelling against?" His answer, "Whatcha got?", represented the unfocused anger felt by many young people.<sup>5</sup>

Contrary to the nostalgic image that has since developed of teenagers enjoying only "happy days," the tensions between 1950s youth and adults presaged the more open rebelliousness of the 1960s. Teenage behavior transformed the conventional into the contentious. Adult practices such as smoking, drinking, and driving were adopted by teenagers not as steps to entering the adult world but as acts of defiance. Even the manner in which many of them spoke with sarcasm and anti-sentimental mockery demonstrated the hostility they felt toward adult-determined social norms. An increasing fascination with the dark outsider as an object of desire further represented a turning away from the world their parents had expected them to replicate. Though more subversive than revolutionary, teenagers sometimes engaged in rowdy, incipiently violent behavior. In response to perceived and feared serious misdeeds, adults agonized and legislated, imposing public restrictions such as curfews.

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<sup>5</sup> *Rebel Without a Cause*, directed by Nicholas Ray (Warner Brothers, 1955); *The Wild One* (Columbia, 1954). Actor Dennis Hopper, who worked with Dean in *Rebel Without a Cause* and *Giant*, recounted a story that showed some influence of Brando on Dean's screen performances. According to Hopper, Dean said he drew from Brando's toughness and Montgomery Clift's sensitive, troubled screen persona: "I've got Marlon Brando in this hand saying 'Screw you!' and Montgomery Clift in this hand saying 'Help me!'" See Hopper quote in *James Dean: The First American Teenager*. Another version of the quote, also citing Hopper, appears in Dalton, *James Dean, the Mutant King*, 194.

The battle was joined, and by the end of the decade, the once-apolitical youth showed stirrings of more overt opposition. As discussed in earlier chapters, themes of class and gender divisions continued to run through the youth culture. A teenage fascination with the late-1950s counterculture known as the Beats, and the identification of many young people of all races with the civil rights movement, showed that the spirit of rebellion evident in earlier lower-level resistance was neither trivial nor transitory.

James Dean's role in *Rebel Without a Cause* and his sudden death made him an emblem for teenagers of the 1950s. Some cultural critics blamed him and the film for encouraging rebellious and antisocial behavior by making it seem "normal and attractive."<sup>6</sup> Regardless of any possible causative effects, the character of Jim Stark represented genuine feelings in the teenage audience which responded enthusiastically to Dean's performance. Evidence of his role as a teenage icon can be found in the heartfelt letters young people wrote and in the reports in high school newspapers of his continued importance in their lives. His image appeared as a locker pinup next to photographs of living stars such as Elvis Presley. Almost two years after his death, teenage magazines still published letters from mournful readers. "Our sadness and grief over his death is very real," declared one. "It is

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<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Dwight Macdonald, "Profiles: A Caste, A Culture, A Market," *New Yorker*, 29 November 1958, 62.



not easy for those of us who revere his memory to put into words why we should still feel this way about him after all these long, long months."<sup>7</sup> Yet not all who wrote about him displayed such reverence. One critic of the worshipful treatment asked sarcastically about the full-page photograph leading the article, "Was the 'bigger than life' picture of the late James Dean taken before or after rigor mortis had set in?"<sup>8</sup>

This letter exemplified the defiant iconoclasm, here directed at an icon of teenage culture, which ran like a connecting thread through much of the fabric of youth. Irony and mockery showed a subversive sense of humor, challenging orthodoxy and the status quo with ridicule. When Dean's *Rebel Without a Cause* character Jim Stark first talked to Natalie Wood's Judy, their bantering conversation dripped with sarcasm. Jim's proclamation, "Life can be beautiful," signified not only his rejection of a cliché, but also of a staple of established mass culture, the radio soap opera bearing that name.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Letter from Ellen Rose Terry, Ann Cosgrove, and Ann Matuchio, Hoboken, New Jersey, 'Teen, August 1957, 6. See also a similarly reverential letter, though somewhat less mournful, from B.W., Clifton, New Jersey, Seventeen, September 1957, 4. For a report of locker pinup pictures of Dean, see "Picture of Idols Seen In Lockers," *Marionette* (Harding Junior-Senior High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 8 March 1957. Three years after his death, 'Teen printed a full page advertisement for a registration service promising fan club addresses for fifteen stars--fourteen living ones from popular music, television and movies, and James Dean. See advertisement for Hollywood Fan Club, 'Teen, September 1958, 61.

<sup>8</sup> Letter from C. G., Burbank, California, *Seventeen*, September 1957, 4.

<sup>9</sup> *Rebel Without a Cause*, directed by Nicholas Ray (Warner Brothers, 1955). The CBS network broadcast the radio serial program *Life Can Be Beautiful* for fifteen minutes each weekday afternoon for many years. The narrator of a widely-read "coming of age" novel in the

Principles of post-modern pastiche, appropriating mainstream cultural symbols for oppositional purposes, characterized not only this exchange but much of teenage discourse throughout the era.

Though more clearly rebellious examples can be found as the decade of the fifties drew to a close and the sixties began, the rhetoric throughout the preceding twenty years contained harbingers of impending upheaval. Criticism of parent or teacher power sometimes found expression in quite sincere words of protest, but humor better suited some topics.<sup>10</sup> Teenagers sought to reciprocate adults' mocking amusement about youth culture: "Although your parents laugh when they see you jitterbug and rock and roll, just ask them about that leg shaking, shimmying dance, the Charleston. Remind them about the Black Bottom, too."<sup>11</sup> Balanced between sincere pleading and exasperated sarcasm, a teenager of the mid-1940s wrote, "Please try to understand we are not 'problem children' because we enjoy bands like Harry James, and top vocalists like Sinatra."<sup>12</sup> A dozen years later, Sinatra

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early 1960s "recognized sarcasm as the protest of people who are weak." See John Fowles, *A Separate Peace* (New York: Macmillan, 1960), 21. By that standard, the use of sarcasm and irony by the teenage culture showed its relatively powerless position in relation to the dominant adult culture.

<sup>10</sup> In a mostly friendly article, one student suggested that a sign reading "Beware of Mad Teacher" should be worn by some members of the faculty. See "If You Were a Teacher at Allderdice . . .," *The Foreword* (Taylor Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), 23 March 1945, 2.

<sup>11</sup> "Fads," *The Foreword*, 22 November 1957, 2.

<sup>12</sup> Letter from I. R., Franklin Park, Virginia, *Seventeen*, November 1944, 7.

himself made teenage enemies by disparaging rock and roll. One decried his "longhair attitude toward us," tauntingly calling him "the great Frank Sinatra [who] must hide from himself and his petty professional jealousy behind a holier-than-thou attitude."<sup>13</sup>

Other adults who spoke unkindly of teenage culture received similar ridicule. In a sharp parody of editorials expressing self-righteous dismay over youth misbehavior, a student journalist announced early in 1953, "It's time for us to do something about this degenerate older generation!" Describing an appalling assemblage "in their natural habitat, [of] scores upon scores of tipsy celebrating citizens," he asked rhetorically, "For what abstract and elusive vein of happiness are they searching?" These self-absorbed adults' "every thought revolves upon how to save their own collective skin." Though "some of them," by implication a very few, actually "practice what they preach," the rest stood judged guilty of gross hypocrisy.<sup>14</sup> Thus they earned the mockery of the increasingly autonomous teenage culture as it developed a growing sense of its own separate identity.

In the late 1950s, teenage comic sense became even more directly oppositional. Cartoons and jokes printed in school newspapers delighted in gallows humor. *Mad* magazine, which had significant success among teenagers,

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<sup>13</sup> Letter from Jacke Sauyre, Alberta, Canada, 'Teen, February 1958, 9.

<sup>14</sup> Walter Cates, "Oh! This Older Generation," *The Tech* (Technical High School, St. Cloud, Minnesota), 12 February 1953, 2.

began publishing its skewed views of popular culture and adult society in 1955.<sup>15</sup> So-called "sick jokes" also appeared in the adult press and on the stage, but a major means of transmission was through teenage culture. Challenging social niceties through deliberate cruelty, these odd little expressions of cultural hostility had a wide appeal. A student-drawn cartoon showed a dog looking down at what could be either a doll or a small child prone on the ground, clenching a detached piece of it in his mouth. Holding his leash, a teenage girl explains "He's fond of children."<sup>16</sup> The widely-circulated "Mommy, Mommy" jokes also put children in cruel situations. The format usually cast the first line in the words of an anxious child and the second in the angry reply of a wicked parent. One school newspaper printed this: "'Mommy, Mommy, it's dark in here!' 'Shut up or I'll flush it again.'" A variation presented a murderous father: "'Papa why is mama lying there so white and still?' 'Shut up and keep digging!'"<sup>17</sup> These jokes served two functions, both subversive. They broke a social barrier set by the

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<sup>15</sup> Maria Reidelbach, *Completely Mad: A History of the Comic Book and Magazine* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1991). In a semi-serious photo feature on study habits, a school newspaper showed one student reading a copy of *Mad* instead of the textbook. ("Study Habits Vary with Each Student," *The Tech*, 27 February 1959, 4.)

<sup>16</sup> Cartoon by L.H., *The Tech*, 3 April 1959, 2.

<sup>17</sup> "Colt-niks: If all Else Fails FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS," *The Colt* (Arlington High School, Arlington, Texas), 30 September 1958, 2; "Things to Do Without," *The Colt*, 14 October 1958, 2. The second article objected to "the current run of 'sick jokes'" and cited the "Shut up and keep digging" item as an example. But the earlier article printed not only the "Shut up or I'll flush it again" joke but also an even crueler one, in which a blind boy is told by his mother as she gives him eyedrops that they will restore his sight. Johnny: "But I can't see!" Mother: "April Fool!"

prescribers of good manners deeming certain sensitive topics unsuitable for comedy. And by portraying monstrous mothers and fathers victimizing children, they served as barely-disguised attacks on parental authority.

Rebelliousness against adult control took many forms. It had been recognized as a phenomenon of the adolescent years for most of the century, as psychologists urged parents to recognize the needs of "teen-age children" to define their own identities in preparation for individual independence.<sup>18</sup> In establishing this separate identity, certain peer-group-directed behavior set standards that were more contested than others. Adults might complain or joke about teenage clothing or hair styles, but they accepted these fashions more readily than the more frightening breakaway behavior involving tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, reckless driving, and sexual activity. Teenagers knew how strongly adult authorities objected, increasing the appeal of these forbidden pursuits. The intrinsic pleasures held by each, combined with the thrill of defying control, made these acts of rebellion defining characteristics of the teenage culture. When Buzz in

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<sup>18</sup> For an early example, see "Individuality in the Making" in the column "Everyday Problems and How Parents Meet Them," *Children, the Parents' Magazine* (later *Parents' Magazine*), May 1929, 34. Mrs. A.N.B. reported that her son became "obdurate and rebellious" when she tried to dissuade him from wearing "the most violent red and yellow neckties, the baggiest of 'plus fours' and . . . a particularly atrocious green felt hat." But after reading an article on adolescent psychology, she recognized his developmental need to break with family traditions, "glad that his rebellion took as mild a form as it did."

*Rebel Without a Cause* proclaimed, "Ya gotta do something!" he announced its underlying principle.

Cigarette smoking stood out as a visible teenage behavior that annoyed adults. The Gilbert Youth Research Organization found in one late 1950s survey that three-fourths of teenagers over the age of sixteen smoked regularly, as did about half of those between ages thirteen and fifteen. Though Gilbert stated that they did it because it "infers [sic] adult status," the young people he quoted gave quite a different reason: "All my friends were doing it."<sup>19</sup> Other Gilbert surveys indicated some inconsistency in attitudes, behavior, and the statistics themselves. In dating, "About half the girls prefer non-smokers while two out of five don't mind the practice at all."<sup>20</sup> Further confusing the results, Gilbert claimed that "Girls who smoke don't have a chance with about half the boys while some four out of five [sic] see nothing wrong with it."<sup>21</sup> In a survey of one high school's student body, fifty-eight percent of the boys answered yes to the question "Do you mind if a girl smokes when with you?" No similar question appeared about boys for the girls to answer. Gender roles made it somewhat more

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<sup>19</sup> Eugene Gilbert, "Sound-Off," *'Teen*, December 1958, 44.

<sup>20</sup> Eugene Gilbert, "What Young People Think--Here's Word, Men: Girls Don't Go for Jive Talk," *Norman (Oklahoma) Transcript*, 15 October 1959, 15.

<sup>21</sup> Eugene Gilbert, "What Young People Think--Boys' Ideal: Not Marilyn," *Norman (Oklahoma) Transcript*, 8 October 1959, 22.

acceptable for boys to smoke than for girls.<sup>22</sup> Yet there was no male counterpart to this school newspaper verse:

I don't go for drinking!  
I don't go for smoking!  
I don't go for boys!  
I don't go for dancing!  
I don't go for dating!  
You must think I don't have much fun--  
I DON'T!<sup>23</sup>

Similarly, letters to advice columnists from non-smokers complained that they felt excluded from social activity which smokers dominated: "I want to stay in with the crowd. . . . Should I smoke once in a while just to show I'm not a prude?"<sup>24</sup>

Messages from adults remained inconsistent. The teenage magazines did not carry tobacco advertising, and articles routinely urged readers not to smoke. Trying not to antagonize parents who indulged, one began "Cigarettes and liquor, in moderation provide forms of relaxation that adults frequently find pleasant." But the author's

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<sup>22</sup> "Terrible 'Truths'!!," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 14 January 1955, 2. For examples of gender bias, see "High-School Girls Cheapen Themselves If They Smoke Say Many Hardingites," *Marionette* (Harding Junior-Senior High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 20 February 1956, 2; "Male Students Prefer Freedom" [for themselves], *Central High Times*, 22 November 1950, 1. August B. Hollingshead's survey of one Illinois town in the early 1940s found a large gender gap, with 77% of teenage boys smoking but only 29% of teenage girls. See Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth: The Impact of Social Classes on Adolescents* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1949), 316. Class difference had no impact on the smoking percentages among boys, but girl smokers were most likely to be found in the lowest class and the one just below the top, dubbed by Hollingshead the "sophisticated elite."

<sup>23</sup> "Exchange" (column reprinting items from other school newspapers), *Bothell High Cougar* (Bothell High School, Bothell, Washington), 3 December 1954, 3; attributed to "The Apple Leaf exchange."

<sup>24</sup> "Any Problems?" *Seventeen*, October 1954, 39. The answer, unsurprisingly, was "No." See also the letter from M. L., Hudson, Pennsylvania, *Seventeen*, April 1947, 4.

concession to widespread use went no farther: "They are not decorative. They do not produce social acceptance. They can be very destructive. And they are hopelessly unbecoming to a girl in her teens."<sup>25</sup> Other adults recognized the prevalence of teenage smoking and sought to control it through etiquette instruction. A school newspaper reported on a speech by a recent graduate: "Disregarding the usual taboos on the subject, Mrs. Oskey accused high school students of smoking incorrectly. 'You do not put ashes in saucers,' she declared. 'No matter where you are, there is always a place for refuse.'"<sup>26</sup> A student in another school, resenting an implied link between smoking and trash, demanded to know, "Why are our students forbidden to smoke in the building? Are we so ashamed of them that we must hide them behind the building with the garbage cans?"<sup>27</sup>

Regulation of smoking by school authorities reflected an ongoing struggle that occasionally received notice in student publications. While some schools attempted to ban the practice entirely, others made compromises. The students who gathered near the garbage cans at Harding Junior Senior High School did so with "smoking permits."

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<sup>25</sup> Irma M. Phorylles, "How About Drinking and Smoking?" *Seventeen*, November 1945, 66-67.

<sup>26</sup> "Grad Discusses Social Blunders," *Central High Times*, 11 February 1949, 3.

<sup>27</sup> Letter from "Smokey," *The Marionette*, 22 February 1957, 2. The editor's reply combined two oft-repeated, though seemingly contradictory, justifications for the school smoking ban: "Since you are expected to act like adults, be smart. Leave the things alone lest they stunt your growth."



At that school and others, students lobbied for smoking lounges, comparable to what teachers had. In La Jolla, a California law prohibiting smoking on public school grounds apparently was so infrequently enforced that many did not even know of its existence. Elsewhere, occasional printed "No smoking" reminders and the ongoing work of student patrols pursuing smokers showed the persistence of the problem.<sup>28</sup> At Allderdice High School in Pittsburgh, gathering and smoking at "The Wall" had become so institutionalized that the student newspaper called it a "tradition." For several years the subject of both humorous verse and angry editorials, the Wall seemed somehow beyond the reach of the administration, even though it stood on school property. The principal's pleas to cease and desist increased in the late 1950s and early 1960s, but to no apparent effect.<sup>29</sup> Smoking at the Wall

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*; "Soonerostities," *Sooner Spirit* (Central High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma), 11 March 1949, 5; "Cool Comments," *La Jolla Hi Tide* (La Jolla Junior Senior High School, La Jolla, California), 29 April 1949, 2; "Some 'Do's' to Observe," *The Colt*, 22 March 1945, 3; "Pupils Must Keep Law and Order," *Central High Times*, 30 November 1945, 1; "'Pride in School' Brings Better Care," *Lake Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 7 November 1950, 1; "Orchids 'N Onions," *The Bothell High Cougar*, 28 January 1955, 3; "Students Set New Parking Lot Rules," *Central High Times*, 10 February 1956, 3; "Classen Advice is Good for All," *Sooner Spirit*, 2 November 1956, 2; "Unpopular Pupil," *Sooner Spirit*, 15 March 1957, 2.

<sup>29</sup> See for example this bit of verse: "At 8:15 I hear a call;/The kids assembled at the wall./By 8:20, as is the trend,/Toward my group of friends I wend./At 8:30 the smoke is thick;/Snatches of laughter and gossip I pick./Oops! the bell, it's 8:35;/Time to go in kids--look alive./8:40 and the gang's departed--/A sure sign another school day's started./A senior's day just isn't complete/Without the wall where the elite meet." Entitled simply "The Wall," it appeared in *The Foreword*, 10 June 1952, 3. Life at the Wall seemed not to have changed much six years later, when this verse appeared with the title "It's a Smoke Joke, So Smirk Jerk:" "At Allderdice School,

symbolized the autonomy and oppositional quality of teenage culture. Adults sought to influence and control it, but their directives and advice give evidence of behavior beyond their power.

Characters in guidance films rarely smoked. When they did, the action made an implicitly negative statement about them. Smoking signified frustration, thwarted ambition, recklessness and potential immorality. Smokers in *The Benefits of Looking Ahead* and *How Much Affection?* had dropped out of school and faced dreary lives. Smokers in *Social-Sex Attitudes in Adolescence*, *Teenagers on Trial*, and *Boy with a Knife* had fallen in with the wrong crowd, sometimes because of serious family problems. Evading the message of the film's title, Nora, the protagonist of the smoking scene in *How to Say No (Moral Maturity)*, stressed the need to be non-judgmental while declining the offer of a cigarette: "I can't give up a friend because of one little fault like that." The scene depicts the decision as both difficult and momentous. The

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life is often a joke,/And things always aren't what they ought./At lunchtime each day all the wall seems to smoke/While the smokestack contrar'ly does not." (*ibid.*, 9 May 1958, 2.) Though a crackdown on smoking was announced a few months later ("Requiem for a Cigarette," *ibid.*, 7 November 1958, 2), frustration in enforcing the policy was evident in a 1960 editorial lambasting the unchanging scene: "Each day, in the morning, at lunchtime, and after school, a cluster of students religiously gathers for 'a smoke' at the rear of our school. A huge cloud of smoke quickly rises from this unsightly group. The spectacle of students smoking during the school day cannot be expected to give anyone the impression that these pupils are really interested in learning, or that they are conscientiously working at bettering themselves. In addition, the empty cigarette packs, the match cases, and the discarded butts detract from the general appearance of the school." ("Breaking Tradition," *ibid.*, 14 October 1960, 2.)

viewer sees a close-up of Nora's head and shoulders with the slumber party hostess's hand holding the cigarette a few inches from her mouth. "Take a puff on mine," her insistent friend offers seductively. Nora lowers her eyes and parts her lips, then turns her face away. The shot is laden with sensual implications. The filmmakers recognized the temptation and the appeal of the forbidden fruit as well as the peer pressure working to promote group solidarity by uniform behavior.<sup>30</sup>

In the same film, another teenager faced group pressure to have a drink in a bar where he and his friends had stopped for a meal. The lure of liquor seemed less for Marty than smoking for Nora, but resisting friends' urgings presented similar difficulties. Neither episode offered health, legal or moral arguments, assuming both that the teenagers involved would want to say no and that keeping friends without joining them in tobacco and alcohol consumption could be quite difficult. The potential harm from drinking received only a joking allusion. When Marty tells his non-drinking friends of his problem, one suggests he turn down the whiskey with

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<sup>30</sup> *How to Say No (Moral Maturity)* (Chicago: Coronet, 1951). The only guidance film which portrayed smoking positively, as its protagonist escaped social isolation by finding convivial companions who all smoked happily, was *Feeling of Rejection* (Ottawa: National Film Board of Canada, 1947). That film's characters seemed to be slightly older than teenagers, probably in their early twenties. Other films cited in the paragraph: *The Benefits of Looking Ahead* (Chicago: Coronet, 1950), *How Much Affection?* (Ottawa and New York: Crawley Films for McGraw-Hill, 1958), *Social-Sex Attitudes in Adolescence* (Ottawa and New York: Crawley Films for McGraw-Hill, 1958), *Teenagers on Trial* (Hollywood: RKO-Pathé, 1955), *Boy with a Knife* (produced for Los Angeles Community Chest; distributor-- Chicago: International Film Bureau, 1956).

the excuse of being in training. But the fellows in the bar are his teammates, expected also to be on the same regimen, and they order beer and Scotch. Hearing this, one observer comments, "No wonder we lost so many games!"<sup>31</sup>

In two other guidance films previously mentioned, *Social-Sex Attitudes in Adolescence* and *Teenagers on Trial*, drinking serves the same symbolic function as smoking, signifying loose youth behaving badly. In guidance films aimed primarily at helping adults understand teenagers, drinking could appear as a sign of a troubled psyche by neglected young people, as it did in *Kid Brother*.<sup>32</sup> Or it could be portrayed, as in *The Teens*, as a normal part of the growing process and adolescent socialization, with eighteen-year-olds routinely drinking beer and fifteen-year-olds drinking ginger ale while talking about drinking alcohol.<sup>33</sup>

One of the "Discussion Problems in Group Living" series, *What About Drinking?*, tried to avoid presenting a single point of view, ending as did all the films in the series with a question mark filling the screen as the narrator asked the audience, "What do you think?" The film's discussion of drinking takes place at a social gathering of six teenagers who dance, talk, and drink soda pop. Then comes a telephoned report of a serious traffic accident involving two of their friends and the ominous

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<sup>31</sup> *How to Say No (Moral Maturity)*.

<sup>32</sup> *Kid Brother* (New York: Mental Health Film Board, 1957).

<sup>33</sup> *The Teens* (Ottawa: Crawley Films for the National Film Board of Canada, 1957).

news that "The police found a bottle in the car."<sup>34</sup> Had this film been a straight-forward warning about the dangers of drinking and driving, such as *None for the Road* or *The Bottle and the Throttle*, that would be the heart of its message.<sup>35</sup> But *What About Drinking?* shows more complexity, and actually seems to take a more pro-teenage-drinking stand. While the teenage drinker in *Kid Brother* is made to seem a victim of peer and adult pressures, teenagers in *What About Drinking?* represent peer pressure as a positive good, a signifier of social acceptance. Those who denounce drinking seem bigoted and too quick to jump to conclusions.

Though the film's sympathetically-portrayed teenagers ultimately acknowledge the right of one classmate to shun liquor on religious grounds, the consensus seems to agree with the boy who, despite family liquor problems, plans to drink. "Just because my dad's an alcoholic doesn't mean I'm going to be one. You don't inherit alcoholism, according to Dr. Bruhn. No, sir, that's not going to keep me from going along with the gang." His group loyalty is endorsed by another, also insisting on the importance of drinking to teenage solidarity: "If you want to be one of the gang, you've got to act like one of the gang. You don't want people to think you're a square, do you?" A few mild demurrers are allowed in response (e.g., "I don't

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<sup>34</sup> *What About Drinking?* (Lawrence, Kansas, and New York: Centron Productions for McGraw-Hill, 1955).

<sup>35</sup> *None for the Road* (New York: Young America Films, 1957); *The Bottle and the Throttle* (Los Angeles: Sid Davis Films, 1961).

drink and I get along okay with the gang," and a disapproving remark about guys who "drink deliberately just to get high and put on an act"), but the group sentiments seem to be at least tolerant of, if not enthusiastic about, teenage drinking. No one mentions the legal sanctions against underage consumption of alcohol. Summing up their stand, one of them states "With most things there's a hard and fast rule. They're either right or they're wrong, and most everybody agrees as to which is which. But drinking--who is right?" After another round summing up the arguments, heavily weighted in favor of drinking, the viewers get the "What do you think?" question. The filmmakers clearly felt that a more negative approach would fail to reach the teenage audience, among whom they presumed alcohol to be so culturally integral. Underlying both the adult and teenage view, of course, was the ideology of popularity and a thorough commitment to Riesman's "other-directed" personality.

Significant numbers of teenagers drank, despite the fact that laws required purchasers of alcoholic beverages to be at least eighteen, and twenty-one in most states. In his early-1940s study of "Elmtown," sociologist A. B. Hollingshead found that "nearly all tavern keepers sell liquor to high school students and ask no questions."<sup>36</sup> Because of careful adult scrutiny and peer standards,

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<sup>36</sup> August B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth: The Impact of Social Classes on Adolescents* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1949), 319.

drinking in connection with school events remained rare. Overall, thirty-nine percent of the high school age boys and nineteen percent of the girls drank alcoholic beverages. Hollingshead stressed the taboo nature of drinking, and how its importance in the youth culture had to overcome parentally-conditioned aversion to it. The resulting code of silence insured that teenagers rarely spoke of drinking in the presence of adults.<sup>37</sup> As a result, many adults remained unaware of the prevalence of alcohol in youth's social life.

Some teenagers interviewed by *Seventeen* nearly a generation later described a similar pattern of adult ignorance, and the continued importance of drinking to teenage social life. Survey results reported in the same issue showed percentages of drinkers varying widely by community, from thirty-two percent to ninety percent of teenagers age sixteen and older. Though the interviewees seemed evenly divided between drinkers and non-drinkers, all of them knew other teenagers who drank. Emphatically dispensing proper gender role advice, the magazine quoted two of the drinking boys about the unseemliness of girls who drink too much. The message seemed mixed. The adult editorial voice was clearly anti-alcohol and pro-sexual-restraint, warning of dire consequences that could befall the reader in "the situations that demand clear thinking in your life . . . dates, parties, drive-in movies" should

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 320, 321.

she cloud her judgment and block her inhibitions with liquor.<sup>38</sup> But the photographs and statements of several attractive middle-class young people presented evidence that drinking played a major part in teenagers' lives and that some accommodation with it had to be made.

Student concern on the subject appeared occasionally in high school newspapers. Some references showed a self-consciousness about teenage social life. When one columnist mentioned drinks or drinking at parties, he or she took care to specify non-alcoholic beverages. For example, among the guests at a birthday party "eating and drinking--cokes of course--were Bill and Char," et. al. At another, they "celebrated her birthday with the usual ice cream and cake and drinks (coke and grapette)."<sup>39</sup> The peer pressure not to bring beer and liquor into the school setting, reported by Hollingshead, seemed to be effective for most students. For the rest, occasional printed warnings testified to the ongoing struggle. One student paper headlined a news item about legal penalties for under-age possession of alcohol, "Take Heed, Readers." In another issue, the editor attacked those violating anti-

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<sup>38</sup> "Drinking: Boy Girl Report," *Seventeen*, July 1960, 52-53; "Drinking: What's Right for You?" *ibid.*, 54-55. Two of the ten interviews did not explicitly say whether the individual drank. Thirteen letters from teen-age readers responding to the article appeared two issues later. Nine were anti-drinking, including three "shocked" and "stunned" about the drinking teenagers and their statements. Three expressed anger at anti-drinking attitudes. The other two praised the article for clearly discussing an important topic, as did the two adults who wrote, a mother and a convent supervisor. See "Your Letters," *Seventeen*, September 1960, 4.  
<sup>39</sup> "Scuttlebutt," *La Jolla Hi Tide*, 26 September 1947, 3; "The Vicious Circle," *ibid.*, 16 April 1948, 3.



drinking and smoking rules "whose conduct at the games and dances is going to affect our activities. A very small minority, about one per cent, of the students have been coming to the dances and drinking and smoking on the school grounds."<sup>40</sup> This posed a threat to future dances, disrupting the accommodation between adult authority and the teenage culture.

Even school etiquette columns touched on the issue. One concluded with "In reply to that everlasting question, 'Should I drink?' I have only this to say. Have you ever seen a more pathetic sight than a drink silly girl or boy?"<sup>41</sup> Though the prescriptive advice discouraged drinking, the need to repeat it frequently, to deal with "that everlasting question," demonstrated the persistence and importance of drinking among teenagers. As discussed in chapter four, some students showed great resentment against the peer pressure that made drinking a measure of masculinity or of maturity. "At one time or another in the life of every teen-ager he will be faced with that inevitable question: 'Aw, come on, how about a drink?' . . . A person is acting more 'adult' when he has the courage to say 'no' bluntly than when he 'goes along with the gang simply because he fears being called

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<sup>40</sup> "Take Heed, Readers," *The Bothell High Cougar*, 28 May 1954, 3; "Minority Can Hurt Majority," *ibid.*, 16 December 1955, 2. Other reminders of regulations barring smoking and drinking appeared in stories about off-campus dances, e.g., "J-S Rules," *Central High Times* (Central High School, St. Paul, Minnesota), 22 April 1955, 1.

<sup>41</sup> "Do What's Sensible--That's Etiquette," *Central High Times*, 25 March 1949, 2.

"chicken".<sup>42</sup> Though that editorial took a stand quite different from most of the characters in *What About Drinking?*, it similarly recognized the pervasiveness of drinking in teenage life.

Two years later, the same Texas high school newspaper revealed even more about student drinking habits, shifting from indignation to amused approval. The liquor-laden double entendres in one humorous account of a senior class excursion included descriptions of students "drunk with excitement," one of them "so intoxicated by trip festivities that he had forgotten . . . his Scout training . . . sitting IN the fireplace amid a pile of papers, vainly attempting to ignite the papers with a match!" By the end of the day, "A number of students became indisposed from having taken too large a dose of trip spirits, but sunburned skin and queasy stomachs did not seem to lessen their enjoyment of the outing."<sup>43</sup> Less explicitly, a Minnesota student newspaper reported on post-prom Wisconsin excursions to an area notorious for drunken youthful rowdiness. The neighboring state's lower legal drinking age had created a situation causing some uproar and considerable comment in community newspapers in the towns at either end of the bridges crossing the St.

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<sup>42</sup> "Is 'No' Easy to Say?" *The Colt*, 19 March 1956, 2.

<sup>43</sup> Joella Stevens, "AHS Seniors Intoxicated With Trip Festivities, Return Burnt, Blistered, Baggy-Eyed, Broke," *The Colt*, 27 May 1958, 1.

Croix River.<sup>44</sup> Alarmed adults expressed dismay, but teenagers' attitudes seemed much more sanguine.

