## Macalester College
# DigitalCommons@Macalester College

Spring 4-24-2014

# Roosevelt, Boy Scouts, and the Formation of Muscular Christian Character

Gordon J. Christen
*Macalester College*, gordonchristen7@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/reli_honors

Part of the Christianity Commons, Comparative Methodologies and Theories Commons, History of Christianity Commons, History of Gender Commons, History of Religion Commons, History of Religions of Western Origin Commons, History of Science, Technology, and Medicine Commons, New Religious Movements Commons, Other Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons, Practical Theology Commons, Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons, Social History Commons, and the United States History Commons

Roosevelt, Boy Scouts, and the Formation of Muscular Christian Character.

Gordon Christen

Susanna Drake-Religious Studies

Macalester College

April 25th, 2014

Abstract:

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, many prominent Christians and political leaders saw a degenerative influence in industrializing America. For them, urban culture had eroded gender roles, personal strength, and moral fiber. So-called "Muscular Christians" prescribed physical exertion and wilderness experience to cure these ills. I argue that these values were embodied in idealized characters such as Theodore Roosevelt, Jesus, and the Boy Scout to give a form to cultural remedies. In the process, they became the terms upon which proper Americanism, and proper Christianity, were constructed.

*We do not admire the man of timid peace. We admire the man who embodies victorious effort; the man who never wrongs his neighbor, who is prompt to help a friend, but who has those virile qualities necessary to win in the stern strife of actual life.*

-Theodore Roosevelt[1]


For people of turn of the century America, Theodore Roosevelt represented a rejuvenated masculinity. Roosevelt overcame the urban, intellectual culture of his upbringing and critiqued its societal effect. He blamed a surplus of intellect and a deficit of "rougher...manlier virtues" for the sickness and weakness he so frequently observed in society.[2] Urban citizens throughout America, and the young Roosevelt himself, were diagnosed as "neurasthenics." Contemporary doctors prescribed "complete rest" for this disorder of "headaches, backaches, worry, hypochondria, melancholia, digestive irregularities, nervous exhaustion, and 'irritable weakness.'"[3] Roosevelt, however, suggested activity and strenuous life in nature for this outbreak of physical illness among the lethargic upper-classes.[4] As "an apostle of WASP rejuvenation" his advocacy of the Strenuous Life inspired devotees to emphasize "duty, bodily vigor, along with action over reflection, experience over 'book learning,' and pragmatic idealism over romantic sentimentality" and to reassert masculinity into a "feminine" vocabulary.[5] Though his personal philosophy was relatively common for his upbringing, generation, and social standing, Roosevelt acted out these so called "Muscular Christian" values, and gave them

---

[1]Roosevelt, Theodore. *The strenuous life; essays and addresses.*. New York: Century Co, 1901. http://www.theodore-roosevelt.com/images/research/thestrenuouslife.pdf (accessed March 29, 2014) 2.

[2] Roosevelt, Theodore "Machine Politics in New York City," *Century Magazine* 23 (November 1886) 76. Quoted in Putney, Clifford. 2001. *Muscular Christianity: manhood and sports in Protestant America, 1880-1920*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press 26.

[3] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 27.

[4] Gulick, Luther "Neurasthenia," *Physical Training* 2, no. 4 (January 1903) 148-152. Quoted in Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 27.

[5] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 33-34.

credence through his public achievements. Roosevelt's public image characterized this certain form of masculinity, but he is merely one prominent version of a larger tool of this discourse: idealized characters who exemplified American manhood.

Proponents of revitalized masculinity saw exemplars such as Roosevelt to be a means of strengthening culture morally and physically. Turn of the century England and America were undoubtedly concerned with proper moral fiber, and Roosevelt's contemporaries saw his life as the perfect example of "character". It's possible that all societies decry social decay, but cultural luminaries of the time were especially worried about lack of character, some sort of loosely (and fluidly) defined fortitude. However, by the turn of the century character certainly had to do with an ideal set of traits. Lord Baden-Powell, founder of Scouting, "saw character as a bundle of faculties and powers to be strengthened."[6] This era was especially and explicitly concerned with developing ideal adults, especially strong male leaders. Roosevelt proclaimed that, "In the long run, in the great battle of life, no brilliancy of intellect, no perfection of bodily development, will count when weighed in the balance against that assemblage of virtues, active and passive, of moral qualities, which we group together under the name of character."[7] "Character" in the present can seem a set of abstractly developed traits, but at the turn of the century its intention was more obvious. Character was built up in youth to prepare the boy to face the rigors of manhood.

The adolescent years, then, were an increasingly important time for religious and moral formation. The period known as "adolescence" was constructed by psychologists and the discourse of a newly-leisured industrial culture. Along with the physiological

---

[6] Macleod, David I. 1983. *Building character in the American boy, 1870-1920: the Boy Scouts, the YMCA, and their forerunners.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press 138.

[7] Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life VI: Character and Success* 114.

changes of puberty, the preteen and teenage years became the crux of moral development. A person's faith, health, sexuality, ethics, and gender identity were determined by proper adolescent conditioning. To build character was to form proper adults, to induce the experiences that would produce model men and women.

Roosevelt's frequently retold biography was archetypically aligned with this concept of character, and was an instance of the imagining of "semimythical models of an ideal boyhood."[8] A bespectacled, asthmatic boy described as a "tall, thin lad with bright eyes and legs like pipestems,"[9] he counteracted "WASP malaise" through exercise and achieved the height of virility.[10] Roosevelt was easily bullied by his early-teenaged peers, and in response he practiced boxing, hunted, moved to a ranch, and built himself into a physically, intellectually, and morally strong military and political leader. He was presented as a model for men and boys to emulate. Also aligned with muscular Christians specifically, Roosevelt challenged the "effeminacy of character" associated with urban "overcivilization" and intellectualism through emphasis on nature, masculinity, and military service. These publicized feats, and his position as commander in chief helped Roosevelt represent a Christianity that emphasized manliness and robust nationalism.[11][12] He "brought a sense of the old time religious fervor to public life"[13] and in doing so came to mean more culturally than the summation of his actions.

According to Clifford Putney, Roosevelt's appeal to his contemporaries would be difficult to overstate. With a national presence, the man's story served to unite the

---

[8] Macleod, *Building Character 52.*

[9] Reisner, Christian F. 1922. *Roosevelt's religion*. New York: Abingdon Press. http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/2357139.html 75.

[10] Putney, *Muscular Christianity 33-34*

[11] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 26.

[12] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 35.

[13] Burton, David Henry. 1972. *Theodore Roosevelt*. New York: Twayne Publishers 208.

discourses he'd come to embody and to deploy them, unified, on the national scale he had achieved.[14] The dedication to Reisner's 1922 work *Roosevelt's Religion* is inscribed "to young men/ in the hope/ that they may be as wise as was/ Mr. Roosevelt/ in appreciating and appropriating concrete Christianity." Additionally, upon Roosevelt's death, the BSA emphasised the transitional significance of Roosevelt's strenuous boyhood in a memorial resolution written by Herman Hagedorn: "He was frail; he made himself a tower of strength. He was timid; he made himself a lion of courage. He was a dreamer; he became one of the great doers of all time."[15] Roosevelt, as a mythical as well as actual figure, characterized the solutions to the perceived social ills of urban, industrial culture; however romanticized, his ideology and public persona made him a powerful figure for mythologizing, and he symbolized larger cultural values of manliness, action, and upright citizenship.

In my inquiry I aim to uncover the larger discursive strategy underlying his importance. Due to revolutions in industry, physiology, and psychology, Victorian masculinity faced a perceived challenge. The changing social landscape seemed to erode the proper identities of days past. Under these conditions idealized characters, such as Roosevelt or "The Boy Scout," were developed to solidify, symbolize, and continually define the proper attributes of Christian manhood and adolescence. First, I outline the contexts of Muscular Christian and adolescent discourse, and present their suggested solutions for cultural degeneration. Second, I examine the characters forwarded in those discourses and the methods of their construction. Finally, I focus on the Boy Scouts of

---

[14] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 34-35.
[15] Reisner, *Roosevelt's Religion* 245.

America[16] as a constructed character of Americanism, Muscular Christianity, and adolescent theory. However, to examine this model of sacralized characters it is important to outline the underlying religious theory from which idealized characters can be understood as sacred. Such theory will draw from Durkheim, a relative contemporary to these movements, and Foucault, whose concepts of discourse and power can embolden such rhetorical characters. Finally, my view of religious discourses will be informed by J.W. Laine's distinction of religious and "metareligious" concepts.

## I. Theoretical Underpinnings

*A society can neither create itself nor recreate itself*
*without at the same time creating the ideal.*[17]
-Emile Durkheim

*The mechanisms of power are addressed to the body,*
*to life, to what causes it to proliferate, to what reinforces the species, its stamina,*
*its ability to dominate, or its capacity for being used.*[18]
-Michel Foucault

The theory I set forth is a development of Durkheim's understanding of religion through discourse theory. Durkheim, in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life,* views religion as inherently societal. In his view, religion is "the preeminent form and abbreviated expression of the whole of collective life," which attempts to make shared feelings referential. The use of symbols and language (which, for Durkheim is a form of symbolism) creates the realm of the conceptual and the category of the sacred, "an ideal

---

[16] Henceforth "BSA"

[17] Durkheim, Émile, Carol Cosman, and Mark Sydney Cladis. 2008. *The elementary forms of religious life*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press 317.

[18] Foucault, Michel, and Robert Hurley. 1988. *The history of sexuality*. New York: Vintage Books 147.

superimposed on the real."[19] Religion is a major mode by which society views its relations and the way in which those relations developed. Of course, Durkheim's specific analysis has to do with texts and observations that might be considered orientalist or colonial, but his overarching philosophy was undoubtedly developed from a western perspective. Therefore, as I examine the development of the discourse of Muscular Christianity, which was contemporary with Durkheim's theory, I believe his theory of religion to be particularly applicable to this historical moment. Foucault's discourse theory serves as a way to complicate and nuance Durkheim's theory; Foucault's work also addresses the construction of ideal bodies, which is related to my analysis of the construction of ideal characters.

Most important to my inquiry are three theoretical points:

1. Religion exists as discourse and practice, not as a rigid monolithic structure, but as a diverse series of power interactions that construct and reconstruct meanings over time and space. Religion is wholly interlocked with society, and is best observed in a certain temporal and geographic setting on the terms of that region's economic, political, and social discourses.

2. Human interaction and language construct an ideal that is termed sacred in a religious context. Due to the corporeal fact, this idealization also involves the building of sacred bodies to conceptualize humanity.

3. Based on these ideals, certain identities are reified and placed as a sanctified entity for society as a whole; these idealizations are an exemplary means, produced through discourse, by which that discourse is imposed onto bodies.

---

[19] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms* 314-317.

**A. Durkheim**

Durkheim defines a religion as "a unified set of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and surrounded by prohibitions--beliefs and practices that unite its adherents in a single moral community called a church."[20] On the surface, phrases such as "unified" and "single moral community" seem to convey a certain rigidity in churches. However, even to Durkheim's perception religious traditions took on different characteristics over time. Certainly, he finds the basis of all religion in a "rhythm of collective activity" that reproduces "states of consciousness that we have already experienced."[21] However, sufficiently matured religions, namely those purporting monotheism, can eventually "stimulate higher mental functions." His major goal in the work is to "show how [religion] gradually developed, grew more complex, and became what it is at the moment under scrutiny."[22] The teleology in this view of religion is apparent, but when tempered it remains clear that changes in religious understandings were apparent in early twentieth century discourses. The rigid and collective structures described by Durkheim are subject to change in concert with the emergence of science[23], the interaction of tribes and cultures[24], or the contention of "the ideal of yesterday and the ideal of today."[25]   In Durkheim's view, however,societies are united through the shared ideal representations that constitute their religions.

The construction of an ideal is an essential facet of religion for Durkheim, and a

---

[20] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms* 46. It is important to note the Christocentric terminology of "church" to describe a religious community, and this only clarifies Durkheim's western perspective on religion. However, in this case Durkheim is using the term to describe any "moral community" formed by a relationship to sacred things. Tribal religions would be classified as churches along with larger Christian denominations. As I'll show below, Durkheim's work certainly emphasizes the increased complexity of the Christian church and more "modern" religions.

[21] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms* 12.

[22] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms* 4-5.

[23] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms* 324.

[24] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms* 321.

