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Old Time Quiet in a Breathless Age: Faith, Virtue, and the Strength of the Social Gospel at Trinity-Pawling School

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Old-Time Quiet in a Breathless Age:
Faith, Virtue, and the Strength of the Social Gospel at Trinity-Pawling School

Senior Project submitted to
The Division of Social Studies
of Bard College

by

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Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

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Acknowledgements

In her memoir, *Hold Still*, photographer Sally Mann writes:

When an animal, a rabbit, say, beds down in a protected fencerow, the weight and warmth of his curled body leaves a mirroring mark upon the ground. The grasses often appear to have been woven into a birdlike nest, and perhaps were indeed caught and pulled around by the delicate claws as he turned in a circle before subsiding into rest. The soft bowl in the grasses, this body-formed evidence of hare[:] each of us leaves evidence on the earth that in various ways bears our form...¹

There are many who have taken care to watch over and guide me as I've made my mark over these past some-odd years. These souls received me with thoughtfulness and understanding as I repeatedly drew from their vast wealth of knowledge. They were generous with their time and exceedingly patient; they had confidence when I was lacking and were unsparingly honest when I was unsure.

For these reasons and many more, I am immensely grateful to: my Senior Project Board and advisors, Bruce Chilton, Richard Davis, and Yuka Suzuki, whose discernment, insight, and encouragement was invaluable; Headmasters Archibald Smith and William Taylor, whose trust made this project possible; the Trinity-Pawling community, who never failed to make me feel at home; the faculty and students who participated in my fieldwork, all of whom took a leap of faith in trusting me to portray their voices and who found time in their crowded schedules to accommodate me; Todd Hoffman, whose wisdom has been and continues to be indispensable; John Gedrick, a man of faith and virtue who I am privileged to call my friend; and my parents and family, whom I love dearly and who continually inspire me.

This project is dedicated to the Trinity-Pawling acolytes, who keep the faith.

¹ Sally Mann, *Hold Still: A Memoir with Photographs* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2015), 87.

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Abbreviated Timeline

- 1860 Frederick Luther Gamage is born in Woodville, Massachusetts.
- 1870 - 1920 **Social Gospel movement flourishes in the United States.**
- ~1870 - 1880 Muscular Christianity enters the scene as an offshoot of the Social Gospel.
- 1878 Gamage enters Brown University.
- 1879 St. Paul's School is established in Garden City, New York by Cornelia Stewart.
- 1882 Gamage graduates from Brown with a Bachelor's Degree but stays until 1885 to earn his Master's.
- 1882 - 1885 Gamage is Master of the Delaware Academy in Delhi, New York.
- 1884 Groton School established by Endicott Peabody.
- 1885 - 1893 Gamage is Principal of the Oxford Academy in Oxford, New York.
- 1886 - 1906 Boarding schools flourish in the United States, growing by 185% by 1906.
- 1886 Gamage marries Isabella Horner.
- 1893 Gamage leaves Oxford Academy to become Headmaster at St. Paul's.
- 1891 Gamage's wife gives birth to his first child, Margaret.
- 1896 Frederick Luther Gamage, Jr. is born.
- 1898 Gamage receives an honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law from Hobart College.
- 1895 Ganson Depew is born in Buffalo, NY.
- 1897 Bishop Littlejohn attempts to have Dr. Gamage appointed as Headmaster for life at St. Paul's. He is unsuccessful.
- 1901 Bishop Littlejohn dies; authority of the Diocese is passed to Bishop Burgess.
- 1907 **Gamage resigns from St. Paul's** and takes most of the faculty and current student-body with him.
- Gamage purchases the Dutcher House in Pawling with the help of Mr. Simpson.
- The Pawling School opens in Pawling, New York in October 1907.**
Ganson Depew is one of its first students.
- Panic of 1907 precipitates the onset of a recession.
- 1908 Mr. Simpson invests again in the Pawling School by purchasing Mr. Dutcher's

- farm a few miles away.
- Alfonzo Rockwell Cluett funds the construction of a new School building to be built on the new property.
- Robert Baden-Powell publishes *Scouting for Boys*.
- 1910 Cluett building is dedicated.
- Pawling School boasts enrollment of over 100 students.
- Scouting crosses the pond to the United States after becoming popular in the United Kingdom.
- 1914 World War I begins.
- Ganson Depew graduates from Pawling and enrolls at Yale. His mother dies that summer.
- 1917 **Walter Rauschenbusch publishes *A Theology for the Social Gospel*.**
- Ganson goes to war.
- 1918 World War I ends.
- 1919 Ganson returns from service and re-enrolls at Yale to practice Law.
- 1923 Murals are discovered on the walls of the College Chapel at Eton College in the United Kingdom.
- 1924 Ganson graduates from Yale, is admitted to the New York State Bar and begins a law practice. He dies of appendicitis soon thereafter at the age of 29.
- 1925 **All Saints' Chapel is built in memory of Ganson Depew.**
- Ganson Depew Sr. orders James Powell & Sons to create and install a stained glass window in the chancel in memory of his son.
- South end window is installed.
- 1926 Chancel window is installed.
- 1929 Cluett suffers a devastating fire.
- New York Stock Exchange plummets, marking the **beginning of the Great Depression**.
- 1932 Gamage steps down as Headmaster.
- Gamage ordained as a Protestant Episcopal priest; serves as the School's Chaplain until 1937.
- Dwight Bridge paints murals to adorn the Chapel walls in memory of Ganson

- Depew.
- 1937 Lowell Thomas introduces Matt Dann to Dr. Gamage; the idea of a partnership between their two schools surfaces but fails to gain the momentum it needs in order to be successful.
- 1939 World War II begins.
- Bridge's paintings are reported to be badly damaged by excessive moisture caused by faulty plasterwork.
- 1940 Murals are removed for renovation.
- German Luftwaffe badly damages Eton's Chapel; only the chancel window remains intact.
- 1941 Pawling School hosts an Army and Navy conference in conjunction with representatives from thirty independent schools.
- 1942 **Pawling School closes.**
- 1943-4 Campus is leased by the government for use as a cryptographic unit and later as a rehabilitation center for Air Corps flyers.
- 1945 World War II ends.
- 1946 Gamage gains control over the Pawling School property again.
- 1947 Deal between Pawling and Trinity is finalized; **Pawling re-opens as Trinity-Pawling.** Matt Dann of the Trinity School is Headmaster at both locations.
- Gamage dies.**
- 1956 Dann moves to Pawling to devote himself to Trinity-Pawling full-time.
- 1969 Cluett again catches fire.
- 1970 Dann retires.
- 1977 **Partnership between Trinity-Pawling and Trinity dissolves;** Trinity-Pawling keeps its name.
- 1978 The Bennett School, which Gamage had been intent on purchasing in 1907 before finding the town of Pawling, closes.
- Trinity-Pawling is forced to admit girls due to societal pressures and declining enrollment.
- 1985 Trinity-Pawling goes back to admitting only boys and is again a single-sex school.
- 1991 St Paul's School closes.

Selected Faculty and Students

David Avery*	Academic dean and teacher [†]
Jack Connor*	Foreign language teacher [†]
Matthew Dann	Headmaster of the Trinity School who re-opened Pawling to create the Trinity-Pawling School
Ganson Depew	Student to whom All Saints' Chapel is dedicated
Dr. Frederick Luther Gamage	Founder of the Pawling School
Mary Harris*	Admissions officer [†]
Rick Jackson*	Academic dean and teacher [†]
Jane Johnson*	Teacher [†]
Thomas Keating*	Chaplain
Carter LaChance*	Student, Acolyte
Derek Reed*	Student, Acolyte
Archibald Smith	Headmaster of Trinity-Pawling from 1990-2015
Michael Smith*	Student, Acolyte
Phillips Smith	Headmaster of Trinity-Pawling from 1970-1990
Harry Stevenson	Academic dean and teacher [†]

* Indicates a pseudonym.

[†] Indicates that the description of this faculty member's attributes or position were changed in order to protect their anonymity.



“And Lot’s wife, of course, was told not to look back where all those people and their homes had been. But she did look back, and I love her for that, because it was so human. So she was turned into a pillar of salt.

So it goes.”

- Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse Five*

“Nature is imperfectly perfect, filled with loose parts and possibilities, with mud and dust, nettles and sky, transcendent hands-on moments and skinned knees. What happens when all the parts of childhood are soldered down, when the young no longer have the time or space to play in their family’s garden, cycle home in the dark with the stars and moon illuminating their route, walk down through the woods to the river, lie on their backs on hot July days in the long grass, or watch cockleburrs, lit by morning sun, like

bumblebees quivering on harp wires? What then?”

- Richard Louv, *Last Child in the Woods*

Of Time and the River

Do you hear them? The boys, tossing a baseball across the quad. How could you not? Harry Stevenson certainly does - he just shouted, his voice worn and raspy from talking to all of the new students this weekend, and told them to keep it down. I envy them and everything they'll soon ignore: the bell they'll rush to beat, the fiery autumn foliage that will surround them in a few month's time, the carols sung by candlelight in the Chapel in December. They'll run in the rain and swelter under the sun, stretching out their navy blue blazers above them for protection until one day they're hung carelessly in their closets, mementoes of the years they once wished away.

Mr. Stevenson goes back crossing names off his beat-up clipboard, mumbling something unintelligible to everyone but himself, as I take my seat on the slate steps outside the Library. After a few minutes, he looks up, splits us into two groups of twelve, and off we go on the Orientation Tour. Our guide is Jack Connor, a foreign language teacher with a deep voice, a wry smile, and hair the color of dark cinnamon. Our feet crunch against the grated road as he shows the others the upper fields - I'm sure you've seen them, where the Fourths soccer team practices in the fall, right next to the tennis courts across from Father Keating's house.

"You guys will be doing laps through the cornfield - actually, it's Goldenrod - later this week. See?" he says, pointing. "Right through there. Especially those of you who run Cross Country - Jacks¹ takes the guys up here all the time." He pauses reluctantly to give the rest of the group time to catch up, tapping his calloused fingertips against his khaki-colored cargo shorts as he waits. A few beats pass before we start moving again.

¹ Short for Rick Jackson, the Cross Country coach.

We bear left as Mr. Connor takes us down the path to the pond. Unlike the road with its dirt packed forcefully by absent minded bikers and impatient motorists, this narrow, winding path has been all but reclaimed by nature. Loose pebbles hang on to the edges as if holding on for dear life, eternally in fear of being tumbled into the leafy undergrowth of the sunless forest where they wouldn't be seen again. Trees that started to grow too close stretch out their roots, creating dips and bumps in areas that would otherwise be smooth. A car barrels down the highway nearby, its tires shrieking as they stop short at the red light, but we wouldn't know it. The path, the woods, the boys - they're all silent.

Weeds and wildflowers grow as high as our knees as we emerge from the cover of the thicket. Cattails stand guard, bobbing their heads to some song that us boys can hardly hear. Streams of sunlight pour onto the far side of the pond, highlighting hundreds of tiny insects that have come out to greet us. The glassy water waits patiently for one of us to pick up a stone that needs skipping; a few hear her call and start searching. It's as though this place has been forgotten, left behind, untouched by human hands that would destroy its magic; no trash litter its borders, no cars parked on either end, no boomboxes blaring. And yet it remains, remembered, never ending and quiet, waiting for the wandering traveler to make their mark.

-

A young boy goes out to the pond and pitches his tent. He slips his hands beneath the emerald-colored surface and watches the water seep and snake around him as it would over a pebbled riverbed. His strawberry blond hair saunters from side to side, tangled and untouched. He builds castles and fortresses and bonfires and passageways until one day, he doesn't. He hardens, cut and shaped by time's unforgiving knife which robs him - now a man, not a boy - of his dream world. He matures, awake, his tent moth-eaten and threadbare.

But the pond - the pond, it remains. Its contour changes with the rumble of every storm, its rocks shift ever so slightly, its dam becomes just a bit more fragile. The boy doesn't notice this, of course, but why would he? The bugs and the dirt and the flora and the fauna - they're all still there, waiting. One day he'll return with stubble on his chin and a furrowed brow; he will bring all of the mystery and mischief "of the world to the woods, wash it in the creek," and "turn it over to see what lives on [its] unseen side..."² He will sketch every vision and every fantasy that had once been soldered down and again his hands will be wet with earth and muck.

And again, he will be a boy.

For every one thing that changes, there is another that stays exactly the same. We dig, we bury, and we dig again; the soil, it seems, remains unchanged. Every stroke of the shovel infinitely splinters that which we try painstakingly to forget, making it that much more likely for pieces to be found and rediscovered by someone else from some other time. This project is grounded in the belief that the present moment is influenced by and thus a reflection of, our common past. The chapters that follow will present Trinity-Pawling's Chapel as a transhistorical symbol of the School's religion and of its core ideology. I will argue that like the pond, the Chapel patiently stands by as it is lost and rediscovered by every passing generation of students. Whereas social and theological movements may ebb and flow, All Saints' Chapel remains unbroken and uninterrupted, an emblem of the School's humanity as it confronts problems of both antiquity and modernity.

This project will attempt to demonstrate these claims by using both ethnographic and archival research to delve into conceptions of *faith*, *virtue*, and *masculinity* as they were once defined by the School's founder, Dr. Frederick Gamage, and his contemporaries. We will begin by briefly exploring the Pawling School's early history in the context of the social and religious

² Richard Louv, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-deficit Disorder* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2008), 7.

movements that were taking place at the time of its founding. In doing so, we'll uncover some of Gamage's earliest convictions and pay tribute to some of the challenges that he once faced. We'll attempt to bring some of the School's earliest influences to light as we progress through the early 20th century, stopping along the way to consider several remarkable feats of happenstance and faith. The project's latter half will focus on interviews conducted on Trinity-Pawling's campus as part of a limited ethnographic study. The intent of this section is to compare, contrast, and speculate on the Chapel's historical significance in relation to its modern use as a "meeting place"³ and "club house."⁴ These concluding chapters will provide the space necessary for these voices to be heard and for their convictions to be openly examined.

The central objective of this project is to begin the process of reconciling the campus Chapel - a fixture that now appears strikingly out of place to some - with Trinity-Pawling's present culture. To do so, we'll trace some of the ways in which its function has changed since the time when Gamage first held the pulpit and examine the complexities and opportunities that its evolution now presents. Ultimately, I will suggest that the Chapel remains relevant today, perhaps more so now than ever as both the School and its students adapt to new problems and influences. We are fated to draw on and reinterpret those same memories and traditions that we always have. Our basic humanity, I argue, and that of the institutions that we create, will forever remain intact. We simply cannot help but dip the tips of our fingers back down into the muck and once again see our hands beneath the muddy surface.

³ David Avery, interview by the author, Trinity-Pawling, Pawling, NY, February 2015.

⁴ Carter LaChance, interview by the author, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY, February 2, 2015.

Faith and Virtue

“There is no present or future - only the past, happening over and over again - now.”

- Eugene O’Neill, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*

Old souls take pleasure in spaces that are quiet and still, invisible to the untrained eye but sacred to those who know their secrets. These are places that veil the confusion and noise of everyday life in solitude; they provide respite, however brief, from the deafening cacophony of the commotion that surrounds us, slowing its tempo ever so modestly. A ramshackle cabin with a porch and a swing, a cool bench on a crowded pathway; a stroll through a dark forest or along the river’s edge; a chapel, a chapter, a stanza. Here, other voices are given the chance to speak and old souls the chance to join their company.

This narrative begins among the stories and testimonies sequestered to the Trinity-Pawling archive. There you will find newspaper clippings yellowed with time, yearbooks tightly bound with tired rubber bands, and cardboard boxes marked by year and scattered with all things. Spend some time with them and they will whisper to you their history; they will know that you, too, are an old soul, and that you can be trusted with their memories. You will find, as few others have, that these texts have each had their own effect on our present reality, and that they have each left behind a curious feeling of wonder and “[t]he quiet sense of something lost.”⁵

It is through this inevitable loss that time is able to morph into the present, giving yield to ‘new’ traditions, principles, and institutions that are in view of the future but are in fact located in the past. Such was the case when Dr. Frederick L. Gamage abruptly left his post at St. Paul’s School of Garden City, Long Island, took the New York and Harlem Railroad 75 miles

⁵ Lord Alfred Tennyson, "In Memoriam A. H. H. OBIIT MDCCCXXXIII: 78," Poetry Foundation, accessed November 2, 2015, <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/174612>.

north to the small town of Pawling - population 1,900,⁶ - and founded a school of his own.⁷ In this chapter, I will briefly examine Gamage's tenure as Headmaster between 1893 and 1907, focusing largely on his resignation from St. Paul's in 1907 and his discovery of the upstate town of Pawling later that year.⁸ I will also explicate the forces and circumstances that enabled Gamage to begin his own School within the context of the complex social and religious climate of the early 19th century. In doing so, I hope to uncover and explore some of the theological shifts that were taking place during this period, such as "Muscular Christianity" and the "Social Gospel" movement. I will suggest that these developments may have influenced Dr. Gamage's beliefs about the place of athletics and religion in boys' education, which in turn, I argue, may have impacted the establishment of what would ultimately be known simply as "the Gamage School."⁹

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St. Paul's School was erected in 1879 "by Cornelia Stewart, the widow of multi-millionaire Alexander Turney Stewart, the founder of Garden City," New York.¹⁰ Mrs. Stewart is said to have founded the institution in an effort to form a "permanent nucleus of the nascent village that reflected her husband's vision of a 'planned community.'" When Dr. Gamage left his post as principal of the Oxford Academy¹¹ in upstate New York and arrived at St. Paul's in 1893, "the student body numbered approximately ninety, and had been declining."¹² Shortly

⁶ 1900 Census Documents, Census of Population and Housing, accessed April 17, 2016, <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/decennial.html>.

⁷ "All Teachers Quit St. Paul's School: Faculty Unanimous In Siding with Dr. Gamage Against Bishop Burgess, Headmaster Resented Interference With Methods That Had Made the School Prosperous," *New York Times*, June 14, 1907.

⁸ "St. Paul's," *Garden City News* (NY), September 6, 1972.

⁹ "\$125,000 In Gifts For Gamage School," *New York Times*, June 10, 1909.

¹⁰ "Historic St. Paul's," Committee to Save St. Paul's, last modified 2006, accessed November 2, 2015, <http://savestpauls.org/history.asp>.

¹¹ Hon. O. H. Curtis, *The Oxford Academy Centennial*, 1895, Gardiner Library Archive, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY.

¹² Account of St. Paul's School, Gardiner Library Archive, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY.

after assuming authority, Gamage expanded and updated the curriculum and began to develop the School's physical facilities.¹³ He also dismantled the School's strict military system which had been in place since 1881,¹⁴ arguing that "it involved a useless waste of time, caused ill-feeling, retarded the progress of the School's work and destroyed the individuality of the student,"¹⁵ and in its place instituted mandatory chapel services that would be held twice a day.¹⁶

By the end of his second year as Headmaster, Gamage "was in firm control of the situation," having registered over fifty new boys and accepted more than twenty registrations for the coming year.¹⁷ He had also begun to institute significant changes in the School's ideology. In a May 1895 letter addressed to the parents of his pupils and to his alumni, or "saints," he explicated "the ideals which [he had] undertaken to carry out:"

The baby cries or laughs; the man of business hurries; while the boy in School gets into mischief... The country is full of weak-legged, weak-armed, and weak-bodied boys, because proper attention has not been paid to their early training.¹⁸ The remedy is to be found in the School. We have taken full charge of your boy's development, mental and physical, and have promised to return him, at the end of his regular course, sound in body and mind....

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵ Wallis E. Howe, Jr., "Garden City: An Informal Biography," August 15, 1974, Gardiner Library Archive, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY.

¹⁶ Account of St. Paul's School. Why Gamage was intent on discontinuing the School's military system is unclear given that he was in the midst of a campaign centered around physical fitness and virility. Historian John F. Kasson reminds us that "physical educators of the period...believed that concentration on a single activity or sport created a physical imbalance and, with it, a potential moral distortion." Another possibility is that it provided Gamage with an opportunity to clearly demarcate between the School's history and its future over which he felt full control. We should also keep in mind that Gamage was of a generation, as one scholar suggested, that had been born only a very short while after the end of the Civil War. While their fathers recounted vivid memories of the battle field, they themselves drew blanks. As such, they questioned in what ways they would assert their masculinity in modernity and demonstrate physical prowess in a rapidly transforming social landscape. Perhaps America's new fascination with muscle and sport would be the solution if war was not (yet) an option. John F. Kasson, *Houdini, Tarzan, and the Perfect Man: The White Male Body and the Challenge of Modernity in America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2002, 48).

¹⁷ Howe, "Garden City: An Informal."

¹⁸ David G. Schuster, history scholar and author of *Neurasthenic Nation: America's Search for Health, Happiness, and Comfort, 1869-1920*, writes: "As the United States rushed toward industrial and technological modernization,...people worried [and] [p]hysicians testified that, without a doubt, modern civilization was causing a host of ills" such as "irritability, insomnia, lethargy, weight loss, anxiety, lack of ambition, and....impotence." David G. Schuster, *Neurasthenic Nation: America's Search for Health, Happiness, and Comfort, 1869-1920* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2011), 1.

The one thing that Saint Paul's School is striving for is manly, Christian character; character that fits a boy to be trusted at all times. But along with this, there must be a correspondingly well-developed body, strong in every part, and a mind in which the ability to create is second only to the ability to think.¹⁹

Above all, Frederick Gamage promised to install what Henry Coit, rector of the unrelated but prestigious St. Paul's School of New Hampshire, called "'high bred manliness:'" that is, as Clifford Putney, a historian of the Progressive Era, described in his text, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1880-1920*, "a combination of discipline, heartiness, and 'freedom from the tendency to abnormal precocious vice.'"²⁰ Gamage would ultimately jettison the archaic theology of the Anglican Church which had become "overly tolerant of physical weakness and effeminacy"²¹ for a "new model of manhood [that] stressed action rather than reflection and aggression rather than gentility."²²

Putney states that this "strain of religiosity, known both admiringly and pejoratively, as 'Muscular Christianity,'" flourished across many denominations between 1870 and 1920 - the exact period of time during which Gamage would both join and later leave St. Paul's and found the Pawling School. Putney argues that "[c]onverts to this creed, as 'advocate[s] of strenuous religion for 'the Strenuous Life,' thought bodily strength a prerequisite for doing good. These...stalwart supporters of Christian manliness hoped to energize the churches and to counteract the supposedly enervating effects of urban living."²³ To realize their aims, they advocated for competitive sports and physical education as means to "enhance the body's serviceability."²⁴ Institutions such as the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the Boy

¹⁹ Account of St. Paul's School.

²⁰ Clifford Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1880-1920* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 106.

²¹ *ibid.* 1.

²² *ibid.* 5.

²³ *ibid.* 1.

²⁴ *ibid.* 13.

Scouts of America, and a number of boarding Schools would soon be established to meet the growing expectation that men exert themselves physically so as to express themselves spiritually.²⁵

Muscular Christianity, within the context of the Social Gospel movement, “sought to bring men to the church by making Jesus look more manly” and in doing so construct a brand of Christian character suited to meet the demands of the 20th century.²⁶ One could argue that this living theology that paired strength with piety and imbued Christian virtue resonated deeply with Dr. Gamage throughout his tenure at St. Paul’s and would continue to impact him throughout the remainder of his career. By 1897, he appeared in firm control of St. Paul’s, having made a number of favorable improvements with the blessing of Bishop Abram Littlejohn, the first elected Bishop of the newly formed Diocese of Long Island whose direct responsibility it was to manage the institution.²⁷ After a mere four years after having been appointed, Gamage had been “able to bring an end [to] the military system which had been part of the School since 1881, to expand and update the curriculum, and to expand the School’s physical facilities.”²⁸ How secure the Bishop believed the School to be under Gamage’s leadership is reflected in Littlejohn’s (unsuccessful) attempt in 1897 to have Dr. Gamage given the post for life.

Gamages progress at St. Paul’s, while significant, was far from unprecedented. Four hours away at the Groton School, established in 1884,²⁹ Headmaster Endicott Peabody was intent on restoring boys’ “intellectual and moral and physical fibre” through “daily sports,

²⁵ David I. Macleod, *Building Character in the American Boy: The Boy Scouts, YMCA, and Their Forerunners, 1870-1920* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 24.

²⁶ Putney goes on to state that the preeminent religion scholar of the period, Walter Rauschenbusch, once asserted that “[t]here was nothing mushy, nothing sweetly effeminate about Jesus,” [f]or Jesus was a “man’s man” who “turned again and again on the snarling pack of his pious enemies and made them slink away.” Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports*, 42.

²⁷ *Calling a Bishop Coadjutor for the Diocese of Long Island* (Long Island, NY: Diocese of Long Island, 2008), 12, accessed November 2, 2015, http://www.dioceselongisland.org/website_pdfs/Search_Profile_The_Call_09-02.pdf.

²⁸ Account of St. Paul’s School.

²⁹ Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports*, 107.

chapel services, and Bible readings, all of which [he believed] immunized them from Peabody's particular [irritation]: 'loafing.'"³⁰ Like Gamage and others who followed Muscular Christianity, Peabody shared the view that the body was "a tool for good, an agent to be used on behalf of social progress and world uplift."³¹ He would model Groton after strict English boarding schools and emphasize "religious observance, vigorous exercise and spartan living."³² These ideological parallels between Groton and St. Paul's illustrate the influence of Muscular Christianity on the formation of secondary schools³³ during this period and can also provide insight into the ways in which St. Paul's was shaped during its years with Dr. Gamage at its helm.

By 1897, St. Paul's would advertise that its aim was to "develop manly, Christian character, a strong physique, and the power to think."³⁴ Gamage would accomplish this by building the Cluett Gym to accommodate the newly formed department of "Physical Culture," in which "[e]very boy [was] carefully examined and given just that training which is necessary to develop the weak parts of the body. Daily drills in the 'setting up exercises,' dumb-bells, Indian Clubs, and chest weights, together with the out-door games and sports," he argued, "cannot fail to give good results - erect, strong, healthy boys."³⁵ "Organized sports," Putney claims, "[had] rules, chains of command, and strenuousness [that] made [them] ideal teachers of duty and hard work,"³⁶ and thus exemplified the Christian character that staunch believers such as Gamage sought to build.

³⁰ *ibid.* 108.

³¹ *ibid.* 107.

³² Otis L. Graham and Meghan Robinson Wander, *Franklin D. Roosevelt: His Life and Times : an Encyclopedic View* (New York, N.Y.: Da Capo Press, 1990),316.

³³ Similarly, George Van Santvoord, an early headmaster of the Hotchkiss School of Lakeville Connecticut, claimed that there was only one "rule...that the School truly had:...*Be a gentleman!*" One could argue that Van Satvoord also equated, like Gamage and Peabody, Christian character with gentlemanly behavior in the classroom and on the playing field. Ernest Kolowrat, *Hotchkiss: A Chronicle of an American School* (New York: New Amsterdam, 1992), 33.

³⁴ "Historic St. Paul's," Committee to Save St. Paul's.