Drinking and smoking were hallmarks of teenage oppositional behavior. Yet many adults and teenagers alike saw them as something else, merely premature imitative steps into the world that high school students had been deemed not ready to enter, tokens of admission to adult patterns of behavior, "like . . . your first kiss or your first time around the block behind the wheel of the family car. Another milestone, another privilege."<sup>45</sup> Viewed in that light, some teenagers could not understand what seemed to them to be hypocritical adult moralizing in forbidding youth from engaging in these habits. One wrote to an adult advice columnist expressing her dismay:

Why is it there are some things that are considered all right for adults to do but if teen-agers do the same things they are considered juvenile delinquents? My parents both smoke and sometimes take a drink. If dad gets mad, he swears. My uncle has been pinched twice for speeding and the family thought it was funny. . . . I am a 15-year-old girl. When I asked mom and dad this question they just said, "It's different when you're grown up." I can't see that it is.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Cynthia Cone, "Sssh! Don't Tell A Soul," *Central High Times*, 23 May 1952, 2; "Twenty Youths Involved in Big Beer Thefts at Taylors Falls," *Chisago County Press* (Lindstrom, Minnesota), 2 June 1960, 1; "Extra! Sheriff's Own Report On Beer Theft Drowning Case," *ibid.*, 1, 8. One 15-year-old visitor described nighttime in Taylors Falls, Minnesota, where the police attempted to monitor youthful drivers crossing the Wisconsin state line, as resembling a scene from a movie about rebellious teenagers. (Letter from Shirley Taylor to Ronald Green, 15 July 1959; in author's possession.)

<sup>45</sup> "Drinking: What's Right for You?" *Seventeen*, July 1960, 54.

<sup>46</sup> Letter from "Bootsie," "Teen-Age Mail," *Atlanta Constitution*, 20 May 1955, 14.

The writer saw that adults labeled the behavior oppositional by associating it with "juvenile delinquents." Not considering her own questioning of authority so extreme, she rejected the linkage. Thus the argument became about issues much larger than the consumption of tobacco and alcohol. The columnist's response sought to persuade by using references from the teenage culture, asking "can you imagine the furor it would cause if 6-year-old children started dating and going to high-school dances?" Implicitly, each age-group needed to protect its own privileges by denying them to others. Thus teenagers were to adults as six-year-olds were to teenagers. "[A] person must reach the age of maturity before he is free to choose the immature habits which may prove harmful to himself. As silly as it sounds, that's about the way life is." Adults in the young reader's life did not escape all blame: "As for swearing and fast driving, there is no justification for people of any age to do them."<sup>47</sup> Justified or not, large numbers of teenagers behaved in ways that contradicted the standards established by the lawmakers and manners mavens of adult society. Asked in a school-wide poll if they would put up with a boyfriend who drank or continually swore, a hopeful eighty-nine percent said no. But one more cynical respondent acknowledged she might not be able

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<sup>47</sup> Dorothy Ricker, "Teen-Age Mail," *ibid.*

to be so discriminating: "That all depends on what else he has to offer. Most boys drink and most boys swear."<sup>48</sup>

If drinking, smoking, and swearing served primarily as badges of adulthood, then teenage use of them should have received relatively small opposition. But the ways in which teenagers drank, smoked, swore, and drove appeared not as attempts to imitate their parents, but to rebel against their standards and their authority. If these behaviors had been associated with other signs of what the society considered mature, the reception would have been more welcoming. Instead, the teenagers who smoked, drank, swore and drove fast also wore clothes and hairstyles and played music that were distinctively their own. They defined themselves by peer standards and showed disdain for adults. Though most rejected the excesses of the "juvenile delinquents" among them, the style and the attitude of this avant-garde had a strong lure for even the more conventional, less overtly rebellious teenager. The standards of the teen culture defied that of adults, challenging rather than emulating it.

Even the most well-behaved, adult-approved teenagers seemed fascinated by the miscreants among them. James Dean's character Jim Stark in *Rebel Without a Cause*, despite excessive drinking and smoking and sarcastic retorts to adult authority figures, at first displays reserves of adult respectability. The group wearing black

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<sup>48</sup> "Terrible 'Truths'!!" *Central High Times*, 14 January 1955, 2.

leather jackets and a more defiant attitude ridicules him. Drawn to them, he finally finds acceptance after increasing his rejection of adult norms. He joins a knife fight, doffs his sport coat and slacks for a windbreaker, T-shirt and jeans, and drives in a deadly duel with stolen cars at the edge of a seaside cliff. In the previous scene he chokes and nearly strangles his father, and smashes his foot through a portrait of his grandmother's elegant face. His rebellion explodes from deeply-rooted rage. Just as he found the most alienated youth the most attractive, so were teenage fans drawn to him and to Elvis Presley as icons of rebellion. One man, in his mid-teens when Dean's star rose and died and Elvis exploded on the scene, recalled the excitement:

Did I ever want to be like Elvis! I wanted to jump up on that stage, wiggle, and have all the girls scream and squeal. . . . Plus, we all felt the rebelliousness, too; the way we did with James Dean. Our parents were scared that Elvis encouraged sexuality. But to the degree they disliked him, they emphasized the forbidden fruit aspect of both sex and Elvis. They were just telling us, if they thought it was so bad, it must be something great.<sup>49</sup>

The mania for Elvis and the post-mortem madness over Dean further solidified the sense of teenagers as a group apart, with its own heroes and martyrs, a group that behaved in ways alarming and incomprehensible to adult observers. Dean's screen persona had been echoed in life and in death. He had been fond of quoting from Nicholas

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<sup>49</sup> Cass Hunnicutt, quoted by Benita Eisler, *Private Lives: Men and Women of the Fifties* (New York and London: Franklin Watts, 1986), 72.

Ray's 1949 film *Knock on Any Door* the line "Live fast, die young, and leave a good-looking corpse." Fan and scandal magazines later cited this joking remark as evidence of his "death wish."<sup>50</sup>

Bereaved fans sent hundreds of letters to Warner Brothers; after a few weeks, the number diminished. But the mail increased again around the end of the year, and in January more than three thousand letters arrived at the studio asking for a photograph. In May, 1956, the Dean letter tally was 5,863, with many envelopes addressed directly to him. Seven thousand more letters came in July. Within that first year after his death, Warner Brothers received more than fifty thousand Dean letters from all over the world, more mail than addressed to any other star, living or dead.<sup>51</sup>

Journalists' accounts of the Dean fan letters varied widely. A writer for *Look* described them as straightforward requests for photographs, with payments enclosed, while *Life* stressed a more hysterical quality. "'I was wondering if you would send me a piece of his clothing,' pleaded one fan, 'just a piece so I will have

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<sup>50</sup> "Death Premonition by Dean Recalled," *Los Angeles Times*, 2 October 1955, 2; Barney Hoskyns, *James Dean: Shooting Star* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 190; Randall Riese, *The Unabridged James Dean: His Life and Legacy from A to Z* (Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1991), 136.

<sup>51</sup> George Scullin, "James Dean, the Legend and the Facts," *Look*, 16 October 1956, 120-128; "Star That Won't Dim," *Newsweek*, 18 June 1956, 122; David Dalton, *James Dean, the Mutant King* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1974), revised edition, 315; Riese, *The Unabridged James Dean*, 358; Ezra Goodman, "Delirium Over Dead Star," *Life*, 24 September 1956, 75-88.

something. Even if it's just a piece of his hair when he was small. I don't care what you send just as long as it is something.'" Another wrote, "When James Dean was killed in that horrible accident, it seemed like a big, black curtain had been drawn in my life. But he will never die, no, not the great James Dean. He can't." *Life* quoted just four letters, all with a similar tone.<sup>52</sup> Subsequent biographies of Dean repeated these same four quotes over and over again. Perhaps they are thoroughly typical, as the article implied. Unable to see the letters for themselves, later writers accepted this premise and perpetuated it.

In their outpouring of grief, many fans expressed disbelief. Some imagined that a badly disfigured Dean had survived the accident and gone into hiding in a remote sanitarium. *Newsweek* reported this rumor as early as June, 1956, and it subsequently appeared in print in the fan and scandal magazines as well as in the mainstream press. The *Newsweek* writer showed prescience in noting that "this part of the legend promises to be as durable as the same talk about Hitler." Adolf Hitler and James Dean were several years later to be joined in the select ranks of the Never-Died by John Kennedy, Marilyn Monroe, Bruce Lee, and Elvis Presley. As William Zavatsky later wrote in *Rolling Stone*, "The cheap-shot tabloids were pumping out the same stuff in

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<sup>52</sup> Scullin, "James Dean, the Legend and the Facts," *Look*, 16 October 1956, 120-121; Goodman, "Delirium Over Dead Star," *Life*, 24 September 1956, 75-76. None of the fan letters to Dean, alive or dead, seem to have been preserved in any archive.



1963 after the assassination of John F. Kennedy--so eager are we to cling to our young heroes."<sup>53</sup>

Between 1955 and 1958, about one hundred forty fan magazine articles about Dean appeared; all but ten were post-mortem. During the same period, scandal magazines printed over thirty articles on Dean, and four one-shot, cover-to-cover magazines with titles like "Jimmy Dean Returns!" and "The Real James Dean Story" appeared on newsstands.<sup>54</sup> The mainstream press deplored the unseemly nature of this publishing phenomenon. While fan magazines appealed to teenage devotees with overheated rhetoric paying tribute to Dean or reworking revelations of his "secrets," the adult press took the role of the overwrought parent, dismayed at this strange channeling of youthful energy. Perhaps the most unsettling single product of the craze was the lifelike James Dean face coated with "Miracleflesh," manufactured in California at the rate of three hundred per week. The editors of *Life* chose a nearly full-page photograph of several of these effigies to begin their influential story, "Delirium Over Dead Star."<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> "Star That Won't Dim," *Newsweek*, 18 June 1956, 122; Goodman, "Delirium Over Dead Star," *Life*, 24 September 1956, 75-76; William Zavatsky, "Epitaph for a Rebel," *Rolling Stone*, 16 October 1980, 61. Zavatsky's explanation clearly does not include Hitler, and might be amended to "young heroes and powerful villains."

<sup>54</sup> David Dalton, ed., *James Dean Revealed!* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1991), 65, 154; Riese, *The Unabridged James Dean*, 316; "Dean of the One-Shotters," *Time*, 3 September 1956, 54.

<sup>55</sup> Goodman, "Delirium Over Dead Star," *Life*, 24 September 1956, 75. When CBS and ABC in November, 1956, reran three television dramas featuring the late actor, *Life's* sister publication *Time* responded, "TV last week hysterically joined the weird posthumous cult of James Dean." ("Dean Cult," *Time*, 26 November 1956, 63.)

A more thoughtful article elsewhere noted that "you find hysterics on the fringe of every mass movement, even the few healthy ones. . . . Most of the furor over Dean seems to trace back to the fact that it's hard to be an adolescent."<sup>56</sup> To many commentators, Dean embodied the anxious searching for love and identity that characterized mid-twentieth-century adolescence. In his ambitious survey of *America as a Civilization*, Max Lerner offered an explanation: "[H]e was a searching, puzzled, unhappy boy; his meteoric rise and his death were a life symbol, phoenix-wise, for many young Americans who shared his frustration as well as his dreams." Lerner noted that the "Davey Crockett hysteria was followed by a teenagers' cult of James Dean" and found the roots of both in "the psychic hunger for a compassable legendary figure in an era of the mechanical and impersonal."<sup>57</sup>

Gwyndolyn Conger Steinbeck, who had been married to the author of *East of Eden* for five years, saw a spiritual hunger and implicitly religious themes in the Dean fans: "Many young people had no emotional roots and were without a basic faith. Dean became a substitute Christ. As such, they even tried to resurrect him."<sup>58</sup> A teenage reader of *Seventeen* expressed reverent, though less theologically specific sentiments, praising a magazine story: "It made

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<sup>56</sup> Martin Mayer, "The Apotheosis of James Dean," *Esquire*, October 1956, 246.

<sup>57</sup> Max Lerner, *America as a Civilization* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957), 803, 827.

<sup>58</sup> John Parker, *Five for Hollywood* (London: Macmillan, 1989), 126.

me feel, as all articles about him do, that he was a symbol of American youth. Perhaps his death wasn't as tragic as we seem to think; for possibly he had gained something people twice his age still grope for--inner peace."<sup>59</sup> Though not unusual in its sentimentality, this statement missed the wider range of appeal that Dean exerted as the consummate troubled teenage rebel.

Sociologist Wini Breines, describing the experience of teenage girls in the 1950s, noted that many expressed their opposition to adult-defined social roles by their attachment to rebel and outsider males, both the unreachable idols of popular culture and the dark Deanoids and aspiring Presleyites of their own communities. Ironically, this rebellious quest linked them with boys and young men whose contempt for convention and disdain for domesticity translated into open misogyny. Breines found the disappointment ultimately liberating for the girls and young women, as these feckless males "provided them with alternative images of living, even if as boyfriends they" failed.<sup>60</sup> In a similar analysis of rebel stars' attraction, a team of three social commentators observed that "Part of the appeal of the male star--whether it was James Dean or Elvis Presley or Paul

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<sup>59</sup> Letter from B. W., Clifton, New Jersey, *Seventeen*, September 1957, 4.

<sup>60</sup> Wini Breines, *Young, White, and Miserable: Growing Up Female in the Fifties* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 144-147. Breines here described specifically the Beat and bohemian worlds, but elsewhere in this chapter conflated the appeals of the dark, the delinquent and the Beat as part of the same oppositional impulse.

McCartney--was that you would never marry him; the romance would never end in the tedium of marriage."<sup>61</sup> Beyond that, Elvis Presley's rise to fame and wealth from his lower-class origins demonstrated the power of his adoring public. He was "a hood who had no place in the calculus of dating, going steady, and getting married. . . . He would be back behind the stick shift of a Mack truck if you, the fans, hadn't redeemed him with your love."<sup>62</sup>

The lure of the unconventional took on class dimensions, as the image of the one-time truck-driving Elvis with long greasy hair attested. The association of teenagers with a style called "hoody" had begun before Presley's sudden success, but his appearance and mannerisms gave it increased emphasis. The competition between him and Pat Boone, reported in detail in the teenage magazines, represented a struggle between working-class and middle-class style. Though both sang "covers" of songs originally from African-American rhythm and blues performers, Presley's renditions seemed much less sanitized and denatured than those by Boone.<sup>63</sup> Elvis's

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<sup>61</sup> Barbara Ehrenreich, Elizabeth Hess, and Gloria Jacobs, *Re-making Love: The Feminization of Sex* (New York and London: Doubleday, 1986), 27.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 33. Though the first chapter is called "Beatlemania," and its early pages seem to minimize the importance of pre-Beatle teen idols, it contains trenchant analysis of the phenomenon of fandom, and examines with care the importance of Elvis Presley.

<sup>63</sup> Compare, for example, Presley's gutsy "Hound Dog" with the original by Big Mama Thornton, then listen to the bland way Boone recorded "Tutti Frutti" as an almost comically pale version of the original by Little Richard. Among the many exchanges between the Presley and Boone fans, see for example the letters in *'Teen*, February 1958, 8.

rawer emotion and more sensuous style made him a much more exciting presence for teenage fans, but also more frightening for some and for many parents.

Teenagers seemed alternately appalled and fascinated by the hoods in their own midst. Originally drawn from the word "hoodlum," the name implied criminality. By the 1950s, it designated a style of dress and behavior rather than law-breaking, though the defiant challenge to conventionality seemed to contain just enough danger to verge on the criminal. Long, elaborately greased and combed hair, low-riding pants and turned-up shirt collars identified the boys and young men to whom others attached the names hood, greaser, rink, or pachuco.

Though often invisible in the student publications which document the experience of teenagers in their schools, occasional evidence of the middle-class reporters' and editors' concern with this internal threat would surface. The St. Cloud, Minnesota, comic strip "Robin the Hood" presented a jive-talking, violence-prone fellow in leather jacket and sunglasses.<sup>64</sup> A reporter in a Seattle suburb wrote a tongue-in-cheek nature study of the distinctive creature, the rink, including the observation that the "sleeves of the shirt must be rolled up to show muscles which sometimes resemble those of man, closely related to the rink."<sup>65</sup> Sometimes gently amusing,

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<sup>64</sup> "Robin the Hood," *The Tech*, 8 September 1959, 2, and several subsequent issues during the 1959-60 school year.

<sup>65</sup> "Definition of Rink Explained Below," *The Bothell High Cougar*, 27 May 1955, 3. The word's origin is unclear, but it may be a

sometimes caustically condescending, the article hinted at no danger from these oddly-plumed creatures. But the same issue of the newspaper carried an editorial nearly frantic in tone, greatly disturbed at what seemed to be a complete breakdown in social order: "The conduct of the students at the high school showing of the 'Mikado' was terrible. The rock-throwing, penny-tossing, jeering mob was hardly what one would expect of a high school audience."<sup>66</sup> Yet increasingly such behavior became what one did expect. Bombarding performing classmates with missiles from the audience signified serious breaches in middle-class decorum. Though the editors usually denounced such behavior, it definitely caught their attention. A letter from members of the student government at another school expressed concern "about such action as throwing pennies at the performers on the stage, booing, hissing, and other such rude conduct. These students are performing for your entertainment. Let's give them our cooperation! It's time to grow up!"<sup>67</sup>

But a disinclination to grow up and join the adult world was a key element in the formation of the oppositional, autonomous teenage culture. Printed testaments of misbehavior provide evidence that the phenomenon was not confined to the record-breaking rebels

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shortened form of "rinkrat," meaning someone who hung around skating rinks. The only place I have encountered the word is in the Pacific Northwest.

<sup>66</sup> "Audience Conduct Miserable," *ibid.*, 2.

<sup>67</sup> Letter from Heather Peterson, Judy Van Valkenberg, and Ardyce Gustafson, *The Central High Times*, 29 January 1954, 3.

of *Blackboard Jungle*.<sup>68</sup> A Texas student editorialist tried to shame schoolmates by slurring their sophistication rather than their maturity. Calling them "rubes . . . hayseeds . . . hicks" because of their "cheers, hisses, catcalls, deliberate coughing, [and] guttural snorts reminiscent of a contented hog relaxing in his favorite 'waller'" during a performance by a visiting choral group from presumably more urbane Galveston, the editorialist used the ultimate insult for in the glory days of rock and roll, associating them with the despised Western Swing of Bob Wills: "The only things lacking in this farcical display were an occasional 'Aw haw--San Antone' or 'play it purty, Leon' screeched from the balcony. . . ." <sup>69</sup>

Though some of their classmates may well have liked Wills's music, it was excluded from teenage culture. The

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<sup>68</sup> Nor was it a one-time thing at Central High School. A few months after the above letter appeared, a humor columnist noted "...Something I see often at student participation assemblies is 'Pennies from Heaven.'" ("By the By," *The Central High Times*, 2 April 1954, 2.) *Blackboard Jungle*, a 1955 MGM film, featured an early rock and roll hit song, "Rock Around the Clock," during its opening credits. The records broken by the unruly students were a math teacher's prized classic jazz collection. The apparent symbolism of a generational music split was compromised by the script's insistence that the delinquent boys most preferred the pop ballads of Joni James. The opening rendition of "Rock Around the Clock" does not typify the music throughout the rest of the movie. (*Blackboard Jungle*, directed by Richard Brooks, released by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1955.)

<sup>69</sup> "Hey Rubes!" *The Colt*, 25 March 1958, 2. Bob Wills and his band, The Texas Playboys, were noted for their leader's near-falsetto cry "Ah-HAH" and his vocal encouragement of various soloists, including pedal steel guitar player Leon McAuliffe. The band's biggest hit had been *San Antonio Rose*. Western Swing was actually a musically sophisticated blending of big band jazz with more traditional country and western music. To the teenage culture, it seemed hopelessly old-fashioned and represented a rural lack of sophistication associated with an earlier generation, and perhaps with their parents.

editorial revealed that attitude as clearly as it decried the disruptive conduct that characterized that culture.

A guidance film called *What About Juvenile Delinquency?* also examined the phenomenon of anti-social disruption and violence. Part of the "Discussion Problems in Group Living" series, it told the story of a teenager whose father is attacked and beaten by four members of the son's gang. When Jamie learns of the assault, he quits the gang in disgust but refuses at first to join his clean-cut classmates in denouncing vandalism and violence. The city council responds by threatening to put severe restrictions on all teenagers, including a curfew, raising the minimum age for driver licenses, canceling the football season and halting dances.<sup>70</sup>

In a hallway confrontation with the student government forces, the gang members use both mocking sarcasm and belligerent threats to attempt to dissuade their wayward comrade from joining the opposition. The class president convinces him to come to the council meeting by pleading, "They'll listen to you, Jamie, because it was your dad who . . ." With that, they escape as the menacing malefactors are delayed by an elderly

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<sup>70</sup> *What About Juvenile Delinquency?* (Lawrence, Kansas, and New York: Centron Productions for Young America Films, 1955). The gang's jackets bear a strong resemblance, complete with insignia patch, to the letterman's jacket worn by the most vocal and forceful of their hallway opponents. It was in the mid-1950s that the traditional letter sweaters worn by school athletes were supplanted by letter jackets, in a style perhaps influenced by the identifiable gang attire. Possibly this was a co-optation of one sartorial sign of rebellion.



female teacher with clearly more adult authority than the unfortunate father. Vestigial respect keeps the gang members momentarily rooted to the spot. Jamie and his new cohort have entered the council chamber by the time the gang arrives. From inside, their silhouettes loom threateningly on the opaque glass of the chamber door.

Nearly as violent a tone runs through the adults' discussion. One angry citizen proclaims the need to get tough to match teenage toughness. Caught between two warring, overwrought forces, the school principal and Jamie must speak with voices of reason. The mayor asks for the teenagers' suggestions on what to do. Jamie turns to look at the gang's ominous shadowy figures, emphasized by a cut to a closeup of their distorted forms. As he steps forward to speak, a large white question mark grows until it is superimposed over the entire crowded room. The music swells and the narrator asks pointedly, "What would you do if you were Jamie? What can we do about juvenile delinquency?" The crowd scene fades to black, leaving only the persistent, demanding question mark.

Students expressed concern and resentment over adult attempts to curb youth misbehavior by blanket restrictions on teenagers. Curfews imposed by many communities applied to everyone below a certain age, usually either 16 or 18. The mandated times varied from 10:30 p.m. to midnight. Most young people interviewed opposed these limits, their feelings typified by the objection that "a lot of

teenagers will be punished for the things a few do."<sup>71</sup> Though an occasional youthful voice supported the law because without it "so many hoodlums . . . would make trouble," most teenagers seemed to agree that it would unfairly "affect the innocent ones" while "the people that cause the trouble won't obey the curfew anyway."<sup>72</sup> It seemed a profound intrusion into the basic social patterns of the youth culture: "Teen-agers like to go somewhere after the show and get something to eat and to talk. With the midnight curfew you can't do that."<sup>73</sup> And with such intrusion, overt opposition increased. Predicted one high school junior: "If they pass the curfew, it will cause the teenagers to be worse because if they can't do something they are inclined to violate the law more so than usual." Echoing her thoughts, a student in another school in the same city pointedly stated "a lot of teenagers are going to resent the curfew and are going to break it because they think it is unfair."<sup>74</sup> More than one argument against such regulations emphasized reliance on

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<sup>71</sup> "Question Box," *Sooner Spirit*, 2 November 1956, 2. The Oklahoma City Council was considering a law requiring boys under 16 and girls under 18 to be off the public streets after 10:30 p.m.. The neighboring city of Norman, Oklahoma, had had a 10:30 curfew on the books since 1943, though without the gender distinction, affecting all youths under 16. See "Parents Request Enforcement of Norman Curfew," *Norman (Oklahoma) Transcript*, 14 April 1950, 1.

<sup>72</sup> "Youth Sounds Off," "Young Ideas" page, *Atlanta Constitution*, 30 March 1957, 15; "Teens Cast 'No' Vote on Curfew," "The Times for Teens" page, *Oklahoma City Times*, 11 December 1956, 12; "Question Box," *Sooner Spirit*, 2 November 1956, 2.

<sup>73</sup> "Youth Sounds Off," "Young Ideas" page, *Atlanta Constitution*, 30 March 1957, 15.

<sup>74</sup> "Roving Reporter," *The Marionette*, 25 October 1956, 3; "Question Box," *Sooner Spirit*, 2 November 1956, 2.

parental authority, suggesting that legal bodies had become just another competing adult voice seeking to direct teenagers, thereby adding to the overall cacophony.<sup>75</sup>

Though occasional disparaging remarks about "hoods" and "hoodlums" and "rinks" indicated a serious class division in the teenage culture, increasingly the feeling of opposition to adult-imposed standards put many of the self-identified "innocent ones" into a state of alienation. One 1951 novel captured a sense of this alienation among middle- and upper-middle-class teenagers. J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye* seemed to one grown-up teenager looking back "the definitive portrait of the adolescent in revolt against the cynicism of his peers and the hypocrisies of his elders."<sup>76</sup> Holden Caulfield, the sixteen-year-old-protagonist of this widely-read novel, spoke in such an uncannily accurate and profane voice that adults in many communities sought to ban the book from classrooms and library shelves. Analyzing his appeal to teenagers, one reader explained that he

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<sup>75</sup> "Teen-agers Think Curfew Law Is Unrealistic and Unworkable," *Sooner Spirit*, 2 November 1956, 1; "Roving Reporter," *The Marionette*, 25 October 1956, 3; "Parents Request Enforcement of Norman Curfew," *Norman Transcript*, 14 April 1950, 1. In the *Transcript* article, the police chief described difficulties in enforcing the existing law because of conflicts between his officers and parents who "call us up here at the police station and complain because we brought their children home." For other accounts of teenage response to curfew laws, see "10 pm Curfew for Under 16 to Start Oct. 22," *The Tech*, 15 October 1943, 2; "Kirkland Curfew Forbids Loitering," *Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 18 January 1949, 4; Eugene Gilbert, "What Young People Think," *Tulsa Sunday World Magazine*, 3 November 1957, 37.

<sup>76</sup> Eisler, *Private Lives*, 97.

came to personify the miseries of privileged youths in midcentury America. Neglected or manipulated by adults, repulsed by the crassness of his contemporaries, Holden is a preppy double of James Dean, teen martyr. An Outsider by choice, in his heroic refusals and purity of heart he flattered and consoled us.<sup>77</sup>

Though recognizing the subdivisions within teenage culture, from "the black-jacketed delinquent to the over-sensitive *Catcher in the Rye*, from the misunderstood James Dean to the fun-and-football fraternity man," observers noted the unifying force of these disparate characters' alienation from the adult world.<sup>78</sup> Kenneth Keniston, the author of those words and an influential commentator on mid-century youth culture, noted that two generations earlier, "youth was largely defined as a time of apprenticeship: adolescence was a matter of 'learning the ropes' . . . a phase to be outgrown as quickly as possible." Writing in the early 1960s, he observed the change of attitude to one in which "we expect that youth will have a special culture of its own, with characteristics that are those of neither childhood or adulthood."<sup>79</sup> Evaluating the effects of this separate culture on its members, Keniston noted that it

requires a refusal of conventional adulthood for the time one is in it. . . . [It] permits American youth as a whole to be

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<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 98. For a listing of journal articles describing the many attempts at censoring *The Catcher in the Rye*, see Jack R. Sublette, *J. D. Salinger: An Annotated Bibliography, 1938-1981* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1984), 157-168.

<sup>78</sup> Kenneth Keniston, *The Uncommitted: Alienated Youth in American Society* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1965), 395.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 394.

'institutionally' alienated without having to be personally alienated . . . [and] permits most youths to remain uninvolved in the adult world without having to take an open stand against it.<sup>80</sup>

But within only a few years the seemingly passive withdrawal described by Keniston rapidly reached the "open stand" that he denied. Even more skeptical of the belief that the youth culture had genuine oppositional qualities, Benita Eisler described it as ultimately a disguised preparation for conventional adulthood,

only a brief parole between our policed childhood and premature middle age. Our elders recognized that blowing off steam as teenagers was a safety measure: we could be counted upon to chug along nicely thereafter, tracked for life.

. . . A closer look . . . at our high-school yearbooks dissolves the distance between our 'crazy' teenage personae and the sober, old-at-heart collegians we became. Both the professional photographer's camera and our own snapshots reveal in Mister and Miss Teenage America our middle-aged selves (older by far than we are now)--"his" earnest, responsible gaze, framed by bristly crew cut and sprouting outsized ears, "her" jam-colored lipstick highlighting an anxious, I-aim-to-please Ipana smile.

Cruising, drag racing, jitterbugging, screaming for Elvis, or running around the streets in our nighties, we never forgot the expectations that weighed upon us--to be well-liked, well-adjusted, well-educated, and well-married; to do good and do well in careers.

There we are, dressed for success, in felt circle skirts or pleated reversible ones; saddle shoes and penny loafers, tinkling charm bracelets or IDs, letter sweaters, chinos or rolled dungarees--even blue serge uniforms.<sup>81</sup>

Eisler's analysis may well accurately represent the expectations of some adults who tolerated or even

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<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 403-404. Emphasis in original.

<sup>81</sup> Eisler, *Private Lives*, 94.

encouraged the structure of youth culture as either safety valve or socialization engine. But, as with the Sadie Hawkins and TWIRP rituals of gender role reversal described in an earlier chapter of this dissertation, the intent of the adult sponsors differed from the effect on the participants. Promoted as instructive, these carnivalesque enterprises were absorbed and transformed by teenagers into something ultimately subversive. Far from confirming adult-imposed traditions, the distinctive youth culture practices helped promote new world views and ultimately led to the youth revolt of the 1960s. What the youth culture of the 1950s produced was summarized by historian Roland Marchand:

A mystique emerged that fused the elements of Marlon Brando's role in *The Wild One*, James Dean's portrayal in *Rebel Without a Cause*, J. D. Salinger's Holden Caulfield in *Catcher in the Rye*, and the rebels of *Blackboard Jungle*, and the driving energy and aggressive sexuality of the new heroes of rock 'n' roll into a single image. The mystique emphasized a hunger for authenticity and sensitivity . . . with nuances of sexuality, pain and violence.<sup>82</sup>

As William Graebner pointed out in his study of youth in Buffalo, New York, the teenage music scene of the mid-1950s racially blended performers and audiences.<sup>83</sup> Although producers found success with white cover versions of songs originally from African-American sources, the

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<sup>82</sup> Roland Marchand, "Visions of Classlessness, Quests for Dominion: American Popular Culture, 1945-1960," in *Reshaping America: Society and Institutions, 1945-1960*, ed. Robert H. Bremner and Gary W. Reichard (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1982), 179.

<sup>83</sup> William Graebner, *Coming of Age in Buffalo: Youth and Authority in the Postwar Era* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 34, 37.

prominence of black artists as favorites of white teenagers included such raucous, earthy performers as Little Richard and Chuck Berry. The success of the all-black group The Teenagers with "Why Do Fools Fall in Love" showed that the term "teenager" had no whites-only exclusion policy.<sup>84</sup>

The "Teens in the News" page of *Seventeen*, which each month presented photos and brief descriptions of notable youths, routinely showed champion baton twirlers and winners of science talent searches. In June, 1960, the page featured eighteen-year-old Ezell Blair, one of the four young African-Americans whose sit-in at an all-white lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, began a movement that ultimately transformed social and legal standards throughout the South. The quote from Blair portrayed the struggle as one especially suited to the young: "Teen-agers must be the ones to sit-in, because we don't have jobs that we can be fired from." The magazine approvingly noted the support given to the protesters, stating that their "courage has won the admiration of teen-agers outside the South; many are raising money to help southern students pay fines and new tuition fees by

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<sup>84</sup> Many historians of popular music have commented on the integrationist influence of rock and roll, including Greil Marcus, *Mystery Train: Images of America in Rock 'n' Roll Music* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1975). The Teenagers, featuring 13-year-old lead singer Frankie Lymon, recorded "Why Do Fools Fall in Love" (Gee Records 1002) early in 1956 and it stayed on the *Billboard* charts for sixteen weeks, reaching as high as the number six spot. See Joel Whitburn, *The Billboard Book of Top 40 Hits* (New York: Billboard Publications, 1989), 263.

charging admission to record hops."<sup>85</sup> For those who would make a sharp distinction between the supposedly self-centered teenage dance world and the more socially engaged counterculture yet to come, record hops to support civil rights organizing might seem impossible. But they happened.