[25] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms* 318.

defining characteristic of objects termed "sacred." Durkheim says that "what defines the sacred is that it is superimposed on the real; and the ideal answers to the same definition." The ideal "is a natural product of social life."[26] The ideal society is part of profane society, but is also the basis for its morality and social structures; it is a mode of existence upon which the real is considered. The realm of the conceptual creates the terms of religious discourse. Conversation is an exchange of concepts, and in their universalization is constructed a set of assumptions and ideals that constitute our personal and religious philosophies. This is not simply because of the communicability of generalizations, but because communicating experience "is to project onto sensation a light that illuminates, penetrates, and transforms it."[27]

For Durkheim, religious concepts are "collective representations," agreed upon truths "outside of individual sensations and images...through [which] men understand one another."[28] When the area of concern is bodies and their actions, on the proper state of humanity, it follows that bodies will be the medium of an ideal's construction. If we propose ideal humanity, ideal humans must serve as examples. Based on theories of totemism, Durkheim sees collective life as leading to "secondary sacred beings" associated with individuals, and by intermingling with other cultures these secondary beings become associated with more omniscient gods.[29] My contribution is to broaden this idea, and to suggest that collective ideals are often expressed through characters that don't necessarily become known as gods, though most take on something of an idealized supernatural character or religious iconography. Roosevelt again is a useful example, as

---

[26] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms* 317.

[27] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms* 331.

[28] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms* 332.

[29] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms* 321.

he clearly holds a prominent place in imagination that was probably less extreme in life.

In my analysis of the characters of Muscular Christianity, I consider the methods through which the sacred was interpreted and understood in the era. This understanding becomes clear based on the writings of Durkheim and the models that were so emphasized by Scouting's founders, Roosevelt, and Christian youth organizers of the time. These leaders helped sacralize a set of traits and experiences that were central to building character; they related a "collective ideal" to be emulated. The structured identity of proper character was the quintessential goal for turn-of-the-century organization of the masculine body, and this exemplifies the theoretical construction of the sacred suggested in Durkheim's contemporaneous work.

## B. Foucault

Foucault informs my interpretation of Durkheim. Durkheim writes, "Collective representations are the product of a vast cooperative effort that extends not only through space but over time; their creation has involved a multitude of different minds associating, mingling, combining their ideas and feelings--the accumulation of generations of experience and knowledge."[30] I employ Foucault's theories of power/knowledge to examine the role of discourse in such religious creation, and I invoke Foucault to complicate supposed permanence and simple cooperation in Durkheim's religion. Foucault suggests, "we are dealing not nearly so much with a negative mechanism of exclusion as with the operation of a subtle network of discourses, special knowledges, pleasures, and powers."[31] The construction of a collective ideal is

---

[30] Durkheim, *Elementary Forms* 18.

[31] Foucault, *Sexuality* 72.

not the whole of society referring to an object and constructing its importance, but a web of interactions that develop the meaning and relatability of collective objects.

In *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1,* Foucault examines the way bodies and sex are transformed into discourse.[32] Through confessional interactions (which are spread to include "a whole series of relationships: children and parents, students and educators, patients and psychiatrists, delinquents and experts"[33]) individual pleasures are taxonomized and transformed into truth, through which power is constructed and applied. In my perception, this attempt to create a "uniform truth of sex" is an essentially social act.[34] The "intensification of the body" for the purpose of "maximizing life" was "the self-affirmation of one class rather than the enslavement of another."[35] Viewed in the religious perspective of Durkheim, this categorization of bodies is part of a larger discussion of ideal religious identities and activities: the formation of the sacred.

Such idealized identities can be seen as one mode of power in the Foucauldian model. In *History of Sexuality: Volume 1* Foucault describes the development and deployment of a middle-class sexuality onto bodies. Sexual "heresies" such as homosexuality were rhetorically structured and given "strange baptismal names." This "alien" taxonomy "did not aim to suppress [minor perversions], but rather gave [them] an analytical, visible, and permanent reality: it was implanted in bodies."[36] Not suppressed, but specified, these heresies seemed abnormalities against bourgeois sexuality. They were part of the industrial machinery attempting to "formulate the uniform truth of sex," and

---

[32] Foucault, *Sexuality* 28.
[33] Foucault, *Sexuality 63.*
[34] Foucault, *Sexuality* 69.
[35] Foucault, *Sexuality* 123.
[36] Foucault, *Sexuality* 43-44.

create rigid categories "in an ordered system of knowledge."[37] To contrast, the bourgeois developed its own sexuality and formed "a specific body based on it, a 'class' body with its health, hygiene, descent, and race." This was "the incarnation of sex on its body, the endogamy of sex and the body."[38] I draw on Foucault's analysis of sexuality to show how religious identity was constructed and deployed in a similar manner. When Muscular Christian practitioners formulated their discourses, they created the ordered systems of the ideal, often in relation to developing middle class sexuality and values. They represented these ideals upon bodies to which the public would be receptive. These authoritative characters displayed the essential characteristics of Muscular Christianity overtly in their bodies and narratives. The characters of Muscular Christian discourse, including, but not limited to  Roosevelt, are one way of disseminating a uniform truth of religious identity.

## C. Laine

I use James Laine's recent concept of "metareligion" to contextualize Muscular Christianity. In Foucault's understanding, what Durkheim considered "set apart and surrounded by prohibitions" exists through more implicit interactions. Religions may explicitly manifest as the entities called "churches" but their discourses relate them to economic, political, and other social realities. In the case I'm considering, Unitarians and mainline Protestants as well as politicians and psychologists constructed the uniform truths of the Muscular Christian body.  Muscular Christianity may be an instance of what J.W. Laine calls metareligion, uniting seemingly heterogeneous culture based on

---

[37] Foucault, *Sexuality* 69.

[38] Foucault, *Sexuality* 124.

underlying assumptions about power and morality.[39] Muscular Christianity, rather than promoting "the particular doctrines of a specific sect or religion," encouraged vague religious and political values that could be agreed upon by a diverse cross-section of America. For many Americans, masculinity, strength, character, and craftsmanship were "taken-for-granted" values, essential to their worldview, that united them under the discourse of Muscular Christianity.

According to James Laine, "all religious traditions are *fundamentally* and not just superficially affected by the historical and geographic location, the culture within which their adherents live out their faith." Religion can seem to its followers to be part of "a universal, unchanging, and eternal truth," but it is more useful to study the religion in its social context.[40] Through interaction with the economic, social, and political environment the discourses and privileges of religion can be rethought. In the attempt to define religious identity based exclusively on denomination, sect, or tradition, one misses the metareligion, the unifying attitudes that unite geographically and socially across traditions.

I deal with Muscular Christianity as a moment of rhetorical transformation engaged with the cultural changes of industrialization, the ostensible invocation of a new ideal over an existing one. Though individuals might participate in a variety of denominational and sectarian rituals and theologies, there can be no doubt that national symbols (such as the "Boy Scout" or Roosevelt) have been co-opted within the underlying discourses of American identity.

The characters of Muscular Christianity are a combination of reimagined heroes

---

[39] James W. Laine,"Metareligion" (unpublished ms.)

[40] Laine, *Metareligion*.

and new embodiments, and through their deployment proper manliness, identity, and experience were fleshed out. These characters incorporated cultural lamentations over prevailing medical discourses and came to signify the desired state. These characters, however, are not consistently personified, but fluid with the ideals of the cultural contexts in which they are used. My goal is to consider this well-established moment of historical flux, Muscular Christianity, as a backdrop for the exposition of an exercise of bodily power. Regardless of what we can say historically about the feminization of religion or the effects of city life, the deployment of moral stances in opposition to these trends offer a qualifiable assertion in religious discourse, and a reconstruction of sacred identities. By utilizing existing authoritative texts on this period, *Building Character in the American Boy* by David Macleod and *Muscular Christianity* by Clifford Putney, as well as primary sources of character construction, I examine a moment when characters and their conceptual bodies made for a primary means of religious dissemination. I will explore the way these bodies and their traits were invoked, and continue to be referenced, in the formation of models of adulthood and adolescence.

## II. Muscular Christianity

*Though the conditions of life have grown so puzzling in their complexity, though the changes have been so vast, yet we may remain absolutely sure of one thing, that now, as ever in the past, and as it ever will be in the future, there can be no substitute for the elemental virtues, for the elemental qualities to which we allude when we speak of a man as not only a good man but as emphatically a man.*

These discourses that came to a head in Theodore Roosevelt's heyday (around the turn of the century) were termed "Muscular Christianity" by commentators and practitioners alike. Proponents of Muscular Christianity lamented the promotion of exclusively spiritual virtues in a demanding physical world. In their age of so-called "nervous masculinity," Muscular Christians conflated bodily strength with spiritual strength and showed little interest or enthusiasm for the "soft" spirituality they perceived in churches. In *Muscular Christianity* historian Clifford Putney broadly defines it "as a Christian commitment to health and manliness."[42] In this period of social and economic flux, many Protestant denominations, and eventually American culture as a whole, saw increasing emphasis on physicality and supposedly "traditional" male gender roles. Muscular Christianity's social leaders sacralized the supposed masculinity, toughness, and health of rural life in response to the antagonist of urban living, its feminine influences, and its new, repetitive, industrial jobs .[43] Defining their ideal characters in opposition to industrial "overcivilization" and an effeminate church, Muscular Christians superimposed the strength and health of an idyllic past over their complex and dynamic realities.

Usage of the term "Muscular Christianity" first appeared in an 1857 edition of the *Saturday Review* in an article on Charles Kinglsey's *Two Years Ago*. A year later the term titled an article describing Thomas Hughes' book *Tom Brown's School Days* in *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*.[44] Hughes and Kingsley's subsequent writings in the Muscular

---

[41] Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life* 314.

[42] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 11.

[43] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 1.

[44] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 11.

Christian genre identified themes that eventually flourished in the United States. Each author forwarded similar goals in their writings, though they disagreed on the use of the term "Muscular Christian." Kingsley thought it an oversimplification that could be generalized for negative interpretation while Hughes used the term liberally.[45] *Tom Brown's School Days* was by far the most popular novel of the genre, such that in his essay "What We Can Expect of the American Boy," Theodore Roosevelt considered it one of two books every boy should read.[46] In the novel, Tom is a young boy "whose combination of strength and piety mark him as an embryonic Christian gentleman."[47] Tom refuses to take female guidance and rejects his upper-class lifestyle; resultingly he is sent to Rugby School, an all male academy. At the academy Tom finds himself the ideal medium in the strength-religion spectrum; between "Flashman, [a bully] who can boast of strength but not of the goodness necessary to use that strength appropriately," and "Tom's pious but ineffectual friend Arthur." Tom's character is the "just right" balance of the two attributes, especially after being properly influenced by a headmaster who "hit upon [the means] for turning out Christian gentlemen [with] organized sports, whose rules, chains of command, and strenuosity made them ideal teachers of duty and hard work."[48]

Through such "adventure novels replete with high principles and manly Christian heroes," Hughes and Kingsley stressed fitness and bodily service as important factors of religious life; God's work in the physical realm was most easily accomplished by

---

[45] Harrington, Henry R. 1977. "Charles Kingsley's Fallen Athlete". *Victorian Studies*. 21 (1): 73-86. Quoted in Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 15.

[46] Roosevelt, Theodore, "What We Can Expect of the American Boy," *St. Nicholas 27* (1900):573. Reprinted at Foundations Magazine : Roosevelt, Theodore. Foundations Magazine, "The American Boy." Accessed March 17, 2014. http://www.foundationsmag.com/americanboy-com.html.

[47] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 16.

[48] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 15-16.

physically adept bodies. Kingsley, an Anglican clergyman, encouraged a new appreciation of worldliness over the metaphysical spirituality he saw promoted by ascetic clergy in his own church.[49]  Decrying celibacy and asceticism as effeminate, Kingsley valued the qualities of "manfulness" and "usefulness" over what he viewed as the contemplative, inactive religion of the time.

Significantly, the system of English government and religion facilitated the spread of Muscular Christianity throughout Britain several decades earlier than in the US. In England, where the Anglican church and state were interlocking entities, Christian boyhood had a direct connection with imperial necessity. In the works of Muscular Christian authors, athletics builds the ability to act out God's work in the physical world but also gave the strength to be warriors and imperial leaders.[50] For Kingsley, these activities were "likely to enhance the body's serviceability," to God, but also reinforced masculine qualities essential for colonial administration.[51] In the United States, Muscular Christianity and Theodore Roosevelt's "strenuous life" still engaged patriotism and national identity as an important characteristic. Accoring to Roosevelt, "in this world the nation that has trained itself to a career of unwarlike and isolated ease is bound, in the end, to go down before other nations which have not lost the manly and adventurous qualities."[52] Promotion of a physical Christianity went hand in hand with the virtues of imperial power.

As Kingsley and Hughes were introduced in the US, the message was seen to

---

[49] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 12.

[50] Henry R. Harrington, "Muscular Christianity: A Study of the Development of a Victorian Idea" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1971), p. 178; F.E. Kingsley, ed., *Charles Kingsley: His Letters and memories of His Life*, vol. 1 (London 1877), p. 249; and Charles Kingsley, "What, Then Does Dr. Newman mean?" in John Henry Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua: Being a History of His Religious Opinions,* ed. Martin J. Svaglic (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 363. Quoted in Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 12.