³⁵ Account of St. Paul's School.

³⁶ Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports*, 34.

These “muscular” tenets operated within the larger framework of the religious reform of the Social Gospel movement that would come to prominence in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.³⁷ As the end of the 19th century neared, the United States was wrought with economic and social problems that rapid industrialization had introduced during the years prior.³⁸ Monumental changes in the structure of American industry and culture, such as the unrelenting growth of cities and large-scale immigration, resulted in disease, exploitation, and overcrowding that characterized the experience of many.³⁹ In response, widespread social reform would become an important dimension of American protestantism and of the forthcoming Progressive Era. Like other movements of its time, the Social Gospel would advocate for change through a theological perspective and ignite an urgent call to action within the Church.

The Social Gospel was born in part out of ministers’ growing inability to connect with their audiences, many of whom members of the rapidly growing working class.⁴⁰ As the distinction between social groups grew more severe, theologians were forced to “establish some connection between religion and [the] social feelings and experiences” of life as it was presently lived; failure to do so, as some would argue, would result in the church’s senility and ultimate death.⁴¹ But rather than viewing the predicaments of industrialism as inevitable or inescapable, thought leaders such as Walter Rauschenbusch saw opportunity in the beginning of a new millennium. In his seminal manifesto for the movement, *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, published in 1917, Rauschenbusch argued that the “Social Gospel seeks to bring men under repentance for their collective sins” incurred during the previous century.⁴² To do so, he

³⁷ “Social Gospel” in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed November 2, 2015, <http://www.britannica.com/event/Social-Gospel>.

³⁸ Bradley W. Bateman, “The Social Gospel and the Progressive Era,” TeacherServe, accessed November 2, 2015, <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/twenty/tkeyinfo/socgospel.htm>.

³⁹ *ibid.*

⁴⁰ Walter Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 3.

⁴¹ *ibid.* 1, 12-13.

⁴² *ibid.* 5-6.

contended, would “create a more sensitive and more modern conscience” and invoke “the faith of old prophets who believed in the salvation of nations.” Essentially, he maintained that the ‘new’ theology that he would outline was in fact a return to what he and others viewed as one of the most basic premises of Christianity.⁴³

In order to give rise to the “new ideals” that would be created by the Social Gospel and that would advance its “practical theology,” its classical counterpart - namely, the testament itself - would need to be “rejuvenat[ed].” Rauschenbusch and his contemporaries sought to apply Christian ethics to the modern social issues that were affecting humanity, thereby operationalizing the Church’s mission. Like the Muscular Christians who used athletic metaphors that “taught the essential manliness - and therefore palatability - of Christ” so as to restore boys’ moral “fibre,”⁴⁴ Social Gospellers sought to “approximate lay religion” by dealing with those ethical and moral “problems of the present life” which pressed upon man’s conscience.⁴⁵

Theology is not superior to the gospel. It exists to aid the preaching of salvation. Its business is to make the essential facts and principles of Christianity so simple and clear, so adequate and mighty, that all who preach or teach the gospel, both ministers and laymen, can draw on its stories and deliver a complete and unclouded Christian message. When the progress of humanity creates new tasks, such as world-wide missions, or new problems, such as the social problem, theology must connect these with the old fundamentals of our faith and make them Christian tasks and problems.⁴⁶

The Social Gospel democratized the theology of the Church by linking modern social issues with religious thought, thus making Christianity accessible so as to enable worshipers to more fully

⁴³ *ibid.* 13.

⁴⁴ Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports*, 18.

⁴⁵ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 16.

⁴⁶ *ibid.* 6.

embody it. Here, Rauschenbusch plainly demonstrates the central objective of the movement and declares its relevance to the tasks that the Progressive Era sought to address.

Rauschenbusch would later describe the movement as a necessary theological readjustment that combatted the unethical behavior of the nonreligious and that sought to restore faith writ large.⁴⁷ Early 19th century philosopher and psychologist William James would also advocate for such an adaptation in his early 20th century lectures on the institutional and personal forms of religious experience.⁴⁸ In his text, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, James disregards what he classifies as antiquated aspects of the Church - its organization, ceremonies, and rituals, for example - and instead focuses on that which concerns man himself. He inquires into manifestations of *individual* faith, “the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine.”⁴⁹ James claims that personal religion rests on “the belief that there is an unseen order” to which we are “harmoniously adjusting ourselves” through our actions and our dispositions; this, he claims, represents the impact of the “religious attitude in the soul.”⁵⁰ Here, James emphasizes the discernible qualities of religion and how they influence one’s motivations and behaviors. This assertion enables him to examine personal religion within the context of how it affects and is affected by the human conscience and its emotions. As such, he is able to conduct his analysis outside of the aspects of the institutional branch that he aims to avoid.

Crucial to James’s conception of the individual experience of religion is his understanding of morality. Unlike Rauschenbusch who is himself a theologian, James writes from a scientific (and perhaps even skeptical) point of view. For James, morality is a product of one’s consciousness and not an approximation of religious thought; he states that “[a]ll our

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸ William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, ed. Robert H. Abzug, abridged ed. (Longmans, Green & Co., 1902; Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2013),31.

⁴⁹ *ibid.* 32.

⁵⁰ *ibid.* 38.

attitudes, moral, practical, or emotional, as well as religious, are due to the ‘objects’ of our consciousness, the things we believe to exist, whether really or ideally, along with ourselves.” To put it plainly, James asserts that one’s moral compass is the result of their own subconscious interacting with their consciousness so as to influence the choices that they make. This reveals the way in which he believes the subconscious operates: what Rauschenbusch would designate as the ‘spirit at work,’ James characterizes as the product of one’s mind.

Your whole subconscious life, your impulses, your faiths, your needs, your divinations, have prepared the premises, of which your consciousness now feels the weight of the result; and something in you absolutely knows that that result must be truer than any logic-chopping rationalistic talk, however clever, that may contradict it.⁵¹

This quote demonstrates that, according to James, morality exists exclusively within and through the subconscious. There is, he argues, a “subconscious life” to each individual that is completely unseen and inaccessible outside of the way that it manifests itself through one’s consciousness. One’s values are here attributed to their subconscious morality which presses on their conscious attitudes and behavior. This, in turn, provides humans with the capacity to cultivate a moral life without the intervention of the divine through the institutional branch of religion.

James’s premise parallels both Gamage’s Muscular Christian ideology and that of the Social Gospel movement. Social Gospelists and James alike sought to approximate the structure of religion in order to confront the ethical and moral “problems of the present life” which at the time pressed upon man’s conscience.⁵² The Social Gospel dealt with many of the same moral concerns that James attributed to the subconscious realm; whereas James applied an

⁵¹ *ibid.* 42-3.

⁵² Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 16.

“existential judgement” in his analysis, Rauschenbusch’s argument was dominated by a “spiritual judgement” that dealt with the spiritual and social issues of his day.⁵³ He would, like James, advocate for personal rather than institutional religion so as to propagate a moral way of living within the new reality of the early 20th century. This gave way to Rauschenbusch’s penultimate goal: to respond to the social turmoil that the onset of industrialism had wrought, and in doing so reinvigorate the Church and make it relevant again.

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Gamage’s success would be impeded in 1901 when, after the death of Bishop Littlejohn, the authority of the Diocese was “passed to a small group of affluent rectors and laymen” who began to exercise their control over St. Paul’s.⁵⁴ Whereas Bishop Littlejohn “was most likely selected in as the compromise candidate between ‘high’ and low’ factions [where] he had supporters in both camps,” his successor, Frederick Burgess, was much more conservative and austere.⁵⁵ Burgess, who perhaps felt pressure due to an inadequate endowment and significant budget deficits left by Littlejohn,⁵⁶ would exert his control more forcibly than his predecessor, often resulting in disagreements with Dr. Gamage over the general management and religious character of St. Paul’s.⁵⁷

It is said that Dr. Gamage resented the attitude that the Bishop took toward him in spite having rescued the School from its impending demise a few years prior.⁵⁸ Gamage’s eventual departure was precipitated by a vehement dispute caused by the “desire on the Bishop’s part to

⁵³ James, *The Varieties of Religious*, 20.

⁵⁴ *Calling a Bishop Coadjutor*, 12.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*

⁵⁶ At the time that she decided to build St. Paul’s School, Mrs. Cornelia Stewart also “agreed to build a large endowed church that would serve as a memorial to her late husband....and also serv[e] as a cathedral to the Diocese.... Mrs. Stewart’s agent, lawyer Henry Hilton, acquired such influence over her and funding for the project that donations were severely restricted, and years of litigation followed her death. The endowment for the Diocese, the Cathedral, and...St. Paul’s, was to prove inadequate in the future” Diocese Long Island..

⁵⁷ “All Teachers Quit St. Paul’s.”

⁵⁸ Account of St. Paul’s School.

put in Dr. Gamage's chair a man of his own selection."⁵⁹ A seeming opponent to the Gamage's Muscular Christian ethos, the Bishop also began to express concern over the money that Gamage had spent erecting and equipping the School's gymnasium and sports teams:

It was soon rumored that the Bishop was finding fault with the personal account Dr. Gamage submitted to the Chapter. Athletics were always favored by Dr. Gamage. After Bishop Burgess' arrival[,] Garden City heard of disputes about bills for the track, baseball, football, and other teams.

Bishop Burgess vowed to enhance the religious character of the institution, and his "discover[y]" that "there was not enough religion at St. Paul's" effected an immediate change on the recommendation of the Chapter over which he now presided.⁶⁰ Following this claim, students were required to attend chapel more often than they had under Dr. Gamage's orders and adopt a more conservative mode of study. The storm ultimately broke when "the combatants openly expressed their opinions of each other"⁶¹ at a meeting of the Cathedral Chapter in 1905, after which Gamage was reputedly advised to resign.⁶²

Dr. Gamage, steadfast and unrelenting, would ignore their advice and retain his post until he tendered his resignation in May 1907.⁶³ A month later on June 14th, the New York Times would report that the faculty unanimously sided with Dr. Gamage against Bishop Burgess:

Every member of the Faculty of St. Paul's School has resigned, it was announced today, following the lead of Dr. Gamage, the Headmaster, who got out some weeks ago after a quarrel with Bishop Burgess. Seven

⁵⁹ "All Teachers Quit St. Paul's.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*

⁶¹ "All Teachers Quit St. Paul's."

⁶² A 1907 article in the New York Times claims that "the Bishop had already selected Dr. Gamage's successor" as of this meeting. Another account claims that Gamage "had been voted by the School's Committee against his wishes a year's leave and [he] refused." Account of St. Paul's School.

⁶³ "All Teachers Quit St. Paul's."

of the masters are going to Dr. Gamage's new School at Pawling, and the rest have decided to seek positions elsewhere.⁶⁴

Having formed relationships with many members of the student body who supported him, Gamage had a similar effect on St. Paul's enrollment the following year:

Parents of the students are indignant over the disruption. Most of them side with Dr. Gamage. Last night some of these held an informal conference at the Garden City Hotel and blamed the Bishop. Most of them have already withdrawn their children from the School. Others are sending in resignations for their sons.⁶⁵

The School's alum would unanimously vote the following year to withdraw from the St. Paul's School Alumni Association and would proceed to organize under the umbrella of Gamage's new institution whose location had yet to be determined.⁶⁶ The dedication shown here is emblematic of the growing momentum of the Social Gospel movement, of which Gamage was a staunch supporter, that claimed that it would "rejuvenat[e]"⁶⁷ the uninspired theology of the Church. At St. Paul's, Gamage proposed a remedy to the antiquated "voices of past ages"⁶⁸ by making the doctrine of Christ comprehensible to his young male students. Above all else, Gamage's philosophy was grounded in practicality: his quest to build Christian character through virility, strength, and piety appealed to many and provided the framework on which the youth of a new generation would approach religion. In his view, competitive sports, physical health, and manly exertion promulgated the Christian commitment to health established in the New Testament and built not only muscle but also faith.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ *ibid.*

⁶⁵ *ibid.*

⁶⁶ "Dinner to Dr. Gamage," *The Phoenix*, March 1908, 25.

⁶⁷ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 21.

⁶⁸ *ibid.* 8.

⁶⁹ Mark 11:15. 1 Cor. 6:19-20.

The circumstances under which Dr. Gamage left St. Paul's may be representative of the larger theological shift taking place during the early 1900's, during which time the Social Gospel claimed to revive and reconstruct the "earliest doctrines of the church."⁷⁰ Gamage's desire to actualize this mission unimpeded and according to his own particular beliefs is reflected in his strategy to construct a school of his own over which he would have full control. His goal was to create a microcosm that answered humanity's modern religious yearnings and assuaged his own desire for autonomy. Yet in spite of the gradual mutation of the religious landscape that was taking place, "change," as Rauschenbusch wrote at the time, "always hurts."⁷¹

Though he had no place to put the boys nor capital with which he would pay their instructors, Gamage had the unusual advantage of having already secured six faculty members and "some ninety odd fellows"⁷² with whom he would begin the school's inaugural year.⁷³ As Gamage began his search to find a suitable location on which to build, a series of economic shocks induced the Panic of 1907, precipitating the onset of a recession "at a time when credit markets were already under great stress, and many borrowers were likely having difficulty in obtaining funds."⁷⁴ The disruption of the stock market, however, was but one of the impediments that Gamage would need to overcome in the early months of that year. He would first need to secure funds in a changing and unstable economy and, after locating investors, purchase property that would stand him in good stead throughout the coming years.

Gamage's mission to build a new school through which he could practice his own pedagogy was far from unusual or unprecedented for his time. In his paper, "The Rise of American Boarding School and the Development of a National Upper Class," Harvard sociologist

⁷⁰ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 26.

⁷¹ *ibid.* 21.

⁷² "Pawling School," *The Pawling School Weekly*, November 9, 1912, 6.

⁷³ Margaret Gamage Spurr, interview by Marian Utter, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY, July 1975.

⁷⁴ Carola Frydman, Eric Hilt, and Lily Y. Zhou, "The Panic of 1907: JP Morgan, Trust Companies, and the Impact of the Financial Crisis" (working paper, n.d.), 4, accessed November 2, 2015, http://econ.as.nyu.edu/docs/IO/23161/Hilt_03232012.pdf.

Steven B. Levine argues that the majority of the top twelve boarding schools in New England were established between 1883 and 1906,⁷⁵ at the same time that others, founded earlier, “underwent a process of rapid expansion and internal transformation.”⁷⁶ It was during this period that “the upper class began the practice of sending their sons away to boarding school,”⁷⁷ causing overall enrollment to grow by 185 percent between 1886 and 1906.⁷⁸ Levine links the rise of these schools to the demands of the rapid industrialization of the economy, which called for the formation of “a single national elite” that would be able to “coordinate the increasingly complex...capitalist economy” and keep it “prosperous and stable.”⁷⁹

As the endowment and size of the schools around him grew, Gamage presumably sought to take advantage of what appeared to be an opportune time to add to the area’s “network of rural, private secondary schools” that continued to prosper in spite of an unstable economy.⁸⁰ According to one source, Mr. Thomas Simpson, who at the time had two sons enrolled at St. Paul’s, advised Dr. Gamage that he had found a possible location at the Dutcher House, a hotel in Pawling, New York.⁸¹ Simpson was one of “seven men who had pledged themselves to stand by him in his enterprise [and] set about to find the proper location and to raise the funds necessary for the founding of his new school.”⁸² Mr. Simpson suggested that “this building, with its adjacent cottages, might be readily utilized, and, should his views meet with those of [Dr. Gamage], that he ask the owner, Mr. John B. Dutcher, if he would lease the premises for a term of years.” Margaret Gamage Spurr, Gamage’s daughter, would later remember the series of

⁷⁵ Steven B. Levine, “The Rise of American Boarding Schools and the Development of a National Upper Class,” *Social Problems* 28, no. 1 (October 1980):64, accessed November 3, 2015, doi:10.2307/800381.

⁷⁶ Levine attributes this massive restructuring of older Schools to the “development of public secondary education in the 1880s and 1890s,” which “posed a serious problem” as “publicly-supported high-schools began to fulfill the function that had historically been theirs.” Levine, “The Rise of American,” 65.

⁷⁷ *ibid.* 63.

⁷⁸ *ibid.* 65.

⁷⁹ *ibid.* 66.

⁸⁰ *ibid.* 64.

⁸¹ Rutgers R. Coles, *Pawling School: 1907-1922*, Gardiner Library Archive, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY.

⁸² *ibid.*

events differently and would state that he had been on the train back to New York City after unsuccessfully attempting to procure another property, Halcyon Hall in the nearby town of Millbrook,⁸³ when he

stopped at the Pawling Station for the restaurant which use [sic] to be there. And he got off the train and saw the Dutcher House and thought, I'll let the train go on and I'll go and look at the Dutcher House, which was an ordinary country hotel. So, he went over, got a room, bath and found out who the Dutcher House belonged to...and he called him up and made the appointment for the next day and called two of his alumni fathers in New York. They came up and met and between the three of them [and together] they bought the Dutcher House.

Regardless of whether Gamage found the Dutcher House himself or if it was at the suggestion of Mr. Simpson, the significance of Pawling's pastoral location and bucolic charm was certainly not overlooked. On the contrary, changes in the underlying social and economic structure of cities had made boarding schools' addresses increasingly important. In his paper, Steven Levine cites a 1903 survey in which boarding schools reported "that they had been founded in part because of parents' feelings" that their children were in need of an escape from the "undesirable," "objectionable personal habits" of peers not of the same nationality.⁸⁴ To put it plainly, headmasters sought to "create schools where the children of old established families would be isolated from the children of immigrants."

Parents preferred that their sons be educated in a pristine rural environment rather than in the city. In a rural environment their children would be far removed from many of the contaminating aspects of city

⁸³ "He went up...and tried to buy Halcyon Hall and this Miss Bennett had bought it three days before." (Spurr, interview.) May F. Bennett, the founder of Bennett College of Irvington, New York, intended to move her School to this location and did so in 1907. The School had an enrollment of 120, a faculty of 29, and was originally named "The Bennett School for Girls." It would close after a failed merger with another college in 1977. (Andree Brooks, "Hope Dims for Saving a Millbrook Mansion," *The New York Times*, December 29, 1991, Real Estate, accessed November 3, 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/12/29/realestate/hope-dims-for-saving-a-millbrook-mansion.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm>.)

⁸⁴ Levine, "The Rise of American," 72.

life, including the dangerous habits and ideas of working-class children whom they were likely to meet on their way to School.⁸⁵

According to one study, more than 15 million immigrants arrived in the United States during the first 15 years of the 20th century: about equal to the previous 40 years combined.⁸⁶ As the numbers swelled, cities became increasingly crowded and public works often failed to keep up with the growing population.⁸⁷ As a result, poor housing, sanitation, and health care became a dominant issue for Progressive reformers and a source of discord for wealthy families.⁸⁸

“Delighted” and “struck with [the] possibilities” of the Dutcher House, Gamage urged Mr. Simpson to begin negotiations, upon which Mr. Dutcher promptly offered the property for \$75,000, cash.⁸⁹ Dutcher’s price “came as somewhat as a shock to” Dr. Gamage as 1907 had witnessed one of the greatest panics in financial history, and “although numerous friends were willing to help, few were able.”⁹⁰ Simpson, however, himself a wealthy pawnbroker,⁹¹ agreed to pay the entire sum, reputedly having stated that “should his price have been twice the figure,... the cost would be immaterial so long as his dear friend the Doctor⁹² was satisfied.”⁹³

⁸⁵ *ibid.*

⁸⁶ "Immigrants in the Progressive Era," Library of Congress, accessed November 3, 2015,

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/progress/immigrnt/>.

⁸⁷ Keep in mind also the growing desire for the ‘clean air’ of the rural and unpopulated countryside (which, as it turns out, was largely free of immigrants.)

⁸⁸ "Progressive Movement," Eagleton Institute of Politics, accessed November 3, 2015,

http://www.eagleton.rutgers.edu/research/americanhistory/ap_progressive.php.

⁸⁹ Coles, *Pawling School: 1907-1922*.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*

⁹¹ "Million Left by Pawnbroker to His Family," *Citizen Register* (Ossining, NY), July 29, 1932, 0, accessed November 3, 2015.

⁹² This title is identical to one used in the 1857 text, *Tom Brown's School Days*, in which the characters refer to the headmaster of Rugby School, Dr. Thomas Arnold, as “the Doctor.” Boys are described as having “feared the Doctor with all our hearts, and very little besides in heaven or earth; who thought more of our sets in the School than of the Church of Christ, and put the traditions of Rugby and the public opinion of boys in our daily life above the laws of God.”(Though *School Days* is a work of fiction, Arnold was, in fact, the actual headmaster of Rugby from 1828 to 1841.) Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, ed. Andrew Sanders (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2008), 7.

⁹³ Coles, *Pawling School: 1907-1922*. "Pawling School," 6.

In the span of a mere few months, the Dutcher House would be transformed into what would become the first location of the Pawling School. That summer, Gamage's associates contributed a combined sum of \$15,000 "for the purchase of equipment and supplies."⁹⁴ The hotel boasted two large stories, fifty-six rooms, a library and public reading room, a large hall, and dining and reception rooms.⁹⁵ The building was heated by steam, lit with gas, and was "supplied with pure water, which [was] brought one mile, from the mountains east of the hotel."⁹⁶ In October 1907, Dr. Gamage would begin his twenty-fifth year as a schoolmaster⁹⁷ with the men of his choice, in his own school, under his own direction, and according to his own beliefs.

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If Gamage was to realize his ideal after leaving St. Paul's, he would need to "find some institution where, once it had been established, no outside influences could rupture the harmony of effort" that he put forth.⁹⁸ In erecting his own school, Gamage established an academy upon the "immutable principles to which his life, and to which the lives of the men about him, had become dedicated." His purchase of the Dutcher House provided him with the grounds for administrative and theological latitude that would have been impossible to achieve under Bishop Burgess's supervision. The curriculum, while similar in format to St. Paul's, would pay special attention to the "training" required to "strengthen the body and develop manly, Christian character" so as to prepare boys for college.⁹⁹

Gamage designed his course of instruction so as to support those activities that "consecrated" the body "in God's service,"¹⁰⁰ as it was his belief that

⁹⁴ *ibid.*

⁹⁵ James H. Smith, "History of the Village of Pawling," in *History of Dutchess County, New York* (n.p., 1882), accessed November 3, 2015, <http://www.usgennet.org/usa/ny/county/dutchess/dutch/Hist/pawlvil1.htm>.

⁹⁶ *ibid.*

⁹⁷ Coles, *Pawling School: 1907-1922*.

⁹⁸ *ibid.*

⁹⁹ Advertisement from The Scroll, School Yearbook, 1911, image, Gardiner Library Archive, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY.

¹⁰⁰ Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports*, 12-13.

systematic exercise is as necessary for the full development of boys as mental drill[. As such,] no effort will be spared to interest every pupil in physical culture. Athletics will not be allowed to have first place, but will be used as a means to true education.

While this was certainly emblematic of Gamage's Muscular Christian ethos, it was also in line with the Progressive Era desire to modernize and take control over their own environment. Gamage's reference to "true education" parallels the longing for the "one best system" - a phrase used by historicist David Tyack in his analysis of 20th century urban education in America - that Reformers sought to implement in lieu of the waste and inefficiency of the pre-industrial age.¹⁰¹ Here, education is the cure to society's moral and physical weaknesses; hence, one is obligated to devote significant effort to strengthening the "body" of the urban-industrial society - immigration, human rights, public health, economic and social affairs, and so on - by first developing their own.

If, as Rauschenbusch contended, "Christianity is most Christian when religion and ethics are viewed as inseparable elements of the same single-minded and whole-hearted life,"¹⁰² then the "Christian character" that Gamage sought to imbue would first require an understanding not only of theology but of the issues of present life. The central task of the Pawling School would be to align its students' moral and religious characteristics - as James contended, their "impulses,...faiths,...needs,... [and] divinations" - with the requirements of the new social order of the 20th century. The Social Gospel movement provided Gamage with the theoretical support through which the message of the Church could be approximated to everyday experience, and thus the framework for the Pawling School's culture and curriculum.

¹⁰¹ David Tyack, *The One Best System: A History of American Urban Education*(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), accessed November 3, 2015, <http://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674637825>.

¹⁰² Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 14.

By late 1908, Mr. Simpson again invested in Gamage and his School with his purchase of Mr. Dutcher's farm but a few miles away, presenting it as a site for a new school building.¹⁰³ With the generosity of Alfonzo Rockwell Cluett of the Cluett Peabody & Company, a wealthy shirt manufacturer from Troy, New York whose son had once been a pupil of his at St. Paul's,¹⁰⁴ Dr. Gamage "took the handles of the plow" and began construction.¹⁰⁵ In a few years time and with the help of "those [students] who were fortunate enough to be in school at the time [to pull] the plow," the building was finished and enrollment had grown to well over 100 students.¹⁰⁶ By the dedication in June 1910, money had been given by Mr. George D. Cross, President of the Alumni Association, to construct a chapel, "work on which," the New York Times reported, "will begin at once."¹⁰⁷

It is significant to note that the Chapel wouldn't be built until 1925 and with the contributions of a later benefactor, Mr. Ganson Depew, Sr. It is unclear whether Mr. Cross's donation was never received or was instead rerouted to another area of the School. Gamage's daughter, Margaret Gamage Spurr, would later state that after building the Alfonzo Rockwell Cluett Foundation, (or "Cluett," as the building was to be called,) her father built "a couple of master's houses...trimmed the lawns and made [the grounds] pretty" - a project conceivably bankrolled by Mr. Cross.¹⁰⁸ Alternatively, if the contribution was in fact never received, one wonders why the proceeds from the sale of the Dutcher House weren't used to construct a chapel; the new building on Mr. Dutcher's farm, only a half mile from the village, stood four

¹⁰³ "Pawling School."

¹⁰⁴ "Pawling School Dedicated," *The New York Times*, June 10, 1910, accessed November 3, 2015, <http://nyti.ms/1XNgJDA>.

¹⁰⁵ Spurr, interview. "Mr. Cluett of Cluett Peabody in Troy and his wife stopped by from Palm Beach on the way up to Troy and Mr. Cluett and my father had breakfast together and Mr. Cluett said, "Fred, you can't stay in this ramshackle old house indefinitely." But he said, 'If you start a School being built up on the hundred and fifty acres that you own on the hill,' he said, 'I'll give you half a million dollars.'"

¹⁰⁶ "Pawling School."

¹⁰⁷ "Pawling School Dedicated."

¹⁰⁸ Spurr, interview.

stories high, could accommodate 500 students comfortably, and provided ample room for instruction, conceivably enabling the quick sale of the Dutcher House.¹⁰⁹

The fact that it was built over 15 years later is perhaps a testament to Gamage's religious philosophy, which plainly advocated for religion to escape the physical confines of the Church. To borrow a phrase from Rauschenbusch's work, the "interests" of the theology which Social Gospelists like Gamage proposed "lie on earth, within the social relations of the life that now is."

