

"The Volunteer Who Seeks to Help Others Also Helps Himself": Religion, Class, and the Development of Youth Volunteer Service in the United States, 1934–1973

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“The VOLUNTEER WHO SEEKS TO
HELP OTHERS ALSO HELPS
HIMSELF”: RELIGION, CLASS, AND
THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH
VOLUNTEER SERVICE IN THE UNITED
STATES, 1934–1973

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“THE VOLUNTEER WHO SEEKS TO HELP OTHERS ALSO HELPS HIMSELF”: RELIGION, CLASS, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH VOLUNTEER SERVICE IN THE UNITED STATES, 1934–1973

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This dissertation examines the development of youth volunteer service in the United States through a constellation of religious, private, and government programs. It explores how this larger impulse, which includes “service trips,” service–learning courses, and postgraduate programs like the Peace Corps, became a normative and ubiquitous opportunity for middle class, and consequently largely white, Americans. This study weaves together multiple programs, and a rich array of ideas and events such as social gospel concerns, pacifism, William James’ arguments for a “moral alternative to war,” gender and class anxieties, Great Depression and Cold War–specific exigencies, the Catholic Lay Apostolate, 1960s student activism, and the War on Poverty. The dissertation further demonstrates the religious roots of this phenomenon, as seen through Protestant and Catholic programs in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. Further, it shows that this paradigm of volunteer has always been twofold in its aim; it has focused both on the growth and education of the volunteer as they served others. It also shows that impulse has always been a limited agent for large–scale social change. Service programs were by their nature short–term projects meant to expose and educate volunteers to more entrenched social problems. Finally, while adult organizers often made service opportunities a possibility, it was the desire of many young women and men to “do more” with their time and abilities outside of traditional educational or professional options was the engine that truly drove and grew this movement.

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ABBREVIATIONS KEY

AFSC	American Friends Service Committee
BSC	Brethren Service Committee
BVS	Brethren Volunteer Service
CCC	Civilian Conservation Corps
CPS	Civilian Public Service
CYSP	Commission on Youth Service Projects
MCC	Mennonite Central Committee
MVS	Mennonite Voluntary Service
SCI	Service Civil International
NTC	National Teacher Corps
VISA	Voluntary International Service Assignments
VISTA	Volunteers in Service to America
NSVP	National Student Volunteer Program

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INTRODUCTION

A May 2016 news story for Marketplace, a public radio news outlet, highlighted one large bank's newest recruitment strategy. The institution had offered a select group of incoming hires, all recent college graduates, an unusual signing perk; they were given the opportunity to delay their start date so they could pursue a service-oriented "gap year." To illustrate the new initiative, the story focused on one young man who had spent his year as a volunteer English teacher in Peru. The young man explained that the decision had been shaped by an undergraduate service trip to Ecuador where he had done similar work. Reflecting on his unique delay into corporate life, he said of his decision, "I knew this essentially would give me the best of both worlds. I think having both those experiences could help me develop as a person and as a professional and help me get some really good perspective on what I think I should do to impact the world."¹

Tellingly, the story did not fixate on the details of the young man's desire to volunteer teach in Peru, his previous service trip to Ecuador, or his general interest in integrating his personal development with some form of constructive service. Instead, the story focused on the bank's recruiting innovation. The young man's previous experiences of volunteer service were not treated as highly unusual; rather, they were a given without the need for further detailed explanation.

¹ Mark Garrison, "Banks look at new ways to recruit recent graduates." Marketplace. May 16, 2016. <http://www.marketplace.org/2016/05/13/business/young-bankers>.

Though just one young man in one article, this small example sheds light on a larger phenomenon. For many young Americans—particularly those in the middle and upper class with the privilege to do so—from high school through college and the years immediately following, volunteer service is a normative presence in their lives. They can go on service trips overseas like the young man who went to Ecuador. Within the United States they can take similar service expeditions to impoverished urban neighborhoods, Native American reservations, or rural Appalachia to help improve homes or tutor small children. They can join a volunteer service club to help in their local community and can even earn college credits for such activities through “service–learning” courses that integrate volunteering into the curriculum. After college, they can sign up for postgraduate service programs that last up to a year or longer. The most famous of these latter opportunities is the iconic Peace Corps. But there are also smaller, and in many instances older, religiously–affiliated programs (many with Peace Corps–sounding names) like the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, Lutheran Volunteer Corps and Episcopal Service Corps. Behind the scenes, a volunteer service infrastructure facilitate theses opportunities, including volunteer coordinators, school and even federal funding, and catalogs of the many choices available for one to grow and develop while they serve others. There are manifold opportunities to take part in this impulse, whose direct origins stretch back to the early decades of the twentieth century.

As ubiquitous as this movement of youth volunteer service may be, historians have yet to tell its larger story. This dissertation is a step towards filling this historiographical void. Through the following pages, I explore the growth of this impulse and some of its defining attributes through a constellation of religious, private,

government, and school programs. The following chapters weave together the manifold events, people, theology, and ideas that have shaped this phenomenon from its start in the aftermath of World War I to its arrival as a nationwide movement in the early 1970s. These influences include, among others, social gospel concerns, pacifism, William James' arguments for a "moral alternative to war," gender and class anxieties, Great Depression and Cold War-specific exigencies, the Catholic Lay Apostolate, 1960s student activism, and the War on Poverty. The cast of characters is equally rich. It includes conscientious objectors, Quaker pacifists, progressive education proponents, Catholic women religious and priests, congressmen, and of course all the young women and men whose labors and enthusiasm ultimately drove this impulse.