When mentioning the counterculture, consideration must be given to its 1950s origins. The bohemianism and social criticism of the Beat Generation had a remarkable impact on popular consciousness toward the end of the decade and into the early 1960s. The mass media gave much attention to the people dubbed "beatniks," and teenagers took notice. Images of the Beat world appeared in unexpected places. Early in 1959, a photo feature in one Minnesota school newspaper showed various ways of studying. Among the several shots, one depicted a student sitting at his desk at home. He had a blonde crewcut, horn-rimmed glasses, and appeared very studious with his slide rule. But prominently displayed on the desk in front of him stood a large photo of the bearded profile of Beat poet Allen Ginsberg.<sup>86</sup>

Later that same year, three students in Hutchinson, Kansas, wrote to California Beat writer Lawrence Lipton with an invitation to visit their school, and he accepted. Adults in the community expressed alarm and outrage. The

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<sup>85</sup> "Teens in the News," *Seventeen*, June 1960, 151.

<sup>86</sup> "Study Habits Vary with Each Student," *The Tech*, 27 February 1959, 4.



subsequent uproar resulted in a seven-page feature in *Life*, which also documented a Hutchinson High School skit called "Shady Sadie and Her Swinging Seven," labeled by the magazine "a beatnik parody of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*." The appeal of the Beat life to teenagers was expressed by one Hutchinson student: "I'd like to be one for a week. I'd like to do what I want to do and say what I want to say and have no worries, and know it wouldn't affect me in the future."<sup>87</sup> Similar sentiments appeared in *Seventeen* after the magazine ran a sympathetic article. One reader wrote, "Most of us secretly would like to be a Beat, but few of us dare."<sup>88</sup>

Other high schools also held Beat-theme assemblies and dances, complete with "Sunglasses! Beards! Bongoes! Berets! . . . groovy beatniks and beat-chicks . . . ."<sup>89</sup> In such school-sanctioned entertainment, any subversive potential could not be openly acknowledged. Adults could not believe teenagers took the role-playing at all seriously. Though the costume-wearing and mock bohemianism had no deeper conscious meaning for most, it safely allowed expression of deep dissatisfaction by

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<sup>87</sup> "Squaresville U.S.A. vs. Beatsville," *Life*, 21 September 1959, 31-37. The invitation to Lipton had been quickly withdrawn.

<sup>88</sup> Letter from M. E. B., North Attleboro, Massachusetts, *Seventeen*, December 1960, 4. On the other hand, J.H., of Solomon, Kansas, wrote: "I am sure most teens do not care to be put in a class with the bums who call themselves Beatniks." The other five letters divided between fans and skeptics. The article to which they responded was Parker Hodges, "The Beats Like I Think I Know Them," *ibid.*, October 1960, 114-115.

<sup>89</sup> Louise Cagle, "Hep Colts Swing With Way Out Plan," *The Colt*, 29 September 1959, 1.

others, and it raised awareness of cultural alternatives. The recurring presence of Beat imagery in late 1950s teenage culture served as another indicator of its autonomous and oppositional quality.

In a remarkably prescient assessment of the youth revolt that would reverberate for years to come, *Seventeen* greeted the dawn of a new decade with enthusiasm:

1960 was the year that teen-agers upset the apple cart. Throughout the world from St. Louis to Leopoldville the generation which had been pigeonholed as 'silent' and 'shaky-shivery' and 'uncaring' suddenly acted--noisily, dramatically and with fantastic courage. . . . In Korea and Turkey teens fought in the streets, took the lead in toppling autocratic governments. In the South, Negro students shrugged off don't-risk-it advice from older people, began sit-ins--a new twist on Gandhi's doctrine of non-violent protest.

Everywhere it was the same. As James Reston, *New York Times* columnist, wrote in pleased astonishment, "The darn kids think they're members of the human race."

. . . . In 1960, teen-agers did with magnificence the job that has been the special job of youth since before the days of Socrates. By acting with courage, by showing through their actions that there are things about which they care deeply, teens injected an electric excitement into the mainstream of life... The generation which will come of age in the sixties got the decade off to a brilliant start.<sup>90</sup>

A fashion magazine might appear an unlikely place for such an appraisal of the revolutionary promise of youth culture. Yet it seems quite appropriate in *Seventeen*, the publication that had contributed so much to the growth of teenage self-awareness and the group consciousness that

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<sup>90</sup> "1960 Was the Year That Teen-Agers Upset the Apple Cart," *Seventeen*, January 1961, 58-59.

defined the generations of adolescents in the 1940s and 1950s. As one of the first significant new adult voices competing for teenagers' attention, the magazine had provided a forum for its readers to exchange views, and to seek alternative visions of life that differed from the received wisdom of their parents and teachers.

Ultimately teenagers did not take direction from any single advisory voice, but chose and adapted variously from the offerings of magazines and marketers, counselors and parents, guidance films and rock and roll record producers. Adults sought control of their pockets and their minds. Throughout the land, watching dancers on "Bandstand," Philadelphia, Pa., deep in the heart of Texas, around the Frisco Bay, all over St. Louis, way down in New Orleans, all the cats wanted to dance with sweet little sixteen.<sup>91</sup> But teenagers literally and metaphorically chose the tune and determined if it had a good beat that they wanted to dance to. Listening to a variety of authorities, even as they increasingly questioned any authority, they relied on each other as the arbiters of taste and correct behavior. Distrustful of adult society, they sought first to withdraw from it and then to challenge and change it as they became rebels who found a cause.

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<sup>91</sup> With apologies and deep appreciation to one voice speaking of and to that generation, Chuck Berry, "Sweet Little Sixteen," Chess 1683. The record first appeared on the *Billboard* charts in late February, 1958, and remained for eleven weeks, rising as high as the number two spot, where it stayed for three consecutive weeks. (Whitburn, *The Billboard Book of Top 40 Hits*, 48.)

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## Annotated Filmography

Occasional discrepancies exist between a film's date as listed in catalogs and on the film itself. In those instances, the date appearing on the film has been used. For archival sources, I have included holdings by the major collections of guidance films: Indiana University, Iowa State University's American Archives of Factual Films, the University of Kansas, and Rick Prelinger's collection in New York City, which he allows researchers to view. If a title is not available from these sources, I have tried to include at least one lesser-known repository where it is held. Some films have been found in many collections, though 16mm film libraries continue to close as videotape becomes the primary educational audio-visual medium. Online catalogs of holdings by Indiana can be reached via telnet: media2.iss.indiana.edu. Iowa State's Film Archives can be found by telnet to scholar.iastate.edu, then typing "Local" and "AAFF." \*Films marked with an asterisk I have not seen, and the descriptions of those are drawn from other sources.

*Act Your Age (Emotional Maturity)*, Coronet, 1949, 14 minutes.

Educational Collaborator: Wendell W. Wright, Ph.D., Dean, School of Education, Indiana University.

Jim, in his mid-teens, cuts into his classroom desk with a knife. Caught, he is sent to Mr. Edmonds, the school principal, who maintains a friendly manner as he chides him for being immature, and illustrates other examples of teenagers behaving much younger than their years, mostly by losing their tempers. For example, in one scene Edmonds says "You've seen the girl who always has to win an argument [dissolve to teenage boys and girls sitting on lawn.] Most of the time she's a young lady. But let someone disagree with her [she stands, dissolve to tiny girl waving arms, stomping off pouting] she might just as well be five years old...." Jim reconciles with both the principal, whose approval he desperately seeks, and the school custodian, whose storage area is filled with knife-marred desks.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Acts of Courtesy*, Young America Films, 1954, 11 minutes.

Companion film to *Words of Courtesy*. A Centron Production.

Narrator dominated, this film aims at a younger audience.

The actors appear to be about 12 years old. A scene of stopping at intersections when riding bicycles opens the film as a good example to emulate. Bad examples follow of gender-typed rudeness as a boy crowds in line and a girl interrupts with constant chattering. The entire



script is spoken in the narrator's voice, the actors shown only in pantomime. A typical comment: "Polly, oh Polly, can you listen just for a moment? What you don't say can also be an act of courtesy." The film concludes with the miscreants mending their ways, and the narrator promising rewards: "Think of the other fellow's feelings, the other fellow's rights, what the other fellow will think of you. If you want to get along well with others, be courteous." In the final shot, one girl drops a book and another picks it up and returns it to her.

Archival sources: Indiana, Kansas.

**Adolescent Development series.** See individual titles listed alphabetically.

The series was produced by Crawley Films of Ottawa, Ontario, and distributed by McGraw-Hill Textfilms. The series was designed to be used in adult education and school psychology classes in conjunction with the McGraw-Hill textbook *Adolescent Development*, by Elizabeth Bergner Hurlock. Crawley's actors were sometimes from the U.S., and the Canadian actors made an effort to minimize any distinctive national accent, to give the films wider appeal in the larger U.S. market. Titles were released in two groups, 1952-53 and 1958. In the first group were *Age of Turmoil*, *The Meaning of Adolescence*, *Meeting the Needs of Adolescents*, and *Social Sex Attitudes in Adolescence*. It also included *Physical Aspects of Puberty*, not considered as part of this study. In the later group were *Discipline During Adolescence*, *Emotional Maturity*, and *Social Acceptability*.

*Age of Turmoil*, McGraw-Hill, 1953, 20 minutes..

Part of the *Adolescent Development* series, correlated with the book by Elizabeth B. Hurlock. Produced by Crawley Films.

Aiming primarily at parents and others who worked with teenagers, this film analyzes the moods and behavior of young teens as bewildering, sometimes amusing, sometimes irritating to the adults in their lives. A confident, cheery narrator describes and explains teenagers squabbling with parents, talking on the telephone, and hanging out at the soda fountain. At first a bit patronizing toward his adolescent subjects, he mostly expresses sympathy for the emotional roller coaster they ride. Early in the film, he says "Sally, Joan and Kay are typical teenagers. Normal. Actions may seem excessive, but that's normal for teenagers. For instance, that giggling... [and] unrealistic ideas of their own future." In the voices of the three teenage girls: "ballet dancer...travel all over--sure hate to spend the rest of my life in this old dump." Narrator: "Yes, if you don't make an effort to understand them,

teenage girls may seem silly and opinionated. And the boys." (Pan to group of 4 sitting on porch. Cut to 4-shot, as they argue about who is the best pitcher in the National League.) "They want to make themselves heard. Changed voices and boundless energy is hard on the neighbors." The film concludes with the wise narrator advising parents that the "stricter discipline of childhood has given way to the friendly guidance of the in-between years. ...goes a long way toward lessening the tension that gives to early adolescence its name 'The Age of Turmoil.'"

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

\**Alcohol and Drugs*, WNET-TV, 1958, 30 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Explains the effect of alcohol and drugs on the driver. Points out the necessity of severe punishment for the driver who drinks and what can be done to improve the situation. Discusses the social drinker and teenagers and drinking. Describes the hazard of drugs, including doctors' prescriptions for various ailments as well as narcotics. (Cincinnati Public Schools and WCET) Kinescope."

\**Alcohol is Dynamite*, Sid Davis Productions, 1952, 10 minutes.

Collaborator: Inglewood, California, Police Department.

From library catalog card: "Dramatizes the case histories of several boys and girls who become victims of alcohol." Remade in 1968 with same title. This second edition is held by Indiana.

Possible locations for the 1952 version: Prelinger, Middle Georgia College.

*Am I Trustworthy?*, Coronet, 1950, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Elizabeth B. Carey, Bureau of Instructional Supervision, State University of New York.

For primary and intermediate grades. Pre-teen Eddie Johnson walks home glumly and the narrator points out that he is feeling left out. Eddie tells his parents that he was not elected treasurer of his school club as he had hoped, but instead was appointed to the clean-up committee. As Eddie's father repairs a lamp, he gets Eddie to think how Bob has demonstrated he could hold such a job, by showing his trustworthiness. That means doing what you say you will, like fixing the lamp. Eddie in a series of flashbacks remembers Bob's showing how trustworthy he is--finishing his class report instead of playing ping pong with the gang, doing his job at the library charge-out desk, always being on time. He keeps trust, whatever responsibility he accepts. Eddie asks, "How can I learn to be trustworthy too?" He decides to start small, and to take the job on the clean up committee. As in many Coronet films for teenagers and younger pupils, his written list of key points emphasizes

and systematizes the desirable behavior in four venues, "at school, at home, with friends, with club." The key elements: "Keep your word, play fair, do your job, be on time." In the final scene, Eddie has begun to earn rewards, taking over Bob's old job at the book charge out desk.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Appreciating Our Parents*, Coronet, 1950, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Reuben Hill, Professor of Family Life, University of North Carolina.

Tommy, the main character, appears to be about 6 or 7. His parents take good care of him, and he eventually learns to show his appreciation by becoming "part of the family team." cleaning up his own room. His parents' roles are very gender-specific--his electrician father (wearing coveralls at work and white shirt and necktie at home) brings home money for Tommy and his mother, who works inside the home cleaning, mending, and cooking. The narrator stresses the fun of belonging to the family team, and concludes by repeating points made earlier in the film: Tommy has learned to put things where they belong, to help save money, to help around the house. The camera shows Tommy painting a chair with his father and cleaning mirror. The film lets the audience know that Tommy's rewards are both financial and emotional. He earns a share of the money saved by getting a bigger allowance. The final shot is of his parents sitting on his bed with him, giving him hugs and money.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Are Manners Important?*, Encyclopædia Britannica Films, 1954, 11 minutes.

For elementary and junior high school audiences.

Producer: Hal Kopel; Collaborator: Rose Alschuler.

The film emphasizes connections between manners and acceptance by peers, as well as larger civic responsibilities. The opening high angle shot of a small city precedes closer views of the American flag flying at the courthouse, as the narrator speaks of "the need all men have for living together with their fellow man," and notes ways we make sure we get along: the police and the law. As a boy opens a door for an elderly couple, the narrator praises his "consideration for others." The camera shows a group of boys, about 11 or 12 years old, playing football. The audience gets brief, illustrated lessons about not cutting in a line to see movies, about the right way to make introductions, and good table manners. The narrator introduces the protagonist, Mickey Taylor, about 12, who "has lost sight of the importance of good manners." Chided by his mother for behaving rudely to her and a guest, he replies, "Manners are just for grownups. Kids don't need manners." Two bad encounters the next day at school help him gain a new

perspective. He carelessly and unapologetically tears a classmate's poster and then intrudes into a football game, breaking up a play. Sitting alone at lunch, he wonders if others are deliberately passing him by. In an interior monologue, he muses "If I were president, I'd put a stop to manners." He fantasizes his proclamation. Vocal dissenters include the girl whose poster he tore and the captain of the football team whose pass he broke up. An angry young mob closes in on President Mickey, apparently intent on assassination. Anxiously returning to reality, he makes his apologies, and the narrator closes with the provocative questions, "What do you think? Do we need manners in this modern day and age? Do boys need manners as much as girls do? Or is there a danger manners might make sissies out of boys?"

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Southwest Missouri State.

*Are You a Good Citizen?*, Coronet, 1949, 10 minutes.  
Educational collaborator: Jerome G. Kerwin, Professor of Political Science, University of Chicago.

When a civic committee selects Mr. Heineman as first citizen, his teenage friend Jim Foster learns more about community responsibilities. They first met when Jim broke his window, illegally playing baseball in the street. Subsequently Jim became aware of what the narrator calls "basic civic duties: Take part in group activities; keep informed on public affairs; know and obey the law; be a good neighbor; pay taxes and know why you pay. . . . Would you close the library, let highways go to ruin, forget about national defense?" Jim promises, "I'll get out to vote, work for a candidate." The baseball incident serves to illustrate these principles in action, as the narrator insists, "Get into habit of obeying all the laws, even if you don't like it.... Mr. Carpenter owned the vacant lot where you used to play ball." Because the playground down the street was not very big. [and] you boys ran roughly over the neighbors' shrubs, they asked that it be posted no trespassing. A shrewd operator bought the land that had been intended for a park and developed it. Only the Carpenter property was left. The town could buy it," but it lacked the funds. "The way is wide open for citizens to get what they want from their government . . . if they're willing to work for it." We see Jim and four other boys gathering petition signatures supporting a tax increase to fund the playground. The final word belongs to Mr. Heineman: "You see, Jim, don't think only of your rights; if you neglect your duties, you may forfeit your rights."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Are You Popular?*, Coronet, 1947, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Alice Sowers, Director, Family Life Institute, University of Oklahoma.

Opening in the school cafeteria with a lunch time snub of the girl who parks with all the boys (sarcastically dubbed "Miss Popularity"), the film shifts focus quickly to the appeal that Caroline, the new girl in school, holds for the others at one table. The narrator notes that her attractiveness comes from how she looks and dresses, because she is as interested in girls as in boys, and because "they've heard no scandal about her." This final criterion was changed to "minds her own business" in the printed study guide to the film. The rest of the script emphasizes dating manners: how to ask, how to accept, and how to have a good meeting with the girl's parents. (The part of Caroline's mother was played by the actress's actual mother.) As Caroline and Wally walk along a snowy road to go ice skating, the narrator sums up: "He is proud to be with Caroline because she looks well, is friendly with everyone, and is considerate of their feelings. She likes him for the same reasons and also because he is fun to be with. Home, parents, and personality all help boys and girls to be popular."

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger, *Our Secret Century* CD-ROM, vol. 3.

*Are You Popular? (New Edition)*, Coronet, 1958, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Alice Sowers, Director, Family Life Institute, University of Oklahoma.

Essentially using the same script as the 1947 original, the film updates the style of clothing, haircuts and slang to appeal to teenagers of the late 1950s. Some variations in the narrative are interesting. Ginny, the girl who parks with all the boys, is played with more of an unpleasant, whining manner. The narrator more explicitly contrasts the outcast Ginny with Caroline's virtuous appeal: "They like the way she looks and dresses, because she doesn't date a different boy every night, parked on isolated roads." The 1958 Caroline has more interests of her own than the more objectified 1947 version. When they discuss work for the upcoming school play, she mentions that she was involved with a play in her previous school. "She does not tell them she had the lead . . . --that might sound like competing. And she is careful about not competing with another girl over a boy that girl likes." Though this advice implicitly seems to encourage feminine self-effacement and passivity, it recognizes better than did the 1947 version both female desire (for "a boy that girl likes") and her own activities and accomplishments. The rest of the film varies little from the original, though Caroline's father no longer wears a suit and tie at home. At the end, showing the increased importance of the automobile to

dating, Wally opens the door of a new 1958 Ford for Caroline, and in the final shot they drive away.  
Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*Are You Ready for Marriage?*, Coronet, 1950, 16 minutes.  
Educational collaborator: Reuben Hill, Professor of Family Life., University of North Carolina .

Opening with a lingering kiss on a shadowy porch, this film begins with a more sensuous atmosphere than other Coronet productions. Sue and Larry clearly are excited about their planned marriage just two months away. The next day at their soda fountain hangout, they are upset that her parents don't approve. To help persuade them, the young couple seeks the advice of a church marriage counselor. Most of the film consists of his commentary and questions, illustrated with scenes of Sue and Larry together. He finds reasons to wait: they are only 18 and 19, their common interests consist mostly of liking the same popular music, they have been a couple just three months. Though the film speaks of the importance of "understand[ing] the physical aspects of marriage," the comment is illustrated with Sue and Larry doing dishes together as they talk with her parents seated at the kitchen table. Typical of Coronet films, the expert presents a list of three standards to be met, here called "Cupid's Checklist: . . . 1. Similar backgrounds; 2. Real friends, comrades through thick and thin; 3. Understand marriage." His verdict: "I think you two have a lot of what it takes. Shouldn't it take longer to get ready for it?" By the end of the film, they have accepted this proposal, and the final word belongs to Sue's father: "If you can continue to reduce the psychological distance between you . . . at Easter we can announce the engagement."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Are You Ready for Service?* **series**. See individual titles listed alphabetically.

Coronet filmed and released this series of fourteen titles in 1951 and 1952, seven each year, aiming it at high school boys who would soon be facing an obligation for a stint in the military of at least two years. The Cold War dominated foreign policy, and the shooting war in Korea had begun in 1950. Each film focused on teenage boys, seeking to motivate and prepare them for the military experience that lay ahead. The credits claimed that consultants and collaborators included personnel from several organizations, though these groups did not officially endorse the films. "Produced in consultation with officers of: National Education Association, American Council on Education, United States Office of Education, National Catholic Education Association, National Vocational Guidance Association and United States Department of Defense." The titles, in order,

included (1) *What It's All About*, (2) *Your Plans*, (3) *Service and Citizenship*, (4) *Starting Now*, (5) *Getting Ready Physically*, (6) *Getting Ready Emotionally*, (7) *Getting Ready Morally*, (8) *The Nation to Defend*, (9) *What Are the Military Services?*, (10) *When You Enter Service*, (11) *Military Life and You*, (12) *Communism*, (13) *Your Investment in the Future*, (14) *Why You?*

*Attitudes and Health*, Coronet, 1949, 11 minutes.

Consultants: Dean Smiley, M.D., and Fred Hein, Ph.D.,  
American Medical Association.

Glum teenager Marv Baker kicks a rock, and the narrator asks what happened. A flashback shows him reading a locker room list and complaining that wasn't his fault he missed practice and didn't make the first team; the "coach is playing favorites." The other players respond to him negatively: "What an attitude!" At home, he finds his older sister has left work ill after missing out on a promotion. The doctor on a house call explains that her worried attitude has harmed her by making her tense, causing her to make mistakes and increasing her tension all the more. He presents a characteristic Coronet three-part solution: "Three Steps to a Healthy Attitude: Get the facts about what's worrying you, make a plan in relation to the facts, carry out the plan." Marv applies the program to his own problem and works with his coach on improving his basketball skills. At the end, he reports to his mother, "I know what's more important than a game: a better perspective."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Baby Sitter, The*, Young America Films, 1949, 15 minutes.

Producers: Lewis S. Baer and Dina Baer. Director: Lewis Baer. Narration: Amy Sedell.

Collaborator: Gladys Romanoff, Guidance Counselor, Finch Junior College.

This instructional film begins as the narrator tells how Mrs. Brown and two children are awaiting Mary. Sue is a 3 to 4 years old, and Baby is in playpen, about one year old. "Baby sitting is not really SITTING at all." Mary takes notes as Mrs. Brown tells her where she can be reached, the doctor's number, when they will return, and special instructions. Also providing lessons in child psychology, the narrator announces that "Children 4 years old are jealous of affection" as Mary pays attention to the baby. By encouraging Sue to feed and mother her own "baby," a doll, Mary wins her over while caring for the younger child. After putting the baby to sleep, Mary turns her full attention to Sue. Putting the doll to sleep was her "first step on the long road to dreamland." Mary gets Sue to put on night clothes before supper, then washes her and keeps her interested in a picture book. Unabashedly gender-biased, the narrator informs us that "Little girls love to set a table, and it will keep them

safely out of kitchen with gas flames and scalding soup." As for eating habits, the narrator endorses permissiveness: "Don't nag Sue about the unfinished bread before letting her eat jello. Children know pretty well what they want and need to eat." With both children asleep in bed, Mary uses the time to do history homework and to talk briefly on the telephone to a friend. She tells her "You'd better not come over my first time here," and that she "better sign off; I don't want to tie up the phone." She even does the dishes, though the narrator points out that it's not required. All that remains is waiting for the Browns to return and Mr. Brown to give Mary a ride home.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Beginning to Date*, Encyclopædia Britannica Films, 1953, 12 minutes.

Milan Herzog, producer.

Collaborator: Esther Lloyd-Jones, Ph.D., Teachers College, Columbia University.

The opening shot in a school hallway closes in on a newly posted "Winter Frolic" sign on the bulletin board, specifying "You and your date." Girls, then boys express excitement and fright. The coach appears and asks George if he's scared. He compares the first date to the first dive into a swimming pool. Narrator: "Diving into the social swim is easier than you think." Illustrating first what not to do, Bill telephones Helen to ask for a date, first by asking "What are you doing Friday night?" before he even identifies himself to her. Floundering, he then asks her to go out with him Friday night without telling the occasion. The entire phone call is then redone to show the correct way. Bill opens with specific information: "The teen club is giving a party at the club Friday night. Would you like to go with me?" But they don't know how to stop their conversation. The narrator informs the audience that the rule is that she declines or accepts, then ends the conversation, after the time of picking up and likely return have been established. Introductions and greetings of the girl's parents are illustrated. Twice the narrator tells prospective daters the secret of good conversation: think of subjects beforehand. At the party, Tom commits the "unforgivable sin of leaving his date stranded." Furthermore, "All-boy huddles and all-girl huddles should not go on long." Because these young teenagers are not old enough to drive, they rely on parents for transportation home. Mildred thanks George, and he waits until she is inside before he leaves. The viewers are reminded that "Etiquette is based on a regard for the feelings of others," and again that they should "plan what to talk about and when to go home." While "picnics, parties, swimming, movies can be fun," more importantly they serve



an educational purpose and provide tests of what guidance film watchers have learned--"social occasions calling for skill in dealing with others."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*\*Being Different*, McGraw-Hill, 1957, 10 minutes.  
Produced by the National Film Board of Canada.  
Director: Julia Murphy; Producer: Nicholas Balla;  
Writing: Gudrun Parker; Photography: John Spotton.  
From the *Index to 16mm Films*: "Cites the case of a thirteen-year-old boy whose hobby, collecting butterflies, is ridiculed by his friends. Provokes discussion as to what extent a person should conform to the group and to what extent he should pursue his own interests. (What Do You Think--McGraw-Hill series)."  
Archival source: National Film Board of Canada.

*Belonging to the Group*, Encyclopædia Britannica Films, 1953, 16 minutes.  
Collaborator: Robert J. Havighurst, Ph.D., University of Chicago; John T. Bobbitt, producer.  
"Newcomers have to show what they can do before they are accepted in any of the town's social groups." The narrator states this film's theme quite early. Flashing back one year to when two families arrived in town on the same train, the narrative examines their experiences in becoming part of the new community. Both families include teenagers, and about half the film focuses on their experiences in their new school and the difficulties they faced. After some bad starts they find social niches through Girl Scouts, theater, and handicraft skills. The two boys are not athletic, and they have to find ways to compensate for this failing in a community where the gender expectations for boys are so closely tied to sports. Meanwhile the parents also have to fit into their new work and social situations (only the fathers work outside the home). Because the Osters are immigrants, they also face problems of language and xenophobia. But at the end of the year, returning to the present, all have learned community customs and have come to feel accepted. The narrator concludes, "Every one of us have to learn the ways to live, and work, and play together, the ways of acquiring the feelings of belonging to the group that's so essential to everyone's happiness."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Benefits of Looking Ahead, The*, Coronet, 1950, 11 minutes.  
Educational collaborator: Harl R. Douglass, Ph.D.,  
Director of College of Education, University of Colorado.  
Aimless Nick and careful planner Don discuss their futures while working on their wood shop projects. Don and three other middle-class upwardly mobile teenagers (chosen as "Most Likely to Succeed") are contrasted with Nick, who

at first scoffs at the notion of planning future life decisions. Each speaks directly to the camera. Ed: "How do I get high grades? I work for them. I'm not going to school just to put in time. I'm going to school to be somebody." Jean: "How do I find time for so many activities? I plan for them. I like to make the most of my spare time." Terry (in a basketball uniform): "Why do I have so many friends? Well, I like people. I want them to like me." Don: "You have to have a purpose and a plan for making things happen, and be working on it all the time." Then visualizing the future, we see Ed as a scientist, Jean as leader of the West Side Civic Association, Terry as a politician, and Nick in a shabby room with a view of a brick wall, sitting on a ratty bed, smoking, gnawing on a chunk of bread, and wearing ragged clothes. "That could be me--nothing but a bum." Nick goes to work on his table, and it falls apart. "I have to figure out how I want it to look and make a plan for building it." He does, and the improved table inspires him to consider Don's advice. "I have to plan for my own future. Not what it'll be like if I just keep drifting (image of him on bed, gnawing on bread again). But what I WANT it to be like." Now we see him sitting behind an executive's desk, wearing a suit, signing a document, as a woman secretary waits to serve him. Then he is on the phone, talking to his dad about having been elected chairman of the community club, and says "Mary and I will expect you and mother as our guests at the club dinner." "Yes," thinks young Nick, "that's what I want, a good job, home, wife and kids. So I better make a detailed plan of how to achieve my purpose. The important thing is to have plans to work with." The film concludes with Nick's plan to socialize more, to get help on bringing up his grades, and to confer with the guidance counselor. "It's easy, my boy," he tells Don. "You just need to do a little looking ahead."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger, *Our Secret Century* CD-ROM, vol. 3.

*Better Use of Leisure Time*, Coronet, 1950, 10 minutes.  
Educational collaborator: Paul H. Landis, Department of Sociology, Washington State College.

Opening and closing with a shot of a ticking clock, this film engages its teenage protagonist Ken in a direct debate with the omniscient narrator, who intones "Time, leisure time. Some of us put it to good use. Some of us, Ken Michaels for instance, spend it moping." Ken, lying on bed, rises in response to the voice: "Moping? He thinks I'm moping. Who wouldn't mope? There's nothing to do, nobody around. I went down to the bowling alley, down to the drugstore, nobody was there. All my friends are busy." The narrator tells Ken he's lucky to have so much time to do things he enjoys. 100 years ago, he would have had backbreaking chores to contend with.

Labor saving devices and shorter job hours have left his father time to pursue activities like golf and woodworking and his mother the ability to plan her woman's club meetings. Some of Ken's friends are shown pursuing hobbies (bird watching, sewing, piano playing) or at their after-school jobs. The narrator elicits the Coronet List of Three from the hobbyists about the benefits of their pastimes: "Give you a change, help you learn things, and have a long-range goal." Plus Marge's piano playing will "help her socially." Ken looks for his camera to take up a photography hobby, but his belongings are so disorganized he can't find it. "Can Ken prepare himself for better living? What might be some good uses for your leisure time?" The final shot again shows the ticking clock. "Will you let time slip away from you, or will you use it well?"

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Body Care and Grooming*, School of Public Health, University of Minnesota, distributed by McGraw-Hill, 1947, 17 minutes.

With no story line or identifiable characters, this film uses a narrator and a large number of college-age men and women to illustrate techniques of cleanliness and fashion, from toenail clipping to hair washing (recommended to be done at least every two weeks). Women are cautioned not to let their slips show below their skirt hems or to wear flowered blouses with high-heeled shoes. "Good appearance is a must." Men are particularly urged to use nail brushes on their hands. Tooth brushing, flossing, face washing, cosmetic removal, daily bathing, and hair brushing all get some attention. In a bit of concluding hyperbole, as the screen shows separate shots of a young man and a young woman asleep in their dormitory beds, the narrator promises "By following simple rules of body care and grooming, you will achieve good appearance and make your dreams of happiness come true."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Borderline*, National Film Board of Canada, 1957, 27 minutes.

Director: Fergus McDonell; Scenario: Charles E. Israel; Producer: Grant McLean.