¹¹⁰ As such, the need to construct a physical place for worship could have been deemed simply unnecessary during the early years of the institution's history. Unfortunately, many prayers would be needed in order to keep the School alive throughout the decades to come.

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"Filled with the spirit of progress and achievement as in the past," the Pawling School Weekly reported, "who can predict the wonderful development that lies ahead of us in the future."¹¹¹ With Dr. Gamage's foresight and acuity, Mr. Cluett and Mr. Simpson's sizable portfolios, and the support of St. Paul's' former faculty and alum, the Pawling School had been born. In spite of their early success, however, Gamage would soon find that whereas the past had been characterized by the realization and expansion of his vision, its execution in the coming years would prove itself to be a far more challenging task. While the Pawling School flourished during its first decade of existence, its survival throughout the next phase of its life would be plagued by countless complications, many of which would virtually suffocate the "progress and achievement" that had once been predicted.

During the next three years, the prosperity that the School had relished in during the early 1900s would all but vanish. A year before its 20th anniversary in 1930, Cluett would suffer

¹⁰⁹ "Pawling School Dedicated."

¹¹⁰ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 31.

¹¹¹ "Pawling School."

a devastating fire that would all but consume the School's resources.¹¹² That fall, stock market prices on the New York Stock Exchange plummeted, precipitating a series of events that resulted in worldwide economic downturn that would set the Great Depression in motion.¹¹³ By the end of 1931, the steady decline of the world economy had set in: unemployment had grown by over 1.5 million souls and the Bank of the United States had collapsed, marking the "largest single bank failure in the nation's history."¹¹⁴ As the economy spiraled into deflation, commodity prices plunged, and the overall conditions of the Depression worsened, the School, dependent on the tuition from its once-wealthy student-body, would struggle to remain solvent.

And yet in a miraculous feat of faith and perseverance, Gamage kept the doors open and did so widely. In spite of the desolation that the Great Depression had wrought, the Pawling School provided a safe haven for its students - sometimes at Gamage's own expense. One account from a graduate of the class of 1934 recalls Dr. Gamage's generosity after arriving in Pawling in the spring of 1930 in the wake of his father's death:

We were mighty poor as...all my mother had was the income from [my father's] life insurance. Dr. Gamage...owned the School, lock, stock, and barrel, and somehow my mother persuaded him to give me a \$1000 scholarship for the \$1200 tuition. Needless to say, I thought of him as standing somewhere between God and the father I never knew.¹¹⁵

In another case, documented in a series of letters penned between 1929 and 1932, Dr. Gamage paid the college tuition of a former student, Reginald "Bidge" Clement, despite his inability to

¹¹² "Dr. Gamage is Thankful," *The Pawling Chronicle* (Pawling, NY), June 29, 1929, accessed November 16, 2015.

¹¹³ Cary Nelson, "About the Great Depression," *Modern American Poetry*, accessed November 16, 2015, <http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/depression/about.htm>.

¹¹⁴ "Timeline of the Great Depression," *American Experience*, accessed November 16, 2015, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/timeline/rails-timeline/>.

¹¹⁵ Alumni Accounts of Dr. F.L. Gamage, Gardiner Library Archive, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY.

pay his own debts.¹¹⁶ Adjusted for inflation,¹¹⁷ Gamage contributed at least¹¹⁸ \$5,700 towards Clement's tuition in the midst of one of the worst economies in history, until finally in January 1932 when he wrote, "in great haste,"

My dear Bidge: I cannot send you the money before the 5th. Personally I am unable to send you a penny. I am down to rock-bottom and pretty nearly at the end of my rope. I have two or three friends whom I am asking for aid and will see them at the earliest possible minute.¹¹⁹

In the same letter, Gamage, seemingly unphased by his own dire straits, advised Clement to "go to the proper officer at School and tell him that I will be responsible for the tuition."

Despite economic, national, and personal hardship, Gamage - and thereby the Pawling School - remained a model of resilience, however flawed and improbable. By the time the second World War broke in 1939, the Pawling School was suffering from "declining Depression-era enrollment and was slipping fast."¹²⁰ Just as Gamage had found the town of Pawling after a seemingly impulsive dinner along his train ride back to Garden City, and just as the School had found its permanent home with the generosity of Mr. Cluett, who had stopped along his way back to his hometown to converse with an old pal, the Pawling School would again find its ultimate salvation in another chance meeting.

Famed travel-writer and broadcaster Lowell Thomas, who owned a home in Pawling, had been at lunch with the Headmaster of the ailing Trinity School of Manhattan, Matt Dann, in 1937 when the idea of a partnership between the two schools first surfaced.¹²¹ With the trustees

¹¹⁶ "Try to keep your expenses down to the minimum as we are facing harder times today than we did even six months ago." Dr. Frederick Luther Gamage to Reginald N. Clement, December 27, 1930, Gardiner Library Archive, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY.

¹¹⁷ "US Inflation Calculator," accessed November 14, 2015, <http://www.usinflationcalculator.com/>.

¹¹⁸ Gamage mentions sending a total of \$405 to Clement. In some letters, Gamage writes that there is a check enclosed but fails to mention the amount.

¹¹⁹ Gamage to Clement, 1932.

¹²⁰ Timothy C. Jacobson, *Charity and Merit: Trinity School at 300* (New York, N.Y.: Trinity School, 2009), 169.

¹²¹ *ibid.*

of both institutions anxious about their futures, they agreed to broker an agreement whereby Trinity would take over the Pawling School's operations, assume its "debts, guarantee its bonds, and make improvements in the physical plant - 'and make Pawling a beneficiary of [Trinity's] large endowment fund.'"¹²² But as the war raged and the months passed, and with the "country so filled with economic, social and political uncertainties," tensions between both parties grew and the deal died. In July 1942, the Pawling School closed. While Dr. Gamage explained in a statement to the press that his decision "was made because six of the institution's masters had entered the armed forces or other war activities,"¹²³ records indicate that the School did not have the financial capital needed in order to reopen for the fall term by itself.

But all had not been lost. Near the end of its final year, the Pawling School hosted a conference at which representatives of thirty independent schools along with Army and Navy speakers "gathered to determine their role in the present war."¹²⁴ Naval officers urged education in mathematics, an expansion in physical education courses, and "the training in 'obligation to citizenship.'"¹²⁵ Whether the location of the conference was by design or mere convenience, it's noteworthy that the Pawling School was chosen given its value system and Gamage's emphasis on the intersection of faith and muscularity. The Pawling School's "Christian commitment to health and manliness"¹²⁶ made it the ideal setting to contemplate the type of character that was needed in order to win the war. Perhaps realizing this, Gamage told officials that they were "welcome" to "take over the school as a training station for the duration"¹²⁷ of the war after he finalized the details of its closure.

¹²² "The terms of the proposed agreement certainly sounded advantageous to Pawling, if only to ensure survival and some continuity, but should also be interpreted as a measure of Trinity's only slightly better disguised anxiety about its own future and its eagerness to find fresh quarters (160 country acres) if not as an alternative at least as an option." *ibid.*

¹²³ "Pawling School to Close," *The New York Times*, July 31, 1942, accessed November 16, 2015.

¹²⁴ "Private Schools Stress War Role," *The New York Times*, December 20, 1941, accessed November 16, 2015.

¹²⁵ *ibid.*

¹²⁶ Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports*, 11.

¹²⁷ "Air Casualties Cured at Pawling," *The New York Times*, May 21, 1944, accessed November 16, 2015.

Soon thereafter, the campus was leased by the United States Government for a “cryptography unit and later a rehabilitation center for Army Air Corps fliers.”¹²⁸ One could theorize that as a Convalescent Center, the campus not only restored men to health but also reconstructed the faith of embattled soldiers returning home from the atrocities of war. Referred to as a “G.I. Heaven”¹²⁹ by the *New York Times*, injured men were rehabilitated both physically and mentally;¹³⁰ articles from the period recount unlikely camaraderie between veterans as they participated in a “great variety”¹³¹ of mandatory sports at Pawling while “strict military regulations and formality [were] waived.”¹³² In a nod to the Social Gospel movement, the Pawling School campus may have provided the grounds on which the wounded could again be “moved by plain human feeling and by the instinctive convictions which,” as Rauschenbusch claimed, “they have learned from Jesus Christ.”¹³³

When Dr. Gamage, now the School’s ailing Headmaster Emeritus, and the trustees gained control over the campus again in 1946, the dormant deal between Pawling and Trinity resurfaced and would this time be able to gain the traction that it needed in order to be successful. Whereas Dr. Gamage had been an ardent Social Gospeler during his years at St. Paul’s and the Pawling School, - he was ordained as a Protestant Episcopal priest in 1932 and served as the Chaplain until 1937,¹³⁴ - Matt Dann, “though a faithful churchman himself,” was

¹²⁸ Jacobson, *Charity and Merit: Trinity*, 168.

¹²⁹ “Air Casualties Cured at Pawling.”

¹³⁰ Another possibility is that Pawling also rehabilitated soldiers’ “manhood.” Historian George L. Mosse theorized that “shell-shock was one of the most widespread battlefield injuries” wrought by “a new kind of industrial warfare.” Characterized by “shattered nerves and lack of will-power,” shell-shock was believed to be the antithesis of the strong, powerful, and resilient image of masculinity. “[I]f such soldiers could be cured,” Mosse contends, “[and] made normal again and sent back to the front, as many physicians wished, then” soldiers could once again “gain entrance to society through a supposed reform of their comportment, manners, and morals.” In essence, the “incomplete men” who suffered from “nervous exhaustion” could be made complete again in environments such as the one that Pawling provided. George L. Mosse, “Shell-Shock as a Social Disease,” in *Exploring Masculinities: Identity, Inequality, Continuity and Change*, ed. C. J. Pascoe and Tristan Bridges (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

¹³¹ “Hospital at Pawling Is G.I. Paradise; Men Brought Back to Health and Duty,” *The Vassar Chronicle* (Poughkeepsie, NY), June 24, 1944, accessed November 16, 2015.

¹³² “Air Casualties Cured at Pawling.”

¹³³ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 7.

¹³⁴ “Dr. F.L. Gamage, 87, Educator, Is Dead,” *The New York Times*, September 12, 1947, accessed November 16, 2015.

determined to operate Trinity as ecumenically as possible.¹³⁵ While the Pawling School sat dormant and its campus was occupied by the Army, and with the Trinity / Pawling merger then inactive, Dann strategized for Trinity's own prosperity by seeking other opportunities for expansion.¹³⁶ When the mother parish of the nearby Trinity Church, for example, became too expensive to operate, the School offered \$50,000 to procure its deed.¹³⁷ When the sale was finalized on July 1st, 1943, Dann "tried to sell everything of the contents of any conceivable use or value, from the high altar to the organs, the bells, the stained glass, right down to prayer books and hymnals."¹³⁸ When the wrecking ball struck, Dann ordered any remnants, along with the Chapel's mosaic floors, to be crumbled in order to fill the foundation's hole. By the spring of 1945, Trinity's Chapel had been leveled and Dann was "boasting about the boost [the new property] gave to School athletics."

Eager to provide country boarding to the sons of elite families from the city, Dann "moved quickly to bring Pawling back to life" once the deal was finalized.¹³⁹ Serving as the dual headmaster of both Trinity and the newly minted Trinity-Pawling,¹⁴⁰ Dann "loaded Trinity boys into his Chevy and put their teenage energies to work, tearing down some unattractive accretions added to the campus during the army's occupation" so as to prepare for the School's reopening in September 1947.¹⁴¹ Much to Dann's discontent, however, the future of Trinity-Pawling would be far from secure, though it would never again breach the edge of closure. Over the next thirty years, Cluett would suffer another fire, funding would again slow to a trickle, and the Trinity School Board would consider closing the School in light of a mounting

¹³⁵ Jacobson, *Charity and Merit: Trinity*, 156.

¹³⁶ *ibid.*, 162.

¹³⁷ *ibid.*, 163.

¹³⁸ *ibid.*, 164.

¹³⁹ *ibid.*, 169.

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*, 170-1.

¹⁴¹ "Varied Activities on the Campus and in the Classroom," *The New York Times*, January 5, 1947, accessed November 16, 2015.

debt of over \$800,000. While the relationship had been absolutely necessary for Pawling at the time, Trinity's leaders "never again thought seriously about quitting town for country and so had bought an unnecessary piece of insurance."¹⁴² The partnership would eventually dissolve in 1977, though Pawling would retain its name as well as its blue and gold school colors, both of which it continues to share with its now-separate Manhattan counterpart.

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Trinity-Pawling would also retain its motto, *Fides et Virtus* (Faith and Virtue), that had once been modified from Trinity's, *Labore et Virtute* (By Hard Work and Virtue). It is a testament to both the Pawling School's strength and Gamage's early leadership that the School was able to retain its religious identity, its *Fides*, in spite of Dann's secular influence¹⁴³ during the merger. As Dann quite literally shoveled the religious remains of the Trinity School into the ground, Trinity-Pawling emerged like a phoenix, its virtues reborn from the ruins of the second World War. By the time he died in 1947 at the age of 87, Gamage had left St. Paul's, created the Pawling School, and survived two World Wars and the Great Depression. He saw Cluett burn to ashes and be rebuilt in spite of the period's debilitated economy (thankfully, he wasn't alive to see Cluett again in flames in 1969). He also witnessed the Pawling School close and eventually reopen as the Trinity-Pawling School with the saving grace of Matt Dann's zeal.

Gamage is said to have had "three words...that he gave to every single one of his boys: Love, Courage, and Faith. And when the alumni came back as a body, they brought those words back with them that they had acquired and were indebted to him for giving them love, courage, and faith."¹⁴⁴ This reflects the way in which his philosophy saturated the School's methods by

¹⁴² Jacobson, *Charity and Merit: Trinity*, 170.

¹⁴³ Tom Keating, past chaplain of Trinity-Pawling, echoed these sentiments in an interview, stating: "I think that Matt Dann, with his relationship with Trinity-School and just the time in history,... there was no real question that the institution of the Church [would] have different values than the School." Thomas Keating, interview by the author, Trinity Pawling School, Pawling, NY, October 23, 2014.

¹⁴⁴ Spurr, interview.

creating a basic value system that its students were taught to abide by. It is clear that in founding the Pawling School, Dr. Gamage sought to equip students with “the attributes of mental, moral, and physical fitness” to be successful in the new reality of the 20th century.¹⁴⁵ This, however, was not his only mission. What Gamage was intent on creating was not only an educational institution but rather a city upon a hill, a model of a religious ideology through which Christianity was most fully realized through collective efforts of mankind. This novel but unfailingly simple notion rested not on doctrine but on one’s faith in fellow men and the organizations that these men themselves created.

When Gamage was without a dime to his name, he still managed to pay Bidge Clement’s college tuition; when the School was unable to support itself, Gamage provided room and board to a boy haunted by his father’s death. Throughout its history, the Pawling School has been saved by and has offered salvation through the humanity of others. Gamage founded the School on the premise that religion is most lucid when it is seen through the lens of another human being, when it is not incarcerated behind archaic text and theory but is rather demonstrated through one’s lived experience. Gamage simply deployed the new work of the Social Gospel and Muscular Christianity so as to enable it to play the hand that mankind had been dealt at the time.

Rauschenbusch wrote, “If theology stops growing or is unable to adjust itself to its modern environment and to meet its present tasks, it will die.”¹⁴⁶ The theology to which Rauschenbusch refers is not just that of the Church but that of any institution responsible for propagating a particular set of morals and beliefs. How does an institution like Trinity-Pawling, then, keep its values relevant, or “adjust itself to its modern environment,” within a social and religious landscape in which change is constant? How does it shield itself from the ravages of

¹⁴⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 1.

time and escape being relegated to history? How does the past make itself known in the context of the present?

One need only pay a short visit to Gamage's old stomping grounds in Garden City to discover the fate that almost befell the Pawling School several times over. After closing in 1991, St. Paul's has inched closer and closer to a tragic end.¹⁴⁷ Its slate roof is riddled with leaks and its once-stately halls with crumbled plaster.

A closed prayer book sits on a lectern in the chapel of St. Paul's School, almost as if an absent-minded schoolboy had left it there yesterday. But closer inspection of the chapel quickly reveals evidence of years of disuse. Two large puddles of water sit in the center aisle, under a telltale water stain on the ceiling at least 25 feet overhead. The pipe organ is covered in dust, and the lead in one of the stained-glass windows has started to peel away from the glass.

The pendulum of the ticking clock that counts the time that this old school has left has long stopped swinging. St. Paul's is on the verge of destruction, and its doors are locked tight against any manner of redemption.

Or take, for example, the Bennett School for Girls, the location in Millbrook, New York that Gamage was intent on purchasing when he first ventured to open a school of his own. After closing in 1978, the property has been continually threatened by demolition and neglect.¹⁴⁸ The main building, Halcyon Hall, quickly fell into ruin: with its heat turned off, its water pipes burst, causing catastrophic damage as the building sunk more deeply into decay. Today, Bennett's sole semblance of life is in its thick oak trees that can be seen sprawling throughout parts of the building and out of its old slate roof. Its name is an eery allusion to both its heyday and its

¹⁴⁷ Cara Buckley, "A Suburban Treasure, Left to Die," *The New York Times*, January 15, 2010, Region, accessed November 16, 2015.

¹⁴⁸ David V. Griffin, "The Rise and Fall of Halcyon Hall," *Preservation Magazine*, August 30, 2011, accessed November 16, 2015.

current state of silence, a school stuck in a period of eternal calm until its inevitable engagement with the wrecking ball arrives.

Is this how the past materializes in the present? Must these schools, Gamage's contemporaries, be remembered in ruins?

Sacred virtues must be reworked and even relabeled if they are to continue to be internalized and made part of our collective character, and if Schools like Miss Bennett's and St. Paul's are to survive. The theology of ages past must be continually made new again if it is to meet the secular demands of our present reality; the Social Gospel and its offshoots in the social climate of the Progressive Era established this fact plainly. If religious organizations are to stand the test of time, they must first seek to understand the current moment. The past must catch up with the present. Trinity-Pawling's history and spirit clearly demonstrates that these two realms can coexist and can do so successfully even in the face of secularism.

To borrow from the June 1925 edition of the Pawling School Weekly, the month during which Pawling's chapel was installed:

"But above all there is the knowledge that we must now live up to the faith of those who have so often demonstrated their confidence in us, and the necessity of constantly bettering the School is upon us. Our duty is plainly evident. We must perform it!"¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁹ Robert M. Calfee, Jr., "Editorial on the Pawling School Chapel," *Pawling School Weekly*, June 1925.

Acts of Mercy

All great stories of the present draw in many ways from the catacombs of the past. It is in our collective history that our memories are situated, built upon each other like an unceasing game of leapfrog that moves slowly toward the current moment. How and what we choose to remember has a profound impact on the traditions that we perpetuate and the groundwork that we lay for the generations to come. These memories are kept alive in the cultures of our communities even as time passes; they adapt to the world around them, continually and imperceptibly flowing from generation to generation and binding us to our neighbors and our forebears alike.¹⁵⁰

Egyptologist Jan Assman writes that the cultural memories to which I refer are “fixed [in] the fateful events of the past.” “What remains,” he claims, “is...that ‘which society in each era can reconstruct within its contemporary frame of reference.’”¹⁵¹ Thus it is the case that we must turn again to what can be recalled of Trinity-Pawling’s history so as to “reconstruct” its heritage and gain insight into its current situation. Walter Rauschenbusch once wrote that “The life of humanity is infinitely interwoven, always renewing itself, yet always perpetuating what has been.”¹⁵² This chapter will attempt to follow the course of events that led to the construction of Pawling’s Chapel and explore some of those that followed. I will make an effort to identify exactly what, as Rauschenbusch claimed, is being “perpetuat[ed]” and through what means. I will also examine the experience of one of Dr. Gamage’s first students, Ganson Depew, and in what ways he may have influenced the School’s philosophy and its future. While his impact may be in large part immeasurable, I argue that it was nonetheless significant and worthy of our

¹⁵⁰ Jeanette Rodriguez and Ted Fortier, *Cultural Memory: Resistance, Faith and Identity* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007).

¹⁵¹ Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," *New German Critique*, no. 65 (Spring/Summer 1995): 129-30, accessed February 20, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/488538>.

¹⁵² Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 79.

attention. Depew can lend crucial insight into Pawling's early culture and perhaps even its character today, thus providing perspective for future analysis and a deeper appreciation of the institution's past.

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Born in 1895, Ganson Goodyear Depew was the son of two Buffalo natives: Ganson Depew, a lawyer and the nephew of the wealthy president of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad Company,¹⁵³ and Grace Goodyear, the daughter of the founder of the similarly successful Buffalo & Susquehanna Iron Company.¹⁵⁴ One of the first to attend Dr. Gamage's newly formed institution, Ganson arrived in Pawling in 1907, the School's inaugural year, at eleven years old after having been privately tutored throughout his youth.¹⁵⁵ His aptitude for learning would soon become apparent as Ganson "easily" rose to the top of his Form and "his capacity of spirit and mind began to show itself."¹⁵⁶

Now several hours away from his churchgoing parents - his father was a member of the local Episcopal church¹⁵⁷ - for presumably the first time, Ganson quickly took advantage of Gamage's zeal and got to work as "the unquestioned undergraduate leader of Pawling."¹⁵⁸ Without a church¹⁵⁹ to satisfy the habits of his youth, he instead took the helm of the St. John's Society, whose purpose it was "to aid in the development of the spiritual life at the school."¹⁶⁰ As the Society's president, Ganson, a "respected and beloved leader," spoke "beautifully and

¹⁵³ Edgar C. Emerson, *Our County and Its People: A Descriptive Work on Erie County New York*, ed. Truman C. White (Boston, MA: Boston History Company, 1898), accessed February 20, 2016, <https://archive.org/details/cu31924025959226>.

¹⁵⁴ *Ganson Goodyear Depew: 1895-1924, 1927*, Gardiner Library Archive, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY.

¹⁵⁵ *ibid.* 15.

¹⁵⁶ *ibid.* 13.

¹⁵⁷ "[Ganson Depew Sr.] is a member of...St. Paul's Episcopal church." Emerson, *Our County and Its People*.

¹⁵⁸ *Ganson Goodyear Depew: 1895-1924*, 16.

¹⁵⁹ Recall that the Pawling School wouldn't be afforded the luxury of its own campus until 1909-10 when Mr. Cluett gave the money for Gamage to purchase Dutcher's Farm. Until then, the school was located in the Village of Pawling, which wouldn't have its own Episcopal Church until 1910. "The Beginnings of Holy Trinity," Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, accessed February 20, 2016, http://www.holytrinitypawling.org/hist_files/histbeg.htm.

¹⁶⁰ *Ganson Goodyear Depew: 1895-1924*, 15.

convincingly...at every meeting,¹⁶¹ reportedly gathering his classmates together regularly to preach the word of God. Gamage would later recall “beautiful Sunday evenings during the spring term” during which Ganson would “take the members of the Society out into the fields” under the fiery glow of dusk.

[W]ith them gathered about him on the grass[, Ganson] would speak from a nearby stone and pour out his soul to them in his pleading that they might be God-fearing, God loving and God-serving boys, and later the same kind of men... I [Dr. Gamage] wish I had the power of putting into words some of the things that he used say about God and God’s work in the world, and God’s work among the boys and how reverence to God would make the world better.

Though many of the details of his youth have unfortunately been lost, one can confidently presume that Ganson, if not himself a budding Social Gospeler, was heavily influenced by his headmaster’s beliefs which at this early point in Pawling’s history were crystalline.¹⁶² The siren call of the social pressures of the early 20th century and the appeal of a new and revitalized conception of Christianity would merge in a single act of faith and loyalty to Dr. Gamage and his new institution. A patent link can indeed be drawn between the religious movement that was now underway and its impact on the founding culture of the School, as in Ganson we find a vivid reflection of what Gamage sought to cultivate in his students. He fed the cultural longing for a faithful yet virile reformer who was clever but discerning, principled but also practical. Ganson, determined and with “a mind too good and observant to be misled into mistaking the trivial for the important,” endeavored to be “an active part of [the growing] social concern”¹⁶³ by fusing his religious upbringing with his newly-defined sense of civic duty.

¹⁶¹ *ibid.* 62.

¹⁶² “This was his first formal schooling and there is no doubt that the influence of Pawling and its headmaster during the next few years had much effect on the formation of Ganson’s character and ideals.” *ibid.* 15.

¹⁶³ *ibid.* 13.

Ganson may have also embodied (or at least alluded to) a vision of Jesus that Social Gospelers like Gamage fervently supported. As one scholar argued, “Jesus, killed as a young man at the peak of his physical and mental development, stood suspended in time” for the leaders of the movement as “the ever-powerful, ever-youthful champion of justice.”¹⁶⁴ Christ’s social and emotional consciousness certainly resembles the “spirit of intense life” that is described having “breathed through” Ganson while he was at Pawling.¹⁶⁵

He was so fair and large-minded, there was an absolute absence of vindictiveness or personal animus in what he did, that even offenders felt the human, friendly, boyish enthusiasm with which he was imbued. He so evidently loved the part he was playing in the fight for... a fairer, more just, and freer community, that in the contagion of his spirit everyone took new hope and belief.”

If, as Rauschenbusch once argued, the Social Gospel was indeed “part of the ‘return to Christ,’” this description of Ganson leads us to believe that we have arrived at our destination.¹⁶⁶ It is in this moment that the “consciousness of God and the consciousness of humanity blend completely” as Ganson is portrayed as the epitome of both Christian and civic virtue.¹⁶⁷

William Dawson, an English clergyman who held beliefs similar to those of the Social Gospelers, also affirmed the potential of the same “boyish enthusiasm” that Ganson had been described with, exclaiming in his text, *The Threshold of Manhood*, that “the world belongs to its youth.”¹⁶⁸ In a passage that described Jesus as a young man in order to inspire religious fervor in the next generation, Dawson told readers that “the great Captain of souls looks on you, the young, the strong, the eager, whose hearts are all athrob with forceful impulses and passions,

¹⁶⁴ Susan Curtis, *A Consuming Faith: The Social Gospel and Modern American Culture* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2001), 238, accessed February 20, 2016, <http://books.google.com/books>.

¹⁶⁵ *Ganson Goodyear Depew: 1895-1924*, 53.

¹⁶⁶ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 56.

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.* 14.

¹⁶⁸ William James Dawson, *The Threshold of Manhood* (New York, NY: A.C. Armstrong and Son, 1889), accessed February 20, 2016, <https://archive.org/details/thresholdofmanho00daws>.

and cries ‘Will ye also be my disciple?’ Ganson, for one, would have answered a resounding, “Yes!” By his final year (1913-1914), we find him the Senior Prefect, the president of the St. John’s Society, and poised to enroll at Yale so as to follow in his father’s footsteps as a lawyer.

Upon graduating, however, he would find that the halcyon days of his early years were now behind him. A tempest of a storm was indeed brewing in the distance, a storm that would cast the meadow in which he once preached in shadowy darkness. He must have heard it coming, the winds swirling and the rains smattering, in the late summer of 1914 when his mother, Grace, died in Colorado Springs and his “sensitive spirit was terribly struck.”¹⁶⁹ A privately printed posthumous account describes Ganson as having been gloomily shaken by her loss as he shed the innocence of his youth, “puzzled and baffled by a sense of wrong that was vital and more than a mere wonder in his mind.”