Additionally, this dissertation shows that much of the story of youth volunteer service in the United States was religiously-influenced. Specifically, through the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, this movement was pioneered by a mix of Protestant and Catholic programs. It was only in the wake of the Peace Corps that more secular volunteer programs came to dominate this landscape.

Of the few existing scholarly works in this area, most have focused on the Peace Corps.² This scholarship has admirably explored the details and tensions of this influential Kennedy administration program, but have not placed it within a wider context of youth volunteer service. Any acknowledgements of predecessor programs were largely teleological. Authors cited them insofar as they were stepping-stones to the Peace Corps. While the Peace Corps was very influential, this dissertation shows that the youth volunteer service story is much bigger and richer than this one federal initiative.

² See, for example, Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman's *All You Need is Love: The Peace Corps and the Spirit of the 1960s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).

Aside from the subgenre of Peace Corps histories, the remaining historiography on youth volunteer programs is quite sparse. To give some examples of this threadbare literature, an almost-fifty year old book continues to be a central reference point for the “domestic Peace Corps,” Volunteers in Service to America, or VISTA.³ No historical literature exists on college volunteer service and service learning college programs save for a few succinct overviews in books that otherwise focus on the theory and praxis of such programs.⁴ The only published works on Catholic volunteer service programs entail a book chapter and an article (the latter is my own and was the basis for chapter three of this project).⁵ Published works on volunteer programs created by the “historic peace churches”—the Quakers, Church of the Brethren, and Mennonites—are an exception to the rule in terms of quantity and quality. But these books have largely been for internal denominational audiences.⁶ Susan Ellis and Katherine Noyes attempted a more synthetic general history of volunteer activity in the United States.⁷ While admirable, given the breadth of their effort to chart “the full scope and depth of volunteer activity throughout three centuries of American history,” the result is too broad in scope to shed light on this specific volunteer service phenomenon in any greater detail. In contrast to this state of the field, this dissertation is the first effort to bring these earlier works and previously

³ Ross Thomas and William Crook, *Warriors for the Poor: The Story of Vista* (New York: Morrow, 1969).

⁴ For example, see Robert L. Sigmon’s *Journey to Service Learning: Experiences from Independent Liberal Arts Colleges and Universities* (Washington, D.C.: The Council of Independent Colleges, 1996).

⁵ See Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello, “Relevant Transformations: The Young Women of the Extension Lay Volunteers, 1961-1971” in Jeremy Bonner, Christopher Denny, and Mary Beth Fraser, eds, *Empowering the People of God: Catholic Action before and after Vatican II* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013); Christopher Staysniak, “‘We are definitely the pioneers of this movement’: The Regis Lay Apostolate and the Origins of Postgraduate Volunteerism, 1949-1972,” *American Catholic Studies* 123, no. 4 (Winter 2012): 45-65.

⁶ For example, see J. Kenneth Kreider, *A Cup of Cold Water: The Story of Brethren Service* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 2001).

⁷ Susan J. Ellis and Katherine H. Noyes, *By the People: A History of Americans as Volunteers* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990).

unexamined pioneering volunteer services programs into conversation with one another as a larger historical narrative.

In addition to the main thrust of the dissertation—that there was a larger movement of youth volunteer service that developed over the twentieth century with significant religious influence—this work makes several additional related claims. One is that this paradigm of volunteer service has, from its beginning, had a twofold aim. These programs were about serving others as well as shaping and developing the volunteer. The often-heard criticism that volunteer programs are self-serving, that “They help the volunteer just as much as they help others,” is to a certain extent true, and by design. Through volunteer service experiences, relatively privileged, i.e. largely white and middle class, young women and men offered their talents and labors to others. In turn they learned, grew, and in some instances were profoundly transformed by their experience of personal encounter across class, racial, and often national, boundaries. This type of volunteer service has always been yoked with learning and growing in both explicit and implicit ways. For instance, in these chapters there is a constant flow of proponents who heralded youth volunteer service programs as supplements or even alternatives to a traditional classroom education. For many, there was no better educational experience than getting out into the “real world” by serving others.

Further, while the concept has been a vehicle for great constructive good in local contexts and shaped countless volunteer participants, it has always been a limited agent for large-scale social change. These were (and remain) short-term projects that were a response to more entrenched, long-term problems. Volunteer service programs could not, for instance, fix or solve inequality and economic turmoil in a place like eastern

Kentucky. But volunteers who spent a week in a community there patching leaky roofs and meeting local families might feel inspired to tackle these larger issues through their professional or political careers. As the dissertation shows, some volunteer programs explicitly acknowledged the tensions of this limitation, others did not. This dynamic, for better and for worse, has always been a feature of the impulse.

Finally, while adult organizers often made service opportunities a possibility, the young women and men who volunteered made these programs a reality. From Quaker work camps in Pennsylvania in the 1930s, to Mennonite volunteers in mental institutions in the 1940s, to Catholic lay teachers in Alaska in the 1950s, to Peace Corps members in Ghana in the 1960s, the desire of many young women and men to “do more” with their time and abilities outside of traditional educational or professional options was the engine that truly drove and grew this movement.

