

This PDF includes a chapter from the following book:

States of Childhood

**From the Junior Republic to the American Republic,
1895-1945**

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Conclusion: The Legacies of William R. George

This book has argued that the history of the junior republic movement recasts our understanding of the transformation from family economy to sheltered childhood in the United States by placing performance at the center of the story. New evidence about individuals and institutions including Wilson Gill and Willis Brown, school cities and school republics, Boy Cities and Boystowns, together with rereadings of familiar subjects from G. Stanley Hall's recapitulation theory of child development and John Dewey's vision of experiential education, to the shared priorities of schools, juvenile courts, playgrounds, and police, bring to light how developmental psychologists, educators, and youth workers applied the theory and practice of role-playing to defining and managing young people in the modern age. Although scholars have recognized that, with assistance from an interconnected network of experts, these populations acquired a new sense of self and circumscribed their actions during this period, previous accounts have missed how dramatic encounters with adult occupations figured alongside more protected experiences in the story to comprise the "double lives" of modern youth. The popularity of William George's total simulated societies for youth—junior republics and, later, junior municipalities—makes clear how a broad range of activities with dual status as real and not real that included student congresses, children's gardens, vocational education, model cottages, junior street cleaning leagues, and juvenile traffic patrols figured in the construction and maintenance of modern childhood and adolescence in America.

Situating the discourse of "miniature" and "reproduction" that linked these youth activities to a cultural context in which living villages, winter gardens, and historical reenactments proliferated and human scientists viewed imitation as a central feature of individual and societal development helps to explain their mass popularity over several decades and why young people were drawn to programming that aimed to copy life experiences from which they were being separated in the real world. Recognizing the affinities between educational entertainments and the discourses about impersonating adults in child development that guided these programs equally calls attention to how the claims about the proximity and distance between reality and representation that popularized homemaking in model cottages and policing delinquency in city streets worked

to produce the category of youth. Indeed, it was these activities that were the most common genre of mediated activity with which youth engaged: participatory performances of adulthood that offered instruction in white, middle-class values, gendered social expectations, and models of democracy and citizenship that obscured as much as they revealed. These pairings of virtual adulthood and sheltered childhood proved popular in a period when expectations about youth behavior were changing, when psychologists recognized a developmental imperative for children to impersonate adults and when vicarious experiences were viewed as real enough to adjust young people to society as it was but unreal enough to reassure adults that kids were not actually undertaking adult activities.

In light of the dominant sheltered childhood narrative, such activities' common features with better-documented educational entertainments have not been part of previous accounts. Yet prominent developmental psychologists, educators, and youth workers saw equivalencies between Scouting, in which "the lad thinks of himself as a pioneer and enacts through a skillful variety of exercises many of the resourceful habits of the early explorers," and the stereoscope which "enables the imaginative youth, or adult even, to enter so vividly into foreign experiences and customs as to constitute, if but briefly, actual experiences of travel." Later social scientists similarly clumped youth organizations, including Scouts, with radio and film as techniques of "propaganda" and "mediums of education." The shifting lexicon that accompanied the spread of these youth activities—from "models" and "dramatizations" to "education" and "recreation"—made it difficult to see these links. Revisiting the alternative worldview of a bygone era points us to how people, activities, and institutions that have traditionally been the province of historians of childhood equally belong in histories of performance and media toward a broader understanding of these fields. This plethora of dramatic techniques mediating experience that existed in parallel with the print, radio, and film technologies—what Edgar Dale later referred to as the "cone of experience"—are methods that persist to the present day even as their full histories remain to be told.¹

As important as the contributions to young people's self-disciplining were the ways that the routinization of role-playing grew the capacities of youth-serving institutions and the state. From within the confines of restricted settings and identities, children and adolescents produced economic value for the people and institutions most closely associated with removing them from the economy and public life and subsequently did the same for their communities, revealing that with the spread of role-plays of adult life came the spread of assumptions that activities with chiefly developmental value were taking place. Late nineteenth-century reformatories had been criticized for exploiting youth for free labor; in this constellation of organizations and activities, by contrast, young people were celebrated for engaging in variations on occupations that they would be criticized for doing for pay in the "real world." When these populations built facilities, prepared meals, administered programs, disciplined peers, and made media for public relations purposes under adult supervision at junior republics,

schools, and youth-serving institutions, they and their supervisors were applauded for implementing the latest scientific theories of learning and play—preparing for the future and learning values lost from the erasure of work. Rare were the occasions when the possibility of exploitation was entertained. Even when observers employed the language of “work” and “production” to describe these goods and services, such activities did not hold the status of child labor.