The film opens in an institution for troubled girls, then flashes back to how Nora got there. She's 15 when she meets a 23-year-old man named Tim at a dance. Telling him she's 18, she arranges to go out on a date with him. Her mother forbids it, then relents in the face of Nora's tears. When Tim brings her home at 3 a.m., again her mother starts to exert firm discipline, telling her she cannot go out again for a month. But again Nora's tears cause her to back down. Nora subsequently gets involved with a series of older men, and her behavior leads to her

being confined at this institution for psychiatric help. In a conversation between the mother and Nora's counselor, the themes of the film are made explicit. Mother: "Tell me what I did that was wrong." John, the counselor: "We sometimes forget about teenagers, especially girls. They look like adults but they're still children. They need a great deal of two things: love and guidance." Mother: "But we do love Nora." John: "Love isn't enough. Don't forget guidance. Adolescents think they know exactly what they want, but they don't know at all. They want to be told, to have decisions made for them. Sometimes when they're most defiant, they're asking adults to take the burden off their shoulders." Mother: "My mother wouldn't let me date until I was 18, and took a strap to me. I remembered all the times my mother made me cry for no reason, so when Nora cried about her date with Tim. . . and when she came home at 3 a.m. I told her I'd punish her, she cried again, and so I relented...." John: "She wanted you to stop her from getting hurt again. That night she was on a borderline. She still is. She can't stay on the borderline forever. Where does she go from here?"

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*\*Borrowed Power*, American Automobile Association Foundation, 1951/2, 19 minutes.

From Robert E. Schreiber, "New Learning Aids" column, *Audio-Visual Guide*, May 1952, vol. 18, #9, page 27: "A high school student, ordinarily recognized for his good sportsmanship, becomes a different person when in contact with the 'borrowed power' of an automobile and is involved in a hit-run manslaughter offense. With the help of a wise judge, the boy comes to recognize the great responsibilities of driving a car."

Archival sources: Iowa State, Northern Illinois University.

*Bottle and the Throttle, The*, Sid Davis Productions, 1961, 10 minutes.

Filmed with the cooperation of the West Covina (California) Police Department.

Bill and his girlfriend sit on the curb as a police car's red light flashes. The narrator, whose voice is the only one heard throughout the film, talks to Bill accusingly. "A short while ago that young woman and her child were happy. Now their bodies are crushed and racked with pain." An ambulance arrives to pick up the two victims, and a policeman leads Bill to the police car. "You've only had a few beers; you're not drunk. But your driving performance was impaired." A cartoon and the narrator show that the liver can only process 3/8 of an ounce of alcohol per hour. Another, older driver demonstrates the slowed reaction time and the blurred vision resulting

from drinking. The film flashes back to the picnic where Bill drank the beer because of his "need to belong, to go along with the group," then to his careless driving afterward. He is talking, his eyes off the road, when the pedestrians appear. "If your reaction time had been faster and the brake had been hit sooner, the young woman and her daughter would have been saved." They receive word from the hospital: the child is dead and the mother probably won't walk again. Bill is placed in handcuffs and taken away in the police car. "It's not a pleasant prospect to face at the age of 18. No matter how your trial comes out, you'll have that memory of a child dead, a mother crippled...."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Northern Virginia Community College, Prelinger.

*Boy with a Knife*, Dudley Pictures, distributed by International Film Bureau, 1956, 19 minutes.

Script by Arnold Belgard, from a story by Betty Hopkins; narrated by Richard Widmark; directed by Laslo Benedek (director of *The Wild One*).

A number of well-known Hollywood motion picture people took part in making this film, which stresses the importance of a social worker, Bud Williams (played by Chuck Connors), in helping to straighten out a troubled teen, Jerry, the title character. Jerry's home life is miserable, with an angry step-mother (apparently Jeanette Nolan) and weak-willed father (apparently Frank Ferguson) showing no concern for him. He hangs out with other teenage boys from unhappy homes. Narrator Richard Widmark's characteristic sardonic speaking style is well suited to the tone of much of the film, though it turns a bit more sentimental by the end. He informs the viewers that "Violence is their only real outlet" for all the frustration in their lives. Jerry's knife becomes emblematic of that violent potential. The club they form, the Regals, plays a positive role in their lives, giving all of them some sense of responsibility. The interest shown by the social worker also helps. The root of Jerry's problems, hammered home in several scenes, is his lack of respect for a father who won't stand up for him or for himself to the shrewish wife. When he finally does, Jerry is able to give up his knife, remembering the social worker's words, "The only way I want that knife is when you find out you don't need it." Thematically, this film strongly resembles a similar aspect of the Hollywood feature *Rebel without a Cause*, released the previous year. In both, a weak father standing up to his domineering wife helps the teenage male protagonist overcome serious problems.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, University of North Texas.

*Bully, The*, Young America Films, 1951, 11 minutes.

Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.

With no adult characters and minimal narrator commentary, the film focuses on two distinct groups of young people and their reaction to the predations of Chick Allen, the title character. Students his own age, about 15, fearing his threats to ruin their class picnic, move the location secretly to prevent his attack. Boys about age 11 form his coerced gang, intimidated into helping him. Chick and his four young accomplices go to the original site of the picnic and tip over tables. Then a messenger arrives with a note for Chick from the class picnic group. Chick reads it and leaves. Fade to a closeup of a sign: Clinton Park. Kids at picnic table: "Why is Chick that way? What will he do when he gets our note?" Chick and four boys rise up over crest of hill. Walk toward group, fists clenched. For the first time, a narrator speaks: "All right, Chick, it's up to you. Can you have fun like the rest of them? Have you learned anything from the way the class has treated you? Are you really so brave?" Shots of class members at picnic tables show them staring at camera, watching Chick come at them. "And you, members of the class, were you right in secretly moving the picnic? Could anything else have been done in handling Chick the bully? What do you think?". From a low angle the final shot shows Chick and his boys crossing the bridge, coming at the camera.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Kansas.

\**Careers for Girls*, McGraw-Hill--March of Time Forum Films, 1949/50, 17 minutes.

*The Educational Screen*, vol. 29, February 1950, page 51; from a full page advertisement for The March of Time Forum Films: "Four million girls in school today will soon be going out to make careers for themselves. Competition is stiff, and success depends on finding the right job for their individual talents. This film presents the many fields open to them, from social service to the stage; shows them the requirements, opportunities, rewards; and gives them real impetus to prepare now for the work that suits them best."

Archival sources: None found.

\**Challenge to Crime*, Association Films, 1945, 10 minutes.

From "Current Film News," *The Educational Screen*, vol. 24, June 1945, page 255: Part of a Y.M.C.A. Motion Picture Bureau series of four one-reel 16mm sound films entitled "World Spotlight," written by the Editorial and Research departments of *Look* magazine, produced by Newsreel Distributors, Inc., and Pathe Studios. *Challenge to Crime* "describes a common-sense way to help rid any community of juvenile delinquency which has flourished under war-time social conditions. The plan was created

by a young girl in her teens who organized a successful cleanup campaign among the youngsters in her home town, Moline, Illinois, and offers a genuine challenge to other communities to do likewise."

Archival sources: None found.

*\*Charm and Personality Plus Character*, Warren Motion Pictures, 1944, 37 minutes.

No description of film found.

From "Key to Charm Lost As Movie Breaks," *Washington World* (Lake Washington High School, Kirkland, Washington), 7 December 1948, page 10: "The school had planned to show *Charm and Personality Plus Character* during November in all study halls, but the print had been so badly damaged by its previous user that it could not be projected. Plans were announced for screening a new print to be sent later."

Archival sources: None found.

*Cheating*, Young America Films, 1952, 12 minutes.

Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.

From the Indiana online catalog: "After he has been elected to the Student Council, John finds it hard to keep up with his schoolwork. He gets his girl friend to help him with his lessons and, finally, to help him during a test. When his cheating is discovered, the teacher shames him in class, the Student Council votes to remove him, and he is ostracized by his fellow students. Concludes with questions concerning John's feelings." This summary captures the essence of the situation portrayed but not its emotional qualities. The style of filmmaking heightens the "shame" effect considerably. The film opens and closes with John alone in a shadowy room, waiting for the telephone to ring with news of his fate. Throughout the film, a series of flashbacks to his slide into degradation creates an unsettling feeling. The worst possible fate is to be shunned by one's peers, leaving only interior monologues and disembodied scolding teacher heads to harass and torment the miscreant. As in all the Discussion Problems in Group Living series, the film ends with the narrator asking several questions of the audience: "Did John intend to be dishonest? What was Mary's responsibility? Should his classmates have given him another chance? What do you think?"

Archival sources: Kansas, Indiana, Iowa State.

*Children of Change*, McGraw-Hill, 1960, 31 minutes.

From *Educational Screen and Audiovisual Guide*, vol. 40, August 1961, page 452, under SOCIAL PROBLEMS:

"Relationship of delinquency to the stress on children in homes where the mother works outside the home. Basic social causes. Suggested solutions, the day-care center

and its problems." The magazine recommended it for adult, college, and senior high school audiences. This brief summary seems to misrepresent the film as opposing working mothers. In fact, the film presents a much more positive attitude and shows day-care centers in a very favorable light. We see no forlorn latchkey children as shown in the anti-working-mother *Youth in Crisis* (1943) or *Children of Mars* (1945). These 1960 children of change are shown with much more optimism.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

\**Children of Mars*, no information available, estimated date 1945.

Edward T. Myers, "Juvenile Delinquency on Film," *The Educational Screen*, vol. 26, April 1947, pages 202-204 includes several films from Britain and the U.S. Among the American films listed is *Children of Mars*, which apparently blamed working parents for youth crime.

Archival sources: None found.

*Choosing for Happiness*, McGraw-Hill, 1950, 14 minutes. Correlated with Henry A. Bowman, *Marriage for Moderns*. Directed by Willard Van Dyke; produced by Irving Jacoby; written by Renee Nell.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "'Is he right for me?' asks Eve each time she meets a new boy. Somehow each one fails to measure up. Eve found a flaw in each, and when she tried to change them 'for their own good,' they drifted away. A cousin suggests that for Eve, as for everyone, self-analysis must come first; that she must accept the possibility of making certain changes in herself and fewer demands on other people." Mary, the cousin, narrates the film, set on a state university campus. Eve dates in succession the popular football player, the intense science student who tells her "You're so smart for a woman," and the free-spirited canoe builder. Mary briefly dates one of the former boyfriends, the canoe builder, but finds they have too much in common: "We're too much alike; it would be like spending time with a twin brother." When Mary suggests to Eve that it would be good for her "to meet someone you can't push around," Eve rejoins, "Someone who pushes me around?" "No," insists Mary, "Someone who's not afraid of you." Yet the likeliest prospect for Eve is John, who tells her, "Someone ought to take you over his knee and give you a spanking." Mary urges Eve and the viewers to "recognize what you can change in yourself, and what you need from others" and to pick a partner with all this in mind. "We'll have to stay friends for a long long time."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.



*Choosing Your Marriage Partner*, Coronet, 1952, 14 minutes.  
Educational collaborator: Reuben Hill, Professor of Family Life, University of North Carolina.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Describes the problem of Joe, a college student who is trying to decide which of two girls he should marry. The marriage counselor suggests an evaluation of the girls on the basis of emotional maturity, family background, philosophy of life, and harmony of personalities. Joe also realizes that he must evaluate himself." Joe's roommate Harvey acts as narrator and guide, steering Joe to a talk with Professor Morton, who doubles as a counselor. Morton gives Joe a typical Coronet chart with which to compare Ann, his in-town date, and Elsie, the one back home. He evaluates them each in four categories: Emotional Maturity, Family Background, Philosophy of Life, and Harmony of Personalities. He remembers their strengths and their quirks in a series of flashbacks. Though no one is perfect (including Joe himself, Harvey is glad to remind him), by the end of the film Elsie seems more appealing. Her major flaw seems to be that in money matters, "Elsie lets me run things. Maybe that would mean she wouldn't carry her share of the load." Too much deference could mean irresponsibility.

Archival source: Indiana.

*Cindy Goes to a Party*, Young America Films, 1955, 11 minutes.

A Centron Production.

From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 682: "A modern variation of the Cinderella story designed to promote better manners in social groups. Within a dream sequence, Cindy's fairy godmother makes it possible for Cindy to attend and enjoy a birthday party." Cindy's basketball playing buddy Dennis is also part of the dream, benefiting from the cheery reminders that the fairy godmother pronounces as the party goes on. The guests are all about Cindy's age, around 12 or 13. As they arrive, play musical chairs, eat, and leave, the fairy godmother waves her wand to put each rule up in capital letters: BE ON TIME, JOIN IN THE GAMES, DON'T BE TOO NOISY OR ROUGH, DON'T BREAK THINGS, DON'T TEASE OR MAKE FUN OF OTHERS, OBEY THE RULES OF THE GAME, BE A GOOD LOSER, BE A GOOD WINNER, BE POLITE, BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHERS, REMEMBER YOUR TABLE MANNERS, LEAVE ON TIME, and THANK THE HOSTESS. Before the dream, Cindy is certain she hasn't received an invitation because of her tomboyish ways: "They probably thought I'd rather play basketball, or go fishing, or..." The fairy godmother says nothing about that, but does provide her with a most decidedly feminine party dress. At the end, waking from the dream, Cindy finds a character looking just like the fairy godmother standing by her bed with the misplaced party invitation.

Archival sources: Kansas, Prelinger.

\**Clean Look, The*, Armour and Company/Association Films, 1951, 30 minutes.

From "Current Materials," *The Educational Screen*, vol. 30, September 1951, page 292: "Good grooming for women stressing body and facial cleanliness, hair care and styling, proper use of cosmetics, and good posture." From "Film Clips," *Film News*, vol. 12, no. 2, October 1951, page 9: "The Clean Look . . . though it overstates a particular Armour product--contains many excellent and commonsense health and hygiene suggestions for women and girls." Armour replaced this film with *Good Looks*, offering health and hygiene tips for both sexes, in 1960.

Archival sources: None found.

*Clothes and You: Line and Proportion*, Coronet, 1954, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Gladys L. Butt, Cornell University College of Home Economics, Department of Textiles and Clothing.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "High school girls learn how to design clothing for themselves based on their personal needs and physical attributes. Emphasizes the importance of body structure in choosing flattering clothing. Illustrates that unflattering aspects can be minimized and attractive features can be emphasized with appropriate attention to body type and the principles of line and proportion. Also demonstrates how assisting each other in the critique of clothing builds each girl's understanding of proper clothing. The girls finally demonstrate what they have learned in a fashion show." The narrator identifies herself as the girls' teacher, helping them to prepare for the annual Central High fashion show. "Fashions change, but not the basic principles of line and proportion," as each girl "looks for certain physical characteristics she would like to emphasize or de-emphasize: neck, bustline, waist, hips, calves, ankles." Each of the examples shown in the film highlights what is considered unattractive by cultural standards of beauty, and then each girl gets instructions on how to disguise that part of her. As the happy, smiling models perform with imperfections camouflaged, the teacher-narrator concludes by telling the viewers "It's fun and exciting getting to know yourself and the effect that clothes can have on you."

Archival source: Iowa State.

*College: Your Challenge*, Coronet, 1953, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Francis J. Brown, American Council on Education.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Discusses the meaning of college and presents college attendance as a challenging

and rewarding experience. Shows different ways to attend college--by means of scholarships or working one's way--and emphasizes the importance of college training to men in responsible positions." The gender bias evident in this summary pervades the entire film. Women students appear only in the background. From the script: "A college man has something--I don't know what you call it." However, it's not an exclusively male world: "The work of thousands of men and women has made our country great." The framework of the narrative is set by a college student writing a letter home to his brother, still in high school, and discussing the contents with a roommate. Although they mention the variation in types and sizes of colleges, much of what they talk about--large lecture classes, active fraternity and sorority system, organized athletic program--seems most characteristic of large public universities. The roommate concludes, "Tell your brother that college is work--but it's a lot of fun and I wouldn't miss it for anything."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Communism*, Coronet, 1952, 11 minutes.

Number 12 in the *Are You Ready for Service?* series of 14 films.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows Communist leaders and the Russian people at various times between World War I and Potsdam. Some Communist uprisings are pictured, as is the fighting in Korea. The work of the U.N. in disputes between the United States and Russia is mentioned. Emphasizes the influence of Karl Marx and the belief in world revolution." Over opening and closing scenes of Red Army soldiers marching, the narrator blames the military arms race on the Soviet Union, referred to throughout as "Russia." Scenes of what the narrator characterizes as Communist-led disorder in Italy, Iran, southeast Asia and Malaya are contrasted with the peaceful intentions of the United States, arming only because it has to respond to the Russian threat. Americans "continually seek a workable plan to live in peace with Communist Russia," but (over a shot of a boxcar door slamming shut "They don't want this." It is a battle between freedom and tyranny.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Control Your Emotions*, Coronet, 1950, 13 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Illustrates the need for well-balanced emotions in a well-rounded personality. Jeffrey Moore, angered by an unpleasant incident, becomes increasingly angry as additional things go wrong, making those about him tense and unhappy. A change of scene shows him meeting the same events with understanding and control." The narrator identifies himself as a doctor and states that three basic emotions are provoked by

stimuli: rage, fear, and love. The opening shot shows a raging fire. The closing shot shows a controlled fire around which a group of teenage boys and girls roast wieners. In between we see Jeff lose his temper when he spills a drink among his friends in the soda fountain and when his car battery goes dead just as he needs to drive to a party and "a chance to impress the gang." When his little brother takes his letter, he tries to club the child with a wooden coat hanger. The narrator warns ominously "If the flare-up is repeated often, it could lead to a permanently warped personality." What could Jeff do? The narrator presents three alternatives: 1. Eliminate the stimulus or 2. Modify the stimulus or 3. Modify the response. He learns to think things through, to evaluate his problems, and to find solutions.

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger, many others including Southwest Texas University.

*\*Cool Hot Rod, The*, Sid Davis Productions, 1953, 27 minutes.

From Robert E. Schreiber, "New Learning Aids," *Audio-Visual Guide*, vol. 20, #7, March 1954, page 7: "How earnest, responsible young men and women all over America are working to live down the bad connotation of the term 'hot rod' in promoting driver education in the public schools."

Archival sources: Prelinger, University of Illinois (?).

*\*Courtesy Comes to Town*, Forum Films, 1943, 20 minutes.

From John B. Geisel, "Visual Aids for Mental Hygiene," *The Educational Screen*, vol. 22, October 1943, page 290: "The value of courtesy in social and business life is graphically enacted in this film and provides opportunities for analyses in class." A photo on page 289 shows a shot from the film, as a teenage boy holds a door open for two teenage girls carrying armloads of books, captioned "An act of courtesy in the school corridor."

*Date Etiquette*, Coronet, 1952, 10 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Evelyn M. Duvall, National Council on Family Relations.

The film follows Danny and Alice from the time he asks her for a date as they stand by her locker at school until they say goodnight on her doorstep. A narrator provides a running commentary throughout. Danny provides the plans and answers any questions Alice has ("Are we double dating?"). Just before he arrives to pick her up, Alice asks her mother to check her skirt hem. The narrator approves: "Alice looks kind of sharp. Good grooming is an important part of date etiquette. A fellow wants a girl to look nice when he takes her out." Danny arrives, also looking nice, then faces an awkward silence meeting her parents when the conversation stops. He talks about

the school play, and everybody is at ease again. The strain is evident again after the play, when the two teenagers are at a restaurant without quite knowing what to talk about. Danny again takes the lead, asking Alice about her bracelet, which fortunately gives her much to talk about. The narrator assures us that Alice will reciprocate, asking Danny to talk about himself. Much of the etiquette described has to do with masculine prerogatives and feminine acquiescence. At the play intermission, the narrator instructs "You girls notice--watch Alice" who turns aside at the refreshment counter. "You shouldn't watch to see how much is being spent. Fellows like that kind of politeness." Similarly, at the restaurant, Danny recommends what she eat. She makes her own choice, but uses his suggestion as a clue for how costly an item she should get. And (consistent with all the advice literature) she does not speak to the waitress, allowing Danny to do all the ordering. Each are expected to comment to the other about what a good time they are having. The evening ends with a walk to her door and another mutual reassurance that their date has been fun. Alice: "I really had a wonderful time, Danny. Thanks for asking me." She steps up on step toward house as she says it, perhaps to get out of kissing range. The narrator tells us that Danny is pretty sure she'd accept another date if he'd ask. He takes both her hands, rises to her, suggests another time, then says they can talk about it at school. There is a brief uncertain moment before the narrator confirms, "No, there won't be a good night kiss. Not on the first date. Neither one really expects it." They part and wave at each other as Danny walks away. The narrator praises what we have seen, "the kind of etiquette that makes dates a lot more enjoyable."

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*Date for Dinner*, A, Kimberly-Clark, 1960, 13 minutes.  
Produced by Douglas Productions, Inc. for Kimberly-Clark of Neenah, Wisconsin.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Presents typical situations which occur on a dinner date--checking, seating, ordering, table technique, make-up repair, tipping and escort courtesy."

Starting with Linda being asked out on a dinner date, then expressing anxiety, the film puts her through a home practice with her friend Cathy and brother Jerry and the expert Aunt Kate, who serves as manners maven and narrator. As Jerry and Linda pretend they are a couple in a restaurant, Aunt Kate puts them through their paces: "The gentleman holds the door for the girl and lets her precede him into the restaurant. . . . Wait for the hostess. The hostess goes first, then the girl, and the man follows. Usually the hostess will indicate the chair that will give the most desirable view to the girl. Sit

down slowly to give your escort a chance to push your chair toward the table." (Though not unusual for its era, referring to the couple as "man" and "girl" has a peculiar ring to it, since they are both about the same age, in their late teens or early twenties.) Which silverware to use, how to hold a napkin, how to read a menu, how not to talk to the waiter (that's the escort's job), and similar such lore get thorough coverage. The tone is light, with regular comic relief, but the message is quite in earnest.

Archival source: Iowa State.

*Date with Your Family, A*, Simmel-Meservey Instructional Films, 1950, 11 minutes.

Produced and Directed by Edward C. Simmel; Written by Arthur V. Jones; Edited by Miriam Bucher; Photographed by Harry F. Burrell.

From the *Index to 16mm Films*: "Emphasizes the need for greater awareness in the home of the respect that all members of the family should have toward each other. Shows that graciousness, consideration, and kindness can apply when the family group is alone, as well as when company is present. Shows the way the family ties are strengthened by practice of simple courtesies." As in all Simmel-Meservey Films, the only voice heard is that of the narrator. We see a teenage brother and sister enter a kitchen. "This boy and girl coming home from school look quite content with life. They're looking forward to an important date: dinner at home with the family. What's the matter? Doesn't that sound exciting to you? Well, to them it's a special occasion, and has been ever since they sat down to dinner in high chairs. Why do they feel that way about something you take so completely for granted?" Sister and Mother (none of the characters has a name other than their family role) change into nicer clothes, not only because "dressing up a little makes her feel and consequently look more charming," but also because "The women of this family seem to feel they owe it to the men of the family to look relaxed, rested and attractive at dinner time." While Sister and Mother prepare the elaborate evening meal, "Brother is spending an hour before dinner catching up on his homework." He interrupts his studies briefly to take a short phone call, giving the narrator the chance to discourage extended teenage telephone talking. When Father arrives home from a hard day at the office, Brother and a small boy called Junior greet him "as if they were genuinely glad to see him." Soon it is time to be seated at the dinner table, where with graciousness and charm, they enjoy the food and each other's company. A few moments of "don'ts" are illustrated, mostly by Sister talking too much or too negatively. At the end of the meal, Brother helps clear the table and insists that Mother stay seated after all her hard work. With a well-

decorated cake as the "conclusion of a thoroughly pleasant meal," it is time for the final narrator pronouncements praising this nightly ritual: "When the dinner hour at home is treated with a certain amount of graciousness and ceremony, it can be memorable [in an] atmosphere of warmth and gentleness. There is no family so busy that it can't come together in the evening for a dinner date that will give its members something to look back upon with happiness--all their days!"

Archival sources: Prelinger, *Our Secret Century* CD-ROM, volume 3.

\**Dating and Courtship*, University of Michigan, 1950 (or 1959--records unclear), 20 minutes.

From *Index to 16mm Films*, page 768: "Dating and courtship problems, and enjoyment are discussed by Dr. Robert Blood, author of the book *Anticipating Your Marriage*. Demonstrates the before and after marriage relationships and happiness."

Archival source: Northern Illinois University.

*Dating Do's and Don'ts*, Coronet, 1949, 14 minutes.

Educational Collaborator: Reuben Hill, Ph.D., Research Professor in Family Life, The University of North Carolina.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Pictures Woody trying to decide which girl to call for his first date; then shows him asking his mother for her permission and listening to his brother Ed as he calls Mary for a date. Finally Woody calls Ann and asks her in a simple and direct way for a date. Shows the two getting ready for the date, on the date, and as they return home from the date." In showing these events, the film also presents some "don'ts," alternative scenes where Woody makes serious social blunders before demonstrating what should be done. Before even asking Ann, he eagerly imagines being on a date with Janice because she is so "good-looking." Echoing Willard Waller's terminology, Woody muses "You'd really have to rate to date somebody like her." Imagining them together, he starts to feel uncomfortable. "Except--it's too bad Janice always acts so superior and bored." In pantomime, it's clear that she has snapped a cutting remark at him, and his smile fades as he lowers his eyes. "She'd make a fellow feel awkward and inferior." Ann, in contrast, "knows how to have a good time and how to make the fellow with her relax and have a good time, too." That decided, he asks his mother if she would mind his starting to date. When she objects that he is too young, his older brother convinces her that "We all had to start some time." Mom agrees, but with restrictions: "If you don't overdo on dating. . . . Weekends only, and not too late." To illustrate the correct way of asking, two "don'ts" and one "do" telephone scenes are shown: 1) "Ann, how about a date?"

Ann: "Well, really! No, thanks, Woody." 2) "Ann--whatcha doin' Saturday night?" Ann: "I guess I'm busy." Woody: "Oh yeah? Any chance you givin' him the brush-off for me?" Ann (angry): "Well, of all the nerve!" And she slams down the phone. (3) "Ann, this is Woody. I have a ticket for the Hi-Teen Carnival for Saturday. Would you like to go?" Ann: "Why, yes, Woody. I'll have to talk to my folks about it, but I think I can go. That'll be fun!" Woody: "Shall I pick you up about 8 o'clock?" Ann: "That'll be fine, Woody. 8 o'clock Saturday." In a momentary departure from the male point of view, the film shows Ann telling her little sister her expectations for the evening: "The important thing about a date is to have a good time. You don't have to spend a lot of money to do that. You just enjoy whatever you're doing. . . . And you leave your boyfriend enough money so he'll ask you again." "My, you'll be out late." "No....Mom and Dad and I have an agreement about what time to come in. . . ." The date itself at the carnival is shown as a montage of images, blended together in quick succession. "When you're having so much fun, time goes all too fast." The end of the date at Ann's door gets the don't/do alternative treatment, as 1) Woody lunges to kiss her, frightening her into bolting inside, then 2) he rather coldly says "Well, so long," scurrying away without any pleasantries, and 3) they finally get it right by her taking the initiative: "I'd ask you in for a bite to eat if it weren't so late. Let's plan to try to get home for a sandwich or something next time." They are holding hands. Cut to Woody smiling, enthused: "Say, that sounds good. I'll call you next week." Ann: "Thanks so much. I had loads of fun." "So did I." "Well, good night, Woody." "Good night, Ann" Both look almost dreamy. She goes in, and he turns and walks to camera with a very happy look on face; he whistles after he sighs.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Developing Friendships*, Coronet, 1949, 12 minutes.

Educational Collaborator: Emo D. Rockwood, Ph.D.,

Professor of Family Relationships, New York State College of Home Economics at Cornell University.

From the Indiana online catalog: "While a group of friends waits for Joe at the railroad station, one boy reminisces about how Joe has taught him the value of friendships. He has learned that friendship is infectious and that he should develop an appreciation of people of varying personalities." No adult narrator intrudes on this complete teenage world. Bob does the reminiscing and his voice controls the film. A former loner, suspicious of successful, outgoing Joe, he gets to know him on the basketball team. As their friendship grows, Joe helps widen Bob's social circle to include even Marie "from the



other side of town"--a clear reference to class distinctions. As an added argument against snobbery, Bob and Marie's relationship has progressed from friendship to dating. The warmth of feeling among the group of friends gives this film a real sense of community, and Joe seems to be almost a spiritual leader. It's an exceptionally effective guidance film.

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*Developing Imagination*, Coronet, 1950, 10 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Henry Grattan Doyle, LL.D.,  
George Mason University.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Stresses the importance of imagination in the appreciation of music, art, literature, and creative activities. Illustrates the work of the imagination by the use of sound without pictures, pictures without sound, narration without pictures, and the gradual refinement of a scene as the imagination might create it." Not actually a personal guidance film in the sense of promoting social relations or personality development, this still makes a similar effort to mold attitudes and modes of thinking. As the synopsis states, it's designed to encourage the student to be more actively appreciative of literature and various art forms. After several brief illustrated examples of envisioning and feeling and hearing, the narrator emphasizes this: "It was a wintry afternoon. A strong wind blew ever-changing drifts of snow on front porch of plain house." The camera shows increasingly elaborate visions of this, urging the viewer to develop his/her own imaginative response to such evocative statements.

Archival source: Indiana.

*Developing Leadership*, Coronet, 1949, 11 minutes.

Educational Collaborator: William E. Young, Ph.D.,  
Division Director of the University of the State of New York.

From the Indiana online catalog: "When Bill decides that it would be good to gather up and repair toys for the children of flood-stricken Greenview, he emerges as the leader of his high school group, because he exhibits the qualities of leadership. He has a sound plan of action, analyzes the job, assigns responsibilities, overcomes opposition by tact and patience, encourages the group to complete the project, and steps aside when another boy emerges as leader." Bill's story is presented as an answer to questions asked as the film opens: "How can you be good member of the group? How can you as a follower help your group? How can you become a leader? What qualities will you need as a leader? How will you as a leader help your group?" Tact and patience are repeatedly emphasized as necessary and effective methods of dealing with grumpy people working under stress. And the narrator assures the viewers that the same principles

will serve them well in the classroom, at social events, and in sports.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*\*Developing Responsibility*, Coronet, 1949, 10 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Tells the story of how Frank assumes his everyday responsibilities at home, at school, and on his paper route, and is rewarded by being given a pedigreed dog by a man on his paper route who has observed his acceptance of responsibility."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Developing Self-Reliance*, Coronet, 1950, 10 minutes.

Educational Collaborator: J. Paul Leonard, President, San Francisco State College.

Opening with shots of a baby being fed in a high chair and a small boy having his hair combed by an adult hand, the film warns of stunted character and career development if young people don't take responsibility for their own actions. In the first few minutes we see spoiled children whose parents do homework for them, and a young man who angers his boss by asking his advice on trivial matters. "The trouble is, if you're not self-reliant, you'll never do any more than just get by." The narrator turns out to be a teacher who is giving this lesson to a teenage boy who takes the stories personally: "Mr. Carson, are you telling me that I'm not self-reliant?" Carson's response: "Anyone of us can use more." I tell that story to any student who complains about not accomplishing enough." When the boy, Alan, asks HOW, Carson laughs, "Oh you want a quick easy formula, eh? There isn't any. . . . It takes time and hard work." But he does give the boy a four-step guide to achieving self-reliance: "1. Assume responsibility; 2. Be informed; 3. Know where you're going; 4. Make your own decisions." For the rest of the film, Alan measures his actions against these guidelines. He breaks free of old habits of overdependency, as when he asks "Mom, do you think I look all right this way, or should I wear a tie?" "It depends on where you're going. Will you be expected to wear a tie?" Cut to Alan looking contemplative, pulling at his ear. "Be informed. . . . Oh, nothing, Mom. I'll figure it out myself." His parents urge him to read Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay on self-reliance, calling it "The foundation of our way of life." From these small beginnings, Alan develops over several months into a student leader who receives great acclaim for solving the school's parking problem. Carson turns toward the camera to address the viewers directly: "Will you develop the habit of self-reliance?"