The source base for this project was a diverse one. I made use of an array of religious and secular archives, ranging from the offices of the Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pennsylvania, to the National Archives in College Park, Maryland. In many instances if I was not the first to have looked at these records, I was the first to have done so in many years. I drew on many different types of sources, such as meeting minutes, marketing materials, volunteer evaluations, personal accounts, periodicals, several works of volunteer service fiction (a genre that does indeed exist, to my surprise), as well as a few interviews. I carefully chose case studies of programs and individuals that best exemplified a given moment in this larger story. I tried to include the voices of volunteers where possible, though more often the sources were from the perspectives of program organizers or observers.

Finding these sources was not always a straightforward process. Volunteer programs, particularly private ones, did not always leave behind organized and centralized paper trails. For instance, there is no central depository of records of the Commission on Youth Service Projects, an important early coordinator of Protestant volunteer organizations. The documents I found for this organization were uncovered across multiple archives and libraries. Other programs, such as the Unitarian Service Committee, offered abundant and detailed records of their youth volunteer programs, but at a certain point the added depth did help explain larger trends as much as they described, for instance, the political back and forth between individual members of intra-denominational committees. But through some patience, persistence, and many helpful archivists and librarians, I was able weave together these different programs into one larger story.

As the chapters unfold, they show how this movement grew from a relatively small group of religious programs to a much wider phenomenon. It further highlights the varied individuals, ideas, beliefs, and external events that shaped this process. I cannot claim that this is a fully comprehensive history of youth volunteer service in the United States in the twentieth century. But the dissertation does outline the larger contours and important moments of this history. This in itself is an important first step. Future studies can further build on, and disagree with, the framework I have put forward.

Chapter one begins in the 1930s with the start and growth of the “work camp” movement. Led by the Quakers of the American Friends Service Committee, the work camp was, as the name describes, somewhat similar to a summer camp experience. But the high school and college students who participated did not pursue traditional camp

activities like archery or arts and crafts. Instead, campers paid for the privilege of living and doing some socially constructive project in communities that stood on the class, social, and racial fault lines of American society, tensions that were further heightened by the Great Depression. It was an immersion experience that offered campers firsthand knowledge of the challenges that faced troubled communities. As the AFSC organizers designed the program, the camp itself was never meant to be a solution to social ills. Rather, the focus of the camp was a transformative educational experience for the volunteer that would ideally lead them to a lifelong pursuit of a more just and peaceful world. The chapter goes on to describe this program's later adoption by other Protestant denominations such as the pacifist Mennonites and Church of the Brethren, mainline Protestant denominations with strong pacifist veins like the Methodists, as well as nonreligious proponents affiliated with the progressive education movement.

Chapter two continues this story in the years immediately following World War II. By this point the work camp movement was more normative than novelty for many Protestant denominations. Through the 1950s this movement spread even more quickly as, spurred by a postwar cultural sense of urgency that permeated much of the country, these groups organized international work camps in Europe and elsewhere to help repair war-torn areas and build social bonds in the wake of global conflict. The work camp movement further led to an outgrowth of different types of volunteer service programs. This included "weekend work camps," as well as year-long service programs that reflected lessons learned from the World War II Civilian Public Service program for conscientious objectors. By the end of the 1950s, the result of this activity was a wider and more general Protestant volunteer movement, including the Commission on Youth

Service Projects that helped coordinate this increasingly robust array of volunteer service programs.

Chapter three examines the development of a Catholic lay volunteer movement that began in the early 1950s. While parallel, it was not directly connected to earlier Protestant programs. This phenomenon was shaped by its own unique confluence of factors that included demographic changes for an increasingly middle-class Catholicism, new ideological currents that served to empower Catholic laity, and a practical staffing dilemma in Catholic mission schools due to their reliance on the practically unpaid labors of vowed religious men and women. The chapter focuses on one of the pioneering programs of this movement, the Regis Lay Apostolate of the all-female Regis College in Weston, Massachusetts. It looks at the experiences of some of these young women, and how their example helped inspire a larger Catholic lay volunteer teaching movement.

Chapter four focuses on the most recognizable and influential youth service program, the Peace Corps. It explores the program's many influences, including earlier religious volunteer organizations as well as its Cold War political context. It also looks at the Corps' widely positive national reception and how this government program permanently shaped youth volunteer service in the United States. As the chapter shows, thanks to its tremendous popularity and recognition, the Peace Corps became the new national point of reference for volunteer service programs. Most other programs, including religious ones and those that preceded the Corps, were thereafter seen by observers and participants alike as variants on the Peace Corps concept. While it cast a long shadow, overall the Peace Corps helped fuel a wider interest in similar programs, and as a result inspired new volunteer service programs throughout the country.

Chapter five outlines the explosion of volunteer service programs in the 1960s and early 1970s as the example of the Peace Corps and its domestic counterpart, VISTA, helped further normalize youth volunteer service on a national level. It shows how student activism in the period helped spur a massive proliferation of volunteer service and service learning programs at colleges and universities across the country. It also touches upon the relation of smaller religious volunteer programs to this wider expansion, as these pioneers represented an increasingly small slice of the widespread phenomenon that they had helped shape. Rather than one specific program, this final chapter highlights larger milestones that marked the arrival of volunteer youth service as a truly national movement.