Discovering the ways in which child labor was redirected and redescribed, these findings thus complicate conventional understandings of how actors in the story of the transition from family economy to sheltered childhood behaved. They reveal economic implications of the contributions to performance theory and practice from developmental psychologists, educators, and youth workers such as G. Stanley Hall and John Dewey who circumscribed the boundaries of work as much as play as they shaped public understandings of relationships between reality and representation in modern life. They document how the schools and youth-serving institutions ostensibly devoted to child protection depended on young people for their construction and maintenance and how the professionalization of experts in education and youth work was inseparable from the “deskilling” of youth—that the populations these experts aimed to free from the labor force shared much in common with workers encouraged to become less proficient over time. And, in identifying public officials’ contributions to youth programs and ambiguous positions on child labor, they point to how the histories of child reform and government reform were closely intertwined.

In short, this history of youth and the state flips the narrative to reveal not only how the welfare state constructed youth but also how youth constructed the welfare state, identifying schools and playgrounds, courts and police, street cleaning and street trades among the myriad agencies that developed symbiotic relationships with youth to their mutual benefit. Recuperating the deep history of state interest in everyday performance makes clear how the influences of young people’s experiences at the George Junior Republic on what George called the “greater republic” went far beyond what he and his colleagues anticipated. Of course, activities such as health inspection, truant tracking, traffic management, food conservation, and public relations offered the citizenship training that program organizers claimed. Yet these activities’ systematic adoption to compensate for a lack of resources, and in many cases the later replacement of kids by paid adults, underscores how civic education was neither their sole nor primary rationale. Moving beyond stories of how citizen participation can become political cooptation, the evidence presented here reveals its hidden economic dimensions.

Continuity and Change in World War II

Resonances between life inside George’s junior republic and the American republic continued into World War II. With the sheltered childhood as national norm, wartime

propaganda trumpeted how America was protecting its precious youth, and educational and recreational activities increasingly emphasized future preparation. Yet in Freeville and beyond, the nation's educators, youth workers, and public officials chose to scale back rather than eliminate young people's economic contributions to the institutions that sheltered them and in turn to the American state.²

Over the four decades of his involvement in the junior republic movement, George had been a public booster for American youth. His attitudes to their capacities had evolved, however, as in his decisions to replace Freeville's citizen-hoteliers with adult cottage "parents" and to increase voting age from 12 to 16. During the dustup with Warner Brothers, George had used Richard Welling's formulation of "citizen-student" to counter the suggestion the institution was a reformatory, continuing this educational talk in the last years of his life. This framework shaped the republic's retooling during World War II as it lost many male citizens to war industries and military service, recruited more female citizens, expanded athletics, and added vocational training for war industries, including mechanics, aviation, woodworking, and electricity. Describing the "student controlled... educational town" in 1943, the *Christian Science Monitor* reported how the republic's emphasis on learning by doing rather than academic training alone was well suited to postwar reconstruction. The importance of civic education in ensuring a solid future for American democracy was also stressed. "Indifferent and useless citizens are responsible for today's chaotic world situation," explained Lyman Beecher Stowe. "France was a victim of sleeping sickness, and that must not happen here." Although, during the conflict, republic programming was less directly war-related and more future-focused than in World War I, when Atlantic Woolen Mills opened a war industry on campus and older girls moved to Syracuse for government munitions work, Freeville's junior citizens continued to participate in an economic system—in particular, increasing farm output by one-third to bring in additional income and helping nearby farmers on account of a local labor shortage. Fewer differences than previously presumed separated the young people who chose to work in war industries or jobs vacated by adults from those who remained in supervised settings—even as these institutions' economic activities were reduced.³