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Developing Your Character*, Coronet, 1950, 10 minutes.  
Educational Collaborator: Herbert Sorenson, Ph.D.,  
Professor of Educational Psychology, University of  
Kentucky.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Presents a round-table discussion by a personnel counselor, a student, and a social worker. Defines character, gives a general idea of why it is important for the fulfillment of goals; shows that it is influenced, and many times determined by, living conditions; and suggests ways to improve character." Dick York, later in Hollywood films and network television, plays Bill, the student. The personnel counselor is Mr. Perry, a man in a business suit seated behind a desk, and the social worker is Mrs. Carter, a plump, motherly older woman sitting in a living room chair with a sewing project in her lap. None of the three ever appears in the same shot with any of the others. As examples of the serious consequences of poor character, Mr. Perry reads from a stack of cards explaining reasons for firing certain employees: "IRRESPONSIBLE, CAN'T TAKE CRITICISM, CONSTANTLY DISCOURTEOUS, PETTY THEFTS, IRRESPONSIBLE, POOR WORK, IRRESPONSIBLE." Mrs. Carter tells of poor living conditions in the slums having bad effects on people's character, but then qualifies the remark: "Several did become criminals, but a few others have become highly respected citizens--this doctor, growing up under the same conditions. So I say it depends partly on the influences, and how we respond to them. We determine whether the changes are toward a poorer or a better character." Bill illustrates good character by describing his friend Jim whom everybody trusts to hold their valuables, and who breaks up a locker-room fight between two football players. As the camera shows Jim sitting on a couch with a teenage girl, Bill comments, "And when he's with a girl, you can tell that he respects them and that they appreciate it." (It's an interesting shift from singular to plural, from the individual to the generic.) When asked if one can improve his character, Mrs. Carter tells the story of a five-year-old boy who stole cookies from a store, but with guidance learned the difference between right and wrong, so that he internalized the moral values and now can walk by the temptation without yielding. Seeking to apply this lesson to his own self-improvement program, Bill says, "I don't steal cookies . . . but I make excuses for myself. . . . Once I make it a habit [to behave differently] I'll feel right about it, too." Mr. Perry ends the film by inviting its viewers to examine their own characters: "Well, what about you? What questions do you have about character? It's your discussion now."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Dinner Party*, Simmel-Meservey, 1946, 23 minutes.  
Produced and directed by Edward Simmel. Script by Joseph.  
E. Johnston.

The narrator, whose voice is the only one we hear throughout the film, announces that we are about to view a "guessing game on table manners." For 18 minutes we watch six well-dressed teenagers seated at a table while a grandmotherly housekeeper serves them a multi-course birthday dinner and the narrator asks questions about the correctness of their behavior. Some if it is so obviously impolite as to be comical, and the narrator unhesitatingly points it out, e.g. "Let's count his obvious blunders: the waving of his knife and fork, talking with food in his mouth, monopolizing the conversation. [Bob spills his glass.] Oh oh. But it stopped Bob from making any more mistakes." The final five minutes consist of a review, where the narrator gives the less obvious answers about what was right and wrong in the first part. The importance of what must have seemed arcane to many of the film's viewers, unaccustomed to proper butter knife technique, is summed up with this comment on the value of good table manners in such a situation: "Bob & Betty forget that being ill at ease spoils friends' fun." They must form new habits and study etiquette. "Correct manners will give you a sense of confidence. By their manners, they show consideration for others."

Archival source: West Chester University (Pennsylvania).

*Discipline During Adolescence*, McGraw-Hill, 1957, 16 minutes.

Part of the *Adolescent Development* series, correlated with the book by Elizabeth B. Hurlock. Produced by Crawley Films.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Discusses the question of how much discipline is good for adolescents, dramatizing in a typical family setting the results of both too little and too much parental control."

Steve's parents disagree about how to deal with his staying out too late at night. His father wants to impose strict controls: "I'm telling you what he needs: tell him what to do and if he doesn't, we punish him." The mother disagrees: "Harry, you told me that your father made you rebel by his strict rules. Treat him like a grown-up, and don't say anything at all. He'll probably have perfectly good explanation for why he was so late, then he'll apologize." Steve doesn't know an apology is expected, and after several more nights of the parents quietly resenting his late hours, they suddenly adopt the father's approach. Steve cannot go out and his allowance is stopped, just one week before a big dance for which his girlfriend has already bought her dress. The resulting stress almost breaks up the couple and creates other social problems for Steve, who becomes increasingly

angry and distant with his parents. As the film closes, he is looking at the want ads and contemplating leaving home and dropping out of school. With Steve so embittered, the narrator warns, "He may make bad decision affecting his education, his whole life. If you were Steve's parents, what would you do?"

Archival sources: Indiana, Southwest Texas State University, University of Texas at Arlington.

*Discussion Problems in Group Living series.*

Starting in 1951 with *The Other Fellow's Feelings*, Centron Productions of Lawrence, Kansas, made nineteen guidance films in this series by the end of the decade, first for Young America Films and then for McGraw-Hill. The films always ended with a large question mark and the narrator asking the audience, "What do you think?" Lawrence Memorial High School frequently appeared as the school, and local students with a wide variation in acting talent played the teenage characters. Adults were often present, but they seemed less omniscient and authoritative than those in the Coronet films, and they had no ready-made three-point plans to solve the characters' problems.

Titles (listed alphabetically): *The Bully* (1951), *Cheating* (1952), *The Good Loser* (1953), *The Gossip* (1955), *The Griper* (1953), *The Other Fellow's Feelings* (1951), *Other People's Property* (1951), *The Outsider* (1951), *The Procrastinator* (1952), *Responsibility* (1953), *The Show-off* (1954), *The Snob* (1958), *The Troublemaker* (1959), *Understanding Others* (1959), *What About Alcoholism?* (1956), *What About Drinking?* (1954), *What About Juvenile Delinquency?* (1955), *What About Prejudice?* (1959), *What About School Spirit?* (1958).

*Do Better on Your Examinations*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Henry Bonner McDaniel, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Education, Stanford University.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Suggests a program for improvement in examination grades. Shows the reasons for Bob's errors on an examination and demonstrates some of the rules for better work, including keeping up with daily work, planning reviews, being concerned but not worried, and doing one's best. Also shows the ways in which various types of questions can be answered."

With an almost wise-guy tone to his voice, the narrator of this film is much less stentorian than usual. He identifies himself as the main character Bob's friend. "Do you sing the blues every time you take an exam? Are you perhaps a worrier? . . . "Are you a scrambler, trying to cram facts into your head at the last minute?" The solution Bob found is typed in four steps on a note card in his hand: "1) Keep up with daily work; 2) Plan effective reviews; 3) Be concerned, but don't worry; 4)

Get set, then do your best." To illustrate a particularly effective technique, the camera shows him with another boy and two girls. "With his friends, he worked out a quiz program . . . talking about ways to approach questions. Bob found this a useful and pleasant way to review." Blending social life with academic pursuits promised happier results.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*\*Do I Want to be a Secretary?*, Coronet, 1954, 10 minutes. From the OCLC online catalog: "Shows how a high school girl, enrolled in a beginning secretarial course, is assisted in her decision to continue the study of secretarial work as a career by talking with her typing teacher and her guidance counselor, by taking vocational tests, by reading about secretarial work, and by visiting a secretary at work in an office. Describes the skills, personal qualities, education requisites, and principal duties of a secretary." This was very gender-specific vocational counseling.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Don't Be Afraid*, Encyclopædia Britannica Films, 1952, 12 minutes.

Rose H. Alshuler, adviser; Hal Kopel, producer.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Billy's fear of the darkness in his bedroom prompts his mother to explain to him that fear is natural. She recalls occasions in which people show fear in times of danger but suggests that occasionally fear is irrational and urges him to understand the cause of his fears, to see if others are afraid of the same things, and to discuss his fears with older people. In concluding, the film asks the audience to discuss Billy's fears." Though the characters in this film are younger than teenagers, around 9 years old, the issues raised relate to concerns expressed in the teenage films, including the importance of peer approval. The fear of nighttime shadows starts the film, but recalling other instances when Billy and other children were afraid highlights the anxieties felt in the youth culture. Frank is afraid others will laugh at him for his out-of-fashion clothing. Billy is afraid when his friends dare him to climb a drain pipe to retrieve a ball from a rooftop. At the end, the narrator emphasizes the point: "Billy refused to climb the drain pipe for fear of falling, but he also had fear of being called a coward by his friends. Which was the real danger?"

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Don't Get Angry*, Encyclopædia Britannica Films, 1953, 12 minutes.

Rose H. Alshuler, adviser.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows the causes and effects of anger as exemplified in the case of two

children. Uses animation to show the effects of anger on the body, and compares an angry child with a kettle that must release its steam. Lists some ways in which anger can be dissipated and asks the audience what they would have done in the two cases." As in its companion film, *Don't Be Afraid*, the main characters are about 9 years old. Susan shouts angrily after a playground dispute, and Paul seethes internally after his brother breaks a promise. The narrator assures them and us that angry feelings are natural, but that we must find outlets other than hurting other people or harming property in our rage. He urges talking about the problems and finding physical outlets. Paul could have hit a punching bag. Susan could have told Carol, her playground nemesis, how furious she was, instead of yelling at Rose or smashing a plate at home. The title suggests more burying of feelings than the script actually advocates. The narrator does advocate talking to the people whose actions angered them. But the main emphasis is on finding non-confrontational outlets for the dangerous angry feelings rather than on assertively seeking to correct the injustices that brought on the angry reactions in the first place.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Dropout, The*, Mental Health Film Board of New York, N.Y., and International Film Bureau, 1961, 29 minutes.

From the OCLC online catalog: "A dramatization about a youngster who leaves high school without graduating is used to show how a community, through remedial reading programs, work-experience programs, and other educational activities may tackle the problem of underachievement."

Archival sources: University of Southern Alabama, Cleveland State University, SUNY Old Westbury, Central Washington University, Oklahoma State University.

*Earning Money While Going to School*, Coronet, 1950, 11 minutes.

Educational Collaborator: C. A. Nolan, Associate Professor of Business Education, Syracuse University.

Bill, a high school boy who clerks in Mr. Jameson's book store, works two days a week after school and all day Saturday. His story forms the main part of the film, though baby-sitters and young soda fountain clerks also speak briefly. Employment is distinctly gender-segregated, even in the newspaper ads which specify "boy wanted" or "girl wanted." The working experience is portrayed positively, for the money Bill earns and the sense of responsibility he develops. The only disadvantage is when the job seems to cut into time he needs for studying. He is about to quit when faced with major school assignments on bookkeeping in a small business and the New England writers. Not surprisingly, his boss can help him with the first, and a customer with

a special interest in the books of those authors helps him with the second one. After that, there seem to be only advantages to working. Bill learns to budget his time and happily becomes a full participant in the capitalist consumer society.

Archival source: film print in possession of author; no other source found.

*Effective Criticism*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator: E. de Alton Partridge, Dean of Instruction, New Jersey State Teachers College at Montclair.

From the *Index to 16 mm Films*, page 856:: "Tells how Ted learns to differentiate between criticism of his work and criticism of himself. Through the guidance of one of his teachers, he learns the importance of wanting criticism, or understanding and evaluating criticisms, and of putting to use the helpful parts of criticisms he receives. As he works to make these principles become habits, he finds that he is benefiting from criticisms he has received." As in *Do Better on Your Examinations*, a student voice narrates the film. Ted opens and closes the film with the confidence and ability to welcome the opportunity to take and give criticism. In flashback, Ted responds angrily to any friend's hint of fault-finding in what he has written. A kind but firm English teacher and a sports analogy helps him change his attitude. The teacher urges him to outline his work to see if the charges of "disorganized" have any merit. And looking out the window, he sees football practice. "Jack is one of the best players. Coach helped him by criticizing. . . showing strong and weak points--help you see yourself and improve." If it's good enough for the football star, it has to be good enough for Ted. The guiding principles are written on the screen. For taking criticism, "1) Want it; 2) understand and evaluate it; 3) put the helpful parts to use." And for giving criticism, "1) Want to help; 2) understand what they're trying to do--and evaluate; 3) be helpful--constructive." The film ends as it began with Alice, editor of the student newspaper and formerly an unwelcome and unappreciative reader of Ted's writing efforts, asking him "What do you think of it? Will it do?" Implicitly, he has achieved respect and popularity and gets along better with his friends as a result of following the film's guidelines.

Archival source: Indiana.

*Emotional Health*, McGraw-Hill, 1948, 20 minutes.

Correlated with Harold S. Diehl, *Textbook of Healthful Living*.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "This film has three primary objectives: 1) to assure people of college age that emotional upsets are common; 2) to show that if a disturbance of this kind is prolonged, the need for



professional counsel and care is just as important and normal as with any physical illness; and 3) to explain in simplified language some of the basic techniques of psychiatric treatment and thereby allay the stigma attached to the necessity for this treatment." A college student suffering from chest pains, racing pulse, and resentment of authority consults a psychiatrist. By exploring his childhood with a hypercritical father who punished him by locking him in the closet, and by discussing the body's "fight or flight" response, they help the young man understand and improve. When he tells the psychiatrist he has a date, the doctor is very pleased: "That's real progress!" Pair bonding is a clear sign of good emotional health, evidenced by the final scene showing the protagonist dancing with a blonde young woman, then sitting at a table talking and drinking Cokes, amidst several other couples, as they look at each other with great intensity.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, University of North Texas, West Chester University.

*Emotional Maturity*, McGraw-Hill, 1957, 20 minutes.

Part of the *Adolescent Development* series, correlated with the book by Elizabeth B. Hurlock. Produced by Crawley Films.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Dramatized incidents are used to explain a high school boy's immature behavior. Shows some of the consequences of an adolescent's failure to channel his emotions into positive actions and feelings. Illustrates how important it is for adults to understand the increased emotional tempo of adolescence in order to help young people develop emotional maturity." The film starts with the written notice that "The increased emotional tempo of adolescence is caused more by social than by glandular factors." Jill breaks up with Dave to date Jimmy Dawson, star football player. Dave's resentment causes him to lash out verbally at her, his friends, and his parents, and to quit the football team after spending an entire game on the bench, blaming the coach and the trickery of Jimmy Dawson. Jill and her friends at the soda fountain call Dave "an awful mama's boy" who "acts like a kid." Dave's parents display the same patterns of soft mother and erratic, hot-tempered father that we see in *Discipline During Adolescence*. The father's refusal to let him use the family car produces more turmoil. Dave walks to Jill's house to spy on her. Seeing her on Jimmy's lap so enrages him that he takes a knife and slashes the tire on his rival's '32 Ford hot rod. Jill, Jimmy, and Jill's father see him, and Dave runs home to find his own father on the phone with Jill's. For the first time in the film, a narrator speaks: "How did Dave get in a situation like this? It seems impossible. But Dave was emotionally unstable. He didn't think straight about what he was doing. Why can't

Dave face facts and accept life as it is? Why does he have such an exaggerated idea of his own importance and ability that he can't see things as they are? Because he can't fit the real world into his unreal idea of how it should be, he is so frustrated that he loses control of himself. With help, Dave can learn to control these emotions and develop more mature attitudes. But how could his emotional instability have been prevented?"

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Oklahoma State University.

*Everyday Courtesy*, Coronet, 1948, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator: William E. Young, Ph.D.,

Divisional Director, University of the State of New York.

From the Indiana online catalog: "When a group of pupils arrange and present an exhibit on courtesy, they write invitations to their parents, entertain their guests, and display materials which they have assembled. Includes courtesy in connection with invitations, telephone conversations, introductions, and entertaining guests." The group of pupils appears to be about 11 years old, and their exhibits consist of drawings illustrating good manners in action, e.g., a gentleman lifting his fedora when greeting the ladies. The narrator's voice dominates the film. He lets us know the basic principle early on, when he instructs us "Let's watch as Pete and Marian act as host and hostess. They know courtesy means showing respect. Real friendliness. When Pete mentions the neat job Bill did on the exhibit, Bill is pleased. That's courtesy at work."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Exercise and Health*, Coronet, 1949, 10 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Erwin F. Beyer, Department of Physical Education at the University of Chicago.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Demonstrates that exercise promotes health, co-operative activities and opportunities for recognition. Shows how various exercises and participation in athletics helped three students to overcome particular difficulties common to many students, such as sickness, shyness and stress. Points out the value of exercise for physical health, as an emotional release, and in building self-confidence and poise." The film depicts three teenagers, Ernie, June and Hal, all of whom solved personal problems by getting involved in regular exercise. Ernie was ill much of the time until he started playing basketball and working out every day. June lacked poise and confidence, suffering from severe shyness, until she took up badminton and then joined the acrobatic club. Hal studied hard, "all work and no play," with "a steady diet of thinking and no release for nervous energy. He was tense and irritable, and needed some other activity as an outlet for his emotions." Taking up tumbling took care of that--and it

led him to meet June. All three are much healthier and happier, thanks to regular exercise (and the social context in which it takes place).  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Facing Reality*, McGraw-Hill, 1954, 12 minutes.  
Psychology for Living series. Correlated with Herbert Sorenson and Marguerite Malm, *Psychology for Living*. Knickerbocker Productions. Features same narrator as *Toward Emotional Maturity* and *Habit Patterns*.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Discusses the nature of psychological defense mechanisms which people employ to avoid facing life's realities. Portrays examples of rationalization, negativism, fantasy, projection, suppression, and malingering. Shows how a high school student uses various defensive tactics in school and at home to hide feelings of inadequacy, and how he finally seeks help in response to a teacher's suggestions made in a class lecture." Very stylized in presentation, the film begins with a shot of a fireworks pinwheel as a visual metaphor for emotional confusion. In subsequent shots we see a circle of mimes, featuring a teenage girl in a Janus mask, a boy in a football uniform pointing an accusatory finger, and a girl shaking her head no. The narrator describes how each of these represents a defense mechanism: "rationalization . . . projection . . . negativism." After a quick look at several other self-deluded teenagers, the camera again shows the pinwheel, then turns its attention to one story, that of Michael Squires, "pinwheeling through life, defenses held high, darting away from reality through the escape hatches." Discussing school activities, he is deliberately negative to draw attention to himself, so that others will coax him to change his mind. Within a few scenes at school and home, his actions illustrate the principles described during the first part. Without any sense of emotional resilience, he is devastated when he spills his drink in the soda fountain and many people laugh. Imagining hostility wherever he turns, he overhears a friend of his mother's talking negatively about a dog and imagines they are discussing him. It is only when he turns to his psychology teacher for help that he has any hope of improvement.  
Archival source: Indiana.

\**Facts About Your Figure*, Warner/Herbert Kerkow, 1951, 15 minutes.  
From "The Second Layer of Fashion," *Seventeen-at-School*, October 1956, page 15: "An analysis and classification of basic figure types, and a check-off list for correct fit, are included in the color-sound film (with accompanying teacher's guide) *FACTS ABOUT YOUR FIGURE*." Subtitled "Foundation Garments Are the Core of Your

Fashion Curriculum," this article's list of "Key Teaching Aids" also included a 16mm film from Perma-Lift called *Magic Makes the Difference*.  
Archival sources: None found.

*\*Families First*, RKO-Pathe/New York State Youth Commission, 1949, 17 minutes.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Portrays the relationship of the home to the future happiness of children, emphasizing the need of children for affective security, success, and new experiences. Dramatizes everyday happenings in the lives of two contrasting families to illustrate the causes of tension, frustration, and anti-social attitudes, and to show opposite results of affection, achievement, and harmonious personality adjustment."

Archival source: Northern Illinois University.

*Family Circles*, McGraw-Hill/National Film Board of Canada, 1949, 31 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Uses case studies to demonstrate the necessity for integrating the home-school relationship into a mutual undertaking in which each actively supports the work of the other. Pictures Freddy Price's dejection when his parents are too busy on Visitors' Day to show interest in his part of the school display. Shows how Shirley Jenkins' parents misunderstand her sensitivity to criticism. Pictures Tommy's need for emotional security in a home upset by quarrels. Concludes with Jimmy's circle, in which the whole family takes an interest in his school work and social adjustment problems." The film begins by spoofing the idealized traditional patriarchal family, identifying it with the previous century and showing it in the context of a stage performance, "a period piece of sentiment to be played broadly for laughs." Similarly it ridicules nostalgia for outdated social patterns, as expressed by a fussy old woman clutching a cat, who denounces "women in pants, doing men's work," and claiming that modern men are weak and the family is going to the dogs. The narrator asserts that the family's "great and enduring purpose" is the raising of children, and that the "strongest and most direct and profound influence" on them is the school. The characters Freddy, Shirley, Tommy, and Jimmy are all quite young, about 8. The adults pictured are often quite monstrous. The film is suspicious of bad teaching by parents and relatives, and decidedly hostile to the commercial advice-givers of publications and broadcasting. Most sympathetically portrayed are school teachers and the children themselves. Relenting a bit on parents who show themselves amenable to learning better child-rearing, the narrator speaks in the sentimental conclusion of the "image of the man he will become--that you have helped him to be. The child as he extends

himself has many needs." We see a montage of all the children in the film, and the narrator rhapsodizes further: "He will carry the knapsack of his past--his life shaped by the teacher, the growing family circle, at its center, the parent. In the image of his parents and of their circle, the child studies the image of his hopes."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Family Life*, Coronet, 1949, 12 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Florence M. King, Department of Home Economics, University of Illinois.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Describes how a family, once disorganized and hard pressed, begins to enjoy life through proper home management of schedules, responsibilities, privileges, and finances."

From the Indiana online catalog: "Explains how the Miller family manage to have the time and money 'to have fun.' They plan cooperatively their schedules, responsibilities, privileges, and finances in order to gain the happiness a family should have."

The film opens and closes with the Millers' reward for their new-found organizational ability, as they take a trip for the day to Crystal Lake. How did they manage that, with their history of housekeeping chaos and time mismanagement? The depths to which they had sunk is shown in a scene featuring a late dinner, unironed pants, and a broken tennis racket. The teenage son announces in dismay, "If this family were a business we'd be bankrupt." After that, they agree to share responsibilities, to be considerate of each other and each other's possessions, and to keep a family budget. Though they are working together, they also make a point of guarding each person's privacy, illustrated by the teenage daughter studying behind her closed door. When unexpected expenses come up, they decide together which planned purchases to defer. As the Millers come home happy from their family trip, the narrator asks the audience, "What can you do to help make your home a well-managed home?"

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

\**Family Life*, DeRochemont, 1957, 18 minutes.

From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 919: "Portrays the way in which family ties can be developed and maintained.

This is shown through the cooperation involved in daily tasks of survival, concern for one another, and family worship." Aimed at primary and intermediate grades.

Archival sources: None found.

*Family, The*, U.S. Army, 1951/2, 20 minutes.

Producer: Herbert Kerkow Productions, Inc. for the Army,  
"for use in occupied areas."

From the Indiana online catalog: "Presents a day in the life of an American family, with its needs, disagreements, and solutions. The grandmother is very much a part of the family, and each member has rights and responsibilities. Shows the importance of a feeling of belonging to a family, and that problems must be met by cooperation."

In addition to the grandmother, the household in this family consists of a working father, a housewife mother, a teenage daughter with a job in the soda fountain, and a pre-teen brother. The narrator indulges in many rhetorical flourishes in telling their story, e.g., "A family begins with children, and it grows strong with a sense of belonging." A tight budget creates some tension, as they make decisions to forego some purchases in order to afford others. "Sometimes the road to desire is blocked, but the desire remains." The teenage daughter's purchase of a prom dress precipitates a crisis. "Adolescence is a very special time, a groping time," the narrator tells us with no intention of a double entendre, "There is the need to be accepted, no matter what the cost." She buys the dress she sees illustrated in *Seventeen*, outraging her father who expected she would save the money for college. His anger drives her from the house. For a time, none of them knows where she is. A montage shows them telephoning, asking around to find her. "When a crisis comes, the family goes out to meet it." They find her sitting in a deserted stadium, and embrace her. The family reunites and father and daughter apologize to each other. Grandmother speaks the film's message: It's part of growing up. There are more problems today than in my time. Families have to get together as equals and talk things over. That's the only way we're going to get along." This attitude, promises the narrator, will give the family "strength for the future."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Farewell to Childhood*, Herbert Kerkow Productions for the National Association for Mental Health and the Mental Health Film Board of North Carolina, 1952, 23 minutes.

Script: Frank Beckwith. Direction: Julian Roffman.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Dramatizes the emotional conflicts within a teenage girl and her parents' bewilderment. When her mother consults the school counselor, in whom the girl has complete confidence, everyone concerned gains new insight into the problems of growing up."

The film emphasizes Susan's mood swings as she cries after being kissed at a party, gets scolded by her parents for coming home late, and loses the part she wanted in the

school play. Her parents are alternately angry and befuddled by her behavior, and a bit jealous of her reliance on Mrs. Soames, the counselor. Susan feels better after hears from her reassurance that "You're not a bit different from the rest of your crowd. Your classmates have the same sense of being at sea. Childhood is an island. You've left that behind. Adulthood is the mainland." Mrs. Soames also urges her to seek an accommodation with her parents: "Understand them as people. It's easier for you to change than it is for them." When her parents show up at Mrs. Soames's door, Susan's mother gets some private counseling as well.: "We must never be guilty of holding life back. . . . They all have to go through a period of struggle and revolt. . . . She needs her friends and her gang. You wouldn't have her unattractive, ignored. . . . Never was there a time when she needed you more. But keep hands off. Make her your friend." In the final scene, the mother gives Susan a dress to wear in the play, which causes the girl to exclaim in pleasure, "Oh, brother." Mother dislikes the use of slang and chides her. Susan wants to wear the straps off her shoulder, thinking the exposure will please her boyfriend. Both parents disapprove, the father saying "It's not supposed to be boy bait." Though the conflicts have not ended, the mood is much more pleasant, humorous, and mutually respectful than before. The narrator assures us that "the only answers are love and understanding." In the final shot, epitomizing her state of transition, we see Susan modeling the dress, straps pushed assertively off her shoulders. The camera tilts down as she raised hem reveals saddle shoes, making a strong contrast between the mature style of the dress and the typical teenage footwear.

Archival sources: Iowa State, Indiana.

*Feeling Left Out? Social Adjustment*, Coronet, 1951, 13 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Paul Landis, Washington State College.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Mike Hanlon wants to get into a high school clique which does not accept him. The coach notices Mike's efforts and suggests that he find other ways to make friends. Mike then learns to make friends with individuals and to join other groups. Soon the clique which rejected him does not seem so important."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Feeling of Hostility*, National Film Board of Canada, 1948, 27 minutes. Second in a series of mental health films.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Presents the case history of Claire, who develops a feeling of hostility because she does not receive affection and understanding

from her family. She compensates by achieving scholastic success, often at the expense of others. She improves under the guidance of an understanding teacher, but her capacity for love and friendship is impaired permanently."

Archival sources: Iowa State, Indiana.

*Feeling of Rejection*, National Film Board of Canada, 1947, 23 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Presents the case of Margaret, who, as a young adult, had not yet learned to make decisions independently. When she goes to a psychiatrist to learn the reasons for her headaches and tired feeling, she reveals that when a child she was afraid of losing the love of her parents and friends and, as a result, learned to acquiesce to all of their demands. When she realizes the cause of her trouble, she begins to assert herself and becomes well adjusted."

Archival sources: Iowa State, Indiana.

*Friendship Begins at Home*, Coronet, 1949, 16 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Dramatizes the story of Barry, a teenage boy who decides to stay at home while his family goes on a vacation. Pictures Barry as he becomes more and more lonesome and spurned; then shows him getting a job so he can make worthy use of his time. Shows the family returning home and Barry happily greeting them and appreciating them, even the brother with whom he had quarreled over a broken tennis racket."

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*Fun of Being Thoughtful, The*, Coronet, 1950, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Ernest M. Ligon, Ph.D., Director Character Research Project, Union College.

Opening with contrasting statements from teenagers, the film uses a narrator and the promise of happy families and fun dates as incentives for thoughtfulness. "Thoughtfulness? Everybody tells me to be more thoughtful. I'd like to be more thoughtful--if I only knew what it meant." Cut to another teen boy, walking to vending machine, puts in coin, pulls lever, turns to camera: "Why should I worry about being thoughtful? What'll it get me? In this world, it's every man for himself." Then he walks away with candy bar. The center of the film is the family of a teen-age brother and sister, Eddie and Jane. In the closing scene, their rewards for good behavior are realized: Jane suggests that she and Jimmy double date with him and Eileen. Eddie: "Yeah; it'd be swell that way." Their parents and Jane send him out to ask her. She goes to do homework. Parents rise from couch, the mother wearing an apron. "And we've got dishes to do. You know (as her husband



puts his arm around her) I think we've got a pretty nice family." She replies, "A nice thoughtful family."  
Archival source: Prelinger.

*Fun of Making Friends, The*, Coronet, 1950, 11 minutes.  
Educational collaborator: Elizabeth B. Carey, Ph.D.  
From the Iowa State online catalog: "Demonstrates the meaning and importance of friendship, and shows that making and keeping friends is a give and take process. A young boy named Joe sits inside his house, watches children play outside and thinks about what it would be like to have friends. He talks to his mother about how to make new friends and she explains four steps he can take to begin developing friendships. These steps include smiling and talking to people, finding good things in people, telling them about the good things and doing this all the time. Joe applies these steps at school and finds out that making friends can be fun and rewarding. Soon his new friends come over to play after school. He also finds that new friends can come to like old friends and that helping others with tasks is a good way to make friends."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Getting a Job*, Encyclopædia Britannica Films, 1954, 16 minutes.  
Collaborator, Harry D. Kitson, Ph.D. Hal Kopel, production.  
From the Iowa State online catalog: "Dramatized incidents are used in explaining the procedures through which various kinds of jobs are obtained. The steps for looking for a federal position, a temporary internship and an industrial job are shown. A high school senior learns the six main roads to employment: want ads, suggestions from friends, employment services, commercial employment agencies, civil service and personal applications. Under the guidance of the school counselor, he takes steps to obtain employment, including deciding the kind of work in which he is interested, analyzing his capabilities and investigating possible jobs. Describes the many aids to job-hunters, such as the personal history, letter of application and letter of recommendation. Gives suggestions for giving an interview, such as having good posture, dressing appropriately, and impressing all the members of the staff. Emphasizes the importance of careful planning to a successful job search."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Getting Along with Parents*, Encyclopædia Britannica Films, 1954, 14 minutes.  
Producer, Milan Herzog; collaborator, Carl R. Rogers, University of Chicago.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Six high school students plan to go to a night club after the junior prom dance. Describes five parental reactions to the plan showing how those reactions disclose varied family backgrounds and attitudes. Emphasizes that there are two sides to most problems and that both sides must have a chance to be heard."

From the Indiana online catalog: "Uses the home experiences of six high school youngsters to portray and analyze the conditions leading to conflict between parents and their adolescent offspring. Shows how a group plan to go to the "Blue Room" after the Junior Prom precipitates an argument in each home situation, and analyzes the reasons for the conflicting viewpoints of parents and youngsters. Encourages mutual understanding of each other's position and depicts the Smith's success with the family conference technique as suggestive of a way to improve relations."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Getting Ready Emotionally*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.