Definitions are not always easy, as is the case here. The terminology of “youth volunteer service,” is at face value a broad way of naming this phenomenon. As one of the main aims of this dissertation is describing a larger and longer movement of youth service activities, I wanted to avoid overly narrow parameters. Overall my approach is descriptive rather than prescriptive. For instance, youth and related concepts of adolescence can mean a whole range of life stages that varies between different cultural contexts. I use youth to describe young women and men in high school, college, and in the years following college graduation. Not all participants of the programs that follow fit this mold. Many were older. Not all students. But overall I found this to be an effective means of describing the majority of volunteers in these programs, particularly as many service programs had implicit and explicit educational and development facets.

Volunteer service is one of those terms that is easy to recognize when you see it in action, whether through individuals or programs, but more difficult to describe in abstract

terms. My definition is borrowed and paraphrased from Edward Miller, an early organizer in this wider movement from the American Friends Service Committee, who appears in chapter two. Volunteer service is an experience in which an individual goes out of their way to help other individuals or communities improve their lives. While the process can be direct, this encounter is mediated by some formal organization. The main incentive for the volunteer is the experience itself, one that allows them to help others while they in turn experience personal growth. Payment for such labors is of secondary importance, if it is included at all. Further, I use “movement” in a loose sense, and often interchangeably with terms like “phenomenon” and “impulse,” as I have done so far. Like the dissertation, these definitions are a first step. I invite others to further shape this terminology with greater precision.

Finally, I would like to offer a word about my general approach and tone. This paradigm of volunteer service was and is by no means without flaws, as critics have and continue to point out. The most salient point of this literature is that these types of experiences are overly self-serving; they do little more than make volunteers feel good about themselves for “slumming” it and helping others. In worst-case scenarios, critics assert that the long term “costs” of short-term trips for host communities can be quite harmful.⁸ In this vein domestic and overseas trips are lambasted as “voluntourism.”⁹ These criticisms are particularly common in regards to high school students trying to pad their resumes to gain an edge in the college admissions process. For example, *New York*

⁸ See Jo Ann Van Engen’s often-cited article, “The Cost of Short Term Missions,” *The Other Side*, January/February, 2000.

⁹ Carrie Kahn, “As ‘Voluntourism Explodes, Who’s It Helping Most?” NPR.org, July 31, 2014. <http://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2014/07/31/336600290/as-volunteerism-explodes-in-popularity-whos-it-helping-most>

Times columnist Frank Bruni recently criticized this dynamic in an August 2016 column entitled, “To Get to Harvard, Go to Haiti?”¹⁰

These points are valid. Volunteer service is, as this dissertation argues, a phenomenon defined by a twofold dynamic as it has meant to help both volunteers and those they are temporarily helping. But these criticisms often take a tone that is overly simplistic and overly cynical, and as a result tend to generate more heat than light. The chapters ahead show that volunteer program organizers were not naive to these tensions and limitations. Often they were quite honest and thoughtful about what their programs could and could not achieve. Moreover, the anecdotal evidence about the volunteers themselves suggests that these young women and men were not so self-serving as some of these criticisms caricature. Many of the volunteers mentioned here were driven by a mix of religious, activist, patriotic, as well as self-serving motivations.

For these reasons I have utilized a “hermeneutic of generosity.” I use it as employed by Paul Farmer, a liberation theology–influenced physician who is best known for his humanitarian medical work in some of the most impoverished parts of the world.¹¹ He uses the phrase to describe how he largely interprets the actions and intentions of others in a philanthropic context in a positive light. This is not to say that I have not been critical in my analysis. But overall, my working assumption is that the volunteers and the organizers of their programs have meant well, despite their mistakes, in their attempts to navigate their privilege, work with people they might never have otherwise met, and try and make their communities, their country, and their world, a better place.

¹⁰ Frank Bruni, “To Get to Harvard, Go to Haiti?” *New York Times* August 13, 2016.

¹¹ For example, see Michael P. Griffin and Jennie Weiss Block, eds., *In the Company of the Poor: Conversations with Dr. Paul Farmer and Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2014).

1.0 Creative Pioneers and Quaker Work Camps

Writing in their camp newspaper near the end of the summer of 1934, the college-aged women and men of the first American Friends Service Committee-run summer “work camp” wrote about how some of the residents of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, had expressed skepticism about the campers’ presence and purpose when they first arrived months earlier. Purportedly, gossip and skepticism abounded as they tried to make sense of the peculiar Quaker venture in the rural southwest corner of the state. From this “babel of cynical rumor” the article authors quoted two particularly imaginative explanations of their camp. One cast the middle and upper class youth as inmates, “Just out of the penitentiary, they are; and you should see them work because they are afraid they will be put back in!” Another felt the camps were an assault on decency in multiple ways, explaining it as “Men and women, all sleep[ing] together in the barn--a Communist, free-love, nudist colony.”¹²

Even if these quotes may have been editorially embellished to make for better copy, the locals, many of them transplanted former mine workers resettled as part of a New Deal homesteading program, were indeed curious about their temporary neighbors.¹³ Given the camp’s novelty, it was not unreasonable for them to speculate. As

¹² *The Friends Service Camper* 1, no. 4, September 12, 1934. American Friends Service Committee Archives, Philadelphia, PA. Hereafter AFSCA.