[51] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 13.

[52] Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life* 6.

especially contradict the American experience. Physical fitness was the cornerstone of Kingsley and Hughes' novels. The Englishmen promoted "the idea that sports built Christian character" in contrast to an America that downplayed or disdained recreational physical exertion. According to the views of Muscular Christian practitioners such as Edward Hale, Horace Bushnell, and Theodore Roosevelt the United States possessed a Calvinist tradition that demonized recreation; according to Washington Gladden, American children of the 1840's grew up "thinking 'that if [they] became a Christian it would be wrong for [them] to play ball.'"[53] For Thomas Wentworth Higginson -Unitarian minister, fan of Kingsley, and prominent American Muscular Christian even in 1858-many churches taught "that physical vigor and sanctity were incompatible."[54] Reintroducing play as a form of spiritual reinforcement subverted old traditions but was actually portrayed as a return to a more physically active past.[55] This sentiment was dispersed through Kingsley and Hughes' novelizations, and Muscular Christianity quickly spread throughout America's anglophile upper-classes.[56]

These early proponents of Muscular Christian discourse had identified the themes that would define the movement in American. In response to the transition from agriculture to industry Hughes and Kingsley constructed overcivilized city life and its supposed feminine influences as new societal ills to which the only solution was the re-creation of nostalgic upbringing through forms of play. While the decay of youth was medicalized in psychological discourses these themes would continue as tenets of Muscular Christianity, and nostalgia continued to define the prescribed remedies.

---

[53] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 20.

[54] Thomas W. Higginson, "Saints, and Their Bodies," *Atlantic Monthly* 1, no.5 (1858): 583-587. Quoted in Putney 20.

[55] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 20. Hale saw sports as a remedy to an America that was obsessed with work.

[56] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 19.

## A. From Agriculture to Industry

Muscular Christian practitioners' cultural critiques stemmed from the altered social formations of an industrializing nation. By 1880 industrialization and urbanization exploded. In that decade cities grew by 50% , six times faster than in the previous decade.[57] From the antebellum period through reconstruction "much of the middle class still lived in smaller towns," but the rise and dominance of factory production towards the end of the century "eroded [the] independence" of artisans and promoted "administrative hierarchies and bureaucratic rules."[58] The relative prosperity of industrialization and urban growth shrank the size of families, and separated men and women from the strenuous necessities of agricultural life.[59] [60] David Macleod explains the increasing importance of a rural past to an America, newly urban, that still had the farm or small town as its moral frame of reference:

> As cities mushroomed, contemporaries lamented the steady drain of young people off the farms. In the evening light of nostalgia, rural communities appeared innocent, homogenous places to grow up, whereas cities glared in the darkness of popular imagining as hellish centers of luxury and misery, where feverish debauchery followed hectic work. To panicky observers, cities and their immigrant slums were like metastasizing cancers.[61]

---

[57] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 28.

[58] Macleod, *Building Character* 10, 11, and 14.

[59] Macleod, *Building Character* 15.

[60] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 24.

[61] Macleod, David I. 1982. "Act Your Age: Boyhood, Adolescence, and the Rise of The Boy Scouts of America."*Journal Of Social History* 16, no. 2: *Historical Abstracts with Full Text*, EBSCO*host* (accessed October 31, 2013) 5.

Ernest Thompson Seton (Chief Scout from 1910-1915) made the same observation in 1910. He saw disrespect and lack of handiness in adolescents of his time, and attributed it "partly [to] the growth of immense cities, with the consequent specialization of industry...;partly through the decay of small farming...; and partly through the established forms of religion losing their hold."[62] Placing significance on a character from the past, Seton suggested that "strong, self-reliant" farm boys who were respectful to superiors had been replaced by "flat-chested cigarette smokers with shaky nerves and doubtful vitality."[63] In contrast to the imagined simplicity of rural life, critics of urbanization found the cities to be taxing and full of strife and immoral influence. In addition to debauchery, the city also disconnected its wealthier citizens with the rigorous necessities of rural life. Without the physical benefits of rural labor as well as the character-building effects of nature and the strenuous male-dominated space it provided, Muscular Christian practitioners worried their cities were making them "overcivilized.". To Theodore Roosevelt an overcivilized man was "the timid man, the lazy man, the man who distrusts his country...who has lost the great fighting, masterful virtues, the ignorant man, and the man of dull mind." According to Roosevelt, the "cloistered life...saps the hardy virtues in a nation, as it saps them in the individual."[64] Moralists worried about the state of manliness as a whole, as the "shorter days and faster pace" of industrial work changed the nature of masculinity by not offering "the same safe, steady preoccupation" of farm life .[65]

---

[62] Seton, Ernest Thompson. "The Boy Scouts in America." *The Outlook*, Volume 95 July 23, 1910. http://www.unz.org/Pub/Outlook-1910jul23-00630 (accessed March 29, 2014).

[63] Seton, *Boy Scouts.*

[64] Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life*.

[65] Macleod, *Act Your Age 5.*

**B. Feminization**

Along with the absence of rural work ethic and increase in vice, overcivilization encompassed a worry about prolonged dependency on the city's "effeminate" influences of school and church. High Schools, seen as a predominantly female space, saw a jump in enrollment. Muscular Christian practitioners and boy's workers worried about a lack of traditionally masculine influence while boys spent most of their time at school, church, or at home with their mothers.[66] G. Stanley Hall, the early 20th century psychologist and author of *Adolescence*, saw the church's feminine character as a flaw in teachers and their message. Religious educators went too far in their instruction of malleable adolescents, and their over-enthusiasm cultivated "a gushy, religious sentimentalism of a unique type the envirates character, [to] favor flightiness, unctuousness, mobile and superficial sentiments, [to] incline to ultra-femininity and patheticism, and to love of climaxes that react to apathy."[67] Compounding changing ideas of manly roles and spaces, the feminine influence was supposedly spurned on by an outbreak of gender challenging "modern women." By wearing pants, smoking cigars, and by lecturing and writing, this (probably small) subset of women embodied the invasion of male identity and the breakdown of gender distinctions valued by Hall and others.[68]

Muscular Christian activity and manliness was promoted as a contrast to a supposedly spiritual, inactive, and therefore feminine church experience that prevailed in late 19th century. In *The Manliness of Christ* Thomas Hughes observed that Christianity was seen as a demasculating factor: "[YMCA members'] tone and influence are said to lack manliness, and the want of manliness is attributed to their avowed profession of

---

[66] Macleod, *Act Your Age* 6.

[67] Jordan, *Recruiting Young Love* 4.

[68] Putney, *Muscular Christianity 30.*

Christianity."[69]  In one sense, this disparity is also backed up by historical data. They weren't alone in their observations; English traveler Frances Trollope explained that "there was surely no other country in the world 'where religion had so strong a hold upon the women or a slighter hold upon the men."[70], as by 1899 "women reportedly comprised three-quarters of the church's membership and nine-tenths of its attendance."[71]

In *The Feminization of American Culture* Ann Douglass presents the sentimental and effeminate characteristics of the 19th and early 20th century church as an effect of industrial capitalism: Privileged men took over business leadership and left church management to women and clergy. With women as its most devoted audience, Protestant faith began to increasingly extol the virtues of sentimentality, romanticism, and home life often associated with the feminine.[72] Even under patriarchy, Douglass argues, women were able to assert themselves and discuss their role through the public forums of religion and literature. Though her empowering feminist revision could be critiqued, Douglass clearly reinforces the existence of the Muscular Christian notion that church and school life supposedly elevated a cultural femininity.[73] Higginson's writing displays the visibility of this perceived femininity to contemporaries. By his reckoning, the least manly males were encouraged to join the clergy while the most virile were ushered into secular careers.[74]  Beyond the promotion of "nurturance, refinement, and sensitivity," ministers equated women with angels, enumerated Christ's feminine characteristics, and

---

[69]Hughes, Thomas. *The manliness of Christ*. Boston: Houghton, Osgood and Co., 1880. https://archive.org/details/manlinesschrist01hughgoog (accessed March 29, 2014) 4.

[70] Milton Powell, ed., *The Voluntary Church: American Religious Life, 1740-1865, Seen through the Eyes of European Visitors* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 68-69. Quoted in Putney 25.

[71] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 41.

[72] Douglas, Ann. 1977. *The feminization of American culture*. New York: Knopf.

[73] Putney, *Muscular Christianity 25.*

[74] Thomas W. Higginson, "Saints, and Their Bodies," *Atlantic Monthly* 1, no.5 (1858): 583-587. Quoted in Putney 25.

supported women's spiritual leadership within the home.[75] From the Muscular Christian

perspective, something had to be done.


## C. The Solutions

Even prior to full-on industrial explosion in the US, many Muscular Christians

hoped to provide positive urban influences while simultaneously challenging these

supposedly feminine, anti-recreational church structures. In doing so, they began

formulating the social antidotes that would define the movement. Influenced by Kingsley

and Hughes, Edward Everett Hale, Reverend Horace Bushnell, Higginson, and Ralph

Waldo Emerson promoted exercise and play as part of one's spiritual strength, and

Muscular Christians played a vital role in introducing physical exertion to the lexicon of

American youth organization. Even prior to the Civil War, "middle- and upper-class

Americans reached out...to counter urban disorder and restore the moral order of the

small community" through "voluntaristic schemes-ranging from Sunday schools and tract

societies to YMCAs and children's aid societies."[76]Much of the Muscular Christian

actions pre-1880 sought the proliferation of gymnasiums and athletic spaces for spiritual

and moral reinvigoration.[77]  Reverend Henry Ward Beecher first suggested using church

property for leisure with the introduction of gyms at YMCAs.[78] Eventually this project

was undertaken in 1869 in New York, and the *Times* considered the move a "concession

to the Muscular Christianity of the time."[79] Moses Coit Tyler even suggested combining

---

[75] Critique mentioned on Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 215 and quotes from 25.

[76] Macleod, *Building Character* 10.

[77]  Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 22.

[78] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 22.

[79]  A CHRISTIAN CLUB. 1869. *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Jul 18, 1869.
http://ezproxy.macalester.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/92502540?accountid=12205 (accessed April 11, 2014).

congregations and converting vacated churches into gyms.

In fact, before 1880 concessions came with plenty of resistance from the American establishment. "Muscular Christian" was used as an insult, and the emphasis on bodily strength was derided as jockish. Also, supposed feminization or emasculation was contradicted by the Civil War Generation. Having proved masculinity on the battlefield, generations who lived through the war had little desire to infuse Christianity with manly traits.[80] Additionally, the industrial issues obvious in England by Kingsley's time were less blatant in the United States, where agriculture remained a primary economic force through 1880 and beyond.[81] Finally "body-denying" churches held deeper roots, and thus enjoyed far more cultural power in America, especially when it came to discouraging recreation.[82] In the perception of this rising mentality of revitalization, the remains of contemplative Calvinism, the valorization of docile femininity, and a still-agricultural culture held back the religious resurgences that had already flowered in England.

As the irregular pace of an agricultural life outdoors gave way to "whole weeks stretched drum-tight by work" in an industrial setting recreation was seen as increasingly important. American readers of Kingsley and Hughes were some of the first to suggest such a resurgence in their own nation.[83] According to Unitarian minister Edward Everett Hale, the gap of work and recreation led to "haggard" and "overwrought" culture that developed youth into effeminate beings. Sports, play, and the outdoors represented healthy alternatives to a more sedentary urban life, and Hale saw the lack of cricket and

---

[80] Putney, *Muscular Christianity 23.*

[81] Putney, *Muscular Christianity 24.*

[82] Ibid.

[83] Macleod, *Building Character* 18.

rowing among boys as an example of an obsession with work and indifference to personal health.[84] Sports and recreation would prevent people from growing up "puny, stunted, and diseased," and promoted imperial and spiritual morals.[85]

The YMCA model was closest to Kingsley and Hughes' Muscular Christianity, but for American practitioners overcivilization required additional remedies. American Muscular Christian practitioners also found such a remedy in the natural world. Nature, a primary means by which nostalgia and idealism were expressed, was for Roosevelt and Seton an alternative to excessive sport. Seton explains that the Woodcraft Indians "was aimed to counteract the evils of the arena style of baseball, football, and racing by substituting the cleaner, saner pursuits of woodcraft and scouting." To some, like him, large-scale sports were but one more manifestation of urban "degeneracy."[86] Roosevelt similarly considered sports useful, but also a possible distraction to utilitarian masculinity, saying "When a man so far confuses ends and means as to think that fox-hunting, or polo, or foot-ball, or whatever else the sport may be, is to be itself taken as the end, instead of as the mere means of preparation to do work that counts when the time arises, when the occasion calls—why, that man had better abandon sport altogether."[87] A balance between intellect, strength, and Christian morality was most significant for Roosevelt, but for him and Seton small farming communities were "the healthiest type" of social organization.[88] Natural experience was one way to enact similarly beneficial

---

[84] Washington Gladden, *Amusements: Their Uses and Abuses* (North Adams, Mass., 1866), p. 6; Edward Everett Hale, *Public amusement for Poor and Rich* (Boston, 1857), pp. 5-6, 20-23; and Mark Carnes and Clyde Griffen, eds., *Meanings for manhood* (Chicago; University of Chicago Press 1990), p. 189. Quoted in Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 20.