Developments in Freeville point to subtle shifts across other republics, schools, and youth-serving institutions during the war. African American republics reorienting their programs to the national emergency added new activities that highlighted their commitment to American democracy while sustaining their earlier sense of purpose supplying supervised recreation. Policing gave way to civil defense as the priority for Cleveland's Boystowns, heralded during the conflict as a leading "leisure time organization" for minority youth. Hill City added first aid training and raised funds for an ambulance to serve neighborhood populations. Youth City, Philadelphia's first "recreation center for black youth," was most vocal in its patriotism, arranging vocational training for war jobs, a bugle and drum corps, and entertainment for African American

servicemen. Director Samuel Evans, who insisted that African Americans could love their country without loving its wrongs, became coordinator of “colored activities” for the city’s branch of the US Department of Physical Training of the US Office of Civilian Defense. Unfortunately, continuing financial difficulties led Youth City to shut down in 1943, one of several republics (including Cottage Row and Progress City) that collapsed around World War II.⁴

Police and housing agencies organized several new juvenile democracies for African American and racially mixed neighborhoods in the early 1940s, and their programming aligned with these broad-brush trends. (Still more were planned, but never fully operational.) First aid training and civil defense were less common than traditional recreational activities, delinquency prevention efforts that organizers believed helped a nation at war, as mothers entered the labor force leaving many youth unsupervised and as race relations came to be understood in national security terms. Washington, DC, police officer Oliver Cowan, seeing boys “getting in trouble because they had nothing better to do,” devoted himself to creating “better” leisure activities by organizing the Junior Police and Citizens Corps. His federation of more than 150 small groups transformed gangs into junior police squads and subsequently into juvenile democracies whose main activities centered on a buffet of recreational options including athletics, drill corps, orchestra, chorus, and newspaper (the *Youthtown News*), and crime prevention. Trained in sociology at Howard and NYU, Cowan was guided by academic theory, using spot maps of criminal activity to site the groups and persuading gang leaders to participate, with the expectation they would recruit other youth. More than 10,000 participated. The personal and community improvement that followed even as the corps operated “with “no money, no buildings, and no outside support”—for example, a 50 percent drop in crime in one precinct over four months—attracted substantial publicity and copies in other locations.⁵

Chicago officials, eager to build community in the city’s recently constructed housing projects, were first to install youth self-government to enhance these institutions’ self-conception as “children’s cities” and reduce potential delinquency on site. Like the Junior Police and Citizens Corps, in the Junior Municipality of Wellstown (at the Ida B. Wells Homes public housing project), Altgeld Junior State (at Altgeld Gardens), Cabrini Junior City (at Cabrini Green), and Lathrop Junior City (at the Julia Lathrop homes), organizers and participants focused not on duplicating some adult referent so much as on recreation and the need for “something better to do.” Wellstown mayor Adolf Slaughter explained to a meeting of the National Association of Housing Officials how that “junior city is not run so much to punish the kids in their own courts, as to give them something to do so that they won’t have to be punished.”⁶

California housing officials followed with San Francisco Junior City for the children of war workers populating the Hunters’ Point housing project and surrounding neighborhoods, more than a thousand in all. “The kids like to keep busy,” reported African



Figure 7.1

Jelna Carr opening the meeting of the Wellstown aldermen 1942. Ida B. Wells Homes housing project, Chicago, Illinois. J. Delano, photographer.

Source: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

American child mayor Horace Peppers on the rich activity program that included a newspaper (*Junior City News*), a radio program hosted by the local CBS affiliate (“Mayor of the Air,” a case study for the textbook *Interpreting Social Welfare*), and a Junior Employment Service to place older youth in part-time jobs. “There’s always something to interest us here, and we know what we do will be appreciated. We’re treated like adults and we work like adults.” Peppers’s comments about work aside, the value made was chiefly in its delinquency prevention, because according to one report, more than two years into its operation, police had little to do, the city attorney had never had a case, and the judges had not yet had occasion to hold a session of court. Program administrator Burt Kebric prepared a bibliography on boystowns and junior cities for the National Association of Housing Officials to help get similar projects off the ground.⁷

Not every republic fit this pattern. Residential training centers, initially created to advance the NYA’s ambition “to fit youth into the world about them” and to diffuse “social dynamite,” shifted their attention to war production when the Federal Security Administration



Figure 7.2

“Mayor of the Air,” San Francisco Junior City mayor Horace Peppers (left).