¹³ For more on the Westmoreland homestead project, see Timothy Kelly, Margaret Power, and Michael Cary, *Hope in Hard Times: Norvelt and the Struggle for Community During the Great Depression*. University Park: Pennsylvania, 2016.

the writer of the article conceded, their program, while original and constructive, was from an outsider's perspective unusual as "a camp sponsored by Quakers, manned by college youth, and dedicated to a program new not only to that state but to the whole of the Western hemisphere."¹⁴

In some regards the service camp closely resembled those run by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Both participated in outdoor manual labor, and volunteer young adults in their late teens and early twenties filled the ranks. But the CCC was a public relief program created by the government to help ameliorate unemployment wrought by the Great Depression. The hundreds of thousands of young men in its "voluntary" ranks were in a real sense driven there by necessity and the incentive of room, board, and wages. In comparison, the smaller group of forty-one male and fourteen female campers at Westmoreland were quite privileged. Instead of working for wages, they had means enough to truly volunteer and choose such a summer experience. As if the locals needed any additional reason to wonder about the Quaker camp, these women and men did not get any sort of payment for their efforts. They paid for the privilege of participating in such manual labor. Further, despite the similarities between these programs, as the *Friends Camper* article noted, the volunteers at Westmoreland did not see themselves as a programmatic cousin of the CCC. They placed themselves as vanguards of a new type of volunteer youth venture in pacifism-inspired social action, as they announced in their newsletter, "The shock troops of peace are drilling!"¹⁵

The AFSC camp at Westmoreland was the start of a larger work camp movement. This novel volunteer service program intertwined pacifist theology, Christian social

¹⁴ *The Friends Service Camper*.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

action, and experiential educational pedagogy. The short-term impact of this service work was important. But just as central (if not more) to the work camp was the transformation and education of the volunteer that would lead them to a long-term pursuit of creating a more just and peaceful world.

The seed planted at Westmoreland found fertile soil in the United States, tilled by anxieties over the welfare of the world as well as the development of America's more economically privileged youth. The Quakers of the AFSC, the strong pacifist culture of interwar mainline Protestantism, and a supplementary array of secular education professionals would spur the proliferation of the work camp concept. From this starting point in rural Pennsylvania, the AFSC work camps would help pioneer and set precedents for a larger movement of Protestant youth service programs that would cater to mostly white, middle-class college and high school-aged youth.

1.1 European Roots

The road to the Westmoreland camp began approximately two decades earlier in Europe. The North Atlantic was a vibrant corridor for the exchange of ideas in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries between the United States and Europe. Central to this discourse were various religious and secular responses to the "social question" posed by mass urbanization and industrialization.¹⁶ The complex problems created by these sweeping changes spawned a fruitful proliferation of progressive ideas in terms of government project and regulations, as well as various iterations of social Christianity.¹⁷

¹⁶ Daniel Rogers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

¹⁷ Paul T. Phillips, *A Kingdom on Earth: Anglo-American Social Christianity, 1880-1940* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996).

Quakers were no exception to the rule. The start of the volunteer work camp movement that began at Westmoreland came from an older Atlantic exchange of thinkers seeking constructive alternatives to military service that was finally realized in response to the horrors of World War I.

The emergence of the modern industrial military state in the nineteenth century meant that armed conflicts had the potential to swallow up the lives of millions as never before. This advancement fueled ideas about how the destructive power of the military might be put to more constructive use in service to humanity. As early as 1850 the Scottish philosopher Thomas Carlyle argued that armies could, when not engaged in warfare, be put to work on domestic projects. Similarly, English thinker John Ruskin argued that in times of peace standing armies could engage “in works of peace side by side with civilians.”¹⁸ The American philosopher William James put forward the most influential of these arguments. In 1910 he published in several journals his now-famous call for a “moral equivalent to war.” While he abhorred war’s unspeakable violence and its excesses of death and destruction, James argued that the “martial values” of the military were important civic fibers that held a nation together. They were “enduring cement” for the state, a blast of oxygen onto the hot coals of national identity.¹⁹ James’ desire to find another source for civic strength reflected generally heightened fears among middle and upper class white Americans about the feminizing effects of the luxuries and

¹⁸ Kenneth Holland, “The Implications of Work Camps for Secondary Education,” *The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals* 24 (April, 1940), 31; Kenneth Holland, *Youth in European Labor Camps* (Washington, D.C: American Council on Education, 1939), 2-3.

¹⁹ William James, edited by John K. Roth, *The Moral Equivalent of War and Other Essays and selections from Some Problems of Philosophy* (New York: Harper, 1971): 23.

benefits of modern life on young men, and whether they would be “fit” intellectually, morally, and physically to become leaders as adults.²⁰

In the place of military conscription, James wanted the entire “youthful population,” regardless of class, to be conscripted into a form of national service in which they would be an “army enlisted against nature.” A set period of manual labor for all would not only have practical constructive outcomes, but for James would be a national means of formation that would bear “many moral fruits.” Instead of war, his proposed equivalent would serve a pacific nation without risking the “manly virtues which the military party is so afraid of seeing disappear in peace.” As he asserted, “We should get toughness without callousness, authority with as little criminal cruelty as possible, and painful work done cheerily because the duty is temporary, and threatens not, as now, to degrade the whole remainder of one’s life.”²¹ James’ essay marked out an aspirational ideal that pacifists and proponents of youth development through the value of work and service would look to throughout the twentieth century. But when originally espoused on the eve of World War I, James’ idea remained an unrealized and wishful theory.