[85] Charles Kingsley, *Sanitary and Social Lectures and Essays* (London, 1880), p. 265. Quoted in Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 13.

[86] Seton, *Boy Scouts*.

[87] Roosevelt, *The American Boy*.

[88] Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life*. On balance of intellect, strength, and Christianity see VI. Character and Success 117-120. On small town life V. Civic Helpfulness 93 and 105-106.

experiences and to revive preindustrial life.[89]

Naturalist John Muir informed much of these discourses with his widely read tracts, described as "radically displaced versions of Evangelical Protestantism," on the restorative character of nature. Muir "took all objects of perception as signposts of the eternal," and saw the "woods, rivers, and mountains to be a place of higher education"[90] In addition to its increasing sentimental significance, it represented a rejuvenating refuge. Muir himself describes his experience with ailment on his first trip to Yosemite:

> My health, which suffered such wreck in the South, has been thoroughly patched and mended in the mountains of California. I had a week or two of fever before leaving the plains for Yo Semite, but it was not sever, and I was only laid up three or four days, and a month in the Sierra cooled with mountain winds and delicious crystal water has effected a complete cure.[91]

Among Muir's contemporaries, nature's revitalizing effects also seemed an excellent method for curing urban ills. One Scout leader in 1915 hoped to "get the boy back to the old-fashioned spirit of courtesy, sturdiness of character, and respect for law and duly constituted authority."[92]

The fear of overcivilization clearly played a role in America's blossoming turn-of-the-century love affair with nature. Camping and hiking did offer a refuge from the vice and corruption of city life, and nature magazines such as *Field and Stream, Outing,*

---

[89] Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life X. The American Boy* 156.

[90] Muir, John, Robert Engberg, and Donald Wesling. 1999. *To Yosemite and beyond writings from the years 1863 to 1875*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=12510. 13-15.

[91] Muir, *To Yosemite* 43.

[92] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 105.

and *Outdoor Life* show the increasing importance placed on a natural experience.[93] For the boys who could afford it, camping was also one place in which they would not be overindulged by the "softening" influences of food, leisure, fancy clothes, or hot showers. According to urban parents, leaders, and psychologists new ways of life corrupted a boy's essential character, and could lead to a weakening of the masculine fiber of a whole society if not remedied by proper developmental experience.[94]

Producing strong men through natural experience also had nationalistic implications. Americans were proud of their wilderness, but also saw it as the ideal training ground for soldiers and frontiersmen alike. Roosevelt proclaimed that "In the Civil War the soldiers who came from the prairie and the backwoods and the rugged farms where stumps still dotted the clearings, and who had learned to ride in their infancy, to shoot as soon as they could handle a rifle, and to camp out whenever they got the chance, were better fitted for military work than any set of mere school or college athletes could possibly be."[95] Nature was the ideal developmental setting.

### D. Adolescence

*Now, the chances are strong that he won't be much of a man unless he is a good deal of a boy. He must not be a coward or a weakling, a bully, a shirk, or a prig. He must work hard and play hard. He must be clean-minded and clean-lived, and able to hold his own under all circumstances and against all comers.* -Theodore Roosevelt[96]

As exemplified by Seton and Roosevelt, many of the solutions to overcivilization

---

[93] Notably, Scouting forefather Daniel Beard was a writer for these publications, and his emphasis on nature became obvious in the scouting program.

[94] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 107-109.

[95] Roosevelt, *The American Boy.*

[96] Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life* X. The American Boy 155.

proposed by Muscular Christian practitioners dealt with the influence of young adults, and it's important to emphasize the interplay and overlap between Muscular Christianity and the developing adolescent wing of psychology. Adolescence became the space where the solutions of sports and nature could be implanted. George Hall and William James, two of psychology's founding fathers, both reinforced the naturalism, activity, and gender dichotomy so significant in Muscular Christianity.[97] Moreover, Hall's *Adolescence* and other psychological texts of the day solidified the psychological period of adolescence and placed increasing emphasis on its developmental importance. Adolescence may seem to be an *a priori* segment of human life, but in fact our taxonomy of development is relatively rigid when compared to the pre-psychological maturation process.

As an unsettled period between childhood and adulthood adolescence is probably a biological category, and all bodies experience puberty. However, for the upper classes, industrialization provided time for formal education and leisure, and the lengthy "youth" of apprenticeship or family farm work gave way to a more compressed period of teenage instruction. In Macleod's terms, "To trace the emergence of modern adolescence is to follow the separation of a narrower, more sharply defined period of life from a broader transitional stage less thoroughly segregated from adult life."[98]

Moreover, young adulthood was structured as a scientific progression. Boys workers and theorists utilized recapitulation theory, the idea that each individual undergoes the stages of development of the whole human race, to understand and oversee

---

[97] Putney, *Muscular Christianity 30.* Of course, this isn't to say the categories are mutually exclusive or symbiotic. Rather, depending on ones definitions and attributed traits many early psychologists could be considered to operate in the Muscular Christian mold. Hall is especially prominent, and his views on gender and activity align squarely with most prevailing sentiment.
[98] Macleod, *Building Character 21.*

"gang age" boys whose social formations were most like that of early hunter gatherers.[99] Hall connected this transition "from savagery to civilization" to the biological understanding that human fetuses develop the physical traits of extinct ancestors in sequence. Teleological biology and psychology promoted the view that modernity was an ultimate cause, and children reflected the steps of humanity in their own development. Thus adolescence, after a brief period of "pygmy" unimaginative unemotionality and overlapping with the "gang age" of early teens, was the manifestation of medieval and ancient men gaining the final instincts of modern manhood. In Hall's romantic view:

> Adolescence was 'the infancy of man's higher nature, when he receives from the great all-mother his last capital of energy and evolutionary momentum.' It was a time of upheaval and confusion, for the teenager had to master a flood of instinctual forces while beset by undertows from the past, and then try to ride the crashing waves farther up the beach than anyone before him.[100]

For Hall, adolescence was "the ephebic decade," and "the religious teacher's great opportunity."[101] As we've seen, Muscular Christians frequently took a developmental stand, hoping nature, sports, and masculine influences could solve the social problems they identified in the next generation. They also hoped that these activities would draw boys into religious life. Psychologists and Muscular Christians alike believed that adolescent boys required a connection to male peers and the ability to participate in the natural and physical activities that had developed strong character in the past. Adolescent overexposure to women in the classroom, at home, or even in monthly magazines was

---

[99] Macleod, *Building Character* 98.

[100] Macleod, *Building Character* 99-102 quoting Hall, *Adolescence* II:71.

[101] Hall, G. Stanley. 1904. *Adolescence; its psychology and its relations to physiology, anthropology, sociology, sex, crime, religion and education*. New York: D. Appleton and Company 346. Quoted in Jordan, Mark D. 2011. *Recruiting young love: how Christians talk about homosexuality*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.2.

considered a perfect storm for the destruction of a boy's masculine nature as well as his soul.[102]  In a space "free from women and their sentimental morality, [gang age] boys seemed to inhabit an ideal male world, a refuge from overcivilization and effeminacy."[103] The enacting of savagery in nature was seemingly paramount in the development of proper masculinity, and had the added bonus of appealing to boys in a way Sunday School did not.[104]

This emphasis on savagery would not include sexuality or masturbation, which Hall, James, Kingsley, Hughes, many Muscular Christians, and most boy's leaders considered unhealthy.[105] According to Hall, sexual desire that could be otherwise utilized in Christian conversion, and reabsorbed semen strengthened bodies; masturbation was an emasculating act.[106] Even the 1911 Boy Scout Handbook described semen as "the sex fluid...that makes a boy manly, strong, and noble."[107] Conceptually, sexuality did not mesh with the romanticism that characterized boyhood. At camps and boy's schools alike sexuality was "corrupting of boyhood innocence."[108] Social control and sexual denial were an additional motivation to the values of wildness and physical exertion. Camping, hiking, and sports, in addition to remedying the unhealthful and effeminizing factors of city life, was an outlet for sexual urges and a place to discuss and teach them in an exclusively male setting. Practically, from the view of a concerned adult, these were also spaces where boys could be easily observed, policed, and nudged into the continence and

---

[102] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 31.

[103] Macleod, *Building Character* 22

[104] Macleod, *Building Character* 23-24.

[105] Macleod, *Building Character* 49; Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 16 and 110.

[106] Macleod, *Building Character* 101.

[107] BSA, *The Official Handbook for Boys* (Garden City, N.Y.,1911), 260. Quoted in Macleod, *Building Character* 149.

[108] Putney, *Muscular Christianity 108.*

masculinity of the imagined past.[109] Boys groups (including Scouting) that united Muscular Christianity and adolescent theories were the advent of "a new protected supervised boyhood."[110]

## E. Youth Organization

With the integration and prominence of adolescent theory it stood to reason that the most effective dissemination of Muscular Christian values would come with the influence of youth. The decrying of societal decay through the example of wayward youths could be the eternal refrain of an ever-renewing society, but with the changing face of work and religion at the turn of the century children were of special concern. Proponent of Muscular Christianity united city life-under the broad umbrellas of feminization and overcivilization- with new beliefs on adolescent development. They enumerated a "boy problem" that "transposed all sorts of anxieties about modern life onto urban youth."[111] Young boys required a strenuous male-only influence to properly develop the essence of their gender role, but the competing organizations also had to portray themselves as a worthy and effective antidote to feminization and overciviliation.

Summer camps offered an affordable middle-class alternative to the rise of upper-class boy's boarding schools. Camps brought city boys to the countryside, exposed them to the fresh air that supposedly prevented physical *and* moral decay.[112] However, "there was only one problem with camps as reformatory tools: they were open only during the summer. This meant (at least insofar as most character builders were concerned) that

---

[109] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 110.
[110] Macleod, *Building Character* 138.
[111] Macleod, *Building Character* 32-33.
[112] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 36.

middle class boys still needed supplements to their indoor, female-directed public school educations--supplements that could be year-round, economical, male-directed, and oriented towards nature."[113] There were various attempts at providing this necessary boyhood influence. Playgrounds were established as an alternative to dance halls and movie palaces, but youth groups provided increased supervision and a united image of improved, healthful boys.

Within churches, Sunday schools for younger children led to the formation of young people's societies participating in specifically church-tied activities. The Methodist Epworth League, Baptist Young People's Union, and the nondenominational Christian Endeavor Society included older youths and "each claimed half a million member by the early 1900s."[114] However, they failed to keep boys interested in simple messages of morality and in various facets of church busywork. These Church associations, though emerging in a time of specialized organizations for all groups and ages, seemed not to have appealed enough to the nationalism of the time.

The lower class "boy's clubs" of the early 20th century created an occasional second home for street youths and the working class, but had to fight against "the stereotype of the boys' club member as a 'ragged urchin with dirty face, bad manners, [and] oafish disposition…" simply to ensure their continued existence.[115] Only a moderate step up, The Boys Brigade is almost wholly represented in its title. Rather than traditional forms of religious education, the Boys Brigade drew on the supposed boyhood

---

[113] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 111.

[114] Macleod, *Building Character* 23.