Not quite a month later, Germany mobilized her armed forces and declared war on Russia, France, and Belgium¹⁷⁰ at the same time that Ganson entered Yale and began to pursue his degree in law. By 1917, the country had become conscious of the threat that it would now be forced to face. Shortly after President Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war, the United States passed the Selective Service Act that “empower[ed] the Federal Government to draft men for the armed forces:” as a result, Ganson was conscripted into service until an Armistice was signed in 1918.¹⁷¹ A mere five years after returning to college in the autumn of 1919, Ganson Depew would lose his life to appendicitis, leaving behind his newly minted admission to the New York State Bar and a fledgling law practice. He was 29.

Upon parting from the comfort of Dr. Gamage’s tutelage, Ganson’s life had been repeatedly tarnished by the harsh realities that he had not before been asked to confront.

¹⁶⁹ *Ganson Goodyear Depew: 1895-1924*, 17.

¹⁷⁰ "The Great War Timeline," PBS, accessed February 20, 2016, http://www.pbs.org/greatwar/timeline/time_1914.html.

¹⁷¹ Ganson went to war on April 16, 1917. *Ganson Goodyear Depew: 1895-1924*, n.p.

Pawling had provided him with a temporary refuge from the unmerciful world that he would soon encounter, alone and unprotected. No more than a month after being declared dead, Ganson's father would donate the funds to erect a chapel in honor of his passing and "in recognition of the school's service to his son."¹⁷² In doing so, he would enable God's work to continue to course through Ganson's veins and continue what he represented while he was alive. Here, the storm clouds would never again conceal those words that would drop so "casually from his lips;"¹⁷³ their wispy edges would be kept on the horizon in perpetuity such that Ganson's "power" would forever be "felt in the St. John's Society." It is revealing that the building would be consecrated as All Saints' Chapel, All Saints' Day being a day "dedicated to the saints of the Church."^{174, 175} The Chapel would define, remember, and respond to both the living and those in heaven, and would commemorate "all Christians, past and present," and "all saints, known and unknown."¹⁷⁶

The construction of All Saints' Chapel would prove bittersweet for Dr. Gamage. The end of World War I and the policies of the early 1920s had produced a culture that would nearly extinguish the momentum of the Social Gospel movement. As the period got underway, the pristine luster of the era's new industrial technology became tarnished by profound cultural conflict in a "revolution in morals and manners."¹⁷⁷ Needless to say, this was not the "revolution" that the Social Gospellers had been hoping to achieve. The atrocities of the war had also left many disillusioned with the ideals that Gamage and Rauschenbusch alike had advocated for,

¹⁷² "Rawling Gets Memorial Chapel," *New York Times* (New York, NY), May 9, 1924, accessed February 20, 2016.

¹⁷³ These are Gamage's words. *Ganson Goodyear Depew: 1895-1924*, 62.

¹⁷⁴ "All Saints' Day," Catholic Online, accessed February 20, 2016, <http://www.catholic.org/saints/allsaints/>.

¹⁷⁵ Recall that Gamage often addressed his pupils as "saints" while at St. Paul's.

¹⁷⁶ *All Saints' Day* (n.p.: Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, 2013), accessed February 20, 2016, <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/bi110313full1.pdf>.

¹⁷⁷ S. Mintz and S. McNeil, "Overview of the 1920s," Digital History, last modified 2016, accessed February 20, 2016, <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/era.cfm?eraid=13>.

which, as critics contended, “did not deal seriously enough with...the reality of sin and evil.”¹⁷⁸

The support that the movement had once drawn continued to wither as neo-orthodoxy began to react to the Social Gospel’s relatively liberal theology and as society further came to terms with an unprecedented state of global conflict.¹⁷⁹

These developments most likely left Gamage with feelings of discontinuity and disconnection from the traditions of his past, especially as the aftermath of the war set in and the rate at which modernity charged forth continued to increase. Having come of age during the Victorian Era, Gamage would come to bear witness to the authorship of a new code of etiquette and decorum: loosened sexual mores, blurred gender roles, and new issues of race and immigration would all clash bitterly in what some would designate as a “cultural civil war.”¹⁸⁰ As he read Ganson’s eulogy, the smell of oak presumably still fresh as he took the podium in front of the congregation, he mourned the loss not only of the child that he once knew but perhaps of the old-fashioned idealism that had characterized the growth of his School up to this point. Realizing all that presently afflicted modern society, this moment may have been the first at which the unparalleled progress of the School’s past, precarious as it was, came to a halt and the hubbub of the Roaring Twenties hushed.

Had [Ganson] lived he would have been the leader of the nation. As an individual, I believe he would have been the greatest power for good in the nation’s council. Such a leader and such a power has been lost to this world!... Whatever little part I played was nothing compared to what he did for me, inspiring me to work hard, to give a larger consecration because of the wonderful response that he gave to me. ¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ Ronald C. White, Jr., C. Howard Hopkins, and John C. Bennett, "What Is the Social Gospel?," preface to *The Social Gospel: Religion and Reform in Changing America* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1976), xvii, accessed February 20, 2016, http://www.temple.edu/tempress/chapters/100_ch1.pdf.

¹⁷⁹ Reinhold Niebuhr would take the Social Gospel “to task for its optimism, inattention to human sinfulness, and avoidance of political conflict.” By the early 1930’s, Niebuhr would call for a “social Christianity that possessed a more realistic understanding of power structures...and [that] based its appeal on a deep, biblical faith” rather than the “utopian visions” of the Social Gospel. John C. Bennett, "Reinhold Niebuhr," in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, last modified July 10, 2015, accessed February 20, 2016, <http://www.britannica.com/biography/Reinhold-Niebuhr>.

¹⁸⁰ Mintz and McNeil, "Overview of the 1920s," Digital History.

¹⁸¹ Dr. Gamage’s eulogy to Ganson. *Ganson Goodyear Depew: 1895-1924*, 62.

Indeed, the timing of the Chapel's construction couldn't have been more appropriate. All Saints' would be built in the style of the College Chapel at Eton, constructed hundreds of years earlier in the United Kingdom on the order of Henry VI so as to underscore the religious aspects of his monarchy.¹⁸² Having stood unaffected for nearly five centuries, Gamage may have viewed Eton's Chapel as a symbol of the permanence of Christianity in both life and education. Another possible explanation for Eton as a source of inspiration is that it symbolized man's unshakable relationship with institutions like the Church, even as various religious movements such as the Social Gospel come to prominence and inevitably begin to fade.

Perhaps Gamage saw a local news article a few years earlier when in 1923 paintings of miracles were discovered on the walls of Eton Chapel after having been hidden for the better part of the last 300 years.¹⁸³ The artwork had been "whitewashed over by the College barber in 1560 as a result of an order from the new Protestant church authorities, banning pictures of fictitious miracles."¹⁸⁴ Surely this revelation would have caught Gamage's eye as news of their restoration hit the wires and went to print in the States. It's possible that he was cognizant of the enduring message of this discovery, namely that what has seemingly been forgotten to history and obsolescence can still be restored through effort and faith. If Eton could withstand England's nearly constant state of war,¹⁸⁵ including the ruination caused by World War I, surely Pawling could withstand the loss of Ganson Depew and the ostensible decline of the Social Gospel movement.

¹⁸² "The Chapel," Eton College, accessed February 20, 2016, <http://www.etoncollege.com/TheChapel.aspx>.

¹⁸³ Sir Charles Holmes, "The Wall Paintings in Eton College Chapel," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, November 1923, 229, accessed February 20, 2016, http://www.jstor.org/stable/862008?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents.

¹⁸⁴ "The Chapel," Eton College.

¹⁸⁵ "The 20 Greatest Battles in British History," *The Telegraph*, last modified January 20, 2013, accessed February 20, 2016, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/history/britain-at-war/9813502/The-20-greatest-battles-in-British-history.html>.

In the end, All Saints' Chapel would stand as both a physical and spiritual incarnation of Gamage's memory of Ganson; it would continually call to mind the image of a boy who represented the richness of the days that had come before his death. Dr. Gamage would later remark that Depew "was the most Christ-like and the most religious boy that ever attended the school."¹⁸⁶ The Chapel would not only carry his memory but would also enable Gamage to revisit the spirit of another era. The effect would be analogous to what author Toni Morrison has described in her work as the act of "re-memory,"¹⁸⁷ a phenomena through which one can conjure the continued presence of that which has disappeared or been forgotten. It is "neither memory nor forgetting," as one scholar states, "but memory combined with...repetition." We can perhaps picture Gamage sitting alone in one of All Saints' many pews, basking in the room's tranquility as he reconstructed his past reality with such vividness that he could feel the warmth of the sun and the coolness of the grass on those "beautiful Sunday evenings during the spring term"¹⁸⁸ where Ganson still preached. Ganson had, like Jesus, "died as a young man,"¹⁸⁹ and as such would forever be "suspended in time" at All Saints' Chapel as the accidental saint of Pawling.

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With the first Cluett fire behind him and the turmoil of the Great Depression still in plain sight, Dr. Gamage began to relinquish some of his executive duties to his son, Frederick Jr., a recent graduate of MIT, so as to be able to devote more time "to personal contacts with the individual boys."¹⁹⁰ After having acted as the School's Chaplain for several years,¹⁹¹ Gamage took

¹⁸⁶ "Alumnus Shows Plan for Repairing Murals," *The Pawling Record*, April 26, 1939.

¹⁸⁷ Marianne Hirsch, "Maternity and Rememory," in *Representations of Motherhood*, by Donna Bassin, Margaret Honey, and Meryle Mahrer Kaplan (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 95, accessed February 20, 2016, http://www4.ncsu.edu/~leila/documents/HirschMarianne_onBeloved.pdf.

¹⁸⁸ *Ganson Goodyear Depew: 1895-1924*, 62.

¹⁸⁹ Curtis, *A Consuming Faith: The Social*, 238.

¹⁹⁰ A note on the source document points out that it is believed that Gamage himself wrote the article where this quote originated. Letter, "Head of Pawling School Ordained Episcopal Deacon," November 5, 1931, Gardiner Library Archive, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY.

¹⁹¹ "For many years Dr. Gamage has acted as chaplain to the School and preached under the permission of the Bishop [of New York]." *ibid*.

“the first step in the orders of priesthood” and was ordained to the diaconate on November 5th, 1931.¹⁹² If religion is to be understood as a means through which we come to terms with our everyday reality,¹⁹³ then it should follow that Gamage sought ordination not only to fulfill a personal desire but in an effort to bring some kind of order to his afflictions. Becoming Pawling’s Chaplain offered Gamage the opportunity to honor Ganson, who had made the School and “all who knew him richer because of the life that God gave him.”¹⁹⁴ “Life is sweeter,” Gamage once said, “because for a little while, he was my boy.” During that same short while, the Social Gospel had prospered both in and outside of the small village of Pawling. But by the 1930’s, Gamage would be forced to find a new method of weathering the anxieties of a failing school and a floundering theology.¹⁹⁵ As such, Gamage would become determined to keep the memory of the movement alive despite its deteriorating momentum by becoming the School’s Chaplain.¹⁹⁶

One notable feature of his ordination ceremony was the “blessing of eight newly completed murals” that had been painted by Dwight Bridge, a friend and classmate of Ganson’s, that would “adorn the chapel’s walls¹⁹⁷ as his contribution to Ganson Depew’s memory.”¹⁹⁸ The murals depicted “imaginary episodes in the life of Christ, representing him in the spiritual

¹⁹² “Annually on November 5th, Pawling School honors its founders and benefactors: George Bywater Cluett, who in 1909 donated the main building named the Alfonzo Rockwell Cluett Foundation in memory of his son, a former pupil of Dr. Gamage’s; Thomas Simpson, a New York broker who gave the land for the school; and Ganson Depew of Buffalo, a nephew of the late Chauncey Depew, who built the Ganson Goodyear Depew [C]hapel in 1926 as a memorial to his son.” To the best of my knowledge, the day is not still celebrated. *ibid.*

¹⁹³ French Sociologist D. Hervieu-Léger offers a similar description of religion, stating that is a “mechanism of meaning which enables humanity to transcend the deceptions, uncertainties and frustrations of everyday life.” Daniele Hervieu-Léger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 34.

¹⁹⁴ *Ganson Goodyear Depew: 1895-1924*, 62-4.

¹⁹⁵ Recall the 1932 letter that Gamage wrote to Bidge Clement, stating that he was “pretty nearly at the end of [his rope]” and “down to rock-bottom.”

¹⁹⁶ Many of the Social Gospel’s most prominent social concerns would in fact be realized in the form of reforms made by President Franklin D. Roosevelt during the 1930’s. Nevertheless, the movement had been divided by the desire for a more realistic understanding of the gospel and the cultural pessimism that World War I had left in its wake. “Social Gospel,” in *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

¹⁹⁷ According to a 1932-33 viewbook, the murals adorned the walls of the nave in particular, an area which symbolically represents the body of Christ. *Pawling School Viewbook* (Pawling, NY: Pawling School, 1932-33).

¹⁹⁸ Note that by this time it had been six years since Ganson had passed; clearly his death had a significant impact on Gamage who still sought to reconcile Ganson’s powerful character with his sudden loss. “Alumnus Shows Plan for Repairing.”

development from childhood to maturity.”¹⁹⁹ Surely this was a scene that Gamage had seen before as an educator and a Social Gospeler; unfortunately, he wouldn’t see it again, nor for long. By 1939, “the walls of the chapel became dampened, thus fading the beautiful murals” and threatening their survival. In a series of events eerily similar to those that had once occurred at Eton, the murals would ultimately disappear by the end of the decade.

In an attempt to save the paintings from ruination, Gamage contacted Bridge and devised a “plan whereby he could remove the murals, repaint them, and replace them in their original position.”²⁰⁰ But the repairs would be costly - \$1,500 per painting, or roughly \$25,500 each in today’s market²⁰¹ - at a time when Gamage, like the rest of the country, was pinching every penny.²⁰² To finance their restoration, Bridge offered to paint portraits of acquaintances of Pawling School boys or alumni, the cost of which he would contribute to “overhauling the murals.” His plan (or some variation of it) must have been successful as on February 27th, 1940, *The Pawling Record* reported that the “renovation of [the] chapel proceeds on schedule,” stating: “The murals have been removed and all the plaster has been chipped off the walls [in preparation for their renovation].”²⁰³

Two years would pass, the School would close, and in time, the paintings would be lost. One Pawling alum remembers that “the murals were gone when [he] returned from the war”²⁰⁴ once the School had been reopened, adding that “there was probably no money to fix [them].” A handwritten note in another file argues otherwise, claiming instead that they were “painted over”²⁰⁵ while Pawling operated as a Convalescence Center. As of this writing, the paintings have

¹⁹⁹ A scene most apt for a school. *Pawling School Viewbook*.

²⁰⁰ "Alumnus Shows Plan for Repairing."

²⁰¹ "US Inflation Calculator," accessed November 14, 2015, <http://www.usinflationcalculator.com/>.

²⁰² "Alumnus Shows Plan for Repairing."

²⁰³ "Renovation of Chapel Proceeds on Schedule," *The Pawling Record*, February 24, 1940.

²⁰⁴ Milnor Morrison, interview by Ned Reade, Pawling, NY, January 8, 2003.

²⁰⁵ Memorandum by Ned Reade, "Ganston [*sic*] Depew Memorial Chapel," December 1997, Gardiner Library Archive, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY.

yet to resurface. Today, those who were asked about the murals either didn't know or chalked them up only to myth, claiming that they never existed in the first place.²⁰⁶

I oftentimes wonder what happened to them as I run my fingers gently along All Saints' pale white walls, taking special note of the places where the plaster has again begun to flake, hoping aimlessly that there's a small patch of color underneath. But while there may be traces of Ganson that have yet to be found, there are still others that remain in plain view, that wait patiently for someone to stumble upon their resting place, to pick them up and put them in their pockets.

It was a frigid December morning in 1940 back at Eton when the German Luftwaffe dropped a bomb near the College Chapel. The explosion sent shards of glass and badly mangled brick out into the rubble, so much so that the campus was littered with the shambles of its pre-war architecture.²⁰⁷ One boy later recalled finding "broken stained glass in the quad [across] from the Chapel;" whilst "picking some up as a souvenir,"²⁰⁸ he noticed that the bomb had "shattered all the [windows] except that...above the organ."²⁰⁹ Its glass, which would later depict four miracles and parables flanked by the "Crucifixion in the center and the Last Supper below," remains intact today.²¹⁰

Pawling's own chancel window had been installed long before the murals had been there to complement it and would stand with the same enduring strength as its English counterpart, ever steadfast and strong, its features still crisp and beautiful. Only a short while after the

²⁰⁶ Keating, interview by the author.

²⁰⁷ "The Chapel," Eton College.

²⁰⁸ "Wartime memories - an assortment," *Eton Wick History Group* (blog), entry posted January 17, 2015, accessed February 20, 2016, <http://www.etonwickhistory.co.uk/2015/01/the-egg-for-several-years-after-war.html>.

²⁰⁹ "The Chapel," Eton College.

²¹⁰ In 1952, Evie Hone of Dublin would install what is "considered by many to be one of the masterpieces of modern stained-glass art." "The miracles are: *The Miraculous Draft of Fishes, the Feeding of the Five Thousand, the Stilling of the Waters, and the Raising of Lazarus*. The parables are: *The Light Under a Bushel, the House Built on the Rock, the Lost Sheep, and the Sower*." "The Chapel," Eton College.

Chapel's dedication in 1925, Ganson Depew Sr. ordered James Powell & Sons,²¹¹ a prominent British glass house, to install the work to honor the memory of his deceased son.²¹² Commonly known as "Whitefriars Glass,"²¹³ the factory was purchased by James Powell in 1834 so as to give his sons a viable occupation. After his death, Powell would become a relative²¹⁴ of the author of *Scouting for Boys*, Robert Baden-Powell (b. 1857), the father of the Scout Movement whose ideas may have significantly influenced Gamage's Muscular Christian ideology.²¹⁵ Twenty years after the book's publication in 1908, James Powell's grandsons, now the proprietors of the company, would be commissioned by Depew to choose a theme suitable for Pawling's Chapel.

By this time, Scouting's prominence in the United States had already manifested itself in the scene depicted in the Chapel's *opposite* window in its south end, given by one of Ganson's former classmates²¹⁶ around the same time that the building was constructed.²¹⁷ Presumably also painted by Powell & Sons,²¹⁸ its subject was the Attainment of Youth, represented by four saints

²¹¹ Margaret Taylor, "The History of Ganson Goodyear Depew Memorial Window," Gardiner Library Archive, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY.

²¹² "Chancel Window Completed," *The Pawling School Weekly*, January 28, 1928.

²¹³ The glasshouse was "established on part of the site of the former medieval 'White Friars' monastery" in England. "Whitefriars Glass," Museum of London, accessed February 20, 2016, http://archive.museumoflondon.org.uk/ceramics/pages/category.asp?cat_id=791.

²¹⁴ While the exact family ties are muddled, it's evident that they were related in one way or another. Unclear records make the task of defining their relationship a challenging one. In one attempt to trace their lineage, I found that Robert Baden-Powell (1857-1941) was the son of Rev. Baden Powell II (1796-1860), whose great uncle was James, the founder of the company (1774-1840). "James Powell," Geni, accessed February 20, 2016, <http://www.geni.com/people/James-Powell/>.

²¹⁵ The Scouting movement consisted of both practical and moral characteristics such as chivalry, sacrifice, and benevolence. In contrast to the Christian-only Boys' Brigade that was founded two decades earlier in 1883, Scouting was independent of any single faith yet still held that spirituality was key to the youth development. Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell, *Scouting for Boys: A Handbook for Instruction in Good Citizenship* (Mansfield Centre, CT: Martino Publishing, 2010), originally published as *Scouting for Boys* (n.p.: Horace Cox, 1908).

²¹⁶ Marcus M. Munsill, class of 1910. The window is dedicated to his father, Marcus Munsill Sr., 1868-1894. "Chapel Window is Thing of Beauty," *The Pawling School Weekly*, February 4, 1926.

²¹⁷ An article printed in the *Pawling School Weekly* on October 8th, 1925 indicates that the south window was given before the Chapel's dedication in 1926. Records indicate that it was in place by the following February. "M.M. Munsill Gives Chapel Window," *The Pawling School Weekly*, October 8, 1925 and "Chapel Window is Thing of Beauty," *The Pawling School Weekly*, February 4, 1926.

²¹⁸ Documentation to substantiate this claim could not be located, but a close comparison of the two windows reveals a remarkably similar style. If true, one can imagine that Powell's grandsons rekindled old family ties in taking this commission and spotted similarities between Scouting, then popular in the United Kingdom, and Muscular Christianity in the United States, which both placed emphasis on a boy's physical, mental, and spiritual development. That being said, one wonders why Powell's name was mentioned by the School's newspaper when the chancel window was installed but not earlier when one was installed in the Chapel's south end.

²¹⁹ each “portraying one of the four great characteristics of manhood, - kindness, chivalry, justice, and charity.”²²⁰ In “six slender lancet panels above” and six smaller segments below “appear the bible and the lamp, symbolic of wisdom and knowledge,” crosses to symbolize Sacrifice, and “crown[s] in the upper cups of each panel” to symbolize “the reward of the Faithful.”²²¹ These values were directly linked to the mission of Scouting, which crossed the pond in 1910²²² in response “to the perception that young men needed to be supervised and controlled.”²²³ In fact, the scene depicted was indicative not only of Scouting but also of the country’s changing identity as it began to “fle[x] its expansionist muscles” and condition its men for war. While similarly organized to its English counterpart, Harvey Green, author of *Fit for America: Health, Fitness, Sport, and American Society*, argued that the Boy Scouts of America would ultimately teach skills “that corresponded” more closely “to Theodore Roosevelt’s” Muscular Christian “urgings for the ‘strenuous life’” - that is, a life that would soon bring men to the battlefield.

Whereas the Chapel’s south window beckoned to the nation’s tempestuous horizon, its chancel window would instead gesture to the timeless, central message of Christianity as it had been seen through the lens of the Social Gospel. Powell’s artistry would capture the lasting impact of its theology even as supporters began withdrawing their support, a permanent memento of both a man and a movement that Dr. Gamage would endeavor to keep alive.²²⁴

²¹⁹ Chivalry is represented “in the form of a medieval knight of the Order of St. George;” the second figure is that of a Shepherd with a lamb to symbolize Kindness, which, in the style of Muscular Christianity, was described as “the least attractive” and “needlessly effeminate;” Charity is represented by a woman ministering to a child; and Justice is represented by “a crowned ruler with raised sword and balances.” “Chapel Window is Thing.”

²²⁰ “M.M. Munsill Gives Chapel.”

²²¹ “Chapel Window is Thing.”

²²² “100 Years in Review, 1910-2010,” Boy Scouts of America, accessed February 20, 2016, http://www.scouting.org/About/FactSheets/100_years.aspx.

²²³ Harvey Green, *Fit for America: Health, Fitness, Sport, and American Society* (New York, NY: Pantheon Books, 1986), 261.

²²⁴ Though the Social Gospel persisted through the 1920s, it did so “mostly through pacifist and ecumenical organizations.” The “majority” of its supporters, “who remained socially and theologically conservative,” had begun to “distrust” the theology behind the movement. While Gamage was an ardent Social Gospeler, the conservatism that was typical of the upper classes that he catered to may suggest that he, too, began to sense that support for the movement had begun to shrink. With that being said, Dr. Gamage’s passion was a force to be reckoned with

The general theme is “The Acts of Mercy....” In the two central panels Christ is depicted in the center of a group, addressing them. His figure...is in the prevailing rich red that dominates the whole picture. Running through the top of all [four] lights are His words, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me.”²²⁵ In the two side panels and the lower parts of the two central ones are depicted “The Acts of Mercy.” Angels bear scrolls on which the words relating to each subject, as follows: I was hungred and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger and ye clothed Me; I was in prison and ye came unto Me; I was sick and ye visited Me.²²⁶

Its theme represents that which was at the heart of the mission of the Social Gospel. Social action, as Walter Rauschenbusch argued, is inherently Christian, and as such one’s duty to their fellow men is synonymous with their duty to God.²²⁷ He contended that “this identification of the interests of God and man is characteristic of the religion of Jesus,”²²⁸ and that these verses represented “the noblest view that we can take of the Church.”²²⁹ By identifying God in the mundane, it became possible to escape the “perpetuation of the past” that stifled theological progress and instead tap into the faith of fellow men.²³⁰ Here, the consciousness of God and humanity are fused together, the premise being that if one knows how to treat his neighbor, the rest will follow.

Perhaps Gamage knew that these verses from Matthew 25, if nothing else, would remain relevant in spite of the cultural ebbs and flows of the future. Indeed, its call continues to endure today. Father Keating, the School’s Chaplain interviewed for this project, described the window as a set of instructions to a society in which “the Church is no longer the center” of its identity.

(remember that he had just recently begun to seek ordination). Language from the time indicates that Pawling would remain protected from the creed’s critics for some years to come. “Social Gospel,” in *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

²²⁵ Rauschenbusch himself quoted this same verse in his seminal *Theology for the Social Gospel*. See Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 49-50.

²²⁶ “New Chapel Window,” *The Pawling School Weekly*, February 4, 1928, 1,3.

²²⁷ Rauschenbusch often indicated this, stating: “Jesus always deliberately and energetically bound man and God together.” Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 49.

²²⁸ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 50.

²²⁹ *ibid.* 50.

²³⁰ *ibid.* 130.

Keating further claimed that its message is “unbelievably appropriate” to a School founded on the Social Gospel and that is still “interested in action” rather than ritual.²³¹ He used his fingers to count the steps to salvation as he continued:

If you want to be saved, go visit the sick, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the prisoners - that’s how you do it. You don’t need to worry about Jesus coming at the end [or worry about] hell and...heaven. That’s not where we are in our life. We’re in the doing stage. We’re in the boy business.

It can be argued that the window affirms the objectives that Gamage first sought to achieve in founding the Pawling School, and that were first realized in Ganson Depew, in that its verses reveal a spirit that is “above all things practical” and action-oriented.²³² This is conceivably what Rauschenbusch meant when he wrote that “[i]t is faith to see God at work in the world and to claim a share in His job.”²³³ Such an interpretation may also give insight into the School’s modern-day mission, which emphasizes the importance of a “value system”²³⁴ not dissimilar to the Fruits of the Spirit introduced in the tracery above the panels of the chancel window. Likewise, its current charge to boys to “contribut[e]” to “the challenges of an ever-changing world” is reminiscent of the phrasing used by Social Gospellers to address the “social problem[s]”²³⁵ that they once concentrated on.

²³¹ Thomas Keating, interview by the author, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY, September 25, 2014.