Number 6 in the "Are You Ready for Service?" series.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Explains how high school students can prepare themselves emotionally for serving in the military. Emotional adjustments to leaving home, accepting military discipline, and participating in a war are covered. Shows how self-discipline can be preparation for taking orders and taking on responsibility and self-reliance is preparation for being away from home. Demonstrates how understanding the facts about military service and seeking spiritual guidance can relieve tensions about going into combat."

Archival source: Iowa State.

*Getting Ready Morally*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.

Number 7 in the "Are You Ready for Service?" series.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Explains how high school students can prepare themselves morally for serving in the military. Shows how the experiences encountered while serving in the military and being away from home can be morally challenging. Suggests that young men get to know what kind of people they are and who they want to be before entering service. Covers the resources available in the military environment that can assist in living up to moral goals one sets for oneself, including men with similar morals, the recreational office, the library, writing home, the Red Cross and the chaplain. Also demonstrates ways high school students can practice living up to their morals at home, in their community and church."

Archival source: Iowa State.

*Getting Ready Physically*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.

Number 8 in the "Are You Ready for Service?" series.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Explains how high school students can prepare themselves physically for serving in the military. Encourages young men to use the physical training, health and recreational resources in their communities. Good health habits and participation in active sports can get people ready for the new physical demands in the service that could mean the difference between failure and success or life and death. Lays out a five step plan for preparation which includes the following directives: Determine the time the student has to get ready. Get a full health examination. Check the student's physical ability. Take care of any health problems. Work with a physical education professional to develop a program towards physical development."

Archival source: Iowa State.

\**Girls Beware*, Sid Davis Productions, 1961, 10 minutes.  
From the *Index to 16 mm Films*, page 1028: "Presents four case histories documenting the problems of young girls falling prey to molesters. Enumerates the dos and don'ts in the babysitting situation. Develops the ever-present problems of the young girl who allows herself to be picked up and who wishes to go with boys older than she."  
Archival source: listed in the Indiana catalog, but no print currently available.

*Glen Wakes Up*, Young America Films, 1950, 11 minutes.  
From the *Index to 16 mm Films*, page 1031: "Glen, a young boy, feels that no one likes him. One night a kind but mysterious Mr. X visits Glen in a dream. He tells Glen that he must learn to be a good citizen at home, at school, at play, and in his community. The next day Glen learns that following Mr. X's suggestions makes his life much more pleasant."  
Archival source: Prelinger.

*Going Steady?*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Marie and Jeff are confronted with the problem of whether or not they should go steady. They have been dating only each other for some time, though they had not planned to go steady. When they individually realize that their friends consider them to be going steady, each ponders the advisability of it. They discuss the pros and cons with their parents, but the answer to the problem is left to the audience."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

\**Good Grooming*, Ponds/J. Walter Thompson, 1945, 30 minutes.  
From "Reviews of Health Films," *Film News*, vol. 7, no. 4, January 1946, page 16: "This film will be valuable to show to high school girls in their Hygiene classes as it brings out points which we stress in these classes, such as elimination of nervous habits (nail-biting, chewing pencils, toying with beads, etc.); cleanliness as the

basis of good grooming; moderation in the use of cosmetics; good posture as an aid to attractive appearance; proper food and amount of sleep as necessities to improvement in appearance, and the importance of selecting clothes and hair style according to the occasion, the type of face, figure and age. The use of the actual school scenes with student carrying out the action makes the film particularly appealing to high school girls. . . .

"[But]...the lecture method of carrying the salient facts was overdone, and the introductory scene of the engagement shower was slow in action and unnecessary to the real educational value of the film. Also, the lecturer failed to demonstrate good posture herself in the school auditorium scenes." Reviewed by Louisa May Greeley, Morris High School, New York, NY.

Archival sources: none found.

*Good Grooming for Girls*, Coronet, 1956, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator, Elizabeth S. Avery.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "A how-to film. Good grooming for girls is achieved by a carefully followed routine--a well-planned and cared-for wardrobe, attention to hair, nails, teeth, personal daintiness, good posture and proper diet and rest."

Essentially a remake of *Personal Health for Girls* (1952). Described in Chapter Three of this dissertation on page 153.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Good Looks*, Dial Soap (Armour and Company) and Sutherland Educational Films, 1961, 17 minutes.

Produced and directed by John Sutherland.

Art director, Robert Dranko; photography, Winton C. Hoch; music, Jack Fascinato; editor, Charles Bordwell; production supervisor, Howard Roessel; screenplay by Anthony Lawrence.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Presents to teen-age girls and boys facts about good grooming and personal care, discussing general cleanliness and the care of hands, hair, and complexion. Explains to girls the proper and limited use of makeup and includes tips about clothes for boys and girls."

Archival source: Iowa State.

*Good Loser, The*, Young America Films, 1953, 14 minutes.

Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Presents the case of a high school student who is a consistent winner of contests and accepts victory as a matter of course, but can not take a loss without displaying feelings of resentment. Prescribes discussion of the problems

attendant with victory and defeat and explains how to accept defeat gracefully."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Kansas, Prelinger.

*Good Sportsmanship*, Coronet, 1950, 10 minutes.  
Educational collaborator, Karl W. Bookwalter, Ed.D.  
From the Iowa State online catalog: "Explains the meaning of good sportsmanship and its importance in all phases of our daily lives. Shows a number of examples of good sportsmanship in action. These examples demonstrate three principles of being a good sport, including playing fair, playing the best for the team and taking the results of an interaction well. Taking turns, respecting others, helping out friends and thinking of what is best for the group all play an important part in displaying good sportsmanship. Whether at home, at school or on the playing field, being a good sport will make people feel better about themselves and enhance interpersonal relations."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Good Table Manners*, Coronet, 1951, 10 minutes.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Tells the story of a 14-year-old boy who meets himself as a young man of 21. The boy is reluctant to attend a party because he is uncertain of his manners, but his older self teaches him the fundamentals of good table manners and impresses him with the fact that as an adult he will constantly be concerned with making a good impression. The boy learns quickly and attends the party."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Gossip*, Sid Davis Productions, 1953, 11 minutes.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Illustrates the detrimental effects of rumors through the experience of Jean, a newcomer in a high school, who becomes the victim of a malicious rumor started by Jack, her first date. After suffering considerable unhappiness, she is again accepted by her friends when her parents and the principal get Jack to confess and to tell the facts."  
Archival sources: Oklahoma City Public Schools. Though it is listed in the Indiana catalog, no print of the film is available there.

\**Gossip, The*, Young America Films/Centron Corp., 1955, 14 minutes.  
Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.  
From the OCLC online catalog: "Through the story of two friends in high school, points out the dangers of gossip, as a basis for group discussion of the problem."  
Archival sources: None found.

*Great American Student, The*, Coronet, 1978, 18 minutes.

Executive producer, Bill Walker; writer, creative supervisor, Mel Waskin; editing, selection, Bob Gronowski; music, Chuck Berry, Target Sound.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Uses scenes and sequences from withdrawn Coronet films to present a nostalgic profile of the 'great American student' as he (not she) appeared in educational media of the 1950's. This composite student is white, clean-cut, and suburban; solves his problems in less than ten minutes (with the help of dad, coach, or unseen voice-over); and says 'swell' a lot."

Archival sources: None found. Print in possession of author.

\**Griper, The, Young America Films, 1953, 12 minutes.*

Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.

From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 1055: "Deals with the problem of a high-school boy who is a chronic complainer in his school group and shows examples of his home life along with the effects of his destructive criticisms in school activities. Uses trick photography to picture the boy's conscience and to give insight into his inner thoughts. Contrasts his behavior with that of a popular classmate who has a reputation for cooperativeness at the school and leaves the question of how to help the griper open for discussion by the audience."

Archival sources: None found.

H--*The Story of a Teenage Drug Addict*--see *Story of a Teen Age Drug Addict*.

*Habit Patterns*, McGraw-Hill, 1954, 15 minutes.

Psychology for Living series. Correlated with Herbert Sorenson and Marguerite Malm, *Psychology for Living*. Produced for McGraw-Hill Book Company by Knickerbocker Productions, Inc. Features same narrator as *Facing Reality and Toward Emotional Maturity*.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Illustrates the social and personal advantages resulting from the formation of orderly and systematic daily habits, by contrasting the purposeful life of a girl who has formed these habits with the unhappy and inadequate existence of one who has not. In one day, these two girls participate in the same activities and have the same opportunities. Helen wakes up when her alarm goes off, has everything she needs for her morning routine accessible and has time to have a healthy breakfast with her parents. Barbara, on the other hand, turns off her alarm and goes back to sleep. By the time her mom wakes her up, she is already running late. In addition, she can not find her hairbrush, the clothes she has to wear for the day are dirty and she hasn't time for a healthy breakfast. She arrives late to school disorganized mentally and

physically. Both girls are asked to attend a social gathering after school. Helen is well prepared to make a good impression as a result of her organized design for living. She has made it a habit to look nice everyday, have pastimes that she can talk about and demonstrate appropriate social skills and manners. Barbara, however is distracted by her dirty fingernails, the spot on her sweater and her messy hair. Not only is she not paying attention, but when she tries to contribute to the conversation, she has little to talk about, utilizes poor social skills and lacks appropriate manners. She finds that since she has not been in the habit of being orderly and socially skilled, she is not comfortable in a social setting. Barbara is devastated by her performance that afternoon and makes an effort to develop an appropriate network of patterns that will allow her to be accepted by society."

Described in detail in Chapter Three of this dissertation, pp. 153-154.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger, *Our Secret Century* CD-ROM, vol. 3.

*\*Heredity and Family*, McGraw-Hill, 1960, 9 minutes.

Psychology for Living series.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "This dramatized study of a high school student demonstrates the fact that individuals are joint products of heredity and environment. The roles of heredity and environment, how they mesh in actual living, voluntary and involuntary actions, and the physical effects of emotion are illustrated."

Archival source: Iowa State.

*High School Prom*, Coronet, 1957, 15 minutes.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Four students prepare for a high school prom. Shows etiquette of asking for a date, making introductions, assuming responsibility for the family car and its occupants."

Archival source: Indiana.

*High School: Your Challenge*, Coronet, 1952, 13 minutes.

Educational collaborator, Herold C. Hunt, Ed.D.,

Superintendent of the Chicago school system.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Explains the importance of a high school education and the advantages of taking part in extracurricular activities. Emphasizes the practical value of staying in school in finding employment, preparing for a professional career, and enjoying life. A young man receives his high school yearbook and thinks about how it reflects the valuable experience he has gained. As he visits his counselor, he summarizes the kinds of guidance offered about employment, courses and activities. He remembers his summer job where he discovered that to take positions of

leadership in the work force, he needs to complete his education. As a teacher signs his book, he thinks about how she helped him to get involved in extracurricular activities. Shows that people need the courses, activities, advice and social opportunities that are gained through a high school education."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*\*Home Economics Story, The*, Iowa State University, 1950, 20 minutes.

A recruiting film, designed to interest high school girls in studying in the Home Economics program at Iowa State.

Archival source: Iowa State.

*Homework: Studying on Your Own*, Coronet, 1953, 10 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Harry W. Porter, Associate Professor of Education, Stanford University.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Demonstrates how to overcome different types of obstacles to study and how to work more independently. Stresses the necessity of budgeting time and applying oneself to his work. Three high school students use a film to illustrate their individual problem situations and to offer their respective solutions."

A principal character is a football player who wears a letter sweater with an "Illinois State Champions" emblem prominently displayed.

Archival source: Indiana.

*How Do You Do?*, Young America Films, 1946, 15 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Points out how we have more enjoyment out of life by being sure of ourselves in social situations, and demonstrates the rules to be observed in one such situation--introducing and meeting people."

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*How Do You Know It's Love?*, Coronet, 1950, 14 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Reuben Hill, Research Professor in Family Life, University of North Carolina.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "The purpose of this film is to give young people a basis for thinking clearly about 'being in love'. The film explains that there are certain factors that can help you judge whether or not love is mature, and shows that love grows through typical stages."

From the Indiana online catalog: "Nora returns from a date, moved by Jack's overtures of love but puzzled by her own feelings. Her mother, who had been in love several times before marrying, is able to distinguish better between the types of immature love that she describes to Nora. Jack's older brother, Bob, remembers how much in love Jack has also been with Betty, Mary, and Alice. On a double-date with Bob and his fiancée, Jack and Nora observe the seriousness of the engaged couple's



conversation and the ease with which they discuss such fundamental issues as children, money, and religion." Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*\*How Do You Know It's Love?*, Coronet, 1960, 14 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Reuben Hill. A re-make of the 1950 film of the same title.

From the OCLC online catalog: "The purpose of this film is to give young people a basis for thinking clearly about "being in love". The film explains that there are certain factors that can help you judge whether or not love is mature, and shows that love grows through typical stages."

Archival sources: none found.

*How Friendly are You?*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Introduces Ray in a number of social situations that are used to trace the growth in his understanding and practice of friendliness. Shows how he misses opportunities to make friendships by snubbing a new boy in the neighborhood, suspecting evil in other people, and being selfish. Demonstrates then how Ray corrects his social errors after his older brother, Phil, talks to Ray about the responsibilities of friendship and Ray begins to try harder to make people like him."

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*How Honest Are You?*, Coronet, 1950, 14 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Bob returns to the basketball locker room for the whistle needed in practice. Don sees Bob searching Ben's pockets and tells the gang that Bob is a thief. At skill practice Coach Barker, in questioning the boys, brings them to realize that jumping at conclusions is dangerous, and that good intentions are not the same as truth."

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*How Much Affection?*, McGraw-Hill, 1958, 20 minutes.

Marriage and Family Living series (McGraw-Hill Book Co./Crawley Films)

Correlated with the textbook by Paul H. Landis, *Your Marriage And Family Living*. Script collaborator, Lillian Bilkey.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Dramatizes a viewpoint regarding young people and their control and handling of affection during courtship. Contrasts the relationship of Jack and Mary, who deal successfully (but not easily) with their feelings of affection, with that of Fred and Eileen, victims of an unhappy, socially necessary marriage." Another synopsis from the Iowa State online catalog: "How much affection should there be between a couple that is going steady? How far can young people go in petting and still stay within the

bounds of social mores and personal standards? The carefully presented drama of this film sets the stage for constructive and frank discussion of these and related questions of vital importance to young people today." Described in Chapter Five of this dissertation, pp. 254-257.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*How to Be Well Groomed*, Coronet, 1948, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Don and Sue show how they keep themselves well groomed throughout the school week and for their Friday-night dates. They give attention to their health, posture, and cleanliness and learn to take good care of their clothes. Emphasizes the importance of establishing a daily routine."

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*How to Concentrate*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Compares concentration on a basketball game and on a history textbook. Suggests that deciding on the questions that the text should answer will help one concentrate. A student demonstrates that after a period of concentration, it is good to relax, look out the window, and stretch. Uses split-screen pictures to illustrate the principles of concentration."

Archival source: Indiana.

*How to Develop Interest*, Coronet, 1950, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator, Herbert Sorenson.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Defines interest as an attitude of willingness to focus attention on a particular subject, and shows how to develop new interests in studies and in community activities. Points out that interests are stimulated by increasing knowledge and success, and that the achievement of more knowledge in a field is based upon the careful and systematic relating of new facts and information to past experiences."

Archival source: California University of Pennsylvania.

*How to Get Cooperation*, Coronet, 1950, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator, Paul H. Landis, Ph.D.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Demonstrates methods of securing cooperation necessary for group action. Details the objectives of cooperation. Shows typical situations requiring cooperation within a group dynamic, including the organization of a high school film projecting club and a community that needed its road paved. Presents basic techniques for achieving the assistance of others, including appealing to individuals' interests, offering a service in return, convincing people that they really want to help and demonstrating the benefit of working together towards a

common goal. Explains how desired ends can be reached more easily with the cooperation of others."  
Archival source: Iowa State.

*How to Give and Take Instructions*, Coronet, 1951, 10 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Dramatizes the value of knowing how to give instructions, and enumerates the steps as Jack works with committee members to plan a class picnic. Bill's difficulties with transportation are solved with a special map of the route, which clarifies his instructions for reaching the picnic."

Archival source: Indiana.

*How to Judge Authorities*, Coronet, 1948, 10 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Bill learns from his school counselor how to compare the two authorities on which he is basing his choice for or against preparing for the law profession. He weighs a local lawyer's enthusiasm against a vocational guidance specialist's discouraging statements. He considers external evidence of authority, internal evidence, and his own experience. His decision is not revealed."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*How to Judge Facts*, Coronet, 1948, 10 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "When a rumor that the school's new motion picture projector is to be paid for from the football funds becomes widespread, a school reporter learns to judge facts. Discusses irrelevant facts, false analogies, false assumptions, and traditional beliefs as they influence one's judgment of the facts."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*How to Keep a Job*, Coronet, 1949, 10 minutes.

Educational collaborator, John N. Given.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Shows that success in a job is dependent upon more than the selection of a suitable vocation, a right attitude toward work itself, or the wise selection of a particular position. Points out that dependability, willingness to work, cooperation, initiative, and loyalty are elements essential to success."

Archival sources: Iowa State.

*\*How to Raise a Boy*, Dupont, 1955, 10 minutes.

Archival source: Iowa State.

*How to Remember*, Coronet, 1950, 10 minutes.

Educational Collaborator: Carter Davidson, President of Union College.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows a boy trying to memorize a poem and listening to a voice as it tells him

the steps in remembering: understanding, getting an over-all view, visualizing, forming associations, picking out key ideas, and repeating. These steps are recorded by a self-propelled typewriter."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*How to Say No (Moral Maturity)*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.  
Educational collaborator: Evelyn M. Duvall, Ph.D.,  
Consultant, National Council on Family Relations.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "A small group of high school students discusses the problem of saying "no" without losing friends. How to refuse a drink or a cigarette and how to discourage love-making without hurting someone's feelings are included in the examples. Some of the suggestions are: distracting the attention, being polite but firm, and planning ahead to avoid situations in which "no" is the only satisfactory answer."

Discussed in Chapter Five of this dissertation, pp. 240-241, 243, and in Chapter Six, pp. 279-281.  
Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*How to Succeed in School*, Young America Films, 1956, 11 minutes. A Centron Production.  
From the OCLC online catalogue: "Discusses skills and attitudes that will help the student succeed in school, emphasizing the need of planning and scheduling of time and effort."  
Archival source: Iowa State.

*How to Think*, Coronet, 1950, 14 minutes.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Follows Dick as he tries to figure out how to get a safety sticker for his car so that he can keep his summer job of delivering groceries. After following irrelevant lines of thought, he begins to concentrate. He is pictured as he defines his problem, applies logic to it, and draws conclusions. He also uses observation, imagination, and memory to complete his thinking on the problem. Shows Dick with his safety sticker working at his job."  
Archival source: Indiana.

*How to Write Your Term Paper*, Coronet, 1948, 10 minutes.  
Educational collaborator, William G. Brink, Professor of Education, Northwestern University.  
From the Iowa State online catalog: "The preparation of a high school term paper. Details the five basic steps: choosing a topic, gathering information, organizing the information, outlining, and writing."  
From the Indiana online catalog: "A high school boy prepares to write a term paper by making a check list of things to do and possible topics for the paper. He uses library facilities and direct observation to gather

information, organizes it by means of an outline, and receives favorable comment on the finished paper." The entire film is shot from the point of view of the student researching and writing the paper. The camera acts as his eyes.  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, University of North Texas.

\**How We Cooperate*, Coronet, 1950, 10 minutes.  
From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 1137: "The necessity of cooperative purpose, effort, and planning is explored in this film. Two boys learn what cooperation is and the value to be derived from it."  
From *The Educational Screen*, vol. 29, April 1950, page 180: "Current Materials. . . . 'How We Cooperate'--shows what cooperation is, the value to be derived from it, and some of the most important 'settings' in which we should cooperate; for intermediate and senior high levels."  
Archival sources: none found.

*Howard*, National Film Board of Canada, 1957, 27 minutes.  
Don Haldane, director; Gordon Burwash, script; Julian Biggs, producer.  
From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 1138: "Portrays the inner conflicts of a teenager faced with the problem of making his first big decision, and accepting the responsibility for it. Howard must decide between his own desire to go on a summer camping trip in opposition to his parents' wishes or stay at home and earn money for college. Howard's final choice is not revealed."  
The lure of the trip includes strong rebellious overtones. Howard's friend George acts as a Kerouacian pied piper, urging him to go on the road. Howard's girlfriend Mary epitomizes bourgeois conventionality, reading books on etiquette and poise, and calls George a "creepy Bohemian."  
Archival source: Iowa State.

*Improve Your Personality*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.  
Educational Collaborator: Clifford R. Adams, Professor of Psychology, Pennsylvania State College.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Presents examples of how personality influences behavior. Bill learns how to get his mother's permission to use the family car, Marie learns to win the interest of her teasing brother, and together they learn to help put others at ease at a dance."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, West Chester (PA).

*In Time of Trouble*, McGraw-Hill, 1954, 14 minutes.  
Correlated with *Marriage for Moderns*, by Henry A. Bowman.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "As one of a series based on *Marriage for Moderns* by Henry A. Bowman, the film pictures Mrs. Denkman at her minister's office asking for

help for her husband, in order to save their marriage. She discloses that her husband has started drinking. Recognizing that Mrs. Denkman, more than her husband, needs the help, the minister convinces her to let her husband share more in family responsibilities and "get involved in the marriage." With the immediate crisis over, the minister soliloquizes that, in the future, Mrs. Denkman will probably be more able to face her real problem."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Is This Love?*, Crawley Films and McGraw-Hill, 1957, 15 minutes.

Correlated with *Your Marriage and Family Living*, by Paul H. Landis, State Professor of Sociology, the State College of Washington.

Script collaborator, Lillian Bilkey, Associate Professor, State University Teachers College, Plattsburg, N.Y.

Marriage and family living series.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Contrasts the romances of two college roommates. Shows how one of the girls is impulsive and emotional while the other hesitates to consider marriage until she has solid proof of her love through successive stages of dating, courtship, going steady, and engagement."

Intended audience: High school.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*It Takes All Kinds*, McGraw-Hill, 1950, 20 minutes.

Correlated with *Marriage for Moderns*, by Henry A. Bowman.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Designed to be used with a marriage text. Emphasizes that marriage partners must complement each other and that traits of personality appear in moments of stress, and pictures a series of young people reacting in a moment of stress. Points out the different types; then shows these same people in situations involving a member of the opposite sex. Analyzes personality traits in regard to mate selection and circumstances of successful marriage."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Jealousy*, McGraw-Hill, 1954, 16 minutes.

Correlated with *Marriage for Moderns*, by Henry A. Bowman.

An Affiliated Film production; written and directed by Irving Jacoby.

Photographed and edited by Richard Leacock; production assistant, Judson Gooding; educational consultant, Henry A. Bowman, Ph.D.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Dramatizes incidents from the life of a young married couple which show the unfortunate results of a lack of faith and understanding in a marriage. The wife waits for her husband to come home from work. He is late again, as he has been throughout the recent past. When he comes home, he

explains that he was working late with his partner at a grill in town on a project that has been taking up a lot of his time. His wife does not believe that he was working and accuses him of cheating. She then examines his handkerchief and finds lipstick smudges on it. Jumping to the conclusion that he has been with another woman, she throws him out. After a short time, the husband's partner calls to talk to him and mentions to her that they were together at the grill and that the lipstick had been used in an experiment. The wife, finding that her jealousy is unfounded, realizes that she had extended her own thoughts of infidelity to her husband. She then goes downtown to find her husband and bring him back. She finds him in the grill, but the woman whose lipstick was used in the experiment is also there and she doesn't want to make a scene. Thinking that she might have driven her husband into the arms of the other woman, she returns home, vowing that she will believe in him, in herself and work to keep jealousy out of their marriage. Soon after she decides this, her husband returns home. Stresses the importance of continuous self-appraisal, and indicates that a basic change of attitude is often necessary in order to uproot a tendency to distort and dramatize insignificant conjectures."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Joe and Roxy*, National Film Board of Canada, 1957, 30 minutes.

Producer, Julian Briggs; director, Don Haldane; scenario, Gordon Burwash; photographer, John Foster; film editor, Donald Ginsberg.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "A drama about adolescence dealing with teen-agers in love. Tells about a fifteen-year old girl, the product of a broken home, who tries to keep her romantic illusions alive against her mother's worry and disappointment in life, and about a sixteen-year old boy who turns unsuccessfully to his father, a man of narrow mind and dulled sensibilities, for help in deciding upon his future. Contrasts the teen-ager's need for absolute rules with the confusion of adult standards."

Archival source: Iowa State.

*Junior Prom*, Simmel-Meservey Instructional Films, 1946, 22 minutes.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Through the experiences of two high school couples who have a date for their junior prom, gives pointers on the selection of proper dress, carrying on a conversation, making introductions, and general date conduct."

Archival sources: Prelinger, University of North Texas, West Chester (Pennsylvania).

*Katie's Lot*, George K. Arthur (Go Pictures), 1961, 18 minutes.

Written and produced by Edward Schreiber, based on material by Buffy Schreiber. Directed by Nicholas Webster.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Vignettes of a suburban tomboy who likes horses. Sometimes she dreams she is a horse, or is riding a horse, as she prances around a woodsy lot near home. After several contests of strength with a boy, Katie decides to release her imaginary horse and accept a party dress."

Described in detail in Chapter Four of this dissertation, pp. 210-211.

Archival sources: None found. Print in possession of author.

*Keep Up with Your Studies*, Coronet, 1949, 10 minutes.

Educational collaborator, William G. Brink, Professor of Education, Northwestern University.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Emphasizes the importance of doing school assignments regularly and of developing a system of orderly work habits. Presents suggestions on scheduling study time and organizing study materials. Discusses the reasons students might not be able to keep up with their studies, including choosing poor places to study, being unorganized and not making use of study time given in class. Suggests ways in which a person can develop good study skills, such as studying each subject every day, keeping track of assignments, planning time for all assignments and having study materials, dictionaries and sharp pencils ready. Shows that students who develop good study habits will get more out of studying, receive better grades and have more time for recreation."

Archival source: Iowa State.

*Kid Brother*, New York City Mental Health Film Board, 1957, 25 minutes.

From *Educational Screen and Audio-Visual Guide*, vol. 36, May 1957, page 262: "Kid Brother [Mental Health Film Board, NYC] . . . Explores some of the hidden emotional forces that lie behind excessive drinking. Reveals that behavior problems which appear on the surface to be concerned with alcoholism may, in young people, be an expression of the many difficulties that adolescents face in adapting to the world around them. The film also depicts the social pressures that are put on young people to take a drink--both by their own group and by adult example."

Archival source: Iowa State.

*Kindness to Others*, Coronet, 1956, 11 minutes.

Collaborator, Marvin D. Glock, Professor of Educational Psychology, Cornell University.



From the OCLC online catalog: "The classmates of a boy who becomes ill and is absent from school remember the boy's kindness to his family, to his playmates and to animals. They discover a special way in which to be kind to him, and find the pleasure that comes from practicing kindness."

Intended audience: primary grades.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Last Date*, Wilding Picture Productions for Lumbermen's Mutual Casualty Co., 1950, 19 minutes.

From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 1270: "Story of four teen-agers whose lives are tragically affected by 'hot-rod' cars and reckless driving. Makes the point that both parents and young people must face and solve the problem."

Described in detail in Chapter Three of this dissertation pp. 141-144.

Archival source: Prelinger.

*Law and Social Controls*, Coronet, 1949, 10 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Illustrates the value of law and social controls. The situation of a teenage group's trying to decide on a proper closing time for their canteen shows the place of custom, the moral code, and law in regulating society."

Archival source: Indiana.

*\*Learning to Study*, Encyclopædia Britannica Films, 1954, 14 minutes.

Archival source: Iowa State.

*\*Let's Give a Tea*, Simmel-Meservey, 1946, 22 minutes.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Describes in story form the appropriate conduct for tea time--accepted procedures of dress, invitations, guest lists, etc. Shows how to arrange a tea table, including the selection and placing of the cloth, centerpiece, candles, tea service, cups, spoons, napkins and food. Points out that rules of etiquette are practical and provide consideration for the guests."

Archival source: Northern Illinois University.

*\*Letter from an American Schoolboy*, U.S. Department of State and United World Films, 1952, 27 minutes.

From *Audio-Visual Guide*, September 1953, vol. 20, #1, page 18, in Robert E. Schreiber, "New Learning Aids" column:

"Guidance Films: . . . Letter from an American Schoolboy . . .  
. A 14-yr.-old boy writes to a student in another country and describes his life in Conway, N.H."

Archival sources: none found.

*Make Way for Youth*, Inform/Association Films; Youth Division of the National Social Welfare Assembly, 1947, 22 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "A community doctor tells the story of how the accidental death of a high school boy during a street brawl inspired the boy's father to launch a campaign for improved recreational facilities. Members of the newly organized Youth Council renovate a city-owned warehouse for their headquarters and later plant trees where the city dump was located. Adults are also shown becoming interested in each other's problems."

*Make Your Own Decisions*, Coronet, 1951, 10 minutes.

From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 1351: "Pictures Jane's frustration as a party invitation tempts her to neglect her homework. Points out that making decisions is a skill that everyone must learn for mature and successful living. Working out her problems, Jane gains confidence in her ability and learns to break down each problem into the following steps: identifying the choice, learning what information is needed, deciding, and acting."

Archival sources: Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Make-up*, Robert Edmonds and International Film Bureau, 1961, 11 minutes.

Narrated by Helen Ross.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Depicts and discusses steps in the care of the complexion and application of make-up, including proper soap-and-water cleansing, application of powder, use of lipstick brush and shaping of the lips, and eye make-up to achieve a natural effect. Uses three teenage models to demonstrate the final effects."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Making a Decision in the Family*, National Film Board of Canada, 1957, 8 minutes.

Director: Julia Murphy; Producer: Nicholas Balla; Writing: Gudrun Parker; Photography: Robert Humble.

SERIES: What's your opinion?

From the OCLC online catalog: "There is a clash of wills when a teenager declares her preference for going to a gathering of her friends rather than to a family party, as her parents insist. The question of how the parents might have handled the situation is left up to the audience."

Archival source: Iowa State.

*Making Friends*, Encyclopædia Britannica, 1954, 11 minutes.

Collaborator: Rose H. Alschuler.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Deals with the problems of making satisfying friendships. Points out the importance of friendship, and mentions the varying degrees of friendship which may exist. Indicates the qualities of a good friend and describes some barriers to

friendship. Encourages the audience to cultivate friendships by overcoming shyness, helping others, and participating in activities."  
The characters portrayed are all teenagers.  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Making the Most of School*, Coronet, 1948, 11 minutes.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Carl learns, by observing his classmates in the science laboratory, that he is not getting the most benefit possible from the time he spends in school. He compiles a list of opportunities he has been overlooking and resolves to begin his new program immediately."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Making the Most of Your Face*, Coronet, 1958, 10 minutes.  
From the OCLC online catalog: "Explains that beauty begins with certain basic health habits--proper diet, rest, and good skin care. Points out the importance of hair styling and the careful use of makeup, stressing that hair styles should be selected on the basis of what is best for the individual and that lipstick, eye makeup, and powder should be used sparingly."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Southwest Missouri State University.