[115] Frank J. Mason, "Materials for Character-Making in Street Boys' Clubs," WWB 7 (1907): 85-86. Quoted in Macleod, *Building Character* 69.

fascination with the military to turn out Christian gentlemen "by the battalion."[116]

According to Professor Henry Drummond, military elements channeled boyhood savagery and enabled the sort of adult criticism that wouldn't be heeded or tolerated by the average child.[117] Imported in the 1890s to America, Macleod compares the program to oatmeal for breakfast, "solid, but unexciting." The program, mostly involving Army regulation drill movements, was useful in forwarding the message of "Christian soldiers," but the development of adolescent psychology and increased emphasis on socialization caused it to be quickly overshadowed by more progressive (and more interesting) organizations. Creating boy soldiers became less enticing, both to character builders and the boys who participated.[118]

The Woodcraft Indians (1901) and Sons of Daniel Boone(1905) were the BSA's most significant predecessors. Each incorporated their generation's belief in the restorative and fortuitous effect of exposure to nature with gang-age socialization and prototypical patriotic sentiment. Drawing on frontier icons, they attempted to portray a specifically American set of characters to remember a nostalgic past and perform it upon their charges.[119] Seton dealt more in conservation and native American myths, and framed relatively unstructured activities around essentialized Native American (some might say noble savage) mythology and engaged the wilderness experience. He is the originator of "Indian style" camping and the native American overtones in the BSA and other camping groups. However, he failed to include the lessons of "morality, piety, and patriotism" almost required for boys' work at the time, his publicity was less than

---

[116] Drummond, Henry. "Manliness in Boys--By a New Process." *McClure's Magazine*, December 1893.
http://www.unz.org/Pub/McClures-1893dec-00068 (accessed January 27, 2014). Quoted in Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 112.
[117] Drummond, *Manliness in Boys.*
[118] Macleod, *Building Character* 89.
[119] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 113.

admirable, and the organization had little structure beyond the experience of camping with youths. The BSA would be clearly superior at constructing and displaying an American identity, and Seton's blending of "stereotypically feminine virtues into his version of manliness" couldn't have allured many of the Muscular Christian mentality.[120]

### III. The Characters of Muscular Christianity

*I soon discovered that an ideal figure was necessary. For it is a matter of history that no philosophy, however beautiful, has been established without a current example.*

-E.T. Seton[121]

In his text Clifford Putney admirably laid out these discursive threads that existed within the performance of Muscular Christianity. To give the reader a firm grasp of Muscular Christian rhetoric, he tied together threads of urban leisure, cultural femininity, industrial structures, and adolescent theory with the supposed remedies of nature, athletics, and group participation, but considers Muscular Christian characters, real-life and fictional, to be rhetorical manifestations. In Putney, the characters of Muscular Christian novels, texts, and speeches seem to be evidence of the movement rather than actual tools of promotion and development.[122] Writings on and of the period characterize Muscular Christianity as a promotion of values, themes, or ideas throughout culture. However, in my conception the values of these authors and their peers were actively achieved through the construction of Christian characters that offered narrative, as well as

---

[120] Macleod, *Building Character* 132-133.

[121] Seton, *Boy Scouts.*

[122] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 14. For example, "Kingsley's view of Christianity, athletics, and patriotism *found expression* in his many novels," (my emphasis) while Hughes "celebrated" Muscular Christianity through his. Henry James's character Basil Ransom is also merely a vessel to disseminate ideas about cultural degeneration.

thematic, examples. This deployment of characters through literary and colloquial mediums amalgamated the host of values championed by Muscular Christians, but more usefully, their characters provided a point of reference for those seeking to uphold and define moral standards. Characters are not simply ways to cite an author's moral values, but are actually a means by which a set of sacred virtues can be attached to a referential body and discussed on those terms. Rhetorically, the characters and their values are one and the same.

## A. Roosevelt

As presented above, Theodore Roosevelt was the most prominent nationwide symbol for this cultural rebellion against the unhealthy, immoral, and unmasculine characteristics perceived in city life. But for all the emphasis on Roosevelt-as-role-model, his character wasn't simply a monolithic example, but a fluid set of ideals wherein new moral elements were emphasized to reinterpret his significance and the model of religious life he represents. Reisner's *Roosevelt's Religion*, published three years after Roosevelt's death, actually gives us an example of the way characters can become points of discussion and definition. By the time of Reisner's writing "over five hundred books and pamphlets about and by Theodore Roosevelt" had been published, but this body of work contained "not a single article, pamphlet, or book about Mr. Roosevelt's religion."[123] By composing a text that examined Roosevelt's Christian identity Reisner makes religion congruous with the construction of American masculinity. Christian faith is essential to the "strenuous life" Roosevelt embodied. After setting him up as one in a long line of faithful Americans from Washington and Franklin to the men on the Titanic Reisner

---

[123] Reisner, *Roosevelt's Religion* 11.

makes the origins of Roosevelt's success blatant:

> Men are not rewarded for their "faith" in an arbitrary way, but such faith and training develops and equips big men and sustains them under strain. The promise was "Seek first the kingdom of God" — the rulership of the Christ spirit — and "all things shall be added unto you," and that promise is literally fulfilled.
>
> Theodore Roosevelt stands out as the towering, unquestioned illustration of the size and kind of men pure religion builds. He was strongly human and yet devout, admittedly imperfect and yet sincerely seeking the truth, notably self-confident and yet avowedly a worshipful disciple of the humble Teacher of Galilee. He went away from earth carrying the diploma of a completed life course, and hence is a beckoning example to all who would think widely, contest successfully, serve steadily, live happily, and cross the river at the end triumphantly.[124]

Roosevelt is the subject through which Reisner promotes Christianity as a facet of manliness. Already a prominent example for those aspiring to Muscular Christianity, Reisner utilizes Roosevelt's public familiarity to inform religious and patriotic sentiment.

## B. Novelizations

Idealized characters such as Roosevelt served as examples of values, but many also reimagined existing entities to underline the motives of Muscular Christianity. This sort of sacred masculinity is redefined through a digestible character and narrative. Kingsley and Hughes composed a nostalgic and mythicized boyhood in their novels. With equal threads of athleticism, patriotism, and religion, Kingsley reimagined familiar

---

[124] Reisner, *Roosevelt's Religion* 12-13.

examples of the Israelites, Goths, Saxons, and even the conquerors of the New World to fit his conceptions of manliness and physical fitness. He even revamped real characters such as ship's chaplain Jack Brimblecombe and fifth-century Alexandrian bishop Synesius as prime models of rugged, Christian manliness. These already esteemed personas, along with contemporary examples of "sporting parsons" were a familiar means for turning his ideals into relatable discourse.[125] Thomas Hughes, in *Tom Brown's School Days* disregards the "lofty, morally superior vantage point" and the "saintly female exemplars," that were literary conventions of the day. Instead, Hughes' exemplars were boys and adults who found the proper balance of bodily and spiritual strength (with an appropriate amount of conformity) in the male-only environment of Rugby boarding school.[126]

Ralph Waldo Emerson and Thomas Wentworth Higginson found a character to both emulate and detract from in the homeland of Kingsley and Hughes. In his book *English Traits* Emerson admired English physiques, calling the average Englishman a "wealthy, juicy, broadchested creature," while still considering their religious practices too ritualistic. Similarly, Higginson saw an impressive connection of strength and religion in England, exemplified in *Tom Brown's School Days,* that did not yet exist in the United States.[127] Though each author could be said to be making a statement on culture, any exposition of a "typical" Englishman involves a sort of character construction. In hearkening to far-away personas, they questioned the identity of American boys and introduced new traits of English manliness that they hoped would be

---

[125] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 14.

[126] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 16.

[127] Emerson, Ralph Waldo. 1990. *English traits*. Hoboken, N.J.: BiblioBytes. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=2008469. p. 76. Quoted in Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 21.

reflected in America.

The recent past, as imagined through the lens of memory and history, is also an idealized setting. Muscular Christians employed the nostalgic simplicity of their past and its idealized heroes and retrofitted their form of Christianity upon it. As mentioned, Kingsley utilized historical figures to make his modern points, but boys' workers and character builders such as Seton and Beard looked to and constructed "semimythical models of an ideal boyhood, yearning for a rural world where strength and virtue flourished in easy harmony."[128] Ernest Thompson Seton mythicized early 19th century boyhood suggesting that every boy of that period "could ride, shoot, skate, run, swim; he was handy with tools;...he was physically strong, self-reliant, resourceful," and also respected his superiors.[129] In this case, Seton intended to paint the Boy Scouts as ideological descendants of this boyhood, but in doing so he was one of many who solidified this mythology of the past. The idyllic character of the early nineteenth century boy became a model and goal of twentieth century youth organizations.

Guilded age novels looked to small town boyhood as a past that catered to the needs of boys in a way their industrial society couldn't. Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Charles Dudley Warner, and Mark Twain popularized the "boy-book" in America and painted the antebellum era as the perfect setting for the unique character of the adolescent boy. However, in their nostalgic exercise they personified the American boy as congruent with adolescent theories. The popular phrase "boys will be boys" granted a level of mischief and savagery as inherent in male children, and the activities of small time thievery, fighting, and general disobedience were considered a fine set of characteristics in the

---

[128] Macleod, *Building Character* 52.
[129] Macleod, *Building Character* 52.

safety of the small town.[130] Boys needed a safe space outside of cities to engage their savagery, and the characterizations of these nostalgic imaginings actively informed the discourse on young male savagery. Hall's work and recapitulation theory created a historical narrative for development, but the characters were fleshed out and deployed in a more popular format.

## C. Boys' Groups

As eventually acted out most effectively by the BSA, other boys groups defined themselves through characters with idealized traits. Youth groups flourished with the dispersion of adolescent theory, and a group's success hugely depended upon the way its boys were characterized. Even in these less successful or publicized organizations, the attempt at a cultural character was commonly found in the group's mission or creed. As was common at the time, numerous organizations professed a list of idealized traits. This offers one glimpse at the necessity of a referential character to group unity and moral profession. The YMCA symbolized pure athletics, and "easily identified its programs with the strenuous life of the Christian athlete; the lad in gym shorts was safely occupied."[131]

Seton strove to establish an idealized character in founding the Woodcraft Indians, seeing the "current example" of a well known "ideal figure" as absolutely crucial for boys' work to succeed:

> I needed an ideal outdoor man who was heroic, clean, manly, brave,
> picturesque, master of woodcraft and scouting, and already well known. At first

---

[130] Macleod, *Building Character* 52.

[131] Macleod, *Building Character* 172.

my thought turned to Robin Hood, but I found him neither ideal nor well known. Rollo, the Sea King, would have been nearly perfect if he were well known, but to the ordinary American he was as strange as Plato or Siddarth...King Arthur was suggested, but he was not specially an outdoor man, and the pursuits for which he stood were not of practical application to-day. Besides, he is unknown to the vast majority. thus I was at last forced to take for my model the ideal Indian of Fenimore Cooper and Longfellow. I would have preferred a white ideal, but the Indian alone seemed to meet all the requisites.[132]

Clearly, racial identity was as important as fortitude to this propagation of rectitude. The association with Native Americans would be the organization's downfall, as Seton's idealized construction did not fit with the racial aspect of a sacralized identity. From Seton's perspective, "many people considered the Indian a loathsome tramp and as far as possible from being a safe ideal for boys."[133]

Beard's Sons of Daniel Boone co-opted a more well regarded American character, the pioneer scout. The pioneer, and Boone especially, had elements of naturalism while still displaying masculinity and nationalism:

"For his grander aims, Beard fell back on nativism and hypermasculinity. Against Seton's Indians he set up the ideal pioneer, boasting that the SDB's 'soul' was 'essentially American. We play American games and learn to emulate our great American forebears in lofty aims and iron characters...' Beard maintained that outdoor life would build toughness: 'We want no Molly Coddles,' he

---

[132] Seton, *Boy Scouts* 630.

[133] Seton, *Boy Scouts* 635.

proclaimed."[134]

Beard chose the archetype of historical figure of Daniel Boone. Boone, fitted with particular Muscular Christian traits and an adequate amount of cultural relevance, was the openly emulated character for his organization. Just as Seton was doomed by a lack of structure in terms of programming, Beard failed to put adults in charge of what started as a magazine. Loosely organized and affiliated, Beard's group couldn't *display* character as scouting eventually could. In addition, it seems a broader archetype was necessary, as the SDB were eventually renamed the Boy Pioneers, only to be mostly absorbed by scouting.[135]

## D. Jesus

Lastly, and perhaps most theologically significant, is the repackaging of the character of Jesus himself. Leaders and theologians such as Walter Rauschenbusch, acting on a desire to fill the pews with more men, emphasized physicality and Jesus' embodied place on the trinity. Often called members of the "Social Gospel," their image of Christ was a manly carpenter, a "man's man" who caused his enemies to slink away.[136] In *Visual Piety* David Morgan describes the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the 20th as "an age that came increasingly to hang its certainties and doubts about [Christ] on the wobbly nail of gender." The "multifarious discourse of masculinities was mapped onto the shadowy man from Nazareth."[137]

In discourse and promotion, the physical personage and exemplary character of

---

[134] "Dan Beard's own Page for Boys," *Woman's Home Companion* 34 (Aug. 1907):33; Daniel C. Beard, *The Buckskin Book of the Boy Pioneers of America* (n.p., 1912), p. 3. Quoted in Macleod, *Building Character* 133.

[135] Macleod, *Building Character* 133. The Boy Pioneers continued to exist into the 20s as an organization for younger boys.

[136] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 42.

[137] Morgan, David. 1998. *Visual piety: a history and theory of popular religious images*. Berkeley: University of California Press 97.