²³² Today, the Social Gospel’s emphasis on the “doing stage” may be of relevance when considering modern pedagogical methods such as kinesthetic learning. Studies show that such methods are particularly applicable in boys schools. Perhaps the Social Gospellers focus on both literal and metaphorical “action” was applicable not only to their time but to the gender that they and their Muscular Christian peers sought to target. For more, see Brad Adams, Abigail Norfleet James, Ph.D., and Joseph Cox, Ph.D., “Building Boy-Friendly Learning Environments” (presented at International Boys’ Schools Coalition Conference), accessed February 20, 2016, and Abigail Norfleet James, Ph.D., “Inquiring Boys: Using Brain Based Strategies to Develop Learning Skills” (presented at International Boys’ Schools Coalition Conference, June 2008).

²³³ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 102.

²³⁴ “History and Mission,” Trinity-Pawling School.

²³⁵ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 6.

Rauschenbusch stated that “We are on Christian ground when we insist on putting humanity into the picture,”²³⁶ claiming that we cannot “deal with man apart from God, nor with God apart from man.”²³⁷ A close inspection of the window’s qualities indicates that these sentiments may have been taken quite literally. In each subject, “the performer of the act of mercy is painted “in the same rich red of the figure of Christ in central figure, thereby suggesting that the doer of the acts of mercy partakes of the character of Christ himself.”²³⁸ Even more revealing, however, is not the color of his cloak but rather the performer’s visage itself, whose features closely correspond to those of Ganson in his senior year photograph. Former Trinity-Pawling archivist Margaret Taylor claims that it is “widely believed that the doer” is modeled after Depew and also noted their “remarkable resemblance.”²³⁹ Though hardly verifiable, this piece of anecdotal knowledge, if true, would further support the theory that Gamage desired to memorialize the peak of the Social Gospelers’ crusade and the boy who best exemplified its most salient convictions.²⁴⁰

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It is my view that Ganson is not only memorialized but also embodied in that chancel window, where today his presence is everlasting as he feeds the sick and gives aid to the forgotten, resilient to time’s temptations. There he remains as boys live and sleep and study and sport around campus, seized by the charm of their imaginations and held captive by the amnesia of modernity. As Pawling begins each day in the pews of All Saints’ Chapel, staring into his reflection, we must wonder whether there are any boys that see Ganson glaring back at them as

²³⁶ This will be elaborated on in Chapter 4. *ibid.* 49.

²³⁷ *ibid.* 50.

²³⁸ "New Chapel Window," 1,3.

²³⁹ Taylor, "The History of Ganson."

²⁴⁰ One 1939 account from the Pawling Record states that the murals, not the chancel window, “depicted the Christ-child in the image of a picture of Ganson Depew,” calling the result “amazing.” It’s possible that the murals and the window alike resembled Ganson’s likeness as both were given in his memory. "Alumnus Shows Plan for Repairing."

he nearly always has. Who, like Gamage, still sees life through Ganson's painted glass? He is the last of a dying breed, slowly decaying as his glass brittles and as memories of him fade ever deeper into the shadowy recesses of our mind's eye. The walls on which his murals once hung now peel as if under the heat of some invisible flame, awaiting a new layer of spackle that will forever erase the old.

Perhaps as we stare into Ganson's visage, we can still find an image of ourselves, haunted and restless as we all are. The window provides a glimpse into a reality that we have forgotten, a realm laden with expressions that we can hardly remember and yet that still seem familiar. Its provenance is one of loss - loss of a man, a movement, and a time - but also of perpetual renewal. Its virtues provide direction and understanding when the night is dark and when words are hollow. One can envision Gamage standing before it, awestruck and scared as Pawling faced closure and as time seemed to journey on without him. The window stood strong when strife was fierce and when warfare was endless, its colors shining bright as they illuminated the way.

Today, we ask questions about Gamage's purpose and intentions, about the course that the School first set out to chart. We meditate on whether his aims were realized and whether his mission has been able to stand the test of time. We study the past in hopes of gleaning something about the present. But in doing so we err and do so greatly, as such study neglects one of the most central tenets of the Social Gospel. The solution, then, is to look not to his words but to those who continue to live them, for it is in them that the enduring impact of both Dr. Gamage and Ganson Depew will be revealed.

"That's what the Trinity-Pawling man *does*," Father Keating once stressed. "If you want to be a successful Trinity-Pawling man, you do what that Ganson Depew did."²⁴¹

²⁴¹ Keating, interview by the author.

Our Brother's Keepers

A few minutes short of eight o'clock each morning, All Saints' Chapel comes to life, its alarm clock the sound of the organist's shoes slapping the wood floor as he gets ready to play the ivory-colored keys in front of him. I can hear the organ warming up - a deep, guttural hum that escapes in a long exhale - as I hang my peacoat on the chiseled metal hook and let the latch of the door fall behind me. I can see students wearing but their thin navy blue blazers to keep them warm through the window to my right; they move in what looks like slow motion as they traverse across campus under the silver-colored sky, plodding through freshly powdered snow as they make their way to their pews. I catch the eye of the sacristan,²⁴² Michael Smith, as he strikes a match to help one of the younger acolytes reach the wick on one of the taller candles. They're silent, possessed and barely breathing until the flame finally catches, illuminating the scene on the stained glass panels above them as the smoke begins to dissipate. The two boys move diligently across the chancel, slowly casting new light onto the window's painted saints from below flame by flame.

I make my way to the faculty section of the Chapel as its pews fill with boys and the organ begins to roar. Michael and the other acolytes take their seats next to the Chaplain as I cross the aisle, eyes closed and spellbound by the spectacle before me. The organist inhales all of the ruckus and commotion and breathes out a long-forgotten lullaby into the nave that quiets the restless congregation; his fingers glide across the keys as though reading from the pages of a classic novel, turning sheet after sheet in search of the perfect note. Unseen valves open and close with the pull of a stop and the press of a pedal, unlocking the passageway through which air passes in and out of the organ's hollow pipes and wraps the room in its presence. The boys

²⁴² The Sacristan and acolytes help the Chaplain prepare for services (which occur every school day). For more, see: John Goggin and Blanche Mary Kelly, "Sacristan," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912).

appear to stand still as the complicated sound escapes from the organ's monstrous windchest and surrounds them, though only a few take the Hymnal out from the slender pocket before them.

But the acolytes - theirs are open wide: pages loose, bindings worn, their voices ready. However rapidly the world may turn, the acolytes always appear to remain constant. When the service is over, Michael will take the Chapel key out of his khaki pocket, slide it into its lock, and return the next morning to do the same, again and again in the same way of his predecessors. They have no varsity team, no prizes or trophies, no crowds that cheer them on. Yet they persist, ever steadfast and strong, their reality colored by the window's ancient amber hues.

This chapter will briefly elaborate on the experience of the few boys who today dutifully protect All Saint's Chapel. Their impact is subtle but nevertheless perceptible to those willing and careful enough to take note and draw their own conclusions. Whilst carrying their gilded crucifix and donning their tattered vestments, the acolytes take care to remember something that the rest of us have perhaps willfully forgotten. Though these boys describe religion as being periphery in their personal lives, they nonetheless carefully defend and guard it at Trinity-Pawling.²⁴³ They protect fragments of history that may have otherwise been lost, filed away in an archive whose door is rarely opened. For the acolytes, the bell still tolls. Through happenstance or habit, they have stumbled upon and kept alive some of the words that Ganson Depew once spoke and that Dr. Frederick Gamage once admired. These boys remind us that the Chapel's virtues continue to endure, and that they remain, for some, powerful carriers of consequence and meaning.

These assertions require an expansion of the scope of the Social Gospel, one that allows its convictions to be applied more widely and to the issues of modernity. This chapter will briefly

²⁴³ When interviewed individually, the boys described religion as a tradition that was important to protect. Each acolyte that I interviewed stated that they did not go to church regularly or otherwise practice their religion outside of School.

explore themes of masculinity, character, and belonging in an attempt to link some of Trinity-Pawling's current dynamics to its founding theology. I recognize the risk inherent in such an undertaking, in that this is but one man's view based on only partial research. As a former student, I offer a perspective that has been shaped by what I can remember of my own experience and by those feelings that were rekindled upon beginning fieldwork. I also acknowledge the criticisms of "participant observation" as "crossing a line of objectivity"²⁴⁴ to the extent that said observations can become exceedingly preferential or even distorted as a result of my direct involvement with the School and its population. With these issues in mind, I proceed, cautious but fair. Rauschenbusch himself stated that the "greatest danger" in examining theology lies not in "mutilation but [in] senility," or else it will become a "dead burden."²⁴⁵ It is hoped that what is written in the pages that follow is reflective of All Saints' Chapel as it is *lived*, complexities and imperfections not only included but also embraced.

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There is the School, the Church, and the space in between. In that space you will find the Chapel's rules and rituals and those who protect them, kept close to their chests under old locks and skeleton keys. One of those keys, if you can find it, unlocks the door to the sacristy, a small room off the side of the Chapel where vestments and other furnishings are stored. The room is dark and simple and smells of a newly lit flame. The floorboards, gnarled and slightly bowed, creak beneath the weight of the boys who stand above them.

The first to arrive are the acolytes, their ties tightly fastened and their blazers freshly buttoned. Four or five boys let themselves in and huddle together, catching their breath and conversing with each other before they begin their morning ritual. They scurry around methodically as Father Keating shakes the snow off his boots and hangs his woolen jacket on

²⁴⁴ John Tresch, "On Going Native: Thomas Kuhn and Anthropological Method," *Philosophy of the Social Science* 31 (2001): accessed April 4, 2016, https://sites.sas.upenn.edu/sites/default/files/jtresch/files/going_native.pdf.

²⁴⁵ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 12-13.

one of the empty hooks. One boy thumbs through the Hymnal as another slides faded black and white numbers onto the cherry oak hymn boards, careful not to treat them too roughly or place them too far apart.

Carter, the sub-sacristan, joins Derek, the chapel warden,²⁴⁶ and strikes up a conversation as he tugs on the bell-rope. Seeing us all together, Michael comes over and taps me on the shoulder; he offers to walk me through the details of their morning routine. They tell me that they look after the sacristy like it's "a kind of...clubhouse," where they "hang out...with [their] friends."²⁴⁷

Michael: Basically, you have to sort of look over everyone else in the Chapel.... I have to be [here] twenty to twenty-five minutes early [to] make sure that everything is set.²⁴⁸

Carter: We deal with effort grades, with keeping the Chapel organized, making sure there's not too much rabble going on in the choir section. We'll help Father Keating with any tasks he needs - he was in Texas last week, so Mike was in charge of Chapel and saying the prayers.²⁴⁹

Derek: We have to show up very early [and] do a lot of the setup... [We] have to kind of "stand out" from the rest of the acolytes as [people] who could get things done if they're needed... We also help keep the Chapel running - we keep it clean and organized and make sure it looks nice.²⁵⁰

Their meticulous routine is representative of the care that they take to perpetuate the Chapel's traditions and devise order within routines that are otherwise unregulated. They describe feeling a responsibility to both Father Keating and the School to protect the Chapel and its rites, as they believe that the last vestments of its purpose would be forgotten without them. Derek continues

²⁴⁶ Wardens are members of the vestry who assist the Sacristan and Chapel is carrying out their duties. For more, see: "Wardens of a Parish," The Episcopal Church, accessed April 4, 2016, <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/library/glossary/wardens-parish>.

²⁴⁷ LaChance, interview by the author. Note that the term "sacristy" has been appropriated by the acolytes to describe an area of the School, not necessarily the Church.

²⁴⁸ Michael Smith, interview by the author, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY, October 16, 2014.

²⁴⁹ LaChance, interview by the author.

²⁵⁰ Derek Reed, interview by the author, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY, February 12, 2015.

by stating that one of his most important responsibilities is to make sure that the others are “staying in line and not breaking anything.” He suspects that without the acolytes, “the candles wouldn’t be lit, the lights wouldn’t go on...[the] Chapel would turn into an announcement building where you go, sit down, hear the announcements, and you leave.” I find out later that some of the other acolytes agree: “[We] want the Chapel to be a little protected compared to what people *would do* to [it if we weren’t there.]”²⁵¹

They believe that being an acolyte is a privilege, a duty that must be taken seriously. Each works hard to earn their “key and title”²⁵² as the “Church team,” as one faculty member described it, may be the only status-bearing group to which they belong. The acolytes that I met admitted to being unathletic or reluctant to join a sports team, often claiming that they simply lacked interest in doing so.²⁵³ They are an anomaly given that sports are a defining characteristic of the Trinity-Pawling experience, a school that today is known for its athletic prowess and for requiring each student to be a three-season athlete.²⁵⁴ Failure to take part in these activities puts at risk not only one’s record²⁵⁵ but also their social status, as alternative activities²⁵⁶ rarely carry the same cachet as belonging to a sports team. The acolytes themselves acknowledged this: Michael described being “picked on for not playing a sport,”²⁵⁷ as did Derek, who claimed that he “didn’t care”²⁵⁸ that other students made fun of him or treated him differently because he didn’t play.

²⁵¹ Smith, interview by the author.

²⁵² Reed, interview by the author.

²⁵³ Derek described the requirement to play a sport as an “illusion.” He described himself as “not a big athletic guy - sports don’t interest me that much.” Michael stated that he chose to be on Tech Crew instead of playing a sport, though he was recently cajoled into managing the Cross Country team. Carter, on the other hand, is on the football team but says that he “really do[esn’t] play at all.” Several members of the faculty concurred by stating that the group does not attract the same type of student as sports teams do. Avery, Johnson, and Harris, interviews by the author.

²⁵⁴ “Athletics,” Trinity-Pawling School, accessed April 4, 2016, <http://www.trinitypawling.org/page.cfm?p=1912>.

²⁵⁵ The School’s “Effort System” grades boys on extracurricular activities such as sports. This will be elaborated on in the next chapter.

²⁵⁶ Alternative activities include Theater or Trail Crew or managing a sports team, to name a few.

²⁵⁷ Smith, interview by the author.

²⁵⁸ Reed, interview by the author.

Several faculty members described the group similarly, theorizing that whereas the majority of students achieve prestige through athletics, the acolytes are instead gratified by knowing that they contribute to and control a component of the School's daily customs. One dean noted that they "hardly ever"²⁵⁹ are on a varsity team, and another described them as being "less athletic."²⁶⁰ Other teachers also intimated that their failure to play sports cost them their status: one remarked that she was surprised that there is rarely "any snark at someone who has that position" in spite of their not being "varsity basketball players."²⁶¹ Their ability to "do it with their head held high, doing their job well, everything really organized...just like it's done on the football field," said another, is admirable given that their "uniform is different" than most others'.²⁶²

Still, the acolytes' involvement with the Chapel may provide them with a means of connecting to their alma mater, if not on an athletic level then on a spiritual one.²⁶³ But while their positions may provide them with "solace,"²⁶⁴ as one teacher phrased it, their relationship with the School and its student body remains a tenuous one. As my research continued, the fellowship fostered between the acolytes appeared to fulfill a deeply seated desire to connect with other boys like themselves - a task that they often depicted as a challenge. Several attributed their roles as outsiders in part to their classification as "day students," a minority population in the face of nearly 300 residents. Derek described "a bias toward the boarders" in that he believes that they are "favored"²⁶⁵ by the faculty. Michael claimed that most acolytes live

²⁵⁹ David Avery, interview by the author, Trinity-Pawling, Pawling, NY, February 2015.

²⁶⁰ Rick Jackson, interview by the author, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY, February 2015.

²⁶¹ Jane Johnson, interview by the author, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY, January 29, 2015.

²⁶² Mary Harris, interview by the author, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY, February 12, 2015.

²⁶³ "I love the school," Carter told me. Michael seemed to express similar fondness in stating that he also "care[s] about the school" and views Chapel as "sort of [a] tradition - and I want tradition like that to stay."

²⁶⁴ Johnson, interview by the author.

²⁶⁵ Reed, interview by the author.

locally, and while the day students themselves “just sort of brush it off,” many of the residents aren’t as quick to do the same.

This kid always, if he sees me at night, says, “Why are you still here? Go home.” Because [the boarders] can’t go home, but they know we can. It’s not that they don’t want us here, it’s that they don’t want us in their sight, making them feel... I don’t know how to explain [it].

Other boys shared a similar perspective, comparing their small “community of guys” to a “closely knit counseling group” wherein “everyone...helps each other out” and deals with various “internal [emotional] problems” similar to those that Michael described.²⁶⁶ Derek described his friends (the other acolytes) as “people I know I can be near,” and who also, as Carter said, share a “higher connection with the Chapel” because they “really [don’t] have anything else.” Michael’s remarks also bear semblance to the viewpoints offered by several members of the faculty, many of whom speculated that some of the boys who otherwise lack belonging find it instead in the structure of the Chapel.²⁶⁷ One notable comment came from Mary Harris, an Admissions Director who believes that the Chapel furnishes the acolytes with the opportunity to form a “hierarchy” like they would if they were “dutiful members of [a] team.”²⁶⁸

I think that [the acolytes are] boys that don’t have another reason for being here... They’re just seeking a place where they can feel a sense of belonging and where they can feel important... Everybody needs to feel needed - they need to feel a sense of well-being, they need to feel a sense of *purpose*. If your purpose is not to be a linebacker or an outfielder, then maybe your purpose is to be a[n] [acolyte],²⁶⁹ and you take great pride in it.

²⁶⁶ LaChance, interview by the author.

²⁶⁷ Johnson, interview by the author.

²⁶⁸ Mary Harris, interview by the author, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY, February 12, 2015.

²⁶⁹ The actual term used here was “altar boy.”

The rituals that they enact and preserve provide both a pecking order that grants them stature as well as a means through which they can couple, as another said, the “two worlds” in which they are forced to live.²⁷⁰ This notion is supported in Catherine Bell’s text, *Ritual: Perspective and Dimensions*, in which she describes ritual as “a medium for cultural messages” that “enables people to modify their social order” while “at the same time...reinforc[ing]” its most “basic categories.”²⁷¹ Within this framework, the Chapel provides the means necessary for acolytes to transcend their pressures and differences and bypass that which makes them feel unwelcome. It also equips them with power and responsibility that in other respects would be virtually unattainable.²⁷² While, as Bell contends, the “basic categories” of the School’s culture remain unchanged, the acolytes are nevertheless afforded a place where they can exercise control and experience a sense of purpose with other boys like themselves.

The Chapel may also provide the acolytes with a brief respite from the everyday trials of young adulthood, a reality that they often described as harsh and unforgiving. They frequently referred to each other in conversation, citing close bonds that enable them to let down their guard and embrace their hardships. One boy solemnly recalled needing “just someone to talk to... someone who would listen”²⁷³ after a fatal car accident claimed the life of one of his closest

²⁷⁰ Keating, interview by the author.

²⁷¹ Catherine M. Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 62.

²⁷² There is one notable exception that the faculty often referred to. Paul Brenner, a recent graduate, was both the Sacristan and the Head Prefect, the highest ranking student-held position in the School elected by both peers and faculty alike. “He had an intangible presence - the way he carried himself, the way he talked, the way he dealt with boys, dealt with adults.” Faculty described him as “wiser than his years:” “courteous [and] chivalrous” - “characteristics” that they acknowledged as “old school.” He didn’t take students out into the fields and preach to them about “God’s work in the world” as Ganson did, but rather was “a part of everything [and] well-rounded.” “[He] can do it all - he is the epitome of...the highest standards we’ve had,” said another, attributing it not only to his involvement with the Church but to his family’s “strong...fellowship with each other...and their community.” From the Chaplain’s perspective, he was “one of the doctors of the Church. He realizes that his role is not to separate from [the acolytes]: it’s that you continue...it, you continue to be involved and allow folks an example of someone who’s well that needs this, too.” Why and how Paul Brenner was able to achieve this level of prestige was not investigated but is surely worthy of the attention of future researchers. Jackson, Keating, Johnson, and Emmett, interviews by the author.

²⁷³ Smith, interview by the author.

friends earlier that year.²⁷⁴ He credited the School's Chaplain and his own peers with providing him with the support and reassurance that he needed in order to make sense of these "tough times." Another referenced the death of his grandmother, explaining that "Father Keating was there...to pick up the pieces...for [him] when it happened,...and so were the acolytes."²⁷⁵

Father Keating was repeatedly identified as being essential to the internal dynamics of the group and was often described as someone who orchestrated the connection, purpose, brotherhood that the acolytes appear to seek. Several related to him as they would to another boy, an honorary member of the "club," by describing a personal connection with Keating that was missing from their relationships with other individuals outside of the Chapel.²⁷⁶ "Any problem you have, good or bad, he wouldn't think differently of you," Carter said. "He wouldn't shun you; he'd always help you, unlike some of the other people on campus."²⁷⁷ Michael explained that he also is "very close" to Keating and used a comparison to illustrate his point.²⁷⁸ When asked about what motivates him to do well, Michael said:

I don't like hearing someone saying, "Yeah, you can do it! You're the best!" ...or "Hey, keep it up! Just do what you can..." That's not true... I can always do better. [My advisor] will beat me up²⁷⁹ and tell me that I suck... I curse myself out as Jacks [short for Rick Jackson, the coach of the team that Michael manages] says he does. It's all I can do because it makes me feel bad, which [in turn] makes me feel better.... I think that [Father Keating] probably beats himself up a lot, [too].

Michael's mention of Father Keating may also serve as a reference to an emotional bond that he views himself as having with the School's Chapel, a building that may offer him protection from

²⁷⁴Craig Wolf, "Police: Speed a Factor in Millbrook Fatal Crash," *Poughkeepsie Journal* (NY), July 21, 2014, <http://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/story/news/2014/07/21/fatal-millbrook-crash-probed/12949153/>.

²⁷⁵ LaChance, interview by the author.

²⁷⁶ Several faculty members supported this by claiming that Keating was "user friendly." Avery and Johnson, interviews by the author.

²⁷⁷ LaChance, interview by the author.

²⁷⁸ Smith, interview by the author.

²⁷⁹ It was clear during the conversation that this was meant figuratively.

the kind of self-vilification that he describes. From this perspective, the similarity that he believes to have found in Father Keating may act as a platform through which he can begin to come to terms with - and perhaps even escape - being treated as a social pariah.²⁸⁰ As a boy who already lacks stature outside of the Chapel, Keating may also provide Michael with a sense of validation that enables him to defend his involvement with the acolytes, a minority group that upholds rites and traditions that some may view as outmoded and unpopular.

The acolytes' relationship with the Chaplain resembles what scholars Michael Reichart and Richard Hawley describe in their text, *I Can Learn From You: Boys as Relational Learners*, as a "working alliance."²⁸¹ Contrary to the prevailing myths that color boys as apathetic, "individualistic and relationally numb," Reichert and Hawley found that boys rely heavily on meaningful relationships with caring adults with whom they can identify.²⁸² They contended that teachers must be "relationally effective" by forming connections with boys that are founded upon mutual regard and interdependency. Such alliances are characterized in part by the adult "reaching out" beyond the classroom, "sharing common interests and...characteristics, such as faith," and their willingness to "reveal some degree of personal vulnerability."²⁸³ This, they argue, can "catalyze teacher-student relationships...especially when the student feels isolated or marginalized."²⁸⁴ This may be especially true in the aforementioned interview excerpts in which each boy is forced to confront personal hardship and reconcile feelings of inadequacy, disconnection, and/or loss, and thereafter describes finding consolation in their relationship with Father Keating.

²⁸⁰ Recall his earlier comment about some students not wanting him "in their sight."

²⁸¹ Michael Reichert and Richard A. Hawley, *I Can Learn from You: Boys as Relational Learners* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2014), 3.

²⁸² *ibid.* 21. See also Niobe Way's work, *Deep Secrets: Boys' Friendships and the Crisis of Connection*, in which Way argues that young males have been stereotyped "as essentially unfeeling and/or incapable of communicating their feelings." Niobe Way, *Deep Secrets: Boys' Friendships and the Crisis of Connection*(Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011), 25.

²⁸³ Reichert and Hawley, *I Can Learn from*, 3.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 105.

Pastors, of course, must be especially deft in managing the relational properties that Reichart and Hawley identify and must exercise both emotional and spiritual acuity in tending to their flock. Christopher A. Beeley, an Assistant Professor of Anglican Studies and Patristics at Yale University Divinity School and an Episcopal priest, writes that “Christian pastors,” like Father Keating, “must exercise a divine authority that is very different from the abusive power of the world.”²⁸⁵ They must offer an alternate and more forgiving reality that compels followers like Michael to soldier on. Paraphrasing orations on the priesthood by Gregory Nazianzen, a 4th-century archbishop and theologian, Beeley writes:

The scope of our therapy is to provide the soul with wings - to rescue it from the world and give it to God: to watch over what is in God's image if it abides, to take it by the hand if it is in danger, or to restore it if it is ruined....²⁸⁶

Chaplains forge an intense relational bond through which they embody a brand of the salvation that the Church promises. As someone who fills the role of a moral exemplar, Father Keating may represent some of the values and beliefs that are essential to forming a boy's sense of meaning, order, and identity.²⁸⁷ He follows an unspoken curriculum that teaches faith in God and man alike in both subtle and not-so-subtle lessons; in one of the countless paradoxes of religiosity, the Chaplain provides acolytes with the means of achieving transcendence whilst also ensuring that their feet remain firmly planted in reality.

Father Keating himself acknowledged that his relationship with the acolytes is one that resonates deeply, speculating “that to identify one's self as an acolyte...is definitely a way of

²⁸⁵ Christopher A. Beeley, *Leading God's People: Wisdom from the Early Church for Today* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 2012), 10.

²⁸⁶ *ibid.* 26.

²⁸⁷ Richard M. Lerner, Robert W. Roeser, and Erin Phelps, *Positive Youth Development and Spirituality: From Theory to Research* (West Conshohocken, Pa.: Templeton Foundation Press, 2008).

managing difference.”²⁸⁸ Whereas others may be “reluctant” to “identify with the Chapel,” the acolytes, he posited, do so partially as a means of gaining “credibility within the larger group,” in that they orchestrate “something” that they believe to be (and is) “essential for the running of the School.” Keating described their fellowship with each other as that which provides them with the security necessary to admit their vulnerabilities and achieve self-acceptance.

[I think they say to themselves,] “You know, we’re a really weird group, but it’s alright...” I certainly try to instill in them that what they do is valuable, and yes, people will make faces at you while you’re up there and all of that stuff, but that’s just part of the deal. That’s just what people do. And maybe because those boys tend to be on the fringes, they *get that*. Right? It’s not the first time that someone’s probably made a face at them.

Evidence of the resilience that the acolytes are afforded through the Chapel later revealed itself when the boys described the opinions that they believe others hold of them. While most of the faculty held firm that their positions are widely “respected”²⁸⁹ by other students, the acolytes themselves indicated that the morning chapel services are typically of little consequence to their peers. When asked about what he thought of his classmates, Michael claimed that he, like the other acolytes, “matured a little quicker than everyone else.”²⁹⁰ “I do feel that a large portion of the School sees the Chapel as [a place] where they...stand up, sit down, and fall asleep,” Derek remarked.²⁹¹ “To them, we’re not that important.” Carter also agreed, admitting that while “there are some students that give [the acolytes] crap,...they really don’t know what we do;” these students, he explained, tend to get “kicked out for bad behavior” anyway.