Source: Helen Cody Baker and Mary Brayton Swain Routzahn, *How to Interpret Social Welfare: A Study Course in Public Relations* (New York: Russell Sage, 1947). Courtesy Russell Sage Foundation.

assumed operational responsibilities in 1939. Education for preparedness and democratic living continued across agency programs with the language of learning by doing, vocational education, and student government as points of pride in the fight against totalitarian states. At the centers, opportunities for self-governance expanded to include a federation of youth governments, worker leadership, and youth representatives to a national advisory committee. Keeping equipment in continuous use lest it be reallocated to war production and manufacturing articles to military specification, these communities of older youth made economic contributions to national needs on a comparatively outsized scale. Staff, enrollees, and labor leaders shared the understanding that the centers broke bottlenecks in the labor supply by reducing on-the-job education required when youth “graduated” to actual wartime industry employment while manufacturing goods that private industry was “unable to supply in sufficient quantities to meet current needs.” Although the agency failed in its effort to push the analogy to schools to its logical conclusion and avoid paying taxes, most opponents did not doubt its “educational” orientation; they merely called for transferring its activities to the nation’s schools. (The



Figure 7.3

National Youth Administration girls and their citizenship instructor at the Good Shepherd community center, Chicago (south side), Illinois, April 1941. Russell Lee, photographer.

Source: FSA-OWI Collection, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

American Youth Congress was an exception, taking issue with what it called the FSA's "forced labor battalions" and offering a counter-proposal for a "real program for jobs and training.") School administrators' fears of an NYA takeover proved unfounded when the agency collapsed on just these grounds in 1943.⁸

FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, whose agency was actively investigating radical youth organizations, enthusiastically supported the republic movement during the military conflict. This was part of his broader interest in how organized youth programs could complement FBI objectives. (Hoover was elected a national director of the Boys Clubs of America in 1943.) He spoke at Omaha Boys Town's commencement exercises about its valuable programs. The FBI sponsored film screenings for the Junior Police and Citizens Corps and called for their expansion to every community in the country. Agents worked with boys in several chapters of Boys State, and trained the San Francisco Junior

City police squad. The agency even hired republic organizers to its staff. For example, James Robinson, who replaced Howard McKinney as Hill City director when McKinney left for army service in 1943, was added to the FBI payroll the following year.⁹

From Prisons and Factories to Internment Camps

Drawing praise over five decades for helping immigrants, Native Americans, and African Americans adjust to the “American way of life,” sponsored by judges, police, and the FBI, and still a point of reference for criminology and corrections professionals, during World War II the junior republics that had inspired adult programs at prisons and factories also provided a blueprint for the internment camps that detained thousands of Japanese Americans. These influences did not result from personal contacts but rather underscore how ideas about democracy and discipline remained in the air. The US War Relocation Authority’s (WRA) insistence that the camps become self-governing and self-sufficient (and, in some cases, that the schools inside them teach youth self-government) underscores federal officials’ continuing embrace of principles and practices made popular by William George. Equally it points to how economic factors were never far from disciplinary ones in motivating state interest in the republic idea. From the program’s inception, WRA staff took the approach that Navy Surgeon General Ross McIntire called “the liberal democratic way of management” to “show that the United States could carry out a program of evacuation and relocation in a democratic manner that would provide the greatest possible contrast to population shifts in Axis countries.” And because “the more efficient and self regulating the administration makes the community, the fewer guards and soldiers will be needed,” this left more men free for frontline action.¹⁰

Federal officials’ initial vision for these total institutions was model communities that could “convert the Center from an item of government expense into an asset.” Evacuees’ community governments would take “responsibility for the civic management of the colony,” administering local agencies, including courts, fire, and police, businesses, and recreational activities such as newspaper, athletics, Scouts, and entertainment. Federal officials detailed these plans:

Through agriculture and industry these communities would become nearly self-supporting, and that there would be a measurable degree of local government. ... The economic development would include the production of agricultural products not only for internal consumption, but also for distribution through regular market channels, and the establishment of factories that would engage entirely in war production. The necessary social services would be provided largely through recruitment from the evacuees. The hospitals, schools, police, fire, maintenance, and other activities would be largely evacuee staffed and directed.