Jesus made for a more effective message than of an immaterial or metaphysical God, and Christ could be tailored to specific religious sentiments. In 1915, Dr. R. Warren Conant published *The Virility of Christ*. Conant saw contemporary images of Christ as feminine renderings with added facial hair. Extrapolating from Christ's "Character" he surmised "that his face was neither smooth nor vacant but lined and stamped...by the strong lines of thought and thoughtfulness; of patiently endured toil, hardship, and obloquy; of courage, serenity, and self-reliance."[138] Franklin D. Elmer, a Northern Baptist minister who favored Scouting for boys referred to Jesus as "the Master Scout, whose life may be best interpreted for a boy in terms of observation, service, and the twelve great laws…"[139]

Muscular Christian practitioners forwarded their ideal masculinity by mapping its traits onto their images of Jesus. Bodies were of utmost importance to masculine discourse, and the man Jesus made for an enticing reference. Other biblical figures were built up in much the same way. One magazine article explained it this way: "Those whome God chose as leaders were men of strong physique...Moses was a strong man, else the march over the desert would have exhausted him, the anxiety of the exodus would have crushed him."

Similarly, Jesus "radiated good health"; John was "a strong, eager, enthusiastic young man"; Paul was "one of the great sport lovers of his day"; and, Samson's "mighty strength and...healthy and resolute and infectious good humor' were offset only by a lack of 'personal purity". Even the theologically conservative *Methodist Review* joined the chorus, permitting publication in 1885 of an article asserting that Christ's good health

---

[138] Conant, Robert Warren. 1915. *The virility of Christ: a new view*. Chicago: The author. 92-93. Quoted in Morgan, *Visual Piety* 112.

[139] Elmer, Rev. Franklin. 1913. "COMMUNITY CO-ORDINATION THROUGH BOY SCOUTS".*Religious Education.* 8 (5): 490-491. Quoted in Macleod, *Building Character* 197.

was 'an essential factor in the scheme of salvation.'"[140]

Thomas Hughes, in *The Manliness of Christ,* had a similar goal to Conant. He introduced his perception of manliness into the character of Christ by viewing his mission as a holy war requiring physical and spiritual strength. He ponders, "Christ says we were sent into this world. But was Christ's own character perfect in this respect,--not only in charity, meekness, purity, long-suffering, but in courage?"[141] He also emphasizes adolescent significance in the chapter on "Christ's Boyhood." The early, almost exclusively undocumented, years of Christ's life were the time "in which the weapons must have been forged, and the character formed and matured, for the mighty war.[142] Though the scene of the boy Christ in the temple at first seems incongruous with manliness, Hughes comes to see it as an exemplification of the formative nature of adolescence. Christ's first experiences with the Holy City, are seen as the first awareness of his identity, mission, and responsibility.[143]

Contrasting a church that supposedly promoted feminine qualities, followers of Muscular Christianity emphasized characteristics in venerated figures that fit their strenuous worldview. Rather than proselytizing on manliness in a vacuum, characters were familiar entities that allowed for the redistribution of values in a context already understood by audience. Like the boys of Muscular Christian Novels and Boy's Books, Englishmen, or Theodore Roosevelt himself, biblical figures don't have *a priori* significance determined by their author, text, or setting, but become the fluid terms

---

[140] "Eight-Minute's Common-Sense Exercise for the Busy Man," Outlook 27 (June 1914): 470, Young Men's Christian Association, International Committee, *The American Standard Program for Boys* (New York 1918), p. 31, "Strength," *Men* 22 (Oct. 10, 1898): 360, William H. Ridgway, "God in the Gym," *Association Men* 40, no. 6 (March 1915):296, William R. Richards, "An Extraordinary Saint," in William H. Sallmon, ed., *The Culture of Christian Manhood* (New York, 1897), p. 125, and Andrew Lipscomb, "Christ's Education of His Body," *Methodist Review* 67 (1885): 692. Quoted in Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 56.

[141] Hughes, *Manliness* 6.

[142] Hughes, *Manliness* 87.

[143] Hughes, *Manliness* 37-41.

through which discourses are enacted and distributed. As we shall see, this practice was especially important to the construction of the still-familiar character of the "Boy Scout."

## IV. The Boy Scouts: A Model for Youth

*The boy is not worth anything if he is not efficient. I have no use for molly coddles. I have no used for timid boys, for the "sissy" type of boy. I want to see a boy able to hold his own and ashamed to flinch. But as one element of this ability to hold his own, I wish to see him contemptuously indifferent to the mean or brutal boy who calls him "sissy" or a mollycoddle because he is clean and decent and considerate to others.*

-Theodore Roosevelt[144]

The Boy Scouts channeled these rising discourses, and found a way to display them publicly. While the depiction of Roosevelt or Jesus as manly served as a goal for turn-of-the-century youth, the characters set forth in Boy's Books and psychological texts began to form the mold for acceptable boy's work. A program had to be enticing to the boys themselves (often through activities that Hall or others might term as savage), but also had to conform to the values set forth by Muscular Christianity. Many organizations and structures made some attempt to engage the various facets of The Strenuous Life, but none reached the heights of Boy Scouting. At its heart the BSA inserted itself into the American milieu in a way few other organizations had. It had the sense to deploy its boys as advertisements and to make the uniform synonymous with natural, strenuous boyhood in local newspapers across the country.

The Boy Scout was simultaneously a throwback to an idealized, rugged past and

---

[144] Roosevelt, Theodore. "I Appeal to the American Boy to Remember That..." *Boys' Life*, December 1913. http://www.theodore-roosevelt.com/images/research/treditorials/byl1.pdf (accessed April 7, 2014).

an embodiment of what many Americans hoped to see in their young men. The Scout was quintessentially American from the start.  While other facets of boys' work, from boarding schools to camps to Seton's Woodcraft Indians, gave lip service to sentimentalized values,  the Boy Scouts constructed for themselves a public persona, like the ever-youthful Roosevelt, that gained them nationwide prominence and approval all the while staking themselves a claim in the lexicon of American identity.

The Boy Scouts' organizing statements, and resulting symbolic mission, were the result of a lineage of enumerated ideals. Beginning with the temperance movement of the mid-19th century, children were encouraged to pledge against alcohol, profanity, and tobacco. This assigning of specific practice to be avoided proved too exclusive, and organizations set to outline more lofty generalized sentiments in their representation.[145] Though Macleod considers these broader goals to be a product of "the middle-class taste for vague idealism" the movement towards loftier sentiment could actually be seen as a moment of transcription. Instead of the actions of temperance, professing boys were juxtaposed with a set of higher ideals, and the organizations were associated with the spiritual in addition to their physical presence.

---

[145] Macleod, *Building Character* 83-86.

The creeds of these organizations became a new medium upon which to ascribe Muscular Christianity to the physical and imagined bodies they represented, a "litany of conventional virtues."[146] The Boys Scout oath and law explicitly outlined the characteristics of a religious and patriotic boy.

*Scout Oath (or Promise)*
*On my honor I will do my best*
*To do my duty to God and my country*
*and to obey the Scout Law;*
*To help other people at all times;*
*To keep myself physically strong,*
*mentally awake, and morally straight.*

*Scout Law*
*A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly,*
*courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty,*
*brave, clean, and reverent. [147]*

Importantly, scouting actually required these characteristics to be performed, as each scout had to produce "evidence that he has put into practice in his daily life the principles of the scout oath and law."[148] The charge of the Boy Scout was to display those ideals while professing them.

As I've shown, several unaffiliated organizations for adolescent boys that preceded the Boy Scouts attempted to enact similar goals of psychology and Muscular Christianity through some combination of grouping boys, teaching values, and invoking

---

[146] Macleod, *Building Character* 255. On 29 Macleod considers the YMCA version of the scout law. Similarly well rounded, though less specific, the YMCA deployed a "fourfold plan of spiritual, mental, social, and physical improvement." Addressing physical, psychological, and societal characteristics other groups used their creeds to profess an ideal body, and to explicitly outline sacred traits.

[147] Boy Scouts of America, "Scouting.org." Accessed March 31, 2014. http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/boyscouts.aspx.

[148] BSA, *Handbook for Boys* 14-16. Quoted in Macleod 149.

exercise and nature. The most notable, the Boys' Brigades, Seton's Woodcraft Indians, Sons of Daniel Boone, and the YMCA engaged values that fed into the Boy Scouts.   As we'll see, the BSA's utilization of their tactics along with powerful self-promotion and character creation allowed it to outpace these groups in popularity as well as presence in American consciousness and discourse. With less broad appeal, and without the flair for publicity the Boy Scouts would show, these other organizations couldn't compete on a national level. Feeding directly into the success of the Scouts, the Boys Brigade, Woodcraft Indians, and Sons of Daniel Boone also introduced a standard organization wide program, promoting a uniform product rather than the heterogeneous independent agencies that made up the YMCA and boys' clubs.

Lord Baden-Powell, the English War hero who founded the Boy Scout movement, took inspiration from these movements, and integrated his military experience with the goal of molding youths in nature. Baden-Powell's organization flourished in England and immediately took hold in the United States, soon becoming more popular than the Woodcraft Indians and Sons of Daniel Boone. The Boy Scouts of America were especially suited to the milieu of American masculinity and spirituality.[149] Importantly, the Scouts couldn't just draw in boys; it was just as important to present an image that harmonized with adult views of adolescence. Adult backers provided the majority of BSA funds, and thus the image of the Boy Scout had to be consistent with such adult views for the eventual financial and social success they achieved.[150] Macleod notes that Baden-Powell's success with Scouting had to do with his understanding of "adult forms of power." In a departure from the leadership of Seton and Beard, Baden-Powell dealt a

---

[149] Putney, *Muscular Christianity* 113.

[150] Macleod, *Building Character* 167.

great deal in his organization's administration and didn't "rush off to be with the boys,"

when the group's adult presence and public image had to be fashioned and reinforced.[151]

Baden-Powell had a bank of military knowledge and goals to instill in the scouts,

but he also believed in the very Muscular Christian notion of building character and the

construction of proper citizens through conditioning. In fact, his mode of character

building fits a great deal with the practice of character construction I have attempted to

unravel. Macleod writes:

> Baden-Powell thought of a "character" as a social type and urged Boy
>
> Scouts to classify people "by their faces, their walk, their boots, hats, clothing,
>
> etc.' This outlook, familiar to readers of English detective fiction, reflected a
>
> lively sensitivity to signs of social class, region, and occupation. Accordingly, in
>
> building character he tried to mold a composite social type, with the public
>
> schoolboy's sportsmanship and sense of duty, the middle-class boy's thrift and
>
> diligence, and a working-class boy's sense of place.[152]

Though the British form of scouting contained far more militarism than its American

counterpart, the program still required some tempering (especially post WWI) to

continually gain the interest of youth and approval of adults. Powell added the reverie of

nature propagated by Seton, but substituted African mythology for Seton's Native

Americans and continued to view nature as more of a training ground than a chapel.[153]

Before the symbol of the American Boy Scout can be deconstructed, however, the

apparatus in place for its dissemination is equally important. The efficient top-to-bottom

---

[151] Macleod, *Building Character* 142.

[152] Macleod, *Building Character* 138.

[153] Macleod, *Building Character* 140. Much more could be said here about Scouting's british arm, especially the way World War One would temper militarism and the role of more explicit class distinctions and military emphasis in Edwardian England. However, as my main concern is the American symbol I'll merely leave this as counterpoint and parallel to the program borne out in The United States.

organization of the BSA and their strong desire for a homogenous product produced a

vessel more suited to symbolic deployment and hegemonic inclusion than the loosely tied

outposts of the YMCA, Boys' Brigade, or Sons of Daniel Boone. Seeking the middle

ground of adolescent sentiment and offering standardized goals implanted the Scouts into

the symbolic discourse of American boyhood. The BSA's early actions helped them

embody an ideal space formerly filled by vague notions of adolescent theory and the

divergent goals of a dozen youth organizations. American Scouting effectively

concatenated the divergent boy's groups that had gone before, and produced an efficient

product that could be disseminated and performed on a national scale with national

imagery.

     The unique promotional ability of Scouting can be exposed in juxtaposition with

its forerunner, the YMCA. The Y was successful, but its structure of heterogeneous

localized agencies prevented it from becoming the symbol and cultural force that the

BSA became.[154] While the Boy Scouts lived by centralized control, the YMCA's outposts

were individualized agencies without a singularly structured program.[155] The founders of

the Boy Scouts of America were YMCA men, inspired by Baden-Powell, who wanted to

adapt Baden-Powell's program before it could be misappropriated.[156] Hearst newspapers

and a Chicago publisher made attempts to establish the American version of scouting, but

the influence of E.M. Robinson and other YMCA supporters allowed the program to be

taken over by men with goals of adolescent influence rather than capitalist profit.[157]

     But the BSA's program was implemented in much the same way as the forming

---

[154] Macleod, *Building Character* 83.

[155] Macleod, *Building Character* 150.