²⁸⁸ Keating, interview by the author.

²⁸⁹ ‘*Acceptance of*’ rather than ‘respect’ or ‘regard’ for the acolytes may be a better choice of words when considering the point of view of their peers. Jane Johnson claimed that the acolytes are “respected by the student body, for the most part.” Mary Harris concurred, stating that one of the “thing[s] that’s great about this place” as opposed to other Schools “ [is that] the captain of the football team doesn’t tease [them]” despite their difference. David Harris and Rick Jackson made similar claims, though each intimated a degree of surprise when doing so. Johnson and Harris, interviews by the author.

²⁹⁰ Smith, interview by the author.

²⁹¹ Reed, interview by the author.

Despite the possibility that their membership in the group does more to secure than to ameliorate their position “on the fringes,” these comments imply a certain exclusivity that the acolytes appear to find attractive. When asked whether this was true, Father Keating chose to describe his habit of printing the acolytes’ names on the backside of the Chapel bulletin each week, the point being that in doing so he brings them recognition and gives them “validation of what they do.”²⁹²

One of the many reasons that I print those names on the back of the bulletin each week is that there aren’t very many other groups on campus that have their names in print in front of the whole student body each week. I hope that - and I don’t say this overtly - when everyone turns the bulletin over, and when those particular boys turn that bulletin over, it’s like, *there you were*.

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“Religions,” Father Keating would later state, “if for no other reason, remind followers that there are another set of values or ways to prioritize your life.”²⁹³ Researchers in the field of Positive Youth Development (PYD), an area of interdisciplinary research that considers young adults’ total potential and the forces that shape them, have linked these same values with distinctly positive outcomes.²⁹⁴ Some have proposed that spirituality can enable youth to “experience the self embedded within a larger context that simultaneously validates” their own “inherent value” and “promotes a sense of belonging and connectedness...to a larger whole.”²⁹⁵ This may lend insight into motives of the acolytes who, as some have argued, may struggle to carve their own niche into their sports-laden school. PYD researchers would perhaps propose that in appropriating the Chapel’s “ideologies and histories,” the acolytes are able to place their identities “within a social-historical framework that connect[s them] to traditions...that

²⁹² Keating, interview by the author.

²⁹³ *ibid*.

²⁹⁴ Lerner, Roeser, and Phelps, *Positive Youth Development and Spirituality*.

²⁹⁵ *ibid* 71.

transcend the immediate moment.”²⁹⁶ I would argue that it is this that enables them to achieve “a sense of continuity and coherence” with the School and to reconcile the traditions that they alone painstakingly preserve.

The institution’s current reality is one that the acolytes often characterized as brash and unaware, or in a remarkable irony, as purposeless. By affiliating themselves with the Chapel, the acolytes’ deviation from the norm appears to be carefully reframed. Now an asset rather than a liability, their difference enables them to detach from a student-body that they described as being somewhere between downright disrespectful and merely aloof.²⁹⁷ One faculty member, perhaps realizing this, described the acolytes as “old fashioned; old souls we would call them.”²⁹⁸ Rick Jackson, a dean and an avid runner, described the acolytes as lacking ego, a trait that he described as uncommon in a school full of boastful athletes.²⁹⁹ Whereas sportsmen are required to “commit” a certain “level of time” to themselves and thus “can be... selfish,” he said, “the guys that are in the Church” tend to be more generous and “selfless.”

[The Chapel is] a *male room* - you can’t not feel it. If you get up there and try to fight it, you’ll be pretty unsuccessful...in front of these guys. I’m not necessarily sure if acolytes are being perceived in the ‘dude community’ as, like, *the thing to do*.

While their affiliation with the Chapel was repeatedly framed by faculty as a positive trait, these and other comments reference an implied code of masculine conduct that the acolytes apparently fail to follow. Jackson’s so-called “dude community” may allude to what

²⁹⁶ *ibid* 10.

²⁹⁷ One boy who seemed to represent the majority of the acolytes’ comments said that the typical student “[doesn’t] take school seriously - they’re just here for the purpose of being here, to get through high school. They’re generally the people who aren’t fully mentally aware of their surroundings when they’re in Chapel.” Reed, interview by the author.

²⁹⁸ Avery, interview by the author. Another faculty member described the acolytes as having a “different sense of honor and commitment;” they are “thoughtful and spiritual,” though “not at the top of the social heap.” Carolyn Emmett, interview by the author, Trinity-Pawling, Pawling, NY, September 19, 2014.

²⁹⁹ Jackson, interview by the author.

some scholars would suggest is a fragile conception of masculinity, one that is comprised of boys' fear of "being seen as weak" or feminine.³⁰⁰ This is set against what Niobe Way, a Professor of Applied Psychology and the author of *Deep Secrets: Boys' Friendships and the Crisis of Connection*, has classified as "a culture that perceives boys and men to be activity oriented, emotionally illiterate, and interested only in independence."³⁰¹ The acolytes are far from the widely popularized icon of the lone cowboy, whose chief desires are sport, competition and autonomy. Rather, they routinely indicated that what they value most is human connection and the freedom to share their thoughts and feelings with their friends.³⁰² Whereas the image of the well-built athlete sustains age-old "stereotypes of teenage boys as grunting, emotionally tone-deaf creatures³⁰³ who bond over sports talk and risk-taking," the image of the acolyte is one that instead calls for a broader definition of boyhood.³⁰⁴

While hardly representative of the undoubtedly diverse opinions of his contemporaries, many of whom were not interviewed, Rick Jackson's remarks may still suggest a wider discomfort with boys who don't fit the male model. Claims made by the School's Headmaster, Arch Smith,³⁰⁵ may give credence to such a theory. In a chapel talk delivered to the school community, Mr. Smith declared that there were but "three groups [of boys] in [the] room:"³⁰⁶

³⁰⁰ Alison Dahl Crossley, "Uncovering the 'Mask' of Masculinity," The Clayman Institute for Gender Research, last modified May 3, 2015, accessed April 4, 2016, <http://gender.stanford.edu/news/2015/uncovering-mask-masculinity#sthash.y2zM8dsw.dpuf>.

³⁰¹ Way, *Deep Secrets: Boys' Friendships*.

³⁰² This is not to say that their peers don't value the same things, but rather that the acolytes appear to be more forthcoming in sharing what it is that they desire.

³⁰³ One faculty member repeated a similar stereotype, stating: "I think in general, outside of an all boys school, the perception is that [boys are] a bunch of neanderthals that grunt and drag your knuckles to school everyday. Yet when you come inside the walls that protect the people inside from those type of perceptions, you realize that it's a very supportive atmosphere." Harris, interview by the author.

³⁰⁴ Niobe Way, "The Friendship Crisis: Why Are Boys So Lonely and Violent?," *The Washington Post*, June 13, 2014, accessed April 4, 2016, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2014/06/13/boys-are-bad-at-making-friends-and-its-at-the-heart-of-their-violent-behavior/>.

³⁰⁵ By the time of this writing, Headmaster Smith had been succeeded by Mr. William Taylor. Smith's tenure continued through June 2015.

³⁰⁶ Archibald Smith (speech, All Saints' Chapel, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY, March 2015).

First, there are those who play sport competitively and are very good at it. Then, there's the second group...who might care less and may not see what the value is; they might be on a lower team. You have [the first group,] the fanatics, and [the] others.

The Headmaster's ostensible marginalization of those who fail to adhere to the stereotypical characterization of boys as athletes ("[the] others") was consistent with other comments made earlier that same academic year. During a meeting with new students and their parents that September, Mr. Smith introduced Father Keating as "very empathetic and confidential, even though guys might not want to talk about that stuff."³⁰⁷ The assumption appears to be that 'normal boys' (read: athletes) are shameless and disconnected, and as such rarely require spiritual guidance or advice. One faculty member later criticized the Headmaster by claiming that his remarks suggested that only social outcasts affiliate themselves with the chaplaincy: "If you're going to be that weird kid who talks about his feelings, here's your guy."³⁰⁸

These comments reinforce what researcher and psychologist Dr. William Pollock has described as "a mask of masculine bravado."³⁰⁹ In his landmark study of boys' lives, Pollock claims that the attitudes of the "dude community" to which Smith and Jackson refer are in fact "persona[s] [that] show the outside world a feigned self-confidence."³¹⁰ "Fear, uncertainty,...loneliness and need" are suppressed, he states, in order to conceal feelings that society deems "unacceptable for men and boys" to show. The "Boy Code," as Pollock labels it, dictates a tough exterior and a sculpted body; it calls for reticence, power, and total autonomy. Boys "may not realize that there is such a thing," he argues, "until they violate the code in some way or try to ignore it;" when they do, "society tends to let them know - swiftly and forcefully" - in the form of social exclusion and admonishment. This analysis may offer a partial explanation

³⁰⁷ Archibald Smith (speech, Gardiner Theater, Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY, September 7, 2014).

³⁰⁸ Emmett, interview by the author.

³⁰⁹ William S. Pollack, *Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood*(New York: Henry Holt, 1999), 4.

³¹⁰ *ibid.*

for earlier remarks that described the acolytes as vulnerable, reclusive, and lacking purpose. Their failure to abide by this “Code,” or one that’s like it, may lead to discomfort on the part of faculty and students who appear to police some of the more conventional modes of masculinity.

The acolytes’ fellowship with each other may gesture to an escape not only from the present-day pressure to “man up” but also from the restrictive edicts that compose Gamage’s legacy.³¹¹ Pollock’s “mask,” Way’s “crisis of connection,” and the other masculine typecasts that our culture has propagated may have first planted their roots when Muscular Christianity emerged in the early 1900’s, promising a cure for weak and feeble men. Indeed, the movement’s attention to “aggression rather than gentility”³¹² may have been the precursor to our modern culture which, as Way has asserted, “prizes independence over human connection” and “emphasize[s] aggression, toughness, and rugged individualism at the expense of...relationships.”³¹³ How these conventions that claim that “needing or wanting emotional support or intimacy [is] the antithesis of manliness” are manifested at Pawling is likely reflective of the perennial influences of the School’s Muscular past.

Niobe Way further argues that boys’ tough exteriors today, however synthetic scholars like Pollock may argue them to be, nonetheless “point to our cultural equation of emotional vulnerability with being gay or girlish as the primary culprit.”³¹⁴ Muscular Christianity’s devaluation of intimate friendship - the repercussions of which we are perhaps still feeling - is a nod to the movement’s emphasis on dispelling notions of effeminacy and asserting masculine strength,³¹⁵ convictions that were likely influenced by the emerging distance between

³¹¹ Niobe Way, *Deep Secrets: Boys' Friendships and the Crisis of Connection* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011), 263.

³¹² Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports*, 106.

³¹³ Way, “The Friendship Crisis: Why Are Boys.”

³¹⁴ Way, *Deep Secrets: Boys' Friendships*, 26.

³¹⁵ Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports*.

homosexual and heterosexual behavior in early 20th century life.³¹⁶ E. Anthony Rotundo, a scholar of American masculinities throughout the 18- and 1900's, asserts that men and women alike often formed intimate same-sex bonds before marriage and as part of youth.³¹⁷ He argues that the definition of friendship in the 19th century differed sharply from that of later years when society adopted a more rigid concept of homosexuality, remarking that men hadn't before needed "to draw a line between right and wrong forms of contact" and expression until the turn of the century.³¹⁸ To reach this conclusion, Rotundo analyzed the correspondence between men and boys of the period, taking care to delineate between the "stalwart alliance[s]"³¹⁹ of early boyhood and the notably more intense "anchor of security"³²⁰ that they would describe finding as they grew older.

As boys reached their mid-teens and entered the phase of life known as youth, their notions of friendship tended to change.... [They became] based on intimacy, on a sharing of innermost thoughts and secret emotions.... They offered - and sought - emotional support that was warm, reliable, and reassuring.³²¹

Youthful relationships in the 1800's, he contends, evoked a "tenderness, dependence, and expressiveness" that taught "empathy and a sense of appreciation for the interior lives of other men."³²² But as Muscular Christianity began to gain momentum toward the end of the century, "a parallel distinction appeared among the middle and upper classes, dividing men into two types - the hearty, vigorous, active man and the gentle, reflective, neurasthenic one."³²³

³¹⁶ E. Anthony Rotundo, "Romantic Friendship: Male Intimacy and Middle-Class Youth in the Northern United States 1800-1900," in *Exploring Masculinities: Identity, Inequality, Continuity and Change*, ed. C. J. Pascoe and Tristan Bridges (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 86.

³¹⁷ *ibid* 75.

³¹⁸ *ibid* 81.

³¹⁹ *ibid* 75.

³²⁰ *ibid* 82.

³²¹ *ibid* 75-6.

³²² *ibid* 83-85.

³²³ *ibid* 86.

While the former was viewed positively, the latter type was seen as “unmanly and undesirable” and was soon linked with the language of homosexuality, which would introduce “new concepts” such as “‘sexual deviance’ and ‘perversity.’”³²⁴ Whereas “such an atmosphere” was poised to adopt the energetic ethos of Muscular Christianity and its allies, Rotundo speculates that “the tender affection and intimacy of earlier years” was forced to fade away as connection became stigmatized and as men began to “distance themselves from one another.”³²⁵

Pollock would argue that this “distance” persists today, perpetually obstructed by “an invisible shield” that society must “get behind...so that [boys no longer] feel afraid or ashamed to share their true feelings.”³²⁶ Pollock’s paradigm, however, makes several far-reaching assertions that gloss over many boys’ idiosyncrasies - some of which are manifested in the personas of the acolytes - and those of the cultures to which they belong. Pollock asserts that most boys wear “the mask” as a means to escape “communication” and “intimacy” and as a means of looking “in-charge and cool;” he claims that only “as adults” do we “have both the power and perspective to see through the boys’ false front....” Yet he fails to consider that some boys *don’t* wear their masks (or at least not as often), and others deftly manage it when they do.³²⁷ Acolytes do not

³²⁴ *ibid.* The term “homosexual” is a relatively new invention, introduced only in 1892 and popularized in 1907-1909 as a result of the widely publicized Harden-Eulenburg affair in Germany. See David M. Halperin, *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality: And Other Essays on Greek Love* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

³²⁵ Rotundo, “Romantic Friendship: Male Intimacy,” in *Exploring Masculinities: Identity, Inequality*, 86.

³²⁶ Pollack, *Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons*.

³²⁷ While Michael’s description of “curs[ing] [him]self out” and wanting to be metaphorically “beat up” can be viewed as an expression of the brand of dominant masculinity that calls for strength and toughness, it may also be emblematic of emotions that Pollock deemed to be virtually impossible for boys to express due to the impenetrability of their so-called “masks.” Way counters these claims by stating that “[w]hile boys may struggle to be emotionally expressive with their peers in general, they *do not appear to struggle* with such expression with their closest male friends particularly during early and middle adolescence” (emphasis mine). Way also criticizes Pollock’s work by claiming that it generalizes and excludes boys like Michael and the other acolytes. Way, *Deep Secrets: Boys’ Friendships*, 63.

It was here that I confronted one of the many ethical quandaries of conducting ethnographic fieldwork. Like several of his peers, Michael was emotional vulnerable with someone whom had gained his trust. Michael recognized me as a former student and as someone who he perhaps considered a friend (we belonged to several of the same clubs - acolytes excluded). Even though Michael gave explicit informed consent to participate in my study, it’s possible that I still used my place of privilege as a researcher in order to get Michael to express himself, perhaps more so than he would to someone else whom he didn’t know and have faith in. Did Michael consider me a “clos[e] male friend,” as

merely stumble into the sacristy and stay for good measure: they appear to seek it out and purposefully embrace it. They describe themselves not as victims of their situations but rather as astute observers; they are players, not pawns. In fact, they draw distinct lines between acceptable and unacceptable forms of “bravado” and enforce clear boundaries between right and wrong.³²⁸ The acolytes embody a quiet strength that lay somewhere in between the draconian “Boy Code,” with all of its inviolable dictates, and a model far more inclusive and protected.³²⁹

While Niobe Way’s observations are perhaps more nuanced than Pollocks, in that her study among teenage boys was far more extensive in terms of boys’ comfort with emotional intimacy, they, too, fail to accurately describe the acolytes’ dynamics. She writes:

The boys who were the most emotionally expressive and reported having particularly intimate male friendships were those who had the most social power with their peers in school...[In other words,] being athletic, tall, and conventionally good looking...resulted in greater social power, which, in turn, led to greater freedom to implicitly or explicitly challenge norms of masculinity.³³⁰

As one author cited in Way’s work claimed, “The good news for parents is that being successful at sports not only protects a boy from being called gay but also gives him permission to...show

Way described, and therefore felt that it was safe to confide in me? And if so, what right have I to reprint his words here in the open, for all to interpret and form judgement on? These difficulties may be inescapable - a necessary evil, so to speak - and yet they are no less troubling.

³²⁸ One example of this can be found in an interview with Carter LaChance, who described an incident where other students gave “Derek Reed crap and pick[ed] on him... If they pick on [him], that’s where me and Michael come in and tell them to stop.” “Whenever someone harasses Derek,” he continued, “I tell them to stop [because] he’s really a great kid [and] he’s really honest.”

³²⁹ Since this research focused almost exclusively on the acolytes and their immediate surroundings, it’s hard to tell whether other groups on campus provide the same form of protection. It’s possible that a similar culture exists in other clubs and activities that also fall outside the center (e.g. Tech Crew). It should also be noted that single-sex environments in general have been shown to overthrow some of the gender stereotyping that often occurs in mixed schools. One report published by the National Association for Single Sex Public Education claims that “boys at single-sex schools have more diverse role models of their own sex.” As such, “boys feel free to be themselves” and participate in “non-macho pursuits” such as music, arts, and drama - areas that have historically been characterized as feminine or unmanly. With that being said, faculty and student comments alike revealed that the “mask” nevertheless persists in one form or another (see Arch Smith’s earlier comments). This makes the religious nature and historical context of the acolytes’ group especially significant, in that religion may enable them to transcend some of the more enduring strictures of the “Boy Code.” National Association for Single Sex Public Education, *What’s Happening to Boys?*, accessed April 4, 2016, <http://www.singlesexschools.org/research-forboys.htm>.

³³⁰ Way, *Deep Secrets: Boys’ Friendships*, 123.

sensitivity and stick up for kids who are bullied.”³³¹ The acolytes gave every indication of challenging these same masculine norms but did so *without* the “social power” that Way described. Those interviewed risked being “emotionally expressive” and belonging to an admittedly unconventional (yet highly visible) group while simultaneously lacking the buffer of athleticism that would otherwise “prove their masculinity.”³³² In fact, there is solid evidence that the acolytes actively resist the conventions that Way and her colleagues described as being typically reserved only for “good looking,” hard-bodied athletes.

One possible explanation for this is that the acolytes enact what Robert Orsi has referred to as “lived religion” in order to challenge the masculine norms that they would otherwise be subject to.³³³ In his essay, “Everyday Miracles,” Orsi examines a spring at a New York City parish that people consider to be miraculously efficacious, a divine “blessing” despite their knowing that “it’s city water [that] comes from the reservoir.”³³⁴ He concludes by stating that religious practices today are often shaped by and in conversation with our everyday experience.

Religious creativity is not intransitive. It is action on the world, made necessary and possible by particular circumstances in the world.... People appropriate religious idioms as they need them [and] in response to particular circumstances. All religious ideas and impulses are of the moment, invented, taken, borrowed, and improvised at the intersections of life.³³⁵

In this view, the acolytes use religion “as they need” it. The Chapel provides them with the means through which they are able to access an alternate, less popular definition of masculinity, one that still favors kindness and affection over emotional stoicism and disconnection. The

³³¹ *ibid.* 124.

³³² *ibid.* and Lyn Mikel Brown, Sharon Lamb, and Mark B. Tappan, *Packaging Boyhood: Saving Our Sons from Superheroes, Slackers, and Other Media Stereotypes* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2009).

³³³ Robert Orsi, “The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem,” in *Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice*, by David D. Hall (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997).

³³⁴ *ibid.* 5.

³³⁵ *ibid.* 8.

sacristy is, as the acolytes have stated, “kind of like a clubhouse:” theirs to control and yet firmly planted in the heart of the School, hidden in plain view. While the conventions of the School and of masculinity at large still apply, the acolytes can write and enforce their own set of rules; they can spell out the type of conduct that is and is not allowed in the sacristy and define their own “Boy Code” to which they will hold themselves accountable.

“The sacred,” Orsi claims, has been “reconceptualized as the place not simply where things happen, but where the circulations of power short-circuit.”³³⁶ It is perhaps this that provides the acolytes with the latitude to define their own space within the Muscular context of their School and thus manipulate its power structure. This notion is supported by the work of noted anthropologist Mary Douglas, who theorized in her text, *Purity and Danger*, that “any structure of ideas is vulnerable at the margins.”³³⁷ The acolytes “transgre[ss] the internal lines of the” cultural “system” to which they belong in that they appear to acknowledge and accept their place outside of the predominate “dude community.”³³⁸ They fabricate an alternate and less rigid hierarchy that accommodates their differences and that reflects, as Keating claimed, a different set of values through which they prioritize their everyday reality. In doing so, they essentially slacken (at least in the sacristy) the “gender straitjacket”³³⁹ that typically belittles emotionality and social connectedness, instead opting for a “close knit counseling group.”³⁴⁰

The vernacular that some members of the School community used to describe the Chapel may also be indicative of the acolytes’ ability to partially and imperfectly invert some of the conventions of the School that they described as being oppressive. Faculty members frequently

³³⁶ *ibid.* 15.

³³⁷ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concept of Pollution and Taboo* (1966; repr., London: Routledge, 2005), 122.

³³⁸ *ibid.* 123.

³³⁹ Way, *Deep Secrets: Boys' Friendships*, 26.

³⁴⁰ It's important to keep in mind that the scope of this study was limited; it's possible that other areas of the School provide similar benefits. If this is the case, we must then ask why the Chapel serves these boys in particular the way that it does and what they have to gain by being an acolyte rather than, say, a chess player.

described the acolytes as belonging to the “Church team,” or “Varsity Church.”³⁴¹ “There’s a captain [the sacristan], there’s a co-captain [the sub-sacristan], there’s the managers [the wardens], and,” as one Admissions Officer described, there’s the rest of the School, who are the “members of the team.”³⁴² The metaphor of the Chapel as the acolytes’ “varsity sport” may reflect an understanding of the exceptional commitment that they undertake in order to maintain its rituals and traditions, so much so that they warrant a high-ranking title.³⁴³ The term “varsity” also implies a degree of effort which, as the next chapter will demonstrate, may bestow added prestige.

Father Keating recalled being “amazed at how strong” the language was among the School’s coaches in particular after a scheduling change brought the Chapel’s configuration to the fore.

When we moved Tuesday morning chapel, there was... a group of coaches - the most visible one was Rick Jackson, - who were referring to... [the] Chapel as “Varsity Chapel.” I still hear vestiges of that, and I find it interesting in our particular environment that that’s how [the change] got translated. It’s all of a sudden that the boy who’s in the ‘funny dress’ who’s carrying the pole with the cross on the top of it [becomes] one of the “team players” or “captains”... in the context of that nickname.³⁴⁴

Orsi asserts that “[r]eligion comes into being in an ongoing, dynamic relationship with the realities of everyday life.”³⁴⁵ It is exactly this interplay between the secular and the profane that may enable the acolytes to capitalize on their differences and achieve social coherence with the rest of the School. Such an overlap may also bring the Chapel itself into the spotlight, in that it may garner added recognition as a result of being translated into the vernacular of athleticism -

³⁴¹ Harris and Jackson, interviews by the author.

³⁴² Harris, interview by the author.

³⁴³ Avery, interview by the author.

³⁴⁴ Keating, interview by the author.

³⁴⁵ Orsi, “The Madonna of 115th,” in *Lived Religion in America*, 7.

which, as Jackson and Smith demonstrated earlier, most members of the “dude community” are quite fluent in.

But while the faculty maintained that the “varsity” vernacular was “not disparaging by any means,” it may nonetheless reinforce some of the timeworn masculine stereotypes that continue to subsist within the School’s culture.³⁴⁶ By making the acolytes “captains” and teammates, the faculty further fortify the assumption that all boys are or should be athletes. It must also be recognized that the acolytes have strikingly separate duties and responsibilities that show little resemblance to the rough-and-tumble ways of the playing field. While faculty may describe them as belonging to a “team” not unlike soccer or lacrosse, the label is distinctly different when it is applied to acolytes instead of athletes.

When faculty compute religion with sport, they may unknowingly trivialize the acolytes’ duties and further relegate them to the margins, which, as masculinity scholar Michael Kimmel has written, is already “visible and painfully visceral.”³⁴⁷ The fact that the *acolytes alone* receive this honorary designation and that they themselves do not refer to each other in this way is perhaps a sign that the use of this language is problematic. The acolytes’ eccentricities are made ever more blatant when faculty call them something that they’re not rather than giving them credence by recognizing who they are. Regardless of the benefits that the acolytes may reap by being included and perhaps even accepted as “players” on the same team, they are nonetheless still seated firmly on the bench.

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We are our brother’s keepers. Together, we explore the dark corners and narrow alleyways of contradiction and complexity, weaving our way in and around them without the

³⁴⁶ Jackson, interview by the author.

³⁴⁷ Michael S. Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History*, 3rd ed. (1996; repr., New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 94.

courtesy of a second glance. In doing so we cast shadows, shadows long and worrisome, shadows that prey on our faults and insecurities. They weigh on us, these shadows, and make us wary of what it is they conceal, afraid that we will uncover something that ought best be left undisturbed. We creep up on them slowly and carefully as our anticipation grows, until finally we build up the nerve to pull the wool up, out, and away from over our eyes. What we find is something indescribable, something impervious to objectivity and something to which we can never do proper justice.

This chapter attempted to slow us down, if only for a moment, and shed light on what would have perhaps otherwise been overlooked. Operating in such spaces, we continually risk reading into blank pages or likewise skipping over some others that ought to have been read. Our reality is one that creates worlds out of rooms and extracts facts out of fantasies. But as I stand here in the sacristy, listening to the acolytes joke and chatter and scuff their way through their morning, it becomes ever clearer that this is how we express our humanity. We must sit back and watch, as Ganson does each day from his place in the chancel window, so as to feel every friction, every gust and every glow until the spirit strikes us. We must become cognizant of our surroundings and endeavor to be emotionally connected to those around us.

Walter Rauschenbusch wrote that the “individual is saved, if at all, by membership in a community which has salvation.”³⁴⁸ The point, perhaps, is that we cannot all be saints just as we cannot all be athletes or acolytes; rather, “[t]he saint of the future” must be able to “realize his fellow-men in God” even when these men don’t fit the conventional image or follow the same formula.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁸ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 126.

³⁴⁹ *ibid.* 108.