The human catastrophe of the Great War spurred one pacifist to put the idea of constructive alternatives to war into practice. Born in 1879, Pierre Cérésolle was a promising engineer and scientist from a well-to-do French Swiss family—among other accomplishments, his father served for some time on the Federal Council, Switzerland’s executive ruling authority. In 1909, despite a promising professional career, Pierre was spurred by general feelings of restlessness and as a result spent several years traveling the

²⁰ For more on this cultural anxiety, see Kristin Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

²¹ James, *Moral Equivalent of War*, 14.

globe working a combination of engineering and manual labor jobs as he moved through California, Hawaii, and eventually, Japan. During the years away he was touched by the personal friendships he made across cultural lines, and spent a great deal of time reflecting on his devout Christian faith and how it might be put to use bettering the world.²² During this stretch, Céréssole developed an eclectic belief system, including an embrace of spiritual mysticism, an internationalist distrust of the nation state, and a social action-oriented pacifism. His pacifism was a clear product of his reading of the New Testament, in particular the Sermon on the Mount and Jesus' command to "Love your enemies."²³ His fermenting ideas were also shaped by the philosophy of the French intellectual Henri Bergson. Céréssole wrote and published an article about Bergson's thought prior to his international travels.²⁴ Bergson, a critic of positivism, argued in favor of the individual's powers of imagination, spiritual impulses, and intuition.²⁵ Bergsonian thought valued a forward-looking, and action-oriented approach to lived existence. His writings influenced a generation of French speakers at the turn of the century, including Céréssole's evolving pacifist beliefs.

Céréssole's convictions were increasingly fueled by the sentiments of nationalism and jingoism that simmered throughout Europe. He returned to Switzerland in 1914 just as hostilities erupted. While Switzerland remained officially neutral, the government still required its citizens to pay a military tax. In a public declaration of his pacifist beliefs,

²² While most English works on Céréssole straddle the line between biography and hagiography, a helpful summary of his life and exploits with SCI/IVS is Sylvie Bèguelin and Philipp Rodriguez's *Pierre Ceresole: A lifetime serving Peace*. La Chaux-de-Fonds: Bibliothèque de la Ville Chaux-de-Fonds/Service Civil International, 2010.

²³ Allan Hunter, *White Corpuscles in Europe* (New York: Willett, Clark & Company, 1939), 33-42.

²⁴ Pierre Céréssole, "Le Parallélisme psycho-physiologique et l'argument de M. Bergson," *Archives de psychologie* 18, (October 1905).

²⁵ For a brief summary of Bergson's ideas within a wider intellectual context see Marvin Perry, *An Intellectual History of Modern Europe* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1992).

Cérésole refused to pay, resulting in a series of court hearings and ultimately ten days in prison. The experience further solidified Cérésole's beliefs. In an instance of fruitful trans-Atlantic pacifist cross fertilization, during his time in jail Cérésole read and took a deep interest in James' essay, *The Moral Equivalent of War*. The constructive alternative vision fit his developing Bergsonian-inflected Christian pacifism. But whereas James had envisioned a civilian service that worked for the state, Cérésole imagined an international service option unbound by national loyalties, one that would bring together young men from different nations to help break down the barriers that helped instigate armed conflict.²⁶

In 1919 Cérésole's antiwar activism and consequent public notoriety led to an invitation by the pacifist International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR)—a network of pacifists and pacifist organizations—to a meeting in the Dutch town of Bilthoven.²⁷ There, he found himself among like minds of those who wished to avoid further conflict as the embers of the Great War still smoldered. Within this new supportive institutional backing, Cérésole began to pitch his idea for organizing a moral alternative to war with a pick and shovel peace army comprised of men from all across a Europe struggling to rebuild after the war. He found a willing partner in Hubert Parris, an English Quaker and IFOR member who with other British Friends had pursued relief work during the war on the Western Front. It was a complementary match between Parris' practical experience

²⁶ Daniel Anet, *Pierre Cérésole: Passionate Peacemaker* (Delhi: MacMillan Company of India, 1974).

²⁷ Fellowship of Reconciliation and International Fellowship of Reconciliation are often used interchangeably, as the original gathering quickly became an international movement of affiliated chapters. For more on the beginnings of the IFOR, see Jim Wallis, *Valiant for Peace: A History of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, 1914 to 1989* (London: Fellowship of Reconciliation, 1991).

and Cérésole's ideas. They decided to pick a location in France to launch their first "peaceful offensive" with the financial support of the IFOR.²⁸

For their first camp they picked Esnes, a small French town near Verdun. The proximity to Verdun was intentional and rich with symbolism, as there during the war clashes between the French and German army swallowed up three hundred thousand young men.²⁹ The camp, by comparison, was a very small affair, but it was an important test of Cérésole's ideas. A small group of English, German, Hungarian, and Swiss young men—many of them former veterans—built huts for townspeople who had been reduced to living in earthen dugouts. They labored from October 1920 into the following spring. Ultimately the camp at Esnes proved to be a success. Cérésole's combination of good cheer and focused group discipline helped maintain high morale despite the Spartan living conditions of the volunteers and additional challenges of working and living amid the cold seasonal temperatures.³⁰

Building on this success Cérésole oversaw another camp in 1924, and soon after he founded a formal organization to see to the establishment of similar camps across Europe, Service Civil International. The camps grew in size in comparison to the modest Verdun project, and took on a wide variety of construction-related projects. These "work camps" jumped the English Channel and became particularly popular in the United Kingdom, where they became a branch organization called the International Voluntary Service (IVS). Whereas continental camps placed a premium on the wide array of nationalities brought together by the camps, the IVS ventures put a special emphasis on

²⁸ Ibid, 63.