[156] Macleod, *Building Character* 146.

[157] Macleod, *Building Character* 146.

of a national conglomerate. News of the Boy Scouts of England spread quickly, and

Robinson brought together the "foundations for a monopoly of Boy Scouting," to

counteract the spread of various "Boy Scouts" throughout the country that may have

leaned more towards militarism or leadership without interest in shaping boys threatened

by city life. Male leaders affiliated with "the Red Cross, Big Brothers, *Outlook* magazine,

public school athletic leagues," met along with Robinson, Beard, and Seton to establish a

proper, overarching, BSA. In keeping with the era's growing obsession with efficiency,

they set out to form a national administration and mark themselves as the only Boy

Scouts of America.[158] They challenged Hearst's American Boy Scouts in court, and

brought in Baden-Powell for a "brief laying-on of hands which showed that the BSA

stood in the true line of succession."[159]

This association with the Boy Scout origin marked the new group symbolically,

but BSA leaders also put in place structures of national leadership, councils, and troops

from which to purvey their national message and construct a fundamental identity of

boyhood. The early conglomerate structure, called a "combine" by Baden-Powell, helped

unify the boyhood groups and their discourses through a single organization's

mouthpiece, but was quickly scrapped for a more standard and bureaucratic format that

would not lose track of troops or of the faith of scoutmasters.[160]

To install such a bureaucratic structure James E. West was hired as a new

executive secretary, and he sought to put the Boy Scouts in line with the most efficient

social agencies. West installed Roosevelt as "Chief Scout Citizen," a role of publicity

more than organizational power. Contented with such a fitting and significant symbolic

---

[158] Macleod, *Building Character* 146-147.
[159] Macleod, *Building Character* 147.
[160] Macleod, *Building Character* 147.

association, West allowed the organization to become more symbolized by the image of its boys than by an overarching leader such as Baden-Powell.[161] He formed committees to overhaul and standardize the BSA's doctrine (oath, law, and promotion requirement), reward system (badges), and organizational structure. His goal was "the absolute adaptation of this idea to American conditions," including the superimposition of an eagle over Baden-Powell's fleur-de-lys.[162]

Changes to the organization's character can be viewed as the reformatting of a model, the synthesis of an American mode of boyhood that could be held dear by the middle-class. It is the redevelopment of a popular British model to represent, and thus define, the burgeoned (but not fully articulated) American character of the adolescent. Primarily, the BSA "played up civic and moral values and de-emphasized imperial rivalries." The American boy was assigned a much more religious and moral moment of formation, as domestic problems were of more concern than the fate of the empire. The Scout's moral codes of oath and law were expanded to include the YMCA pronouncement of physical strength, mental awareness, and moral piety, and the scout law added the traits of "brave, clean, and reverent," to the other nine points. Additionally, the age floor was increased to 12 from Baden-Powell's 10, as the main concern was adolescent, rather than childhood, molding. The fear was that 16 year olds would have no business participating in an organization with elementary schoolers. Higher ranks were also added, including the Eagle Scout, an "all-round perfect scout."[163] A *Handbook for Boys* was published to make scouting "throughout America...uniform and intelligent."[164]

---

[161] Macleod, *Building Character* 148.

[162] James West, report to Executive Board, Feb. 14, 1911, at BSA NHQ. Quoted in Macleod, *Building Character* 148-149

[163] BSA, *Handbook for Boys* 18. Quoted in Macleod, *Building Character* 149.

[164] BSA, *Handbook for Boys* v. Quoted in Macleod, *Building Character* 149

While the national apparatus was put in place, a campaign of publicity and symbolic deployment was undertaken. From the outset of the organization, the founders organized magazine articles and the production of booklets. By 1912 *Boy's Life* magazine had begun publication for boys and *Scouting* for adult leaders.[165] Though the organization centralized power to keep close national control, they continued to reject the promotion of a charismatic leader like Baden-Powell and ruled via bureaucracy while the boys could become the face of the organization. Though the organization did face issues with attendance, recruitment, and surveillance my concern is with symbolic discourse. In short, to prevent the natural oversight of a single national council the BSA established various local councils to better oversee individual troops. Local executives were specifically instructed to make council headquarters a place of business, and to focus most of their attention on their duties as administrator and publicist. Among these employees of the national council, there was also stress on uniformity over individualization. The product, and the image, had to appear the same nationwide.[166]

With a curriculum that overflowed with formative experiences, it outstripped the purely athletic YMCA in many areas. Finally, in 1916, the Boy Scouts gained a Congressional charter, and an additional law was invoked disallowing anyone, except for the BSA, from wearing a uniform resembling that of the military.[167] The Boy Scouts had an implicit national sanction and a certain type of semiotic monopoly. Only they could display scouts in uniform, giving their national character recognizable and exclusive apparel. The rest of the Boy Scout's character was based on this uniform. As the only

---

[165] Macleod, *Building Character* 149.

[166] Macleod, *Building Character* 160-161.

[167] Macleod, *Building Character* 150-170 details the finer points of the bureaucratic organization and the eventual settling of the system of councils.

organization allowed to wear military-style uniforms, BSA garb was a distinctive

signifier in all public representations.  Decked out in "a flat-brimmed hat with a high

crown, khaki shirt and coat, olive drab belt, and shorts or breeches with leggings, puttees,

or stockings," it would be hard to mistake the sight of the Boy Scout.[168]

What Macleod terms "public relations" and "promotion" I view as the

deployment of a discourse. The "Boy Scout" was the final realization of adolescent

modelling. As other practitioners of the Muscular variety had remapped important

characters or pulled from the past, the BSA constructed a new image from these

discourses. In doing so, they not only fully engaged desired traits, but created a reference

point for Americans to discuss their ideal for boyhood and the sacred attributes they

would like instilled.

The public relations of the scouts were intended to connect them to the

foundational activities they participated in, but also to categorize them within the

compartments of the Muscular Christian sacred. By introducing themselves as molders of

corrupted urban youth, lovers of nature and adventure, as religious, patriotic, and

masculine, they constructed a symbol of adolescent male development that is important

in discourse to this day.

By enacting Muscular Christian solutions and hearkening to adolescent theory the

Boy Scouts earliest identity was as a remedy to the sinful effects of city life. The 1913

film *The Making of a Scout* presented scouting "as an answer to juvenile delinquency."[169]

Tom, "a sixteen-year-old street tough" is left by his father and joins the scouts "after

seeing that they are as strong and tough as he." His troop goes on to prevent robbery (by

---

[168] BSA, *The Official hand Book for Boys,* rev. ed. (New York, 1914) 69. Quoted in Macleod 178.

[169] Macleod, *Building Character* 177.

his father no less) and save the effeminate son of a landlord who was lost on a fishing trip.[170] Though only a few stills from the film remain, it was the first seven reel picture in America and was endorsed by BSA national headquarters and Theodore Roosevelt himself. According to W. Stephen Bush's 1913 review, "the production is nothing more than a means of propaganda for the scout movement," and yet "[Director Edward] Warren makes the Boy Scout Movement and its inculcation of the principles of self-reliance and helpfulness the medium through which the good stuff of the boy is brought out and developed into the full flower of fine young manhood."[171] If nothing else, this film clearly acted out Muscular Christian values through a scouting narrative.

Additionally, In the 1917 Edison film *The Knights of the Square Table* experiences of scouts in the modern city are juxtaposed with those of King Arthur's court. The film, wholly approved by scouting, also follows a street boy whose father was recently killed in a gunfight with police. The boy "Pug" creates a street gang based on the King Arthur legends. After being sliced by a cup ("grail") in an attempt at theft, the boy is given first aid by a Boy Scout troop and eventually joins the group himself. The caring influences of a troop of males rooted in attitudes of Christian morality remedied the detrimental upbringing of Pug's gang in addition to the remedies to their physical wounds.[172] In the 1916 BSA annual report, potential recruits were shown "smoking and shooting craps," and although the group's goals would quickly turn to preventing corruption rather than curing it, "forms of publicity which demanded dramatic contrasts,

[170] Rhoads, Jeff. Bridgeboro.com, "Some Information on the film "The Making of a Scout" (1913)." Accessed March 31, 2014. www.bridgeboro.com/page4.html.

[171] Bush, W. Stephen. "The Making of a Scout." *Motion Picture News*, February 20, 1915. www.bridgeboro.com/page4.html (accessed March 31, 2014). Additionally cited Macleod 177.

[172] Harty, Kevin J. 1994. ""The Knights of the Square Table": The Boy Scouts and Thomas Edison make an Arthurian Film". *Arthuriana.* 4 (4): 313-323.

such as movies or cartoons, continued to tell of gang boys transformed."[173] The Boy Scout transformation was the cure to urban vice.

Similarly, Boy Scout books (the most notable of which featured Tom Slade from *The Making of a Scout*) would feature troops performing first aid and other serviceable and beneficial acts, while also occasionally participating in enthralling adventures. To parallel these fictions in the real world organizers made sure boys (in uniform) were seen performing public service, thus becoming visible symbols of active masculinity and rectitude. The National Court of Honor also celebrated real acts of heroism by scouts.[174]

Boy Scout leaders also took advantage of their culture's elevation of nature, and associated their organization's character with the wilderness experience. With Seton as the first Chief Scout, this major facet of Baden-Powell's program was reoriented with American Indigenous culture and symbolism. Seton himself insisted on a woodcraft requirement.[175] These important comportments were also integral to Scouting's public image. Organizers "saw to it that local papers carried regular reports of Boy Scout activities, particularly hikes and camps. They staged rallies where Scouts displayed skills to please the proud parents; the boys lit fires, waved signal flags, and swathed victims like mummies in the elaborate bandages then in vogue."[176]

Constituting "the Boy Scout" also depended of broad appeal to the related identities of religion, patriotism, and masculinity. As we've seen, the values of such identities had be marked and related by Muscular Christians, and the scouts simple had to act out the broadest characterizations of this sort of metareligion. The Boy Scouts sought

---

[173] Macleod, *Building Character* 177.
[174] Macleod, *Building Character* 173.
[175] Macleod, *Building Character* 149.
[176] Macleod, *Building Character* 172.

broad religious appeal rather than invoking specific religious traditions. West described

the twelfth point of the law ("reverent") in such noncommittal terms, that William Byron

Forbush wrote it could mean "everything or nothing."[177] Each religious group could co-

opt this appeal into their faith, and this was only strengthened by the still-prominent

practice of church sponsored troops. This symbiosis was appealing enough, that "from

1912 through 1921, [churches] sponsored about 52 percent of all Boy Scout troops," and

50 percent met in churches. By James West's estimation, "over 80%" of troops had some

connection with a church or Sunday School. More churches had BSA troops than

specifically affiliated youth groups, and "in villages, Scouting was often to only form of

church boys' work."[178]

Above any specific religious tradition, the BSA's official position showed a belief

in nationalistic metareligion over specific theologies: "The recognition of God as the

ruling and leading power in the universe...is necessary to the best type of citizenship, and

is a wholesome thing in the education of the growing boy. Not matter what the boy may

be--Catholic or Protestant or Jew--this fundamental need of good citizenship should be

kept before him." This underlying, agreed upon, set of values kept the BSA from

fracturing along religious lines like its French counterpart[179] According to Macleod, the

BSA appealed to the patriotic mentality through "appropriation of the symbols of

American nationhood." Scouts wore their flamboyant military-styled uniforms even at

impractical activities such as hiking.[180] Though the Great War made the Boy Scouts a

participant in the debate over militarism, where they anchored themselves firmly to the

---

[177] Forbush to West, Apr. 20, 1911 cited in Macleod 176. For the record Seton said, "A scout is reverent. He is reverent toward God. He is faithful in his religious duties and respects the convictions of others in matters of custom and religion."

[178] Macleod, *Building Character* 190.

[179] Macleod, *Building Character* 176. The French version of the Boy Scouts split to be identified with particular religious groups.

[180] Macleod, *Building Character* 178.

middle, scouts were utilized to sell bonds. After the war scouts increasingly associated themselves with anti-communist ideals such as self-reliance.[181]

Finally, as should be apparent, the Boy Scouts depended on masculine constructions. The organization viciously opposed the Girl Scouts early on, and barred women from authority based on a fear of the taint of femininity.[182] According to West, the Boy Scout was not "a puny, dull, or bookish lad," but one properly strengthened by the influences of outdoor life and male influence.

Though perhaps effective at enacting some of the goals of Muscular Christian boys work, almost none of the BSA's competing male organizations remains an important point of social discussion, and none truly reached the heights of Scouting.[183] Their relative failure can be partially attributed to a lack of self-promotion, more limited funds, and less efficient oversight. However, when combined the Boy Scouts' process and resources encouraged their place in the American consciousness; a relatively homogenous product and intentional performance of boyhood in uniform made the Boy Scouts a nationally recognized symbol for previously-disparate formative years. Calling someone an "Woodcraft Indian" or a "Son of Daniel Boone" is undoubtedly far less communicable than suggesting someone is a "Boy Scout." This was the result of the BSA's fitting characterization and self-promotion.