*Marriage for Moderns series*. McGraw-Hill Text Films.  
Coordinated with Henry A. Bowman's book with the same title. 1950: *Choosing for Happiness, It Takes All Kinds, Marriage Today, This Charming Couple*. 1954: *In Time of Trouble, Jealousy, Who's Right?*

*Marriage is a Partnership*, Coronet, 1951, 16 minutes.  
Collaborator: Lemo D. Rockwood, Ph.D., Professor of Family Relationships, New York State College of Home Economics at Cornell University.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows flashbacks of the first year of Dotty and Pete's marriage. Pictures some of the adjustments they had to make, such as the budgeting of their money. Then describes the 'in-law' problems each of them had, and shows how they finally discussed the situation objectively, and came to a mutual decision to move to another town in order to be independent."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Marriage Today*, McGraw-Hill, 1950, 22 minutes.  
Correlated with Henry A. Bowman, *Marriage for Moderns*.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Designed to be used with a marriage text. Shows how two young couples have built lasting marriages by a clear analysis of their mutual aims and cooperation in achieving them. One couple, university graduates, have many interests in common. The

other couple, a business man and a teacher, center their mutual affection in their son."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Meaning of Adolescence, The*, McGraw-Hill, 1952, 16 minutes. Part of the *Adolescent Development* series, correlated with the book by Elizabeth B. Hurlock. Produced by Crawley Films.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Explains the meaning of adolescence and compares the process of initiating youth into adulthood in a desert tribe to the gradual maturation of American youth over a period of about six years of relative inactivity and inadequate preparation. Outlines the problems of Alex and Joan in gaining physical, social, sexual, religious, and moral adjustment and illustrates how the adolescent meets his needs by securing his place in a circle of intimate acquaintances."

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger, University of North Texas.

*Meaning of Engagement, The*, Coronet, 1952, 13 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Tells the story of Tom and Rosemary, who plan to be married a month after their engagement. As they discuss their plans with their parents and each other, they learn the value of appraising many of their qualities and characteristics before marriage. Ends with discussion questions about the purpose and length of engagement."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Meeting the Needs of Adolescents*, McGraw-Hill, 1952, 19 minutes.

Part of the *Adolescent Development* series, correlated with the book by Elizabeth B. Hurlock. Produced by Crawley Films.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows how a family endeavors to meet the changing needs of their two children, seventeen and fourteen years old. Depicts the social, educational, and religious life of the seventeen-year-old and the group activities of the fourteen-year-old as they make adjustments with their increasing physical and mental powers. Suggests that secure family relationships and gradually increasing independence provide the basis for mature attitudes in adulthood."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger .

*Mental Health: Keeping Mentally Fit*, Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, 1952, 12 minutes.

Associate producer, Hal Kopel; collaborator, David Slight.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Describes the attributes of good mental health, discusses its importance to the individual and to society, and explains

some of the basic rules for improving and maintaining good mental health."

From the Indiana online catalog: "Defines good mental health, describes its attributes, and emphasizes our steps in acquiring, maintaining, and improving mental health: express emotions naturally, respect yourself, respect others, and solve problems as they arise. Stresses the importance of discussing problems with someone, and briefly shows symptoms of mental ill-health."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Mickey's Big Chance*, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 1952, 17 minutes.

Producer: Frederick K. Rockett Company.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows Mickey, a junior high school student, taking a driver training course, observing good and bad driving habits, and studying the AAA text on driving, in order to drive his brother's car while he is away with the Air Force. Animation illustrates friction points, reaction time, and the danger zone of visibility."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Mike Makes His Mark*, National Education Association, 1955, 29 minutes.

Producer, J. P. Nicholson; director, Irving Rusinow; writer, Jarvis Couillard; composer of music, Norman Lloyd; cameraman, Pinckney Ridgell.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Dramatizes the story of how a teen-aged boy, who questions why he should stay in school and learn what the teachers try to teach him, makes up his own mind about his future after a good school program gives him new incentives and interests."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, many others.

*Military Life and You*, Coronet, 1952, 11 minutes.

Number 11 in the "Are You Ready for Service?" series.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "The similarities and differences between military and civilian life are discussed. Military discipline, the most typical difference, is interpreted as an extension of the self-discipline of civilian life. Begins by discussing how, while drilling is no longer necessary training for marching into battle, the discipline and working together involved in marching in formation prepares service men for acting reliably in battle. Compares the everyday self-discipline of getting up on time, eating healthy food and getting chores done with the more demanding discipline in the service. Encourages students to observe that they follow rules, regulations and orders everyday, a perspective that will help them better understand military discipline. Suggests that becoming disciplined is important in becoming an adult. Explains

why high school students need to accept the necessary discipline which is a part of military service."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Mind Your Manners*, Coronet, 1953, 10 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows a high school boy and his sister using good manners at home and on the way to school. Illustrates the correct way to answer the telephone, proper behavior on a bus, the importance of promptness and attention in class, and good manners while driving. Emphasizes how manners determine the impression which people gain when they observe behavior."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*\*Miss Northside*, North Division High School (Milwaukee, Wisconsin), 1950, running time unknown.

From *The Educational Screen*, vol. 29, September 1950, page 313: "Film News Notes . . . North Division High School (Milwaukee, Wisconsin) teen-agers recently attended the 'world premiere' of their own color film, **Miss Northside**. The all-school production is the story of a sloppy Joan and an over-glamorized Doris who learn that 'to be treated like a lady, you must look and act like a lady.' Miss Henryka Chwalek, dean of girls who wrote the script and directed the actors, describes the movie as a behavior-attitude film for the benefit of teen-agers."

Archival sources: None found.

*More Dates for Kay*, Coronet, 1952, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Illustrates the advice a high school girl gets from her married sister on how to have more dates. Suggests being around where the crowd usually gathers, and making an effort to be helpful and interested in others. Recommends cleanliness, good taste, and good grooming, and suggests that it is wise to keep up social activities with other girls."

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*Most for Your Money*, The McGraw-Hill, 1955, 13 minutes.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Points out the importance of thinking and comparing before buying. To illustrate principles of sound consumer buying, shows how a high school girl and her brother shop for a sweater and a power saw respectively. The girl sets out to find a sweater for a date and does little thinking ahead of time. She wanders through most of the stores in her town until closing time when she makes a quick decision. After she arrives at home, she realizes that her purchase is impractical and not at all what she wanted. Her brother, on the other hand, does some research before purchasing a power saw. Both teenagers then utilize a variety of resources to shop wisely. Outlines steps to becoming a wise consumer, including evaluating what is needed, looking in advertisements and catalogs,

consulting experts, reading consumer periodicals, and inspecting labels. Encourages consumers to know what they want before they shop and to be courteous to salespeople when returning items."

*Name Unknown*, Sid Davis Productions, 1951, 10 minutes.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Describes several cases of teenagers who were the victims of sex crimes. Judge William B. McKesson, of the Los Angeles Juvenile Court, tells a group of teenagers that he believes people taken in by sexual criminals' ruses are more foolish than delinquent. He appeals to the group to use common sense in their dealings with strangers, and to consider the possible outcome of contact with them."

From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 1469: "Through several episodes--a lover's lane, baby-sitting, and a pick-up, juveniles are shown how clever criminals, like a dishonest 'carnival sharper,' prey on the sucker. The film tries to show the teen-age boys and girls why it is much smarter to be aware of possible perils and avoid them, than to seek a momentary thrill by taking dangerous chances."

Archival source: Indiana.

\**Name Unknown*, Sid Davis Productions, 1964 (revised edition), 10 minutes.

Archival sources: none found.

*Nation to Defend, The*, Coronet, 1952, 11 minutes.  
Number 8 in the "Are You Ready for Service?" series.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Explains why throughout the history of the United States men have been willing to fight when the nation's ideals of freedom were threatened. Shows how devotion to the best interests of our country, such as justice, fair play and an equal chance for all, links young men with men of high purposes who have always served their nation as the situation demanded. Draws from the examples of Nathan Hale, George Washington and others to demonstrate that people need to make sacrifices to ensure their freedom and preserve their way of life. Encourages young people to think of serving in the military as the best way they can defend the country's democratic ideals of free speech, religious choice and pursuit of happiness against tyranny."

Archival source: Iowa State.

\**No Smoking*, Sid Davis Productions, 1952, 10 minutes.

From Robert E. Schreiber, "New Learning Aids" column, *Audio-Visual Guide*, vol. 18, #9, May 1952, page 27:  
"Health-and-Safety . . . No Smoking, 10 min., Sid Davis. . . why a better and longer life may result from avoiding the smoking habit when at the high-school age."

Archival sources: None found.

*None for the Road*, Young America Films, 1957, 15 minutes.  
A Centron Production.  
Collaborator: Yale Center of Alcohol Studies.  
From the OCLC online catalogue: "Deals with the vital problems of teen-age drinking and driving by dramatizing the story of a teen-age group that includes a non-drinker, a moderate drinker, and a heavy drinker. Stresses the fact that alcohol in any amount is dangerous for a driver."  
Archival source: Indiana.

*Obligations*, Simmel-Meservey, 1950, 17 minutes.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Contrasts the disorganized and poorly managed Smith household with that of their happily integrated neighbors. Thaddeus K. Smith's predisposition to lose things follows him to the office, and Mrs. Smith is besieged from all sides by members of the family always made late for appointments by feverish, last-minute hunting. Summarizes by showing that leisure and harmony are the rewards of systematized activities and family cooperation."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*One Man's Opinion*, National Film Board of Canada, 1953, 6 minutes.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Poses the problem of minority opinion in group discussions and actions, through the experience of a high school class conducting a welfare drive. Demonstrates the use of high pressure tactics by the chairman to exact the quota established for each class member. Shows some members yielding to the threat of group disapproval, and depicts one student withholding his contribution and condemning the methods of the chairman as a violation of his principles. Urges the audience to discuss the question."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Other Fellow's Feelings, The*, Young America Films, 1951, 11 minutes.  
Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Opens with a classroom scene in which Judy is crying at her desk. Her teacher learns that the accidental spilling of a bottle of perfume began a series of incidents of teasing by Jack which culminated in the classroom scene. Then mentions alternative courses of action and invites audience discussion."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Kansas.

*Other People's Property*, Young America Films, 1951, 11 minutes.  
Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.



From the OCLC online catalog: "Uses the discussion technique to acquaint students with the problems which arise when an innocent prank results in damage to other people's property. For grades 5-9."

Archival sources: Iowa State, Northern Illinois University.

*Our Basic Civil Rights*, Coronet, 1950, 14 minutes.,

From the Indiana online catalog: "Three high school students gather material for a report on civil rights by attending the trial of a man charged with handing out handbills illegally on the street. The defendant is acquitted on the grounds that he is merely exercising his freedom of speech. After the trial the judge points out how civil rights defend the individual, how they are interrelated, and how they are defended by assuring them to others."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Our Changing Family Life*, McGraw-Hill, 1957, 27 minutes.

Producer: Knickerbocker Productions, Inc.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Compares the family relationships and way of life of a farm family and an urban family of today with the farm family of 1880. Describes the farm family of 1880 as a closely-knit economic unit of rather definite pattern and illustrates the relationships of each family member and the division of labor. Explains several factors affecting the family unit resulting from the Industrial Revolution."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

\**Our Training Plus*, Newark (NJ) High School Charm Club, 1950, 12 minutes.

From *Audio-Visual Guide*, vol. 17, #5, January 1951, page 32: "Secretarial Students Make a Movie," by Florabelle Burke, teacher of Secretarial Subjects, Central HS, Newark, New Jersey. "The purpose of the Charm Club at Newark Central HS is to give girls special training and experience in the development of desirable personality traits in business--good office manners, proper office dress, etiquette, and grooming. . . . To visualize these points, students have presented the various activities of the Charm Club in a 400-foot, 16mm Kodachrome movie, entitled "Our Training Plus." [Shot at the school during Easter vacation, 1950. Filed for use at Library of Visual Aids of City of Newark.]

Archival sources: None found; possibly Newark Library System?

*Outsider, The*, Young America Films, 1951, 11 minutes.

Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Dramatizes the problem of Susan Jane, a junior high school girl who is not able

to become a part of any social group. Puzzled and hurt by imagined rejections, she is eventually invited to a party which will give her the opportunity to make friends. Leaves the solution to her problem open for audience discussion."

Archival Sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Kansas.

*Over-Dependency*, National Film Board of Canada, 1949, 32 minutes.

Third in Mental Health series.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Presents the case history of John, who is suffering from over-dependency developed during his childhood because of an abnormally protective and indulgent mother and father. Shows psychiatric methods and treatment, and John's gradual recovery of independence and self-esteem."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, West Chester (PA).

*Overcoming Fear*, Coronet, 1950, 13 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Tells how Bill overcomes his fear of the water. Shows Mr. Barker, the swimming coach, as he talks with Bill and points out people who have overcome various types of fear. Bill becomes aware of the sources of fear and the means of overcoming it; then he slowly learns skills which help him build his confidence and become a good swimmer."

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*Overcoming Worry*, Coronet, 1950, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "When Chester, a high school senior, becomes disturbed by his father's irritability, he consults the family doctor, who points out that worry is probably the cause. Chester plays chess with his father, becomes more helpful at home, and gets a part-time job to help ease his father's financial burden. The father finally decides that he must stop worrying and face reality."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Parents are People, Too*, McGraw-Hill, 1954, 15 minutes.

Correlated with *Health and Safety for You*, by Harold S. Diehl, M.D. and Anita D. Laton, Ph.D.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Considers how high school students can work with their parents to gain better mutual understanding, and how family discussions can replace arguments and help to establish good family relations."

Set in a junior high classroom, the film consists of a series of flashbacks as students complain to the male teacher about their parents' treatment of them as too intrusive, treating them like small children. A typical tale is introduced with "Yesterday I had an experience that just goes to show what a nuisance parents can be."

The teacher listens and offers wise advice, telling to work for mutual understanding.  
Archival sources: Northern Illinois University, Prelinger.

*Party Lines*, AT&T, 1946, 15 minutes.

With Bil Baird's marionettes.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Using marionettes, illustrates how good neighbors share things courteously, from driveways to telephone party lines. Shows common abuses of the party line telephone and demonstrates a satisfactory way to get the best out of party telephone service. Demonstrates the importance of cooperation and respect for privacy. Encourages people not to monopolize the telephone or to argue with people over the line. Suggests that people break up a long list of calls, so that others have the chance to use the phone. Describes the frustration of other callers, when one caller uses the phone to gossip for a length of time without concern for others. Gives an example of an emergency call that can not get through because one of the parties would not give up the line. Animated sequences show how party lines are organized and operate."

Described in more detail in Chapter Two of this dissertation, pp. 67-68.

Archival source: Iowa State.

*Patty Garman, Teen-Ager*, Frith Films, 1957, 16 minutes.

Screenplay and direction: Emily Benton Frith; Narrator: Don McNamara.

One of a series of films about the 4-H Clubs, all of them featuring Patty Garman at various stages of her life. In this one, she is in her mid-teens, focusing her attention on the ten goats she raises on her family's farm. The main setting is a livestock show where boys and girls and adults compete on an equal footing, and Patty wins the top prize with her goat Nutmeg. The social life of the 4-H Club is also emphasized, as is the importance of her friendships with both boys and girls. As she saddles up her horse Flicka while some friends watch, the narrator observes, "Jim would like to take Patty to the Saturday night dance, but she already has a date with Jack."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Personal Health for Girls*, Coronet, 1952, 10 minutes.

Educational Collaborator: Elizabeth S. Avery, health consultant for the National Education Association.

From the Indiana online catalog: "A high school girl is shown as she pursues her routine of good health habits. She describes her reasons for a daily shower, fresh clothing, and her care of hair and teeth. She also mentions her balanced diet and healthful sleep schedule."

Remade four years later as *Good Grooming for Girls*.

Described in Chapter Three of this dissertation on page 153.

Archival source: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Personal Hygiene for Boys*, Coronet, 1952, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Opens with an appeal to the individual's desire for social acceptance. Follows a boy as he gets ready for school, while the narrator gives reasons for a daily bath; proper care of hair, beard, and nails; clean clothes; and a good breakfast."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Personal Qualities for Job Success*, Coronet, 1952, 10 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Illustrates, through the job interviews of several high school graduates, the personality requisites for job success, such as initiative, good personal appearance, businesslike work habits, and the ability to get along with others."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Personality and Emotions*, Encyclopædia Britannica Films, 1954, 13 minutes.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Producer, Milan Herzog; collaborator, Joseph McVickers Hunt. Presents an overview of the development of emotions from infancy through early childhood; describes through the use of animation sequences the term psychosomatic and the connection between emotional cue and physical response. Explains that emotional maturity is a desirable goal in the development of a healthy personality."

Archival source: Iowa State.

*\*Planning for Success*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator, Clifford R. Adams.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Discusses the close relationship of success to personal adjustment. Emphasizes importance of defining goals and establishing them realistically. For high school college and adult groups."

Archival sources: Kansas State University, California University of Pennsylvania.

*Planning Your Career*, Encyclopædia Britannica Films, 1954, 16 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Encourages early discovery of one's interests and abilities, and suggests steps to take in systematically surveying many types of employment in choosing a life's work. Follows a high school student as he works with his school guidance counselor in seeking occupational information relative to his selection of a career."

Archival sources: Indiana, West Chester (Pennsylvania).

*Posture and Personality*, Social Science Films, 1949, 12 minutes.

State Department. of Health of Connecticut, Marie C. Harrington, director.

A narrator stresses the importance of good posture to good personality and popularity. The camera shows silhouettes, shadows walking up to an archway. Typical of the narrator's advice, he says, "Take this young lady, she may wear the finest clothes and the latest fashion, but she'll never make a good impression because of her posture."

Archival source: Iowa State.

*Procrastinator, The*, Young America Films, 1952, 11 minutes. Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Jean is shown doodling instead of studying, and is scolded by her mother. When she is elected social chairman of a class party, she promises to get everything done herself, in spite of her committee's protests and offers to help. When the day of the party arrives, she has not made all the arrangements as she had promised. Asks the audience which of the suggestions given Jean would have helped her."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Kansas.

*\*Prom--It's a Pleasure*, Coca-Cola, 1961, 17 minutes.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Using the American Junior Miss Pageant in Mobile, Alabama, as a setting, this film shows proper etiquette for boys and girls in regard to formal dances. Points include extending and accepting invitations, choosing attire and flowers, and enjoying the occasion through correct dance floor etiquette, from cut-ins to show-offs."

Archival source: none for certain; once held by the Amarillo Public Library, Amarillo, Texas.

*Public Speaking: Movement and Gesture*, Coronet, 1955, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Karl F. Robinson, Department of Speech Education, Northwestern University.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Demonstrates and explains movement and gesture in good public speaking. Indicates that action is a universal language. Shows a student demonstrating improper action during speech, depicts an assembly speaker exemplifying good deportment, and repeats scenes of the latter's performance while providing suggestions for developing ease and naturalness on the speaking platform."

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Explains that posture, movement, and gestures are important communication aids in public speaking. Emphasizes the effectiveness of natural, spontaneous gestures. Discusses the effective techniques of movement and gesture in speaking, and shows how the practice of these techniques results in well-controlled and precise

gestures. Suggests that the use of body language should start before the speaker stands up and approaches the podium. Demonstrates that action helps build the image a speaker wants to get across. Urges speakers to combine adequate control and naturalness in addressing an audience."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Respect for Property*, Coronet, 1952, 10 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "When a group of boys breaks into a rival group's clubhouse and damages it, the offended group plans revenge. A policeman who realizes this points out that they too have damaged property, showing them their marked up school desks. Both groups of boys come to realize that respect is due the property of others. Both groups cooperate to repair the damaged clubhouse."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Responsibility*, Young America Films, 1953, 13 minutes.

Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Contrasts the working habits of Hank and Ben in meeting high school responsibilities. Both run for president of the student body, and when the election ends in a tie, the principal asks the audience whether they would vote for popular, good-looking Hank, or dependable, responsible Ben."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Kansas.

*Rest and Health*, Coronet, 1949, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "George, a member of his school's track team finds himself losing out on everything. When he finds out that he is not getting enough rest, he learns to establish good habits and is rewarded with renewed energy and success."

The part of George is played by Dick York.

Archival source: Indiana.

*Right or Wrong: Making Moral Decisions*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "A gang of thirteen-year-olds throw rocks at a warehouse window. As a result, the night watchman, the warehouse owner, a parent, a police sergeant, and a member of the gang must make important decisions that affect others. Uses live action and dialogue to present an unsolved problem for discussion--What would you do in these circumstances, and why?"

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*School Activities and You*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Reading about Bill's activities in the yearbook, his sister decides to join all his cubs, in order to have as much fun in high school

as he did. Bill explains that he had reasons for joining those clubs, not only to make friends, but to help him in his studies, to learn or improve skills, and to learn how to get along with other people. He convinces his sister that she should join activities which interest her."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*School Rules: How They Help Us*, Coronet, 1953, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Marvin D. Glock, Professor of Educational Psychology, Cornell University.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows everyday scenes in which rules influence our behavior, and emphasizes that exceptions can't be granted. Shows some ways a new student can learn rules, and stresses their applicability to all. Says that it is each person's responsibility to learn the rules and to work cooperatively to improve them."

Aimed at pre-teens.

Archival source: Indiana.

*School Spirit and Sportsmanship*, Coronet, 1953, 10 minutes.

Educational collaborator, Herold C. Hunt, Ed.D.,

Superintendent of the Chicago school system.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Two schools are competing in a big game on Saturday. The students from each team post signs for their respective teams in the competitor's area. This leads to more aggressive, possibly dangerous plans. At an assembly, the principal of one high school encourages his students to concentrate on showing good sportsmanship by giving a cheer for the other team and remembering to treat them like guests. The basketball coach also encourages his team to play well but to play a good clean game that will represent the school well. The players decide to give up their plans of retaliation. Emphasizes the importance of being good losers and of playing a sportsmanlike game. Explains that the actions of individual students reflect upon the reputation of the entire school."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

\**Search, The: Wayne University--Juvenile Delinquency*, CBS-TV, 1955, 28 minutes.

Network television series: *The Search*.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Reduction print of the 35 mm. motion picture made for the CBS television program *The search*. With film users' guide. Producers, Irving Gitlin, Stephen Fleischman, Norton Bloom; director and script writer, Al Wasserman; narrator, Charles Romine; photographer, Abraham Morochnik; film editors, Sidney Katz, Ralph Rosenblum. The story of the joint attack being made on juvenile delinquency by Wayne University and the Police Department of Detroit. Through actual cases points out that the causes of delinquency lie in

bad family relationships, the insecurity of the times, and the lack of proper guidance."  
Archival sources: Southwest Texas State University, Wayne State University.

*Seduction of the Innocent*, Sid Davis Productions, 1961, 10 minutes.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Produced with the cooperation of the Santa Monica Police Dept. and the Santa Monica Unified School District. With teacher's guide. A dramatization about a teen-age boy and girl, who through a need to belong and to go along with the group, start first with barbiturates and end up as heroin addicts."

Archival sources: Indiana, University of North Texas, Ft. Hays State University (KS), Miami-Dade Community College.

*Self-Conscious Guy*, Coronet, 1951, 10 minutes.

Educational collaborator, Judson T. Landis.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "When Marty tries to find ways to overcome his feelings of self-consciousness, he receives help for his problem through developing skills, thinking of other persons, and attending adult groups. Shows how self-consciousness can keep a high school student from doing class work well or making friends easily. While many of Marty's classmates suffer from similar feelings, they have overcome it and developed poise and self-assurance."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Service and Citizenship*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.

Number 3 in the "Are You Ready for Service?" series.

From the Indiana online catalog: "A young man in the service writes to his high-school-age brother about the importance of good citizenship. Voting, paying taxes, serving on juries, and accepting responsibility in community organizations are cited as examples of good citizenship. Military service is described as the greatest contribution we can make, one for which we can prepare by fulfilling other responsibilities that help to protect our rights."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Sharing Work at Home*, Coronet, 1949, 10 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Wendell W. Wright, Ph.D., Dean of Education, Indiana University.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Illustrates the importance of cooperation in a happy family life. Gives one family as an example, showing how they learned to share the household chores, to the individual benefit of each member. When mom gets sick, the other members of the family learn to cook, clean and repair items. As they go, they read from the girl's home economics book which suggests that if household jobs are planned and organized



with cooperation, all of the tasks get done. After mom recovers, the family decides to continue what they've learned. Persons will pick up after themselves. A list of regular jobs that need to be done everyday is made and chores are assigned to individuals who have the ability and time to do them. They design another list of odd jobs that are only to be done occasionally. In the process, the family develops planning skills, teamwork, and their relationship. Not only have they made improvements on the house, but they have also improved as people."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Should You Drink?*, McGraw-Hill, 1959, 21 minutes.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Explains the importance of each person's making an honest and intelligent decision about the use of alcohol."

Archival sources: Indiana, California University of Pennsylvania.

*Show-off, The*, Young America Films, 1954, 12 minutes.

Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Portrays examples of disrupting behavior caused by a show-off and a group of pranksters in a school. Shows the school principal asking the class officers to work out a solution to the problem of showing off in class, and requests the audience to react to the problem situation."

Archival sources: Indiana, Kansas.

*Shy Guy*, Coronet, 1947, 14 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows the problem of shyness which a boy encounters when he moves to a new high school. When he follows his father's suggestion that he observe what makes other people well liked, he is accepted as a member of the group."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger, *Our Secret Century* CD-ROM, vol. 3.

*Shyness*, National Film Board of Canada, 1953, 23 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Portrays the lonely existence of a shy adult, and then studies three children who exemplify different forms of emotional adjustment apart from their group. A psychiatrist describes the causes of shyness, including the excessive demands of parents, that destroy confidence and predispose children to shyness. Shows how parents, teacher, and psychiatrist together evoke a change in the children's attitudes."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Sitting Right*, Association Films/Grant, Flory and Williams, 1946, 9 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows teen-age girls slouching awkwardly in their chairs. Demonstrations then show how to correct these faults, sit correctly, cross the legs properly, and get in and out of a chair gracefully."

As noted in a footnote in chapter two of this dissertation, the film recognized the nature of the battle, showing several teenage girls in exaggerated slumps, slouches, and sprawls, and one on the telephone with her feet on the wall, as off-screen adult voices hector and scold them. Since parental urgings clearly have no power, the narrator offers the inducement of male approval and more dates, and urges the viewers to emulate popular culture celebrities: "Like the movie stars, you'll be sitting with distinction."

Archival sources: Indiana, West Chester (Pennsylvania).

*Snap Out of It! (Emotional Balance)*, Coronet, 1951, 12 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Howard, a high school student, has been trying to improve his grades and is upset when his report card is not as good as he had hoped. A conference with the principal shows that Howard's reaction follows a pattern that he can sometimes observe in others, either blaming someone else or withdrawing into daydreaming. A constructive approach to the problem of disappointment is worked out, and Howard regains emotional balance by facing the facts."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Snob, The*, McGraw-Hill/Young America Films, 1958, 15 minutes.

Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.

From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 1821: "Provides for group discussion by relating the story of a high school girl, Sara, who had been labeled a snob by her schoolmates. On one occasion when she attends a party, her anti-social action leads the others to retaliate until Sara leaves the part in tears. The film ends by asking whether Sara's behavior is a cover-up for some lack she feels in herself and whether the group is justified in judging everything she does as snobbery."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Kansas, Prelinger.

*Social Acceptability*, McGraw-Hill, 1958, 20 minutes.

Part of the *Adolescent Development* series, correlated with the book by Elizabeth B. Hurlock. Produced by Crawley Films.

From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 1823: "Shows the importance of social acceptance in the personality development of adolescents. Presents the case study of Mary, a shy girl, who is rejected by others of her group. Points out the mother's unfavorable attitude to social

functions which in turn influences the daughter's actions. Indicates that this feeling of rejection could influence Mary's personality development if the proper guidance and the opportunity to get together socially with other adolescents are not provided by her parents." Discussed in detail in Chapter Three of this dissertation, pp. 155-157.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, University of North Texas.

*Social Courtesy*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "The narrator coaches Bill as he picks up Carol for a date at a costume party, and helps him to observe social courtesy during the party. Bill learns how graceful introductions are made, how to make conversation, and how to behave in the case of an accident such as spilling food. He notices the change for the better in his friends' attitude toward him."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Social Dancing*, Coronet, 1947, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Approaches the problem of elementary social dance steps, the waltz and the fox trot, for young people. Shows couples and individuals in the basic box turn, the forward pattern, the crossover, and the underarm turn."

Archival sources: Indiana, West Chester (PA).

*Social-Sex Attitudes in Adolescence*, McGraw-Hill, 1953, 22 minutes.

Part of the *Adolescent Development* series, correlated with the book by Elizabeth B. Hurlock. Produced by Crawley Films.

From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 1825: "Discusses from an early 1950's viewpoint the influences that contribute to social-sexual adjustment in adolescence and adulthood. Traces the home, school, and community experiences of a boy and a girl from childhood to their marriage. Emphasizes the importance of parental guidance, early sex education, and the need for adolescents to exercise independent judgment. Proposes criteria which help in the process of choosing a mate."

Archival sources: Iowa State, Prelinger, University of North Texas, many others.

*Starting Now*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.

Number 4 in the "Are You Ready for Service?" series. From the Iowa State online catalog: "Introduces high school students to the many ways in which they can prepare themselves for military service. Reviews the importance of defending freedom from tyranny and democracy from communism. Emphasizes that it is never too late or too early for a young man to think about including military

service into his life plans. Encourages students to think about the aspects of military life, including cleanliness, living in barracks, no privacy, physical labor, studying, homesickness, learning new skills, acting under orders, meeting new people and being independent. Lays out a four step plan for preparation: find information, check yourself, develop yourself, and start now. Suggests resources in the community that can assist in these steps, such as librarians, recruiting officers, people who have served and recreation facilities."

Archival source: Iowa State.

*Step by Step*, City College of New York Community Service Division, 1954, 20 minutes.

Made by students of film at the Workshop Film Institute, Hans Richter, director Harry Shulman and Richard Brotman, advisers. Directed by Leo Seltzer. Writer: Doris Ransohoff. Narrator: Ben Grauer.

From the OCLC online catalog: "Deals with juvenile delinquency in a city neighborhood where physical and human deterioration has occurred. Shows case workers studying juvenile problems and coping constructively with gang activities."

Archival sources: Indiana, Southwest Texas State University.

*Story of a Teen Age Drug Addict* (also known as *H--The Story of a Teenage Drug Addict*), Young America Films, 1951, 22 minutes.

Written, produced and directed by Larry Frisch.

Director of photography, Maurice Constant; introduction by Lestis C. Spear.

Cast: Gene Fredericks, Ed Simms, Norman Desser.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Depicts the gradual stages of how a young man becomes a drug addict. He starts by getting in with the wrong crowd, smoking marijuana, and eventually becomes a heroin addict. A stay in the hospital for heroin withdrawal and help from social workers enable him to start a new life."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

\**Strangers*, Sid Davis, 1959, 11 minutes.

From *Educational Screen and Audiovisual Guide*, vol. 38, August 1959, in an alphabetical listing of the year's film releases: "Positive behavior patterns for school children when meeting strangers; group travel and play."

Similar topic to 1950 release from the same company, *Dangerous Stranger*.

Archival sources: none found.

*Student Government at Work*, Coronet, 1953, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Describes the nature of the work of a student council and shows how a high school

council improves the conditions in their school lunchroom. Outlines the method used in attacking the problem and follows the work of the council as it secures permission to work on the problem, defines the problem, investigates the conditions, reports on the findings, and makes recommendations for improvement to the principal." Archival source: Indiana.