²⁹ For more on Verdun, see Paul Jankowski, *Verdun: The Longest Battle of the Great War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

³⁰ Arthur Gillette, *One Million Volunteers: The Story of Volunteer Youth Service* (New York: Penguin Books, 1968):15-34.

cross class interaction, such as bringing youth from more privileged parts of England to work on projects in Welsh mining communities to learn about the particular issues working class people faced.³¹

By the early 1930s, the success of his work camp movement had turned Céréssole into a renowned figure in pacifist circles in Europe and increasingly across the North Atlantic. With the help of IFOR he had helped bring James' moral equivalent to war to life, though within an internationalist and Christian pacifist framework. It was at this point that the youth work camp, as a moral equivalent to war first posited in the United States and made manifest in Europe, traveled back across the Atlantic as Céréssole's model found a willing and receptive audience in the American Friends Service Committee.

1.2 AFSC Camps Begin

In the 1930s the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), under the leadership of Haverford professor and esteemed Quaker spiritual writer Rufus Jones, was a leader of social action in the interwar period in pacifist and more general mainline Protestant circles.³² The AFSC originally was founded by Quakers in Philadelphia in April 1917 shortly after the United States formally entered World War I to help create nonmilitary service options for conscientious objectors. Grounded in a liberal Quaker theology that emphasized a universal bond among men and women, its founders hoped it

³¹ John S. Hoyland, *Digging with the Unemployed* (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1947); See also Ethelwyn Best and Bernard Pike, eds., *International Voluntary Service for Peace, 1920-1946*. (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1948).

³² During his lifetime (1863-1948), the *London Times* went so far as to call Jones "the greatest spiritual philosopher living in America," but his name remains little known outside Quaker circles. For a succinct summary of his life, see the introduction of Kerry Walters, ed., *Rufus Jones: Essential Writings* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2001).

would be an institutional means of “conscientiously serving humanity” in the face of modern warfare’s previously unimaginable devastation.³³ As Jones wrote about the AFSC’s creation several years later, “the world tragedy was a common tragedy for which we were all in our degree to blame and the agony of which in some measure we were all bound to bear a share.”³⁴

The organization faced some challenges early on, including public scrutiny of the pacifist labors of a little-understood religious group during a time of supercharged patriotism. But the AFSC quickly compiled an impressive list of humanitarian accomplishments. A combination of skillful leadership, savvy publicity, and guidance from British Quakers with prior experience running relief efforts led to a quick rise in public prominence, especially after success with famine relief in Europe.³⁵ Jones was critical in shaping the organization and its purpose. He saw its work as a means by which Quakers could overcome self-imposed relative isolation from the world through a prophetic and mystical Christianity that culminated “in moral activity” that helped others regardless of race, nation, or creed.³⁶

After earlier successes overseas, the AFSC shifted its attention to domestic projects. Starting in the early 1920’s the Friends organized relief for economically-depressed families in coal mining areas of West Virginia and Pennsylvania, further buttressing the AFSC’s reputation as an exemplar of service and social action, beyond its

³³ American Friends Service Committee, *30 Years of Quaker Service* (Philadelphia: AFSC, 1947), 1; The AFSC was predominantly organized and run by liberal Quakers like Jones who were associated with the Friends General Conference. See Patricia Appelbaum, *Kingdom to Commune: Protestant Pacifist Culture between World War I and the Vietnam Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 39-40.

³⁴ Rufus Jones, *A Service of Love in War Time: American Friends Relief Work in Europe* (New York: Macmillan, 1920), xiv.

³⁵ Ibid; David McFadden and Claire Gorfinkel, *Constructive Spirit: Quakers in Revolutionary Russia* (Pasadena: Intentional Productions, 2004).

³⁶ Allan W. Austin, *Quaker Brotherhood: Interracial Activism and the American Friends Service Committee, 1917-1950* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012):11.

founding aim of providing pacifist alternatives to military service during wartime.³⁷ As Patricia Appelbaum has shown, these efforts gave the AFSC “a more conspicuous public presence” and as a result the organization was held in esteem within social gospel and pacifist Protestant circles.³⁸ Two other pacifist denominations, the Church of the Brethren and the Mennonites, began similar relief work internationally and domestically, part of a wider recognition among pacifists that social change was a means of preventive pacifism that attacked the roots of war and violence.³⁹ But these denominations did not enjoy nor did they seek similar public recognition.⁴⁰

It was against this backdrop of pacifist-inspired social outreach that the AFSC adopted Céréssole’s volunteer work camp model. The process began in 1933 when an AFSC staff member took part in an International Voluntary Service camp in Wales. Upon returning to the AFSC offices in Philadelphia, he convinced his colleagues that they should take up a similar program. It is also likely that this was not a totally foreign idea to the AFSC staff to begin with. While Céréssole would not officially convert to Quakerism until 1934, he had long worked with Friends through the IFOR and harbored an affinity for their beliefs and spirituality. As such, at this time Céréssole’s work was well known

³⁷ See also Mary Hoxie Jones, *Swords into Plowshares: An Account of The American Friends Service Committee, 1917-1937* (New York: Macmillan Press, 1937). This is one of the only accounts of the AFSC in this early period, and is hampered by Jones’ insider perspective and her creative reimagining of certain events based on historical records and oral history. See also Clarence Pickett, *For More Than Bread: An autobiographical account of twenty-two years’ work with the American Friends Service Committee* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1953). While Pickett’s account is also dated, as one of the leaders of the AFSC in its first decades, his insight into the AFSC in this period is as a result unparalleled.