This arrangement was to offer “an equitable substitute for the life, work, and homes given up, and to facilitate participation in the productive life of America both during and after the war.”¹¹

Legal obstacles thwarted the plan to give camp governments the status of local governments outside the camps—like Native American reservations in the 1930s or Omaha’s Boys Town. Officials subsequently restricted voting and office holding to US citizens, and made community governments subsidiary to federal administrators. Later, work programs placing evacuees in jobs outside the camps replaced camp-based industries. With authority resting outside of their group, and work programs compensating them at unfairly low rates when compared with local staff wages, evacuees followed the precedents of prison inmates and protested these conditions. Government officials were disheartened but simultaneously fascinated by how the comparative robustness of self-government organizations affected how these disturbances played out. At Manzanar, with a weak community government, the administration called in military police. At Poston, by contrast, the community organization negotiated peacefully with administrative staff. These developments vivified the disciplinary powers of democracy and highlight persistent similarities between American strategies for managing prisoners and educating and socializing youth.¹²

Beyond Republics

The experiences of participants across the field of junior republics during World War II underscore both continuity and change in the lives of American youth. At the same time that beliefs persisted that the best way to ensure a stable future democracy was to enable young people to practice it and that peers did more to influence behavioral norms than adults, duplicating some adult referent in the organization of programming for these populations became subsidiary to actively engaging them—with the result that young people’s economic activities were much reduced. Compared to the American youth experience during World War I, or the women of World War II, for whom the reality of taking on male jobs conflicted with the rhetorical redefinition of these positions as feminine, domestic service for the nation, at Freeville and beyond the rhetoric and reality of child protection grew more closely aligned. These trends were apparent across the broader landscape of educational and recreational programming as well.¹³

Although, at first glance, students’ experiences in World War II shared much in common with those of the generation in school during the World War I, key differences highlighted transformations in social expectations. Certainly, once again students of all ages encountered the war in the curriculum, with younger students finding problems in math, geography, and other subjects framed in terms of war, and vocational subjects for war industries dominated the upper grades from 1942. Community school projects reoriented to wartime needs, for example with students taking on responsibility for publicizing conservation measures to local populations. And civic education and “world mindedness” were also stressed.¹⁴

Yet a closer look at how the curriculum brought the war inside schools finds teachers and administrators prioritized future-oriented training and scaled back the production of military supplies. John Studebaker's shift from heading the Junior Red Cross in the 1910s (which hijacked classrooms to produce millions of articles) to his leadership of the US education commission's newly organized High School Victory Corps in the 1940s (which asked students to pledge commitment to further their educations) encapsulated the changing common wisdom about the ideal youth experience. Students' economic activities did not entirely disappear, but as the older view that such adult-like activities vitalized the curriculum was superseded by growing unease among educators that these additions to the school day were incompatible with schools' basic mission, value production—for example, selling war bonds and stamps, collecting salvage, competing in poster-making contests for federal agencies, and producing public opinion in student newspapers—increasingly shifted to extracurricular and vacation activities. (The Junior Red Cross, which had coordinated school activities during World War I, became largely associated with weekend or school break projects in World War II.) Radio and film making programs dropped off substantially; those that survived covered subjects such as “the dangers of loose talk in a democracy” and “interpreting the news.”) This paralleled developments at the NYA, which reduced radio broadcasting in its centers so that national security needs could take priority for spectrum use.¹⁵

The wartime activities of junior police, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Girl Reserves, and new organizations such as the American Youth Reserves (established by the US Office of Civil Defense) and the Junior Citizens Service Corps (established by the Civilian Defense Corps), also initially appeared to replicate youth participation in the first World War as these organizations directed participants to sell liberty loans, bonds, and stamps; cultivate war gardens and farms; entertain and feed service members; distribute posters and deliver messages for government agencies; collect paper and metal for recycling; serve as hospital aids and junior air raid wardens; cook meals and babysit for female war workers; raise money for soldiers and kids in war areas; and help with harvesting during school vacations. Indeed, when compared to in-school activities, their economic contributions to the wartime economy were more readily apparent. Boy Scouts and junior police stepped up “to assist short-handed regular police and Senior Auxiliary Police in handling crowds and traffic” and serve as poll watchers. Girl Reserves filled places of older workers in “making black-out candles, knitting afghans, tending children, serving as clinical aides, and performing innumerable other wartime tasks into which their teenage zest and ingenuity lead them.” The Girl Scouts presented President Roosevelt with a “check” for “15,430,000 hours service in war work.” In fact, the nation faced a youth worker shortage as hordes of eager boys and girls found a dearth of available adults to supervise their out-of-school activities. (The number of Boy Scout leaders and former Scouts in military service was a source of frequent comment.) Youth participation in organizations that simulated military occupations was,

by contrast, reduced; from the late 1930s youth organizations lacking formal endorsement from the armed forces had been forced to drop terms like “navy” from their names.¹⁶