The more we approach pure Christianity, the more will the Christian signify a man who loves mankind with a religious passion and excludes none. The feeling which Jesus had when he said, "I am the hungry, the naked, the lonely," will be in the emotional consciousness of all holy men in the coming days.³⁵⁰

What we need now is not someone transcendent who will "pour out his soul" and beg us to be "God-fearing, God loving, and God-serving" individuals, but rather the acceptance of and support for the "plain" human being that the Social Gospel called for.³⁵¹

"[T]o study lived religion," Robert Orsi wrote, "entails a fundamental rethinking of what religion is and of what it means to be 'religious.'"³⁵² The acolytes taught me not only of rituals and routines but also many intangible lessons of love, courage, and boyhood. They taught me what it was like to be a player on a team that's not a team, how to be vulnerable in the face of masculine pride, and why we must stand for and preserve what others may neglect. In the very place that they found sanctuary, the acolytes also found their faith in fellow men and the strength to persevere. It is here in the sacristy among all sinners and saints, the lowly and the prideful, that we are reminded of the simple purpose of religion, so much so that it evades and mystifies us even as we stare directly at its face.

³⁵⁰ *ibid.*

³⁵¹ *Ganson Goodyear Depew: 1895-1924.*

³⁵² Orsi, "The Madonna of 115th," in *Lived Religion in America*, 7.

Looking Homeward

Walking through the hallways of the Cluett Building is like running over the grooves of an old record. The notes of ages past are unlocked as the needle glides along its path, releasing songs that are finally able to escape into the open and be heard. The sound grows louder and louder as the tip glides along the slick vinyl surface, reaching its mid-day crescendo of shrill metal bells and emphatic male voices, then falling in accord with the setting sun over the western hillside. Though the noise may swell and shrink, sometimes a peaceful harmony and at others a cacophonous roar, the record continues its rotation, its pin in place. As long as there is life in Cluett's halls and grooves still untraveled, it will never stop or stammer. Though I sense the tempo has slowed and the beat not quite the same, the rhythm of religion at Trinity-Pawling is one that can certainly still be felt. It resonates throughout the School, producing myths, generating traditions, and influencing the vernacular.

Some say that "Fools rush in / Where angels fear to tread."³⁵³ The jarring image of Matt Dann shoveling the remains of the Trinity School Chapel into the earth like a gravedigger certainly comes to mind; so, too, does his later scheme at Trinity-Pawling to help the school start anew by destroying its ornate marble plaques that once marked graduates from its pre-war years, burying the remnants deep into the umber ground beneath him.³⁵⁴ These "fools" remind us that "[h]umanity always crowds the audience room when God holds court:"³⁵⁵ that is, they bring to the fore the fact that we alone are charged with enacting religion and defining what falls under its purview. They also remind us that faith is a living thing, and though its sound is sometimes faint, it still soldiers on unrestrained, silent but strong.

³⁵³ "Fools Rush In" (1940) is a song first sung by Tony Martin.

³⁵⁴ Dann was reportedly adamant that Pawling's history began upon the formation of its partnership with the Trinity School in 1947. Troupe Noonan, *Pride of Fighting Gentlemen: Trinity-Pawling at 100* (Chapel Hill, NC: Heritage Histories, 2006).

³⁵⁵ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 48.

In the course of my research, I have learned that even Dann's mighty metal shovel can't push back the all-pervasive force of fate. Rumor has it that pieces from Dann's demolition site still appear on the lawn of the Quad behind Cluett, stumbling into the pockets of unsuspecting scavengers on their way to class.³⁵⁶ In that moment, as he scrapes the dirt off its surface and rolls its chipped sides between his fingers, the discoverer "identifies himself with" Trinity-Pawling's "life; he appropriates its past histories and memories, its experiences and hopes, and absorbs its spirit and faith."³⁵⁷ These small slabs dirtied by time and muck are emblematic of those invisible ties that tether Pawling boys to their community, their "brotherhood," and their School's storied history. They are artifacts of antiquity that help us to remember that not all history lies securely in the archives, untouched by the present moment: sometimes it, too, manages to escape and embed itself in us all the same.

This chapter attempts to trace the lineage of several of Trinity-Pawling's modern habits back to their religious roots, fools be damned. Like the trustees who duly chart her course, we, too, must ask of the School what it is that she today strives to achieve. The theology on which Cluett's cornerstone was laid has lost its luster, and Gamage, as impassioned as he once was, has long been buried. In following pages, I will explore some of the ways in which the School makes its religious traditions compatible with its contemporary culture and in doing so is able to carefully craft its modern identity. I will also consider some of the nuances and complexities involved in exploring religion at the present moment and attempt to delineate between what can be legitimately embraced as having religious value and what ought to be rejected as insignificant. My objective is to bring to light some of the parallels and discordances that I've uncovered, many of which are complicated and at best inexact. I will ultimately suggest that while its shape may shift and its form may have changed, faith as Gamage once knew it has

³⁵⁶ Troupe Noonan, *Pride of Fighting Gentlemen: Trinity-Pawling at 100* (Chapel Hill, NC: Heritage Histories, 2006).

³⁵⁷ Walter Rauschenbusch used this same quote to reference the power of communities in generating and sustaining faith. Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 127.

nevertheless prevailed, having lay just beneath the surface in spite of us having trampled on it in the interim.

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One need only take a short stroll from Cluett's imposing lobby - where on this late winter day, a fire crackles - before coming upon Father Keating's small but charming office.³⁵⁸ His standard issue oak door is covered with quotes and other artifacts clipped from objects of everyday life. The emblem of The Phoenix, the school newspaper of which he is the faculty advisor, sits next to carefully cut photographs of boys past and present; a Peanuts cartoon, its paper yellowed and its corners curled, lies adjacent to a careful etching of a Benedictine monk; and a blue plastic envelope labeled "Prayer Requests" sits atop a computer print-out of the R&B artist, Snoop Dogg, under which there is the label, "DADDY K'S CRIB."

Lit by the glow of a small lamp in lieu of the harsh glare of the fluorescent lights above, the inside of Father Keating's office is much the same, his walls and bookshelves blanketed with small frames and posters. *Religion for Dummies* sits comfortably next to a Trinity-Pawling cap with an icon of two tennis rackets in between; *Dirt, Greed & Sex*, a novel about sexual ethics in the New Testament, is not far from *Paradise Lost* and countless other titles spanning a diverse array of subjects. There's a bulletin board that has been hung carefully above his dark cherry desk and that is filled with a mixture of all things sacred and profane: a dream catcher hung with blue and gold pushpins, a bumper sticker - "PADDLE FASTER: I Hear Banjo Music," - and a small crescent moon underneath which a few silver chimes tinkle as the heat dashes out from the vent below. Each coexists peacefully with their counterpart - an icon of the crucifix here, a postcard from a cathedral there, both next to Abraham Lincoln and Charlie Brown.

³⁵⁸ Cluett is the main (and also the first) building on campus. It houses the library, the admissions department, and administration offices on the first floor; dormitories on the second and third; and study hall on the fourth.

The street sign that reads, “Cops Are Everywhere,” the Georgia license plate adorned with the name “MY POPS,” the photograph of an advert for “Realistic Taxidermy”: these are not simply tokens of the Chaplain’s character, arranged arbitrarily above his desk. They are the subject of sermons, themes that will carry the students and faculty through the year. These material objects, some of which the boys themselves may own or are intimately familiar with, stand for something else entirely when spoken about by the Chaplain during morning Chapel. The spiritual significance of these things will make itself known in one way or another as the students sit in their pews and as some attempt to locate the common thread that cracks the code. They are meant to unfurl gradually but not without effort, each revealing its sacred message in due time as the boys move through their days and find where each relic has its place.

Thus it is the case that what at first glance seems to be simply an eclectic mix of artifacts from an even more eclectic personality is in fact a near-perfect representation of the chaplaincy under Father Keating. Thomas Keating is every bit the enigma that his office suggests and yet is as warm and devoted as a dear friend. In addition to his role as the School’s Chaplain and his faculty appointments in Philosophy, Religion, and English, he is the quiet confidant of many. In a culture that seems to emphasize masculine strength and virility, Father Keating provides a place on which one’s imperfections can rest easily. Here, among a scattering of both the contemporary and the arcane, you can be vulnerable; here, you can ponder it all and be still.

Today, Father Keating dons a pressed white shirt, a navy blue blazer, and his trademark bowtie. He has stepped out into the hallway to speak with another faculty member, David Avery, whose voice he lets tower over his own. As I set my bag down on the couch and flip through the pages of my yellow Steno pad, his silver-gray westie, Cleveland, jumps up to greet me. I pause to take a deep breath in. The warm, dry air is a welcome reprieve from the scene outside Keating’s window, where boys bundled up in heavy overcoats are trodding and crunching reluctantly

through the wet snow. Their footsteps are like the pause before the leap, a slowed heartbeat that is patiently waiting for the distant thaw; without them, nothing sounds, nothing stirs, nothing sings. Winter's lacerating winds have stripped the last leaves from the trees, leaving them barren and quiet. Every so often a squall comes through that sends snow flying and boys shivering; I button up my cardigan and hug Cleveland close as it does.

Father Keating has taken a seat opposite me in his leather wingback chair, his fingers wrapped snugly around an Indianapolis Motorway mug that's filled with piping black coffee. I'm still getting my sea legs as I try clumsily to pick up where we last left off. I glance at my notes but to no avail; my mind is stuck, rendered immobile in a translucent fog. I pick wantingly at the threads of this morning's chapel talk by the School's head prefect but my thoughts are like the sound of a skipped disk, endlessly repeating around the same random snippet on which its needle has decided to land.

Embarrassed, I can remember only the final sentence. "*Do well today!*," he confidently proclaimed to the congregation. I remark to Father Keating that I find it fascinating that nearly all of the students that I've seen step up to the lectern end their talks with this declaration, which also happens to be the same way that the Chaplain ends his.³⁵⁹ The faculty, too, have perhaps unintentionally picked up on Keating's popular one-liner. Step outside and a faculty member will be sure to ask how you're doing: respond that you are "doing good" rather than "doing well" and your English will undoubtedly be corrected. While at first the habit appears to be merely a grammatical one, I will soon discover that its origin and underlying lessons are considerably more elusive.

³⁵⁹ Father Keating agrees, stating that "it's remarkable the number of boys who end their chapel talks with 'Do well today.'" Keating, interview by the author.

Father Keating speaks up in his quiet Georgia drawl and admits that his closing sentiments are “very intentional” and something that he has “consciously decided to say in [his] chapel talks.”

Over those first couple of years as I was learning how to preach and how to occupy this pulpit, I came upon this idea that there should be a sign off, something that people can identify with on all levels other than, "Oh, thank God he's done!" to "Wow, that's a part of me now." From my day one here I've wanted to make sure that, as an Episcopal School, the way that we express our faith is by doing the best we can, by doing *well*.³⁶⁰ It's dangerous to think that we're 'doing good'...it's only in doing *well*, in the adverbial sense, that we can approach God.³⁶¹

Keating claims that to confuse “doing good” with “doing well” would be more than just a sin against syntax: it would be “dangerous” and would “put our souls in jeopardy” theologically. In a voice that is uncharacteristically stern, he continues, explaining: “If we [believe we are] do[ing] good, it means that we figured out what the moral thing to do is - [we've] become someone who defines himself as *'good.'* And theologically,” he maintains, “no one is good but God alone.” He continues by theorizing that boys who end their chapel talks with “Do well today” recognize “what we do here” in the Chapel, “so they're willing to say it.” By Father Keating's logic, the best way for Pawling men to express their faith is perhaps not by wearing it on their proverbial shirtsleeves but rather, as the school's Alma Mater suggests, through “earnest striving.”³⁶² “Our realm,” he explains, “really isn't *goodness*; our realm is *action*.”³⁶³

³⁶⁰ “I'm quoting someone, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Bishop Sheldon, who was asked to sum up what the Episcopal Church is all about, and he said, 'We're all about doing well and rejoicing.' And the implication is that if you do *well*, then you are able to rejoice.” Gilbert Sheldon's (1598-1677) theology for the Church aligns closely to what Keating describes. Known for encouraging his congregation to “Do well and rejoice,” Sheldon is quoted as having said: “Let it be your principal care to become honest men, and afterwards be as devout and religious as you will. No piety will be of any advantage to yourselves or anybody else, unless you are honest moral men.” Vernon Staley, *The Life and Times of Gilbert Sheldon* (London, England: Wells, Gardner, and Darton, 1913), 194, accessed February 19, 2016, https://archive.org/stream/lifetimesofgilbe00staluoft/lifetimesofgilbe00staluoft_djvu.txt.

³⁶¹ Keating, interview by the author.

³⁶² *Trinity-Pawling Student Handbook* (Pawling, NY: Trinity-Pawling School, 2010), accessed February 19, 2016, https://www.trinitypawling.org/uploaded/documents/Student/TP_Student_Handbook.pdf.

³⁶³ Keating, interview by the author.

This philosophy of worldly effort as a means of approaching God is reminiscent of the core tenets of Muscular Christianity, which advocated for “manly exertion” within the context of a “Christian commitment to health and manliness.”³⁶⁴ Influencers in the post-Depression era such as Theodore Roosevelt called for “physical and moral courage” to conquer the squalor of the city, the social issues of the day and the aftermath of the Great War.³⁶⁵ Roosevelt patently linked effort not only to nationhood but to the spirit of Christianity that the Social Gospel had brought to the fore,³⁶⁶ contending that men must “not only be good but strong[;] not only high-minded but brave hearted.” While the institutional church was still of value, the “problems with which [the] nation...now confronted” demanded a society that was firmly grounded in reality and courageous enough to bear its burdens.³⁶⁷ Roosevelt argued that while “[w]e must think loftily,...we must also work hard.” Men must be faithful but pragmatic; they must aspire to be “good” theologically “but strong” mentally and physically. The progress and change that Roosevelt fought tirelessly to achieve could not be fostered from a church pew: rather, it was sincere, tangible effort that was regarded as being necessary to growing and sustaining a formidable country.

Strength, effort, and Christian piety were all believed to be key in funneling the untamed energies of youth into a robust national pride, poised to be triumphant over whatever strife may come ahead - military or otherwise. As one sits in All Saints’ Chapel and walks through Cluett’s hallowed halls, it becomes apparent that an aura of Roosevelt’s ideology still lingers today at

³⁶⁴ Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports*, 11.

³⁶⁵ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life: Essays and Addresses* (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2009), 73, accessed February 19, 2016, <https://books.google.com/>.

³⁶⁶ While certainly cast from similar molds, the objectives of the Social Gospel and Muscular Christianity were not necessarily the same. The Social Gospel Movement intended to address and embrace the moral and ethical quandaries that accompanied progressive issues of the early 20th century; Muscular Christians, fully conscious of the sheer number of immigrants flooding into their treasured homeland, sought to exert the nation’s strength through discipline and “Christian character.” Whereas the former ventured to lessen the divisions between socioeconomic classes, the latter, of which Theodore Roosevelt was a staunch proponent, endeavored to assert moral superiority so as to insure their triumph over those who had been (and would remain) sequestered to the margins.

³⁶⁷ *ibid.* 73.

Pawling, where to do *well* has become a means of pulling oneself up by their own bootstraps, to toil in the face of adversity, to overcome and to transcend. The School appears to have heeded Roosevelt's warning that "no man can afford to let himself be carried," nor was it worth their "while to try thus to carry some one else."³⁶⁸ His emphasis on tenacity, perseverance, and faith is central to Trinity-Pawling's modern narrative, which today promotes the conviction that effort "is the foundation on which all achievement ultimately rests."³⁶⁹

The reality that Trinity-Pawling endeavors to sustain is comparable to the one that Roosevelt once sought to cultivate, wherein success or failure is considered as being "entirely dependent on [one's] character and [their] willingness to persevere."³⁷⁰ This approach is most clearly manifested in the Effort System, the jewel in the School's crown, "the heart of Trinity-Pawling"³⁷¹ and an important basis on which the student body's performance is measured. Within this system, boys are continuously scored by a panel of faculty on their levels of effort in all aspects of school life, including academics, dormitory life, attendance, athletics, and student activities.³⁷² The scores range from one to five, with one carrying the most privileges and the highest level of autonomy. On a pedagogical level, it instills accountability and makes clear the "direct connection between persistence and achievement."³⁷³ On a theological level, it is

³⁶⁸ *ibid.* 149.

³⁶⁹ "History and Mission," Trinity-Pawling School, accessed February 19, 2016, <http://www.trinitypawling.org/page.cfm?p=9>.

³⁷⁰ *Headmaster Search Profile* (Pawling, NY: Trinity-Pawling School, n.d.), 2, accessed February 19, 2016, https://www.trinitypawling.org/uploaded/Headmaster_Search/Headmaster_Search_Profile.pdf.

³⁷¹ "The Effort System, The Heart of Trinity-Pawling," Trinity-Pawling School, accessed February 19, 2016, <http://www.trinitypawling.org/page.cfm?p=3017>.

³⁷² *Effort and Academics* (Pawling, NY: Trinity-Pawling School, n.d.), accessed February 19, 2016, http://www.trinitypawling.org/uploaded/documents/Published_Articles/Effort_and_Academics.pdf.

³⁷³ *Headmaster Search Profile*, 2.

Muscular Christianity at its most muscular,³⁷⁴ a system through which boys' determination and faith in the School are measured and their motivation to "do well" is quantified.

Dr. Gamage is quoted as having once said that "Over time, effort inevitably yields achievement. The only time a boy truly fails is when he fails to try."³⁷⁵ Knowledge of whether this quote is indeed an accurate one or the context in which it was stated now lies beyond us, buried deep in a treasure trove of history long lost. That said, the mere fact that it has remained in the School's vernacular to this day alone lends it significance. Today, Trinity-Pawling's website, handbook, and marketing all duly tout its prominence. Gamage's quote has become lodged in its invented history, a proud reflection of his founding values that the institution now seeks to actualize.

I'm greeted by Mary Harris, a member of the Admissions Department, almost immediately after stepping out of Father Keating's office. The small golden cross that dangles loosely around her turtleneck thrusts forward as she stops to greet me in the middle of the busy hallway. Mary has silky blond hair that is pulled back tightly with a rose-colored headband to form a bob; her accent is decidedly Northeastern, accentuated by her habit of elongating vowels ever so slightly and speaking in a tone of voice that is exact and to-the-point. Together we walk the short distance back to Admissions, stopping by the Faculty Room so that she can pick up a Manila folder or two before we reach our destination.

She starts with the School's official statement on religion as we sit down and get acquainted. Mary's word choice is careful despite the directness and speed with which she

³⁷⁴ The Effort System was reportedly installed in the 1970s and "is based on a rubric brought by then-Headmaster Phillips Smith from his time at the University School of Milwaukee." While there is little evidence to prove otherwise, I find it difficult to believe that Gamage did not influence the Effort System; perhaps a similar system was in place with P. Smith was installed in 1973. Tom Keating also speculated whether it was "left over" from Muscular Christianity: "[The Effort System is] in conversation both theologically and pedagogically. [It's] an interesting way to think about what we've inherited from Gamage and his theology and the charter and the conception of the school." *Headmaster Search Profile*, 2. Keating, interview by the author.

³⁷⁵ *Headmaster Search Profile*, 4.

speaks; she trumpets the School's qualities, programs, and traditions not unlike a politician in the process of laying out a ten-point plan. Mary chooses the Chapel by way of a beginning, describing it as having "evolv[ed]" from having once played a central role in the School's history to now a mere symbol of "tradition."³⁷⁶

The Chapel is presented as a traditional part of the School from the founding, day one, and its evolution has had a place in the School for the past hundred years. Religion [has become] an important part of the tradition here - I think we were founded on it. I like the fact that...it promotes understanding, tolerance, and information, but I also like that it's still the traditional place where we gather.³⁷⁷

"Nobody's forcing [students] to go to *Church* anymore," Mary would say sorely, as if repeating the line for the thousandth time; "we're forcing them to go to Chapel for a *meeting*." Another faculty member described the Chapel similarly, stating: "We all have to be on deck at some point, so it might as well be [in the] Chapel;...that's where Trinity-Pawling begins its day. It's that simple: that's where this community starts."³⁷⁸ Several others echoed these sentiments in other interviews, underscoring in one way or another the role of All Saints' Chapel as the "universally recogniz[able]...meeting place [of the] community."³⁷⁹ Whereas "some schools have assemblies," as one English teacher explained, Trinity-Pawling instead has morning Chapel.³⁸⁰ Another claimed that it didn't matter whether its content is still religious in nature, as "just being in that *room*," he said in his booming voice, the "things that are being said are going to get into your brain...[just] through osmosis alone."³⁸¹

³⁷⁶ "Chapel" is used interchangeably by faculty and students to refer to both a physical location on campus and to Trinity-Pawling's Episcopal practices (e.g. morning prayer).

³⁷⁷ Harris, interview by the author.

³⁷⁸ Jackson, interview by the author.

³⁷⁹ Avery, interview by the author.

³⁸⁰ Johnson, interview by the author.

³⁸¹ Jackson, interview by the author.

Father Keating postulated that Gamage may have been the first to predict the Chapel's evolution from that of a sacred space to one of institutional assembly, referencing the fact that the Social Gospel advocated for good character and high moral standards above all else, believing that the rest would follow in due time.³⁸² Keating argued that it comes as no surprise that the School is “more comfortable with the virtue side than we are the faith side” of its motto, *Fides et Virtus*.³⁸³

I'll give Gamage credit for this: He knew that we always fall short of the [faith] side, so he throws it in [the School's motto] - like, 'lest we forget' almost. He *knows* that's where we're going to go;³⁸⁴ it's easier to go there... I can just hear him say it to his faculty, to his boys, 'Let's not forget the faith! We'll trample on it, and I may trample on it, too, but I'm going to force us to think about it.'³⁸⁵

The School certainly appears to support this interpretation - perhaps even more so than Gamage did himself - in that it now appears to bear its Episcopal history with but a trace of muddled pride, a nebulous reflection of what once was. An example of this can be found inscribed on the rear flap of its 2015 Admissions Brochure, which proclaims: “Traditions matter to us. Most days begin with a 20-minute Chapel meeting and end with sit-down dinner.”³⁸⁶ The inclusion of time here is likely a reference to the “trampling” that Keating suggested earlier, in that the service is justifiable in part because it's a “tradition” and in part due to its short duration. Note also how Trinity-Pawling's religious identity is juxtaposed with the image of a shared meal, during which time boys gather together in a shared space and around a common purpose, recounting stories

³⁸² “The social gospel seeks to...create a more sensitive and more modern conscience.” Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 5-6.

³⁸³ Keating, interview by the author.

³⁸⁴ That is, religion as a means of cultivating practical values in *juxtaposition* to its devotional aspects.

³⁸⁵ Keating, interview by the author.

³⁸⁶ *Trinity-Pawling Admissions Brochure* (Pawling, NY: Trinity-Pawling School, 2015), 24, accessed February 19, 2016, https://issuu.com/trinity-pawling/docs/tp_admissions_e-brochure.

of old as one once did before the hearth. This relegates the “Chapel meeting” to the realm of secular ritual which does more to nourish the community than it does the soul.

The School’s present reality appears to be one of convenient nostalgia, or, alternatively, of selective memory. While Trinity-Pawling’s formal values - Tradition, Integrity, and Community - do reference the School’s “Episcopal foundation,” they do so only briefly:³⁸⁷ such traditions are described instead as a means of instilling “intellectual growth, hard work,... and a healthy lifestyle.” And while the Effort System is exhibited proudly, its forefather is notably absent: Gamage is mentioned on Trinity-Pawling’s website only in passing as the “widely respected Headmaster of St. Paul’s School,” whose vision was “to create a new institution that embodied his...philosophy...that effort...is the foundation on which all achievement ultimately rests.”^{388, 389} Pawling’s popular history - that is, what was repeated to me orally and that which can be found online - excludes the fact that the School was founded by an ardent worshiper who later became a minister and the institution’s Chaplain. His effort-laden vision, while perhaps accurate, is suspiciously modern and excludes much of what Gamage was reported to have believed.

Conversely, one could conceive of an alternate history in which the Effort System is hailed not only as the crowning achievement of its founder’s reputed mission but also of his theology and that of his contemporaries.³⁹⁰ If the School chose to embrace its religious heritage

³⁸⁷ "History and Mission," Trinity-Pawling School.

³⁸⁸ In the official history of the School, *A Pride of Fighting Gentlemen: Trinity-Pawling at 100*, the details of Dr. Gamage’s religiosity and his battle with Bishop Burgess - a testament to his Muscular Christian ethos - are both left blank.

³⁸⁹ And yet, this belief that effort invariably leads to achievement has proved true time and time again. Gamage faced countless obstacles - the Great Depression and two World Wars come to mind - and even so, Pawling persevered. This “against all odds” story may have its roots in the celebrated narrative of the Battle of Thermopylae, in which only 300 Spartans defended Thermopylae against - and ultimately outfought - millions of Persians.

³⁹⁰ An example of a similar ideology can perhaps be found in the history of Avon Old Farms School, a short drive away from Pawling in Avon, Connecticut. Its founder, Theodate Pope Riddle, the country’s first female architect, “employed architecture to foster the ideal of commitment to community, in order to instill a sense of public and private responsibility to the boys.” She also emphasized “the importance of physicality and close contact with Nature, as a way to develop the boys’ physical strength,” and “sought to restore prestige to...craftsmanship, in order to inculcate appreciation for hard work, the lower classes, and individuality in the boys.” It appears that it would be appropriate to link these sentiments to the Social Gospel (“appreciation for...the lower classes”) as well as to Muscular Christianity,

rather than obscure it, it could claim that their ethos of physical and mental exertion is one that is in conversation with boys' faith and spirituality in general, including popular new age movements such as mindfulness and social responsibility (read: Christian charity.) Age-old themes such as kindness, chivalry, justice, and charity could again be revitalized to answer the ever-pressing demands of modernity and to rebuke harmful stereotypes of manhood and masculinity.³⁹¹ While the tide that carried in the Social Gospel and its counterparts has now receded, the Chapel itself still stands as a continual reminder of one of the most central pillars of the human condition, namely: "Love thy neighbor as thyself."³⁹²

These stories needn't be left unwritten; in fact, many have already been started. Take, for example, the hackneyed language of spiritual transcendence that now pervades Trinity-Pawling's culture. The Admissions Department proudly calls on prospective students to join "300 brothers strong" and to become members of its "brotherhood."³⁹³ Here, faith manifests itself through the trust and courage that one places in himself and in his peers. Effort is described as their "mantra," their "ethos" and "inspiration"³⁹⁴ - it enlivens Pawling boys like the Holy Spirit and spurs them on to achieve and excel. It is described simply and powerfully as "the basis of transformation."³⁹⁵ One could still venture to claim that what is now referred to as "that

given that the school was founded in the midst of the aforementioned movements and in light of the fact that Riddle herself articulated these ideals. Note also the emphasis on effort and "hard work," similar to the ethos of effort that Gamage once articulated. Nadia M. Niggli, "The 'Gendering' of Architecture" (master's thesis, Yale College, 1995), 5-6, accessed February 19, 2016, http://www.avonoldfarms.com/uploaded/images/about-us/Theodate_Pope_Riddle_Gendering.pdf.