³⁸ Appelbaum, *Kingdom to Commune*, 39.

³⁹ Peter Brock and Nigel Young, *Pacifism in the Twentieth Century* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1999), 14-15.

⁴⁰ Kreider, *A Cup of Cold Water*; John David Unruh, *In the Name of Christ: A History of the Mennonite Central Committee and its Service, 1920-1951* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1952) As the Unruh book demonstrates, the historical literature on the Mennonite Central Committee is sparser, and as such the Unruh volume, despite its age, still holds its value. “Historic peace churches” as a title for the Friends, Brethren, and Mennonites became popular in the mid-1930s as these churches sought to define themselves against political pacifism, particularly after a 1935 gathering in Newton, Kansas, between representatives of these three denominations. See Donald Kraybill, *Concise Encyclopedia of Amish, Brethren, Hutterites, and Mennonites* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 6.

within British and American Quaker circles.

Previously, the AFSC's work with high school and college-aged youth had been limited. Their Home Section Committee had previously helped individual college-aged men and women

find opportunities for service in social settlements, recreational departments, and community centers to partake in various types of social outreach. But these were on a case-by-case basis, rather than a more formal programmatic approach.⁴¹ Other members of the AFSC had for a few years prior to 1934 started to organize "peace caravans." Consisting of groups or "cells" of three, four, or more women and men, these groups traveled to communities, churches, and schools to talk about problems in international relations and spur conversation about alternative and nonviolent ways of solving these larger issues.⁴² But the leadership of the AFSC sought other means of applying pacifist principles to action. This reflected a larger effort among the Protestant pacifist community to engage with college and high school-aged women and men. The aim was to reach youth interested in taking part in constructive work in a pacifist spirit during times of peace instead of scrambling to find conscientious objector alternatives during periods of war, a sort of "preventative" pacifism.⁴³ One internal AFSC document

⁴¹ "History and Development of AFSC Youth Projects." Administration, Leadership, Handbook, 1957. AFSCA.

⁴² Edward Miller, Chaplain, "A Philosophy of Religious Voluntary Service: A Series of Three Lectures given before the Fourth Annual Conference on Youth Service Projects." New Windsor, Maryland. October 13-16, 1949. Harold Row Papers, Brethren Historical Library and Archives. Hereafter BHLA. The AFSC were also leaders in organizing Peace Caravans, as the idea was adopted by other mainline Protestant denominations in this period.

⁴³ "Friend's Service Work Camp." Coal Relief Section, Subsistence Homesteads, Westmoreland, PA. Work Camp, 1934. AFSCA.

described it as a desire “to plan for the training of young pacifists some project as effective as the training given to young militarists.”⁴⁴

The resulting Westmoreland camp cost fifty dollars for the largely college-aged campers, a not insignificant sum for the time, and lasted ten weeks. The volunteers were only expected to contribute as much as they could towards the fee. However, despite the sliding scale, as the experience was unpaid it most likely limited applicants to those who had the luxury of being able to forgo paid summer work. There was no confessional requirement, only a concern about “social maladjustments,” a belief in pacifist alternatives to force, a willingness “to do hard, tedious and uninteresting tasks,” live in relatively simple conditions, have an interest in cooperative living, and willingness to contribute to the group physically, socially, and spiritually.⁴⁵ Approximately half were Quakers. They came from a spread of locations, as close as Pennsylvania, as far as California, as well as New York, Illinois, Ohio, Iowa, Texas, Wisconsin, and even one individual from Germany.⁴⁶

In regards to the living conditions, the camp was not the “Communist, free-love, nudist colony” one of its local detractors claimed. The young men lived in a barn converted to house them and their sleeping cots, while the women were put up in a nearby farmhouse.⁴⁷ The conditions were definitely a step down from what the campers were used to at home, as one AFSC organizer generously described the quarters as “rough but healthful.” During the day the young men mainly worked on the community’s water system by digging a ditch for a pipeline that would connect the homes to their

⁴⁴ “Friends Service Camp--The Project.” Coal Relief Section, Subsistence Homesteads, Westmoreland, PA. Work Camp, 1934. AFSCA.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ “Friends Service Camp—1934.” Coal Relief Section, Subsistence Homesteads, Westmoreland, PA. Work Camp, 1934. AFSCA.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

reservoir. As the camp newspaper wrote, “otherwise dapper young men have forgotten themselves and plunged into topsoil, sandstone, dirt, clay, mud, and solid rock with pick and shovel.”⁴⁸ The young women did their fair share of digging as well, but spent much of the time confined by gender roles to domestic duties such as laundry.⁴⁹

The responses to the camp were overwhelmingly positive. The residents of the Westmoreland Homestead were quite pleased with the quality of the volunteers’ work, a plus given that they did not have to pay for it. One volunteer, Samuel C. Clark of Morgantown, West Virginia, wrote to AFSC executive secretary Clarence Pickett a month after his return home. He thanked him for the experience, saying, “It was an entirely different sort of summer from any that I had spent before, and certainly one of the most enjoyable. The work was healthy, hard work, and the companionship was of the finest.”⁵⁰ In addition to plans for at least another camp the following summer, the AFSC received requests that they also host a “Junior Service Camp” the following summer for high school students.⁵¹ With this response, the AFSC decided their new venture in youth service was very much worth continuing. The next year there were approximately one hundred students in four camps ready to partake in the hard work and companionship Samuel Clark had found at Westmoreland