Here we find one overarching secret to the Boy Scouts' success. Like other boys' groups, they embraced tenets of Muscular Christianity, but the BSA were most effective in the creation of a referential character ("The Boy Scout") with an idealized set of

---

[181] Macleod, *Building Character* 179-182.

[182] Macleod, *Building Character* 184.

[183] I emphasize gender here because the Campfire Girls and Girl Scouts did continue to exist as a counterpart for women. Their relation to the symbol of the Boy Scout, and their own symbolic characters would certainly be an interesting parallel example to my analysis.

characteristics and values. They not only reinforced traits but also bore them out onto bodies entered into the discursive space of a new, powerful, category of development: adolescence. The image itself came to hold power, and could be employed by groups such as the Latter-Day Saints to incorporate their identity into this ideal of Americanism.[184]

The quintessential image of the Boy Scout in uniform, performed visibly and intentionally by the group's members, and encouraged as the manifestation of a sacred adolescent body, became a familiar reference point for the discussion and projection of those values. The creation of a character was integral to their propagation and success, but also developed a symbolic life. Sacralized traits are often carried and communicated through revered bodies in their deployment, and. In this way, the physical bodies of modern debate were not simply outlets for discourse on sacred identity. Instead, they were the very terms upon which that sacred was defined.

The Boy Scouts of America cannot be separated from the lionized attributes they represent. "The Boy Scout" is an ideal character wholly intertwined with each scout's experience in uniform, but not performed by any single scout. In discourse it's important to recognize these terms, and to identify the ideal character that is being referenced. The organization has this importance, but the ideal set forth and the scouts on the ground must be distinguished and recognized. However, it is also unreasonable to expect the discussion to take place without an exemplar like the Boy Scouts. Since their beginnings, they haveve attempted to define and symbolize the adolescent category. The BSA, tied up in our very understanding of this nexus of discourse on the power of youth experience, entered into public discussions to change the nature of ideal adolescence. When we deal

---

[184] Macleod, *Building Character* 303-304.

in the abstract, it still must be set upon a construction we can perceive. Traits *must* be given import through bodies, if only because abstract physical or conceptual attributes are performed qualities. Encapsulation in flesh is our only reality, and perhaps characters, similarly encapsulated, are examples that can be recalled and performed.

The discourses of Muscular Christianity were of fortitude and strength, the bodily enactment of God's might, but they were also rooted in increasingly defined and rigid gender roles. According to Roosevelt, "the man must be glad to do a man's work, to dare and endure and to labor; to keep himself, and to keep those dependent upon him. The woman must be the housewife, the helpmeet of the homemaker, the wise and fearless mother of many healthy children." [185] To attribute this rigidity to industrialization may be crude and simplistic, but Muscular Christianity clearly asserted and defined a certain idealized and homogenized masculinity. Implicit, or just as often explicit, in this discourse is the denigration of femininity. Ro proponents of Muscular Christianity women were not only subordinate and subservient, but also the source of illness, weakness, and decay. Feminization was depicted as a disease: it was a destructive force in line with urban depravity to the point that men were to be partially segregated in youth for proper development. Female identity was also constricted in scope. While boys were attributed the full complexity of adolescent development, girls were considered (even by the early Girl Scouts) to be "fundamentally little women...the surest way to win their interest [was] to open them to the pursuits of women…"[186]

I've also laid aside race and class as categories of difference within these characters. The attributes of such characters also idealized whiteness and the middle

---

[185] Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life* 3-4.

[186] Price, Mrs. Theodore H. "Girl Scouts." *Outlook*, 1918, 367. Quoted in Macleod, *Building Character* 50.

class. Roosevelt notably purported the mastery of the white race, and blacks were excluded from Scouting in much of the south.[187] However, this also gives us an example of the power of a reimagined character. Louisville, Kentucky had a multitude of black troops by 1924, but such troops were "virtually unknown" in the deep south prior to 1926. Though initially exclusionary in this way, in 1926 the BSA embarked on a publicity campaign, thus explicitly expanding the character of the Boy Scout to include African-Americans.[188]

Similarly, class is a major marker of Muscular Christian characters. Only those who could manage to send children to high school could complain of feminization, and it is only the relatively wealthy who can allow their children to participate in such engaging and voluntary activities, not to mention the expenses of dues, uniforms, and gear. Though portrayed as a remedy for underclass youth, the BSA remained an organization rooted in the middle class.

I've emphasized the building of an ideal identity, but the experience of those with non-ideal identity in relation to the ideal is a larger topic. These characters are clearly a mode of establishing hierarchies of gender, ability, race, and class, but the actual experiences of women, and minority and impoverished men, have not been addressed. To expand this theory would be to consider how it played out upon these marginalized bodies, and the way such people have dealt with the uncharacteristic nature of their identity.

When we refer to characters we take them as examples for our own existence, but we also manage to map new traits upon them across time and space. The period of overt

---

[187] Macleod, *Building Character* 177.
[188] Macleod, *Building Character* 214.

Muscular Christianity (for I believe we still exist within it implicitly) made the importance of such characters obvious. Lists of traits such as the Scout Law were ubiquitous, cataloguing the proper and improper attributes of humans, and such distinctive lists make it especially clear when current traits are being mapped onto figures such as Jesus, historical people, or modern entities. Reisner attached Roosevelt's philosophy to religion and Conant mapped a proper body onto Jesus. In either direction, our values are given authority by setting them as examples of humanity. Characters impart abstract virtues, but it seems possible we've only conceptualized those virtues through the characters and people we feel possess them.

Finally, the examination of exemplary characters could be a useful method for viewing differing manifestations of religious "traditions." Though religions may not exist as a "kernel buffeted by historical and geographical change...enduring across time and space"[189] one way to analyze the lineage of a tradition would be through the characters it venerated, and the ways in which those were introduced, reimagined, and cast off based on changing perceptions of what constitutes "true" religion.

---

[189] Laine, *Metareligion.*

Works Cited

Beard, Daniel C. *The Buckskin Book of the Boy Pioneers of America* (n.p., 1912).

Boy Scouts of America, "Scouting.org." Accessed March 31, 2014. http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/boyscouts.aspx.

BSA, *The Official Handbook for Boys* (Garden City, N.Y., 1911)

BSA, *The Official hand Book for Boys,* rev. ed. (New York, 1914)

Burton, David Henry. 1972. *Theodore Roosevelt*. New York: Twayne Publishers

Bush, W. Stephen. "The Making of a Scout." *Motion Picture News*, February 20, 1915. www.bridgeboro.com/page4.html (accessed March 31, 2014)

Mark Carnes and Clyde Griffen, eds., *Meanings for manhood* (Chicago; University of Chicago Press 1990)

A CHRISTIAN CLUB. 1869. *New York Times (1857-1922)*, Jul 18, 1869. http://ezproxy.macalester.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/92502540?accountid=12205 (accessed April 11, 2014).

Conant, Robert Warren. 1915. *The virility of Christ: a new view*. Chicago: The author.

"Dan Beard's own Page for Boys," *Woman's Home Companion* 34 (Aug. 1907):33

Douglas, Ann. 1977. *The feminization of American culture*. New York: Knopf.

Drummond, Henry. "Manliness in Boys--By a New Process." *McClure's Magazine*, December 1893. http://www.unz.org/Pub/McClures-1893dec-00068 (accessed January 27, 2014).

Durkheim, Émile, Carol Cosman, and Mark Sydney Cladis. 2008. *The elementary forms of religious life*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

"Eight-Minute's Common-Sense Exercise for the Busy Man," Outlook 27 (June 1914): 470

Elmer, Rev. Franklin. 1913. "COMMUNITY CO-ORDINATION THROUGH BOY SCOUTS".*Religious Education.* 8 (5): 490-491.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. 1990. *English traits*. Hoboken, N.J.: BiblioBytes. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=2008469.

Foucault, Michel, and Robert Hurley. 1988. *The history of sexuality*. New York: Vintage Books.

Gladden, Washington *Amusements: Their Uses and Abuses* (North Adams, Mass., 1866)

Gulick, Luther "Neurasthenia," *Physical Training* 2, no. 4 (January 1903) 148-152

Washington Gladden, *Amusements: Their Uses and Abuses* (North Adams, Mass., 1866)

Charles Kingsley, *Sanitary and Social Lectures and Essays* (London, 1880)

Hall, G. Stanley. 1904. *Adolescence; its psychology and its relations to physiology, anthropology, sociology, sex, crime, religion and education*. New York: D. Appleton and Company.

Hale, Edward Everett *Public amusement for Poor and Rich* (Boston, 1857)

Harty, Kevin J. 1994. ""The Knights of the Square Table": The Boy Scouts and Thomas Edison make an Arthurian Film". *Arthuriana*. 4 (4): 313-323.

Harrington, Henry R. 1977. "Charles Kingsley's Fallen Athlete". *Victorian Studies*. 21 (1): 73-86

Henry R. Harrington, "Muscular Christianity: A Study of the Development of a Victorian Idea" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1971), p. 178

Kingsley, Charles *Sanitary and Social Lectures and Essays* (London, 1880)

Thomas W. Higginson, "Saints, and Their Bodies," *Atlantic Monthly* 1, no.5 (1858): 583-587.

Hughes, Thomas. *The manliness of Christ*. Boston: Houghton, Osgood and Co., 1880.
https://archive.org/details/manlinesschrist01hughgoog (accessed March 29, 2014)

James W. Laine,"Metareligion" (unpublished ms.)

 F.E. Kingsley, ed., *Charles Kingsley: His Letters and memories of His Life*, vol. 1 (London 1877), p. 249

Lipscomb, Andrew "Christ's Education of His Body," *Methodist Review* 67 (1885): 692.

Macleod, David I. 1983. *Building character in the American boy, 1870-1920: the Boy Scouts, the YMCA, and their forerunners*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Macleod, David I. 1982. "Act Your Age: Boyhood, Adolescence, and the Rise of The Boy Scouts of America."*Journal Of Social History* 16, no. 2: *Historical Abstracts with Full Text*, EBSCO*host* (accessed October 31, 2013)

Mason, Frank J. "Materials for Character-Making in Street Boys' Clubs," WWB 7 (1907): 85-86.

Morgan, David. 1998. *Visual piety: a history and theory of popular religious images*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

 Muir, John, Robert Engberg, and Donald Wesling. 1999. *To Yosemite and beyond writings from the years 1863 to 1875*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press. http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=12510.

 Newman, John Henry *Apologia Pro Vita Sua: Being a History of His Religious Opinions,* ed. Martin J. Svaglic (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990)

Price, Mrs. Theodore H. "Girl Scouts." *Outlook*, 1918, 367.

Putney, Clifford. 2001. *Muscular Christianity: manhood and sports in Protestant America, 1880-1920*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Reisner, Christian F. 1922. *Roosevelt's religion*. New York: Abingdon Press.
http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/2357139.html

Rhoads, Jeff. Bridgeboro.com, "Some Information on the film "The Making of a Scout" (1913)." Accessed March 31, 2014.
www.bridgeboro.com/page4.html.

Richards, William R. "An Extraordinary Saint," in William H. Sallmon, ed., *The Culture of Christian Manhood* (New York, 1897)

Ridgway, William H. "God in the Gym," *Association Men* 40, no. 6 (March 1915):296

Roosevelt, Theodore. "I Appeal to the American Boy to Remember That..." *Boys' Life*, December 1913. http://www.theodore-roosevelt.com/images/research/treditorials/byl1.pdf (accessed April 7, 2014).

Roosevelt, Theodore "Machine Politics in New York City," *Century Magazine* 23 (November 1886) 76

Roosevelt, Theodore. *The strenuous life; essays and addresses.*. New York: Century Co, 1901. http://www.theodore-roosevelt.com/images/research/thestrenuouslife.pdf (accessed March 29, 2014).

Roosevelt, Theodore, "What We Can Expect of the American Boy," *St. Nicholas 27* (1900):573. Reprinted at Foundations Magazine : Roosevelt, Theodore. Foundations Magazine, "The American Boy." Accessed March 17, 2014. http://www.foundationsmag.com/americanboy-com.html.

Seton, Ernest Thompson. "The Boy Scouts in America." *The Outlook*, Volume 95 July 23, 1910. http://www.unz.org/Pub/Outlook-1910jul23-00630 (accessed March 29, 2014).

"Strength," *Men* 22 (Oct. 10, 1898): 360

West, James report to Executive Board, Feb. 14, 1911, at BSA NHQ.

Young Men's Christian Association, International Committee, *The American Standard Program for Boys* (New York 1918)