³⁹¹ A press kit for *The Mask You Live In*, a documentary about masculinity in 21st century America, gives the examples of physical force, sexual conquest, and the pressure of economic success. The film calls for institutions like Trinity-Pawling to "model a healthier form of masculinity" by helping "boys connect their hearts to their heads so they can find the courage and conviction to stay true to themselves." The Chapel could certainly be framed as a means to do exactly this and thus help engender a positive representation and expansion of what it means to 'be a man.' This topic will be expanded upon in the conclusion. The Representation Project, "'The Mask You Live In' Press Kit," news release, 4, accessed February 19, 2016, <http://therepresentationproject.org/wp-content/uploads/Mask-Press-Kit1.pdf>.

³⁹² Mark 12:31

³⁹³ "Admissions - Why Trinity-Pawling?," Trinity-Pawling School, accessed February 19, 2016, <http://www.trinitypawling.org/page.cfm?p=20>.

³⁹⁴ *Trinity-Pawling Admissions Brochure*, 9.

³⁹⁵ *Headmaster Search Profile*, 2.

spark of greatness you've been carrying around inside you"³⁹⁶ by the Admissions Office was perhaps once known as the Light of Christ³⁹⁷ or the Spirit of God. Trinity-Pawling's aim to guide boys in "discovering how [they] will shine and contribute to the world around [them]"³⁹⁸ is noticeably similar to Jesus's Sermon on the Mount, wherein Jesus exalts his followers to "let [their] light shine before others, [so] that they may see [their] good deeds."³⁹⁹

Yet in spite of all of their references and intimations, the School still appears to turn a blind eye to the Chapel's potential, even as its stories are spied anew as the acolytes fumble in their pockets for her rusty old keys. Back in Mary's office, we discuss the many purposes of the Admissions Department, one of which is to tell its prospects about that which will attract them to enroll - that is, to tell people what they want to hear. "We have," she says timidly, "been asked by non-Christians in the past to *lie*" - the word barely escapes from her lips, as if wary of its potential to pollute the air around her - "to family members" about the School's religion.⁴⁰⁰ She takes a noticeable and uncharacteristic pause before she continues. The words linger like the crude aroma of the room's oil heat that has kicked on below us, stirring up a gentle rumble-tumble beneath our feet. We both flinch a little when the Admissions Director, an older gentleman with thick, rounded glasses and a balding head, cuts in through the side door. He excuses the interruption under his breath as he sifts through a white and brown Banker's Box and scuffs across the carpeted floor. After pulling a file and taking a few cards from the Rolodex, he leaves, his head halfway through the doorframe as his right hand waves us goodbye. Mary gets up quietly and shuts the door behind him.

³⁹⁶ "Admissions - Why Trinity-Pawling?," Trinity-Pawling School.

³⁹⁷ John 8:12: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (NKJV)

³⁹⁸ "Admissions - Why Trinity-Pawling?," Trinity-Pawling School.

³⁹⁹ John 8:12

⁴⁰⁰ Harris, interview by the author.

Reading from the dog-eared pages of her mind's eye, Mary calls up a recent conversation with one applicant's family.

[A parent] said to us, "My husband's going to come visit and tour on Saturday - could you just tell him that the only reason you still have a chapel on campus is that you don't have enough money to tear it down? Because otherwise, he's gonna love this place!" And we said, "No, we can't do that." So it is as much an asset to the admissions office as it is a deficit... [The chapel is] something we never hide, and that we display proudly as part of our heritage at the school. [Later, she adds:] It's tradition. We are, in fact, a very traditional, very structured, very...our tradition is *just traditional*.

These comments may serve a practical purpose in a time during which America's religious landscape is rapidly changing.⁴⁰¹ If Matt Dann and his successors, Headmasters Phillips Smith and Arch Smith, were, as Tom Keating believes, "charged by the board to" help the School "survive,"⁴⁰² then the separation between "Church and State" that Mary describes was perhaps demanded not only out of shifting cultural attitudes but out of utter necessity. Indeed, it is only over the past several decades that the School has found its financial footing and has been able to begin to assert solvency.⁴⁰³ The ecumenical classification of the Chapel as "traditional"⁴⁰⁴ may in part be a marketing ploy meant to give merit to what could otherwise be perceived as outdated and thus could be viewed unfavorably in the eyes of prospective students. Today, the Chapel may be best described to the public as a space that excludes none and fosters inclusivity amidst many diverse religions. Thus, it may be the *absence* of theology in the faculty's

⁴⁰¹ According to a 2015 survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, "The Christian share of the U.S. population is declining, while the number of U.S. adults who do not identify with any organized religion is growing." Pew Research Center, *America's Changing Religious Landscape*, May 12, 2015, accessed February 19, 2016, <http://www.pewforum.org/files/2015/05/RLS-08-26-full-report.pdf>.

⁴⁰² Trinity-Pawling's endowment has never been particularly strong and has reportedly required exceptionally careful financial planning so as to insure the School's survival. At one point, for example, Trinity-Pawling was forced to admit girls in the mid-1970's or else once again risk closure. Noonan, *Pride of Fighting Gentlemen*.

⁴⁰³ *2012-2013 Annual Report* (Pawling, NY: Trinity-Pawling School, n.d.), http://www.trinitypawling.org/uploaded/documents/Publications/2012_2013_annual_report.pdf. See also Noonan, *Pride of Fighting Gentlemen*.

⁴⁰⁴ Harris, interview by the author.

description of the Chapel that is suggestive of what has ironically come to save it from ruination and obsolescence, and perhaps has even played a small role in saving the School, as well.

Mary attempts to justify the Chapel's presence (and thus make it an "asset" to the Admissions Office) by claiming that "religion [is] now treated as an academic curriculum area" not unlike other areas of the School. She explains that morning services act as a means of "further edification of the students, similar as it is for our math students who want to go to Columbia for a higher level course or our science students who join the robotics club for higher level attainment of information." This, she argues, permits the School to "ride the rail of the separation of Church and State." This attitude is also echoed in a February 2013 article about the School in which Kim DeFonce, a Trinity-Pawling administrator who also works in Admissions, stated that "while it's an Episcopalian school, 'we're not like a traditional parochial school...[we] sort of throw the old cliché of a 'religious school' out the window... The church part is really about building a community."⁴⁰⁵

The Chapel's strictly functional role on campus was touted by a number of the faculty members who, like DeFonce, claimed that it is simply the place where the community begins its day and "where [they] start the show."⁴⁰⁶ They also contended that like many of the School's practices, morning chapel services also help to establish rhythms and time-tables.⁴⁰⁷ Boys must be in their designated pews by 8am or else a "cut" will be recorded that will be viewed unfavorably when the next set of Effort Ratings are calculated and released. "We all need to be ready at the same time several times throughout the day," one dean said. "Ready for church, ready for school, ready for sports, ready for dinner, ready for bed.... Whether you want to hear

⁴⁰⁵ Dale McKnight, "Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling," *Hudson Valley Magazine*, February 2013, accessed February 19, 2016, <http://www.hvmag.com/Hudson-Valley-Magazine/February-2013/Trinity-Pawling-School-Pawling/>.

⁴⁰⁶ Jackson, interview by the author.

⁴⁰⁷ For example: Sit-down meals which occur every night during the week; sit-down lunches which occur every Wednesday; and required athletics that begin promptly after classes 6-days a week. Attendance is taken at each of these events.

the spiritual message or not, that's sort of independent.”⁴⁰⁸ According to another teacher interviewed, the Chapel affords the faculty “time for appropriate protocol” where students are taught “to put [their] butt on the chair and learn how to be respectful in the same way that you’d learn how to be respectful for dinner with Nana.”⁴⁰⁹ In her view, the boys “could be in a bus station, for all they know,” and thus daily services provide her with the means of reminding them of how to be reverent and behave appropriately.

“There’s not often a lot of attention being paid,”⁴¹⁰ one dean reported.⁴¹¹ “Across the spectrum, I don’t think people are terribly religious nowadays.”⁴¹² His colleague, the teacher quoted above, appears to agree: “We have an amazing group of students, but [their] spiritual life has been overlooked entirely.” Is it time, then, as Mary’s guest proposed, that the Chapel be torn down, its timbers taken back piece by piece from whence they came? As is the case with other school rituals, the Chapel is dependent on the force of repeated practice - but when that practice is markedly different from what it once was, at times far from the grounds for which it was first intended, what justifies its continued existence?

Tom Keating begs to differ. He claims that Mary’s description does not accurately depict the official stance of the School, at least in theory. “Admissions is doing its ‘own thing’ there with that language,” he says.⁴¹³ “It certainly seems at odds with what [the Headmaster] considers it... I think that [the Headmaster] would want it to be ‘marketed’...as part of...what helps define who we are: as a community, we say that we place value on the spiritual life.” He speculates that

⁴⁰⁸ Jackson, interview by the author.

⁴⁰⁹ She described on one occasion going “up to the senior section” of the Chapel, taking “a quick right,” and having “a quiet tirade” that “scared a few people up there just goofing off.” Johnson, interview by the author.

⁴¹⁰ This was mentioned in another interview as well: “Most people - students and faculty - aren't paying attention. They don't want to be there.” Carolyn Emmett, interview by the author, Trinity-Pawling, Pawling, NY, September 19, 2014.

⁴¹¹ Avery, interview by the author.

⁴¹² As the Pew Survey cited earlier (*America's Changing Religious Landscape*) demonstrated, he might be right, though it depends on how one defines what it means to be “religious.”

⁴¹³ Keating, interview by the author.

Mary's presentation of the Chapel as merely a "curriculum area" reflects discomfort⁴¹⁴ on the part of the Admissions Department to discuss organized religion to a population that is increasingly secular (or at least distrustful of the institution of the Church.)

Father Keating himself admitted that the actual religious content of services "can go right over the top of people's heads, which," he conceded, "is fine."⁴¹⁵

I certainly think that [the spiritual message of the Chapel] has an effect. I'm not sure how immediate it is, or how lasting it is if it is immediate, but I think that it certainly has a cumulative effect. I hold to that belief pretty firmly, in that Old Boys [graduates] will say that Chapel was important to them, or old boys take their families to Church... To me, it's such a long, long process.

Keating's comments also encourage us to consider the School's historically tumultuous relationship with institutional religion. Recall that Dr. Gamage left St. Paul's over "disputes"⁴¹⁶ with Bishop Burgess, the man who was representative of the institution of the Church and who himself preferred the conventional customs of Christianity as opposed to the new mode of the Social Gospel.⁴¹⁷ While it's impossible find out for certain, this antagonistic relationship may suggest Gamage's need to have full control over the doctrine that he intended to preach and the way in which religion manifested itself on campus. Assuming that this spirit of ecclesiastical self-governance remains today at Trinity-Pawling, the opinions of the Admissions Office may reinforce this age-old antagonism and thus continue to keep the Church at a distance.

I ask Father Keating where he finds the patience for this "long process" that spans time and tests faith. He glances up toward the heavens and turns back to me with a wry smile and

⁴¹⁴ "I guess that admissions doesn't want to talk about [the spiritual life of the School] because it's uncomfortable, so they come in at stage two...they make it a curricular area."

⁴¹⁵ Keating, interview by the author.

⁴¹⁶ "All Teachers Quit St. Paul's."

⁴¹⁷ *Calling a Bishop Coadjutor*, 12.

says, quietly, “Maybe it's a false sense of security that God's time is something we need not worry about.”

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Walter Rauschenbusch wrote: “Our universe is not a despotic monarchy, with God above the starry canopy and ourselves down here; it is a spiritual commonwealth with God in the midst of us.”⁴¹⁸ I’ve spent many an hour contemplating those very stars as they flicker and glisten under the fall of night, marveling at their inexpressible beauty and at the elusive wonder of it all. If God really is “in the midst of us,” where exactly should we look to find Him? It would be an untruth if I claimed to not have doubted Rauschenbusch as I sat in Pawling and listened to the Chapel being described as “*just traditional*.”⁴¹⁹ Have we crossed the threshold at which “doing well” lets loose its sacred cloak and ceases to belong to its ancestral creed? Has the “religious nature” of the Chapel in fact been, as another dean stated, “strip[ped] away?”⁴²⁰ Perhaps the passage of time, ruthless and unforgiving, has confiscated the fabric of the Chapel’s religion, leaving it threadbare and with “tradition” as its only justification, its saving grace. One has to wonder whether the fate of Trinity-Pawling’s faith was interred with its founder’s in the churchyard when Gamage expired and Matt Dann, as secular as he was, survived.

Having been charged with the task of untangling Trinity-Pawling’s complicated religious identity, we can concede that All Saints’ Chapel is at the very least an important part of the School’s customs and a trademark of its “heritage.” While its official value cannot be plainly determined due to the limited scope of this study, it is evident that it is held widely nonetheless. We must keep in mind that to consign the Chapel purely to “tradition” or to function without further speculation is to ignore the complexities involved in reconciling the School’s religion

⁴¹⁸ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 49.

⁴¹⁹ Harris, interview by the author.

⁴²⁰ Jackson, interview by the author.

with its modern culture and its “ethos of effort.”⁴²¹ The fact that the Chapel continues to exist and be used is proof in and of itself that it acts a vehicle of Trinity-Pawling’s history, a symbol that, as French anthropologist Georges Balandier wrote, has, in some ways, “obliterat[ed] the transforming effect of time” through its continuous use.⁴²² The Chapel itself has been handed down in the same way that its lore continues to be passed from generation to generation. Just as stories of old can reveal countless untold truths, religion and its effects can still provide insight into that which now beats at the heart of Trinity-Pawling’s unvoiced values and identity.

The message of the Social Gospel teaches us that the Bible is no longer the sole means through which the theology of the Church is communicated. Rather, if we are to locate religion we must look instead to those individual and collective convictions that are eternal and have stood the test of time, and the people in whom they continue to live and breathe. These traditions ought to be viewed in the context of their history *as well as* in view of their present function. In doing so, it becomes possible to remember and reconstruct some semblance of the faith on which they were first built and to begin to identify their lasting impact.

As I have continually demonstrated in this chapter and in this project, we must recognize that in spite of some of the evidence that suggests otherwise, religion still manages to make itself known at Pawling, though not always in the form that one expects. I contend that religion endures through what Danièle Hervieu-Léger, a French sociologist, calls a “chain of memory.” Like all memories, it is kept in the shadows of our pockets and as such is perpetually hidden from plain view. It is a force which cannot be measured and is “impervious to definition,”⁴²³ and yet nevertheless still “makes its presence felt...throughout the gamut of human expression.”⁴²⁴

⁴²¹ "Trinity-Pawling School," Boarding School Review, accessed February 19, 2016, <http://www.boardingschoolreview.com/trinity-pawling-school-profile>.

⁴²² Quoted, Daniele Hervieu-Léger, *Religion as a Chain of Memory* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 84.

⁴²³ *ibid.* 31

⁴²⁴ *ibid.* 29

“All we can grasp,” Hervieu-Léger argues, are “carriers” of memory such as gestures and words, edifices and individuals, that invoke institutional values and codes of meaning.⁴²⁵ As such, it is our charge to look for the “covert signs of religion in every sphere of human activity.”⁴²⁶

Through this framework, “doing well,” the Effort System, and Chapel-as-meeting all adopt additional significance as components of the larger cultural framework of the School. Religion gives new relevance to these and other aspects of Trinity-Pawling’s rituals as it reconstructs Gamage’s founding principles and embeds them in the memories of future students.⁴²⁷ It is the system through which his customs and beliefs are remembered, and perhaps also those of Christianity. The Chapel itself preserves the teachings of a bygone era at their most basic level while also drawing from and incorporating themes such as effort, tradition, and community, all of which still permeate the School as they ceaselessly course through its sinewy veins. Whether its services today resemble those of its past is perhaps irrelevant, as to expect as such would be to ignore the powerful ways in which the lessons of Christianity have been absorbed into the School’s culture and the ways in which they have been able to adapt.

We must acknowledge that religion persists in many forms, many of which cannot be measured or even described. Some wear their faith on their sleeve, some in their heart, and others on small golden necklaces that sway gently with their every step. Some choose to bear it in the words that they use, the books that they keep, or the ephemera that they tack behind tiny push pins arranged neatly on their office walls. Others carry it on gilded crucifixes that reach high into the heavens under the “starry canopy”⁴²⁸ of night in spite of the apparent indifference of their peers. And of course, sometimes it is discarded or entirely forgotten, buried deeply in the soil beneath us only to be rediscovered and picked back up again by those of another

⁴²⁵ *ibid.* 31

⁴²⁶ *ibid.* 29

⁴²⁷ *ibid.* 3

⁴²⁸ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 49.

generation. Nevertheless, some brand of faith remains, hidden and frayed, its edges deckled but ever the same.

In the Amber of the Moment

“There was a child went forth every day,
And the first object he look'd upon, that object he became,
And that object became part of him for the day or a certain part of the day,
Or for many years or stretching cycles of years.”

- Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*

How much greater the grandeur is when we don't see it coming. It's been so long since we first saw the scene, heard the song, drew in the fragrance that we've forgotten - or thought we had - until it hits us. We haven't earned it; we haven't brought it about in any way. We have no way of assuring that there will be another moment given to us, and yet it's the most valuable thing that we have, this moment, with all the opportunity that it contains. When it comes we're taken by an awful surprise, because the plot was something we thought we'd forgotten, layered so deep that it feels nearly unconscious yet still somehow familiar. It draws us in and swallows us whole as we stumble into a world that is part fantasy, part reality, and therefore all reality. It's a world that is imperfectly perfect; a world that makes everything ordinary too beautiful to bear.

There are only a handful of these dreamlike moments that we are allowed to recall - the others are destined to be lost, caught in a haze that will never clear. This project called on us to remember some of the ways in which humanity has influenced Trinity-Pawling's identity and that of its Chapel. We began by briefly examining the experience of its founder, Dr. Frederick Gamage, and the series of events that led him to Pawling. We took note of the salvation that he and his School were offered several times over: first by Mr. Dutcher, then through the generosity of Mr. Cluett, and finally by the serendipitous if not flawed merger with the Trinity School of Manhattan in the 1940's. Ganson Depew introduced us to All Saints' Chapel and its unexplored legends, the most notable being those of its chancel window and missing murals. Through

Ganson we also learned of Gamage's character and perhaps even our own as we explored what was left of the movements that he and the School once stood behind.

These individuals taught us that there is much to be said about what we choose to preserve and how we go about keeping the past in - and sometimes from - the present. All Saints' Chapel enables us to glimpse into an alternate, almost utopian reality in which the Social Gospel still thrives and Ganson lives on. It is the living incarnation of Gamage's lost son, a method of extending that "little while" when Ganson "was [his] boy" and when "life [was] sweeter."⁴²⁹ Other New England boarding schools share a similar provenance, most notably Ethel Walker, Westover, and Avon Old Farms, all of which were founded by childless women who perhaps sought to compensate for the boys and girls that they themselves never bore.⁴³⁰ One scholar posited that Maria Bissell Hotchkiss, for example, the founder of the "eponymous" Connecticut boarding "school and widow of a developer of the machine gun, 'had established an elite school for boys in order to atone...for the many promising male lives that her husband's invention...had mowed down during the course of various wars.'"⁴³¹

In describing the Avon School, an institution that she had only recently founded, Theodate Pope Riddle would unwittingly capture the essence of Gamage's intentions and the exquisite charm of All Saints' Chapel.

It is a complete village, distant, secluded, still wholly apart from any settlement, one mile from a railway station...twelve miles from a sizable city. *But it is complete in all that should make a boys' life complete.* (emphasis mine)

⁴²⁹ *Ganson Goodyear Depew: 1895-1924*, 62-4.

⁴³⁰ Niggli, "The 'Gendering' of Architecture," 26. Theodate Pope Riddle, the founder of Avon Old Farms School, often referred to students as her "children." *ibid.* 25.

⁴³¹ *ibid.* See also Birmingham, "What Made Maria Do It?," in *Hotchkiss: A Chronicle of an American*, 20.

These places provide the “loose parts and possibilities”⁴³² that enable us to escape the passage of time, rapid and ruthless as it is, and instead pay tribute to those virtues that ought not be forgotten. While they are subject to the same tempestuous storms and squalls that afflict the outer world, these places provide a secluded harbor in which we can safely drop our anchor. It is their role, as Father Keating once said, to “offer a bit of an idealized life [and] to provide shelter;” these places “provide an alternate way of being.”⁴³³ In all their simplicity and seclusion, they make our “life complete.”⁴³⁴

But these refuges are hardly detached. On the contrary, this project continuously demonstrated that they are fated to concede to both ingress and egress. The Social Gospel established that theology, like all belief systems, must “adjust itself to its modern environment” and expand its scope if it is to survive and remain intact.⁴³⁵ Institutions themselves must also adapt if they are to escape the destiny of the now-decrepit sites where schools like St. Paul’s and Miss Bennett’s once stood. They must continue to evolve - sometimes at great expense - if they are to survive and maintain some semblance of their original mission. “We’re not making citizens of Pawling School,” Father Keating explained, “we’re trying to make citizens of the world.”⁴³⁶ “Not only is the protected community in danger” without this dialogue, “but also the world about it: if we...feel that we are sending people out to contribute, to help the world keep its values, then we can’t send those boys out and have them run back.” Today, the acolytes judiciously maintain the Chapel’s boundaries and determine exactly what must change and what they must heedfully preserve. Like every good “club house,” it is open to all but known by few;

⁴³² Louv, *Last Child in the Woods*, 97.

⁴³³ Keating, interview by the author.

⁴³⁴ Niggli, “The ‘Gendering’ of Architecture.”

⁴³⁵ Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social*, 1.

⁴³⁶ Keating, interview by the author.

its rituals are guarded and yet remain in careful conversation with the larger culture of the institution to which they inextricably belong.⁴³⁷

Trinity-Pawling must proceed carefully and with this in mind. The School must contemplate the function of All Saints' Chapel as it stands today, not simply as a universal "meeting place" but as another element of its culture that can nurture the values that it wishes to inculcate.⁴³⁸ Students need not be religious in order to understand the implicit sanctity of a sacred place; today, the *School* - not the Church - consecrates the ground on which the Chapel stands. It is an emblem of the its heritage, its founder, and of its beliefs both explicit and unstated. As such, the School must respect the Chapel's historical significance and take note of its capacity to bestow a sense of solidarity and responsibility upon successive generations of students.

Trinity-Pawling's mission statement proclaims: "We believe a man of great character exists in every boy...." As long as the School holds this much as true, it ought to use the Chapel as an influential method of uncovering each student's character and helping boys "fin[d] that man" that they believe lay "within himself."⁴³⁹ It's possible that there has never been a better time to do so. Every day three or more boys commit suicide, the third leading cause of death for young men.⁴⁴⁰ Boys today are twice as likely to flunk or drop out of school compared to girls, and four times more likely to be expelled. As the academic research presented in Chapter 3 demonstrated, boys frequently "confront messages that encourage them to disconnect from their emotions, devalue authentic friendships,...and resolve conflicts through violence."⁴⁴¹ These stereotypes

⁴³⁷ LaChance, interview by the author.

⁴³⁸ Avery, interview by the author.

⁴³⁹ *Headmaster Search Profile*, 1.

⁴⁴⁰ *The Mask You Live In: Middle and High School Curriculum* (n.p.: The Representation Project, 2015), 7, accessed April 17, 2016.

⁴⁴¹ *ibid.* 3.

intersect with issues of class, race, and circumstance to create “a maze of identity issues” that boys must reconcile in order “to become ‘real’ men.”⁴⁴²

Boys who struggle to circumnavigate these matters may find solace in the quiet oneness that morning chapel services presently provide. As Niobe Way has argued, “If boys and men...were encouraged to develop their natural empathy and emotional depth” - vis-à-vis the Chapel - “they would not disconnect from others and wreak havoc” as a result.⁴⁴³ The School ought to continue to work in concert with the Chapel to draw attention to its lessons of kindness, chivalry, justice, and charity, all of which demonstrate that the modern promise of ‘manning up’ has been largely misrepresented. One need only look to the Fruit of the Spirit traced above the chancel window to know how best to ‘be a man.’ Contrary to the vapid portrayals of masculinity that inundate the media and our culture, virtues such as gentleness, meekness, and self-control are still of great import to today’s youth.

Future researchers may wish to further explicate the connection between these virtues and those presently advertised by the School. Such a study would explore the various ways in which these and other behavioral standards are expressed among students and faculty and how they may combat or reinforce the negative masculine stereotypes that the School may wish to avoid. These findings could provide the institution with the means necessary to fortify the importance of the Chapel, both internally and externally, as a method of meeting the truly modern needs of 21st-century boys. School officials may also wish to revisit what is implied by calling itself, “The Home of the Pride,”⁴⁴⁴ and its students, “The Fighting Gentlemen.”⁴⁴⁵ How Trinity-Pawling goes about negotiating its identity, both now and in the future, is a task that

⁴⁴² *ibid.* 7.

⁴⁴³ Way, *Deep Secrets: Boys' Friendships*, 49.

⁴⁴⁴ "Athletics," Trinity-Pawling School.

⁴⁴⁵ "Team Directory," Trinity-Pawling School, accessed April 17, 2016, <http://www.trinitypawling.org/page.cfm?p=3859&teamID=42&event=3462&show=recap>.

must be carried out skillfully and sensibly. To emphasize “greatness”⁴⁴⁶ over humility and fellowship would put the mores of the Chapel at risk and further cement the tired equation of masculinity with virility and dominance. As such, the School should take great care to define exactly what brand of “pride” it is “home” to and in what ways it should be expressed.⁴⁴⁷

Trinity-Pawling must continue to help boys “find that spark...deep inside,” whatever and wherever it may be, and carefully “fan it to a flame.”⁴⁴⁸ We cannot let it burn too bright nor should we let it be extinguished altogether. We must protect it - feel its warmth and see its glow, - and we must never lose sight of what its shine reveals. What is faith - in religion, in our institutions, and in ourselves - if it does not endure when it is tested the most? What is faith if it does not engender some type of pride, a pride that lay not in the places and people that have long disappeared but in that which now remains where something else once stood? And what is character but what one wrestles with to define, and what one endeavors to believe?

The boys, the boys who run in the fields, who sit in the pews, who take solace in the sacristy; the boys who are the children of the childless and the boys who make our lives “sweeter”⁴⁴⁹ even when they’re gone; the boys who toss a baseball across the quad and who bow their heads in All Saints’ Chapel as they nearly always have: Do you hear them?

⁴⁴⁶ “We Call Ourselves the Pride,” video file, 02:47, Vimeo, posted by Trinity-Pawling School, July 14, 2015, accessed April 17, 2016, <https://vimeo.com/133506025>.

⁴⁴⁷ “Athletics,” Trinity-Pawling School.

⁴⁴⁸ “We Call Ourselves the Pride,” video file.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ganson Goodyear Depew: 1895-1924*.

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