Yet as these recreational activities offered young people opportunities to make contributions to the war, they too were touched by changing social expectations. Despite occasional claims of history repeating itself—for example, observations of Scouts’ long history of service, or that youth were substitutes for adults—young people’s out-of-school wartime participation looked distinctly different from adults’ voluntary service and from the experiences of youth in World War I. Raising questions about the appropriateness of such undertakings with greater frequency, adults restricted many programs to older teens fifteen or sixteen and above, limiting younger boys and girls to “preparedness” activities: learning first aid skills, improving physical fitness, knowing what to do in an emergency, and training for service as junior air raid wardens, or “to act as messengers in the event of communication failures”—in short, endorsing future-oriented programming as inside the nation’s schools. Simultaneously they stressed the importance to the war effort of young people’s more indirect contributions, from learning about the democratic system to cultivating world-mindedness and improved race relations, to just being kids. As a Girl Scouts spokesperson told the *New York Times*, “Sending a little girl out to do a big girl’s job is a pitfall into which the national Girl Scout organization is determined not to fall in adapting the Scout program to the war.”¹⁷

Of course, there were exceptions to these larger patterns. Although the civic training such activities supplied typically reinforced the status quo, some groups for predominantly African American youth protested racial conditions in a context of African American service overseas and at home—for example, the Harlem-based junior police troops who demanded the federal government do more to prevent lynchings. There were schools that opted for curricular activities that hewed more closely to older precedents of war production, such as sewing and woodshop classes in several communities that made military articles or Junior Red Cross programs integrated into the curriculum, as in Hartford, Connecticut. Schoolboy patrols in Los Angeles directly replaced the adult crossing guards who left for war work with more than 14,000 eleven and twelve year olds. Yet if during the earlier conflict educators and youth workers had used the rhetoric of models and dramatizations to obscure how the activities they embraced were building their institutions and American state capacity, now more prioritized youth protection. As a result, some who made other choices—like Sabra Holbrook of New York City’s Youth Builders, which rallied kids to learn how to stop rumors, make films and radio programs, and include themselves “in work which the government has already defined as necessary”—were forced to scale back their ambitious wartime programming on account of how it conflicted with changing social expectations.¹⁸

Rethinking the Sheltered Childhood

The recognition that it was under the auspices of precisely those institutions associated with child protection that young people produced value and that such ambiguities remained long after the sheltered childhood became the norm invites new questions about the economic implications of youth programs in the decades since World War II. Histories of household labor that articulate the economic value of women's uncompensated activities have called attention to the lasting legacy of the century-old decoupling of productivity from domesticity. For example, the value created by full-time homemakers and caregivers inside spaces that once defined national productivity remain unaccounted for in present-day official figures which separate caregiving from home-based businesses for purposes of taxation and GDP. What, then, of the activities inside schools and youth-serving institutions and the supervised programs beyond their borders in recent years?¹⁹

Young Americans may not prepare cafeteria meals, perform community maintenance activities, serve as crossing guards, discipline peers, or make publicity with the same frequency as in earlier decades. Yet evidence suggests that adult administrators and staff are not the only ones making value in educational and recreational contexts. From unpaid internships for academic credit to contemporary configurations of junior police, teen courts, school patrols, youth councils, and student media; from the cookie sales that sustain the Girl Scouts organization to the college athletes who bring in millions to their universities; from student service learning projects at schools of design and public administration that supply free consulting to local governments, to beta testing software in schools and after-school programs, from the controversies around unionizing graduate teaching assistants, to Boy Scouts' extensive service projects to the US National Park Service, educational and recreational programs that develop young people's human capital for later application are not without present-day value. Century-old assumptions that work is defined by who is doing it and where it is taking place persist, however—for example, the idea that a distinction should be drawn between schools or other preparatory experiences and the "real world." Armed with historical insights, we can begin a new conversation about the state of childhood in America in which young people's capabilities and accomplishments take center stage.²⁰