*Successful Scholarship*, McGraw-Hill, 1960, 11 minutes. Producer: Knickerbocker Productions, Inc. Psychology for Living series. Correlated with Herbert Sorenson and Marguerite Malm, *Psychology for Living*. From the Iowa State online catalog: "This film demonstrates a study method which emphasizes a plan-place-method technique. The method recognizes the necessity for regular hours for study, proper space and equipment, review and self-testing." From the Indiana online catalog: "Deals with the problem of forming successful study habits. Shows how a high school student follows a study scheme of planning, placement, and method to improve her learning. Approaches study in terms of short and long range goals, and illustrates how each step of the student's plan is carried out. Discusses different reading techniques for different purposes and presents a system of note-taking to aid in study." Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Table Manners*, Christy Associates, 1950, 10 minutes. Emily Post narrator, collaborator. From the Indiana online catalog: "Emily Post explains that there is only one correct set of table manners and that, when they have been learned, a person will feel at ease whether dining formally or informally. Various table implements are shown and the correct use of each is explained." Archival source: Indiana.

*Teach Them to Drive*, Penn State, American Legion, Automotive Safety Foundation, 1945/6, 20 minutes. From the OCLC online catalog: "Dramatizes a grieving father's campaign to establish driver education in the public schools following the traffic death of his teenage son." Archival source: Iowa State.

*Teamwork*, Simmel-Meservey, 1947, 20 minutes. Human Relations series. Adviser: F. Dean McClusky; Ted Myers, Narrator. Edward Simmel, producer and director. Photographed with students at Woodrow Wilson High School, Long Beach, Calif. From the Indiana online catalog: "High school students learn about the six ways in which cooperation can be

achieved, through everyday incidents. Presents examples of cooperation through force, bargaining, trickery, compromise, leadership, and democracy, and invites a discussion of each."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Teen-Age Boy, The*, WNET/Washington University of St. Louis, 1959/60, 29 minutes.

From *Index to 16mm Films*, page 1925: "Presents a question and answer session with three teen-age boys. Opinions are expressed concerning their education, ambitions, personal development, and hopes for the future."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Teen-Age Girl, The*, WNET/Washington University of St. Louis, 1959/60, 29 minutes.

From *Index to 16mm Films*, page 1925: "Presents a question and answer session with three teen-age girls. Opinions are expressed concerning their education, ambitions, marriage plans, and the problem of integration in their schools."

In this and the previous film on the teenage boy, the adult questioners display clear gender bias in their choices of topics, and then proclaim at the conclusion that the students' answers show distinct differences between the attitudes of boys and girls.

Archival source: Indiana.

*Teenagers on Trial*, RKO-Pathé, 1955, 8 minutes.

Supervised and written by Frances Dinsmoor; narrated by Bob Hite.

Not a guidance film, but a sensationalized look at teenage misbehavior and juvenile delinquency. Its tone and content are typified by a scene of a teen dance in a bar, in which teenagers drink beer and smoke as swing music plays and the edgy narrator intones, "Night life has considerably altered since taffy pull days. These youngsters cruise around to outlying honky-tonks, dives where bartenders will wink at the law." We see a shot of a teenage girl in booth drinking from a shot glass, then choking and holding her chest as the liquor burns.

Archival sources: Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Teens, The*, Crawley Films and the Canadian Department of National Health and Welfare, 1957, 26 minutes.

Ages and Stages Series.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Uses activities in a representative family with teen-age children to point out the behavior characteristics and tendencies of normal youth in their teens and to indicate how parents and adults can help them to attain maturity. Stresses that an understanding and appreciation of these characteristics of the teen-age youth will assist in achieving this maturity."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Southwest Texas State University.

*\*Terrible Truth, The*, Sid Davis Productions, 1951, 10 minutes.

Teen-age girl drug addict.

Archival source: none found.

*That Boy Joe*, National Women's Christian Temperance Union, 1944, 18 minutes.

Produced by Chicago Film Laboratory, Inc.

Direction, Al Wetzell; scenario, Wesley Carty; photography, Howard Siemon; sound, Fred Abel.

Cast: Carrol Ashburn, Roland Butterfield, Lucille Long, Harold Lesh, Diane Sapoci, William Dale, Bayard Brown, Jim Riordan.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "The story of a middle-class teenager who steals some cigarettes, and how a judge influences him to change his life. It expounds abstention from alcohol, regular church attendance, and following the Golden Rule as ways of stopping juvenile delinquency."

Archival source: Iowa State.

*\*They Think for Themselves*, University of Southern California, 1952, 23 minutes.

Archival sources: none found.

*This Charming Couple*, McGraw-Hill, 1950, 19 minutes.

Correlated with Henry A. Bowman, *Marriage for Moderns*.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Designed to be used with a marriage text. Pictures the courtship of Winnie and Ken. They are 'in love with love' and refuse to evaluate each other's good qualities and shortcomings realistically. Presents several dramatic episodes in which the true nature of each is revealed; then points out how Winnie and Ken refuse to use the proper appraisal of each other and do not alter their romanticized ideas to agree with the actual facts."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Three Steps to Start*, Ford Foundation/McGraw-Hill, 1955, 26 minutes.

Written and Directed by Robert Betts and Francis Thompson.

From the New York State Youth Commission 1957 Film Catalog, page 15: "A group of parents form a volunteer committee to do something about late hours, reckless driving, petty thieving, and other similar teenage behavior. They decide a Youth Program is a realistic starting point for a town program. The film points out that by enlisting the resources of the entire town, not only the youth problem, but underlying problems can be solved."

Archival source: Iowa State.

*Tobacco and the Human Body*, Encyclopædia Britannica Films, 1954, 15 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows how scientists determine the content of the cigarette smoke entering the mouth and its effect on rabbits and humans. Shows how tars and nicotine from cigarette smoke are collected in a laboratory and measured, and pictures their effect on skin temperature, breathing, and blood vessels. Presents a relationship between smoking and cancer and concludes by stating that each person must determine for himself whether he wishes to take the risks of smoking."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Toward Emotional Maturity*, McGraw-Hill, 1955, 11 minutes.

A Knickerbocker Production. Features same narrator as *Facing Reality* and *Habit Patterns*.

Psychology for Living series. Correlated with Herbert Sorenson and Marguerite Malm, *Psychology for Living*.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "This is the story of an 18-year-old girl facing a decision that deeply involves her parents and a boy whom she likes very much. She remembers episodes from her early life in which love, fear and hate were not always controlled and is then able to make a decision that shows her emotional growth."

Described in Chapter Five of this dissertation, pp. 250-254.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa, Prelinger, *Our Secret Century* CD-ROM, vol. 3.

*\*Town that Came Back, The*, Ford Motor Company, 1955, 27 minutes.

An MPO production; directed by Peter Glushanok; script and narration by Joseph M. March; photography by Stanley Meredith; edited by Werner Schott.

Department of Agriculture and National Committee for Boys and Girls Club Work, Inc.

Series: "Americans at Home."

From the Iowa State online catalog: "This is a true story . . . The people in this picture are the people who made it happen--members of a 4-H club in a small Mid-Western town." Shows how one town gained back its sense of community by coming together to form a 4-H group. Some of the town's members noticed that people didn't seem to know their neighbors, that the children didn't seem to know about working together and that young people were looking forward to moving away. Demonstrates steps taken to start up a 4-H group and the skepticism encountered. The group restores the old one-room school house for use as a community center and teaches young people about farming, sewing, tractor maintenance and basket weaving. The kids in the community play a leading role in the corn and livestock show. The true spirit of the resurrected community shines when a farmer's barn burns down and they rally together for an old-fashioned barn raising."



Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Troublemaker, The*, McGraw-Hill/Young America Films, 1959, 13 minutes.

Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.

From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 1984: "Tells the dramatic story of a boy who turns troublemaker as a way of satisfying his own needs. Shows the interaction between the troublemaker and his peer group, and attempts to stimulate class discussion of what makes him behave that way."

Archival sources: Iowa State, Kansas.

*Understand Your Emotions*, Coronet, 1950, 13 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Mr. Brent, a biology teacher, shows three pupils how they react differently in the same situation. He discusses what emotions are, what they do, where they come from, and how they are changed. He show the many important effects of emotions on both voluntary and involuntary behavior, and that people have different emotional responses to the same stimulus pattern."

(Listed in the Iowa State catalog as *Understanding Your Emotions*--but Indiana and film stock itself say "Understand")

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Understanding Others*, McGraw-Hill/Young America Films, 1959, 13 minutes.

Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Illustrates, with everyday examples, the difference between superficial standards and true ideals. A high school boy who is primarily concerned with an automobile, dates, and parties learns from his father's example that ideals are based on honesty, sincerity, and good sportsmanship."

Discussed in detail in Chapter Three of this dissertation, pp. 151-152.

Archival sources: Indiana, Kansas.

*Understanding Your Ideals*, Coronet, 1950, 10 minutes.

Educational collaborator, Carter Davidson.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Shows what ideals are and their importance to one's well-being and happiness. Portrays the experience of a young man who is forced to examine his ideal of popularity. His understanding of popularity evolves from one based on having a car, nice clothes and the right friends, to one based on having honesty, loyalty and sincerity. Discusses the importance of clarifying ideals that are broad concepts, using freedom as an example. Emphasizes the benefits of understanding one's ideals, including gaining the proper

perspective, getting along with others and challenging one's self to always be better."  
Discussed in Chapter Three of this dissertation, p. 157.  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

\**Vandalism*, Sid Davis Productions, 1953, 10 minutes.  
Archival sources: none found.

*Wastage of Human Resources*, Encyclopædia Britannica Films, 1948, 11 minutes.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Emphasizing the needless loss of life through a hotel fire, the film discusses various causes of the wastage of human resources at different age levels, such as disease, accidents, juvenile delinquency, unemployment, alcoholic and drug addiction, mental diseases, crime, and war."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Ways to Settle Disputes*, Coronet, 1950, 11 minutes.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Alice, Jerry, and Eddie learn through everyday incidents at play and at school how disputes can be settled by compromise, by obeying the rules, by finding the facts, or by finding opinions, according to what is involved."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*What About Alcoholism?*, McGraw-Hill, 1956, 11 minutes.  
Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.  
From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 2068: "Presents different approaches to alcoholism. Follows a class of high-school students as they investigate law and medicine and interview employers and individuals in order to obtain their views on alcohol and alcoholism. Shows the group conducting a discussion in which numerous viewpoints are expressed. Concludes by asking the viewers, 'What do you think?'"  
Archival sources: Indiana, University of North Texas.

*What About Drinking?*, Young America Films, 1954, 11 minutes.  
Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.  
From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 2068: "Presents a group of teen-agers in discussion as they reveal their individual attitudes to drinking. News of an automobile accident involving alcohol induces a group of partying teen-agers to discuss drinking. A variety of viewpoints emerges as each member reveals his attitude. Concludes by reviewing the arguments and urging the audience to continue the discussion."  
Discussed in detail in Chapter Six of this dissertation, pp. 282-284.  
Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*What About Juvenile Delinquency?*, Young America Films, 1955, 11 minutes.

Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.

From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 2068: "Uses a car-bumping incident and the mauling of the driver by a teen-age gang to introduce the subject of juvenile delinquency for group discussion. Jimmy leaves the gang when he finds out that it was his father who was mauled. In spite of threats by other members of the gang, he joins other students who go to the City Hall to discuss the proposed teen-age curfew with the City Council. The council asks the students to suggest ways to help stop teen-age vandalism."

Discussed in detail in Chapter Six of this dissertation, pp. 305-306.

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*What About Prejudice?*, McGraw-Hill/Young America Films, 1959, 12 minutes.

Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.

From *Index to 16mm Films*, page 2068: "Examines the damage done by a group to a classmate because of prejudice, largely directed against parental origin; and shows the individual's emotional reactions when the 'truth' is revealed."

Discussed in detail in Chapter Three of this dissertation, pp. 150-151.

Archival sources: Prelinger, *Our Secret Century* CD-ROM, vol. 3.

*What About School Spirit?*, McGraw-Hill/Young America Films, 1958, 15 minutes.

Discussion Problems in Group Living series. A Centron Production.

From *Index to 16mm Films*, page 2068: "This film is designed to suggest that school spirit, rather than the immature concept of the frenzied sports rally, is a form of citizenship requiring the assumption of responsibilities, both curricular and extracurricular."

The narrative framework has a teenage boy introduce his teenage girl cousin to the wonderful school spirit of his high school by bringing her to the town teen hangout, a soda fountain, and telling her the story of the late senior class president Bob Corby. Before he died so tragically young, he imbued his classmates with the school spirit so admired by the filmmakers. There is a "Win one for the gipper" quality about the story, told in a series of flashbacks.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Kansas.

*What Are the Military Services?*, Coronet, 1952, 11 minutes.  
Number 9 in the "Are You Ready for Service?" series.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Describes the separate functions of the army, navy, marine corps and air force, the diversity of skills utilized in each of the services, and their coordinated action as a defense team. Emphasizes the need for teamwork and support between the branches. Uses an example of the take-over of an enemy island to show how each of the four services can add its special techniques in a military maneuver to meet a common goal."

Archival source: Iowa State.

*\*What Happened to Jo Jo?*, Protestant Film Commission, 1950, 30 minutes.

A popular teenage girl confronts a rock-throwing delinquent.

Archival source: Prelinger.

*What is Conscience?*, Coronet, 1952, 10 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Presents three definitions of conscience as seen by a psychologist, a minister, and a housewife. Gives several examples of the effects of conscience, including Lucy, who feels that she has paid too much for a sweater; Hank, whose girl friend is startled by his kiss; Bob, who is given too much change at a store; and a group of students, who are tempted to cheat on an examination. Points out that conscience varies in individuals."

Archival source: Indiana.

*What It's All About*, Coronet, 1951, 10 minutes.

Number 1 in the "Are You Ready for Service?" series.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Attempts to answer the question, 'Why must we fight?' with stock motion picture footage from many parts of the world. Indicates that one-fourth of the world is under Communist domination, and thus constitutes an aggressive threat to our way of life. The freedoms we defend are shown as the right to go to school and to choose our church, the right to work and to spend our time and money as we choose, the right to complain, and the right to stand up for ourselves."

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Answers everyday questions for young people about the reasons for military training. Explains why the draft is necessary, and shows how nations are combating Communist tyranny through the work of the United Nations and other international agencies. Discusses the benefits of democracy, including the many opportunities to set one's own goals and pursue them and the many freedoms written into the constitution. Covers the many ways communism was aggressive which can directly and indirectly affect democracy. Explains that democracy depends on statesmen backed by military might. Shows that men from all walks

of life are called to defend their country by serving in the military."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*What Makes a Good Party?*, Coronet, 1950, 10 minutes.

Educational collaborator, Mary E. Weathersby.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows several girls carefully planning a party guest list, invitations, refreshments, and entertainment. Then shifts to the party itself, stressing the duties of a hostess and the skills of being a guest, as well as suggesting such desirable points as beginning a new game when interest begins to lag, serving refreshments at just the right time, and knowing when to go home."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*What to Do on a Date*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Suggests suitable dating activities for teenagers by showing how Nick and Kay make a double date out of preparing for a scavenger sale. Discusses the social value of group participation in "coming activities" sponsored by the school, and lists other non-commercial activities in which mixed groups can become acquainted in an atmosphere conducive to socially acceptable behavior."

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*When Should I Marry?*, McGraw-Hill, 1958, 20 minutes.

Correlated with *Your Marriage and Family Living*, by Paul H. Landis, State Professor of Sociology, the State College of Washington; script collaborator, Lillian Bilkey, Associate Professor, State University Teachers College, Plattsburg, N.Y.

Marriage and Family Living Series,

From *Index to 16mm films*, page 2084: "Uses dramatized situations to present some of the questions young couples should consider in making a decision as to whether or not they are ready to marry. Shows a young couple, eager to marry but urged by their parents to delay, as they ask a minister's advice."

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*When You Enter Service*, Coronet, 1952, 11,

Number 10 in the "Are You Ready for Service?" series.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Recounts what happens to an inductee in the first few weeks of military training. Discusses the living conditions and environment at a training camp, including the barracks, exchange, mess hall, recreation facilities, telephones, places to write letters and religious facilities. Covers the process of inducting new men, from giving out uniforms to cutting their hair, and from giving inoculations to classifying their abilities and aptitudes. Also, shows the training activities,

including drilling, learning rank insignias, saluting, physical training and weapons. Suggests that a young man might need to make some adjustments to his life style, but that the military will take care of his basic needs." Archival source: Iowa State.

*Who is Sylvia?*, National Film Board of Canada, 1957, 29 minutes.

From *Educational Screen and Audiovisual Guide*, vol. 39, December 1960, page 666: "Guidance, Personal . . . . Impromptu and unchaperoned get-together of young teens after school is backdrop for sensitive study of dreams, hopes, fears of 14-year-old girl."

The narrator's words set the tone. At the beginning and at the end he calls Sylvia "A girl full of hopes, dreams, fears, as she lives the span between child and adult." Archival source: Iowa State.

*Who Should Decide--Areas of Parental Authority*, Coronet, 1958, 11 minutes.

From *Index to 16mm films*, page 2090: "Focuses on the question of who should decide on such problems as choosing friends, spending money, doing household chores, selecting careers to pursue, picking out clothing, and determining the proper time for returning from dates. Presents scenes depicting these problems and leaves the viewer to decide which decisions parents should make for children, which should be made with children, and which should be left for children to make themselves."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Who's Boss?*, McGraw-Hill, 1950, 16 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Designed to be used with a marriage text. Ginny and Mike are successful in their separate business careers, but in their marriage neither is willing to surrender his individuality. Shows how they try determinedly to make an adjustment and form a good partnership. They learn that a good balance can be achieved by patience, love, and understanding."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Who's Delinquent?*, RKO-Pathe, 1948, 17 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Describes the action of a newspaper in inciting a community to remedy a wave of juvenile delinquency. Shows two youths who with a stolen car have run down a policeman, and pictures some other characteristic delinquents. Follows the action of the paper in research, study, publicity, and action, and pictures the community factors contributing to the problem."

Essentially, the town is delinquent for not building recreational facilities for its youth.

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Who's Right?*, McGraw-Hill, 1954, 18 minutes.

Photographed and edited by Richard Leacock; production assistant, Judson Gooding; educational consultant, Henry A. Bowman, Ph.D.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Dramatizes the experiences of a young married couple whose quarrels undermine their happiness and prevent the development of adult love based on understanding. The husband sees his wife as spoiled, scheming and selfish. The wife sees her husband as controlling, uncaring and tyrannical. After keeping house and grocery shopping all day, the wife waits for the husband to come home from work. When he arrives he is preoccupied and complaining about the atmosphere at work. He does not seem to notice that his wife worked hard all day as well, especially to create a special dinner. Without saying a good word about the house, dinner or her looks, the husband talks on and on about what he has been working on at work, and the difficulties he has encountered. She is bored of hearing about his job and bored of her life at home. She would appreciate some : attention and affection. He needs to feel that what he does is important. They argue about whether they are paying attention to each other and about how the money should be spent. Each of them wants to make up but neither wants the other to think he or she is right."

From the Indiana online catalog: "As one of a series based on *Marriage for Moderns*, by Henry A. Bowman, this film pictures the unhappy and quarreling Carsons after eleven months of marriage. Mr. and Mrs. Carson alternately voice their inner thoughts and feelings of dissatisfaction about each other, both justifying their respective actions. An open argument reveals the shortcomings of each partner that have contributed to the conflict and ends with Mrs. Carson hurling the wedding band to the floor as the narrator asks, 'Who's right?'"

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Why Study Home Economics?*, McGraw-Hill, 1955, 10 minutes.

From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 2094: "Shows the nature and importance of studying home economics in school.

Points out that home economics covers buying, handling, and preparation of foods; the history and designing of clothing; home decoration; home and family relationships; child development; and community participation. Suggests a variety of vocations to which a study of home economics may lead."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, University of North Texas.

*Why Study Industrial Arts?*, 1956, McGraw-Hill, 10 minutes.

From the *Index to 16mm Films* page 2094: "Presents an overview of the advantages of studying industrial arts and shows a shop teacher counseling two students.

Indicates the need for designers, engineers, carpenters, and other craftsmen needed by industry whose first experiences and training can be gained in industrial arts classes. Illustrates how industrial arts training can be applied in printing, farming, and teaching. concludes with a discussion by the basketball coach on the application of industrial arts training to his own everyday life."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, University of North Texas.

*Why Vandalism?*, Encyclopædia Britannica Films, 1955, 17 minutes.

Collaborator: Bruno Bettelheim.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Probes the underlying causes that lead three boys to destroy a classroom. Finds the origins of vandalism in the personal traits and environmental factors that create antisocial personalities. Suggests ways in which vandalism may be curbed."

Archival sources: Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Why You?*, Coronet, 1952, 11 minutes.

Number 14 in the "Are You Ready for Service?" series.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Explains the circumstances affecting the selection of an individual for military service by presenting information on deferments and exemptions, and by describing the operation of the selective service boards. Emphasizes the fairness of the draft process and gives examples of how some people can get turned down for poor health, dependent reasons and important industry jobs. Also covers the choice one has in enlisting or getting called. Gives an example of an unemployed young man who enlisted to get the job training he desired immediately. Also covers a scenario in which a young man would go on to college first, with the expectation that he could be called at any time. Encourages young men to look at how they would fit into the process of the service and how the service will fit into their future. "

From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows a young man at the draft board office wondering why he must go into service. As he waits, he thinks about the problem, and realizes that there are many who cannot or should not be drafted. He gets information on special training the services provide, the way draft boards work, and why it may be advisable to enlist. He leaves with the conviction that he has been chosen as the best for the job."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Wise Buying*, Coronet, 1950, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Suggests the desirability of making better use of the money one has by planning carefully and spending wisely. Asks, and suggest



the answers to, four questions which form the basis for wise buying. Contrasts the spending of two girls with identical clothing allowances. Suggests seasonal, quantity, and product label factors."  
Archival source: Indiana.

*Words of Courtesy*, Young America Films, 1954, 12 minutes. Companion film to *Acts of Courtesy*. A Centron Production. Aimed at primary and intermediate grades.  
From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 2114: "Explains when and why it is so important to be courteous."  
Archival source: Oklahoma City Public Schools.

*You and Your Attitudes*, Association Films, 1950, 10 minutes.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows the Barretts gathered in their living room for a family "grouch box session." They discuss such varied problems as allowances, the new girl who moved into the neighborhood, foreigners, and prejudices. Demonstrates how persons can correct bad attitudes through conscientious self- and group-analysis."  
Archival source: Indiana.

*You and Your Family*, Association Films and Look Magazine, 1946, 11 minutes.  
The Art of Living Series. Cowles Publications, Inc. and the National Council of YMCAs. Director, George Blake. Writer: A. R. Perkins. Narrator: Don Goddard.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Is designed to help the audience discuss how young people and their parents should feel and act toward one another in the everyday business of living together. Shows typical family problems."  
Archival source: Indiana.

*You and Your Friends*, Association Films and Look Magazine, 1946, 7 minutes.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "A teenage party is shown, and the audience is asked to evaluate the different types of behavior. Good and bad manners and habits are pictured, while the commentary makes recommendations."  
Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger, *Our Secret Century* CD-ROM, vol. 3.

*You and Your Parents*, Coronet, 1949, 11 minutes.  
From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows Dick, a high school boy, leaving his parents angrily and going to the home of a friend, Mr. Martin. Talking to Dick, Mr. Martin tells him how children grow up and change quickly, but how they still need guidance and control. Dick stays with Mr. Martin overnight and in the morning, after their talk, he returns to his parents. Pictures the three of

them living more happily together and developing a new understanding of each other."

Dick York plays the main character.

Archival sources: Indiana, Prelinger.

*You and Your Time*, Association Films, 1950, 10 minutes.  
Art of Living Series.

From the *Index to 16mm Films*, page 2132: "Deals with the proper and improper use of time, and presents four typical situations as a basis for discussion by teen-age audiences.

After several scenes of irresponsible teenagers aggravating their parents by poor use of time, the narrator intones, "These four examples were shown with no intention of pointing up right decisions or attitudes of parents or young folks. The decisions are up to you." This is a patently disingenuous statement, as the teenagers shown are clearly meant to be bad examples.

Archival source: Iowa State.

*You and Your Work*, Coronet, 1948, 10 minutes.

Educational collaborator: John N. Given, Supervisor of Business Education, Los Angeles City Board of Education.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Shows how a vocational guidance counselor helps a young man who has just lost his job to change his attitude and achieve success when allowed a second chance. The young man takes a job at a shoe store and after a while finds the work boring and tedious. His performance on the job suffers as he comes in late to work and is intolerant towards customers. After he is fired, he goes to see the vocational guidance counselor about getting another job. The counselor suggests that each job can be boring or exciting. He states that if people take pride in their work no matter what they are doing, they will do well. He stresses the importance of personal satisfaction, pride of accomplishment and a sense of importance to others in enjoying a position. With this insight, the young man returns to work at the shoe store with the intention of taking pride in his work and enjoying it as well as he can. Soon he is given more responsibility by his employer and more pay. Eventually, he becomes the manager. Demonstrates the relationship between the attitude of the worker toward his work and the results of his work."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Your Family*, Coronet, 1948, 11 minutes.

Educational collaborator: Viola Theman, Associate Professor of Education, Northwestern University.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "The film story of a happy family--the Brents. Stresses the importance of individual roles within the family and the need for

cooperation. Voice-over narration takes place of spoken dialogue. "

From the Indiana online catalog: "Stresses family cooperation by showing Tony and his family preparing their evening meal, serving it, contributing to the conversation, sharing the clean-up chores, and looking at a motion picture of themselves in which they work and play together."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State, Prelinger.

*Your Family Budget*, Coronet, 1949, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows a family as they plan a budget after realizing that all of the members of the family have spent the same twenty dollars for something each one wanted. Follows the family as they make out the budget and designate certain jobs for each member; then pictures them after the budget has been in operation. Stresses the advancement they have made by working and planning together."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Your Investment in the Future*, Coronet, 1952, 11 minutes.

Number 13 in the "Are You Ready for Service?" series.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "Demonstrates how service can offer good work experience and continued education as well as develop good work habits and a sense of direction. Shows how military service, when intelligently prepared for, can be included in constructive planning for the future. Examines the opportunities for vocational, social and personal development offered by the military. Explains how military service will encourage a young man to develop into a mature, responsible person who can live and work with other people effectively. Details the opportunities persons would have to learn about themselves and others, to learn how to manage their money, and to deal with the responsibilities of naming beneficiaries and claiming people on tax forms."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Your Plans*, Coronet, 1951, 11 minutes.

Number 2 in the "Are You Ready for Service?" series.

From the Iowa State online catalog: "An older brother helps a high school student understand how military service can be incorporated successfully into his life plans. Emphasizes that induction need not interfere with plans for a career, but instead can enhance the valuable skills one needs in any kind of employment. Shows that preparing for service includes activities that would be done in the planning for any future after school, including becoming responsible, looking after health concerns and studying towards a career that is interesting. Demonstrates how people can learn useful skills in military service that will apply to any future,

such as learning how to learn, how to apply what has been learned, how to take and give orders, how people work and how people work together."

Archival sources: Indiana, Iowa State.

*Your Thrift Habits*, Coronet, 1948, 11 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Shows how young people can budget their allowances by planning ahead, learning to forego expensive pleasures in favor of simpler ones, and saving systematically for the purchase of large items such as cameras and bicycles."

Archival source: Indiana.

*Youth in Crisis*, March of Time and 20th Century-Fox, 1943, 22 minutes.

From the Indiana online catalog: "Presents the problem of juvenile delinquency during World War II and the war's effect on the youth of the United States. Shows some of the temptations which beset wartime youth and discloses the work done by intelligent communities in handling the problem."

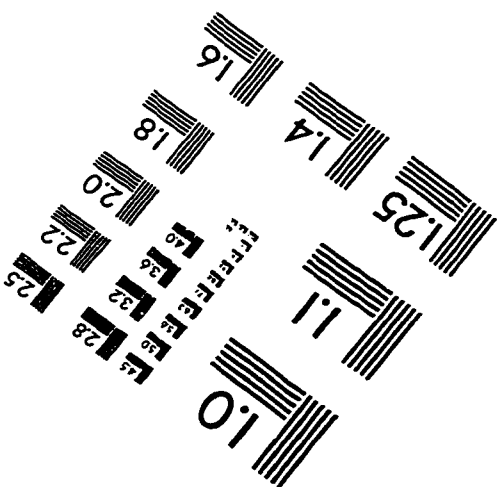
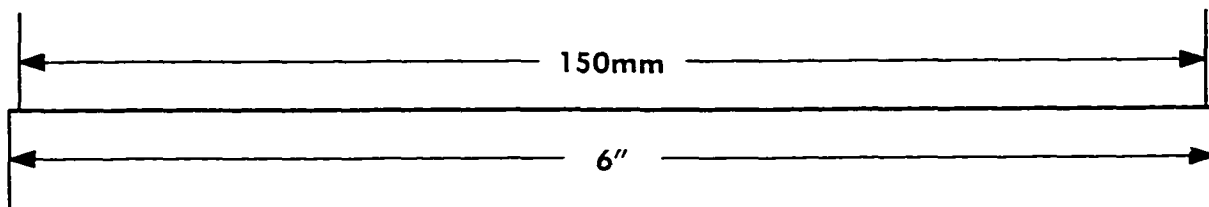
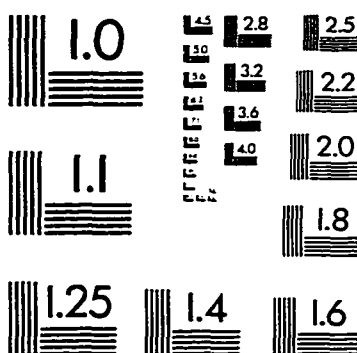
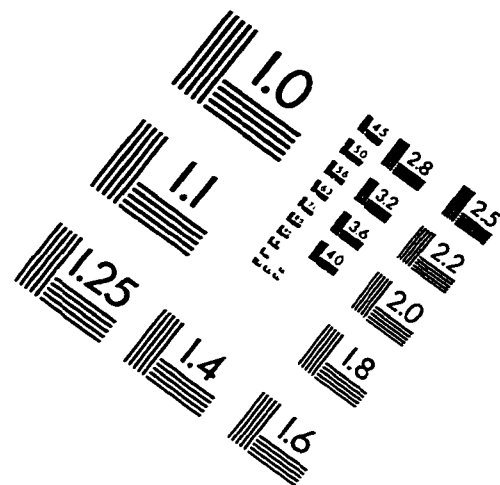
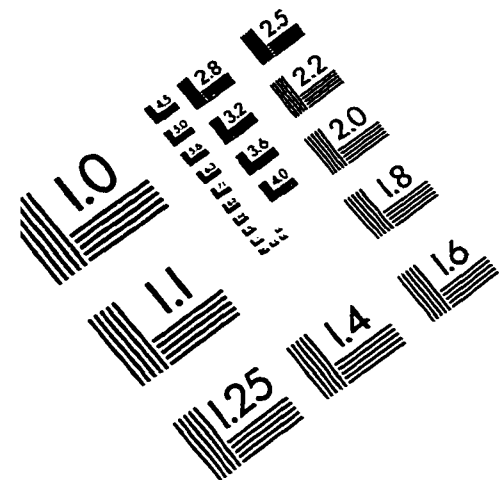
Archival source: Indiana.

\**Youth on the Go*, Illinois Bell, 30 minutes.

From *Educational Screen and Audiovisual Guide*, vol. 40, August 1961, Annual Blue Book of Audiovisual Materials, page 417: "Youth on the Go. Illinois Bell 30 min ...After-school activities of high school youth, concentrates on extra-curricular and co-curricular functions. Narrated by Alex Dreier."

Archival sources: none found.

# IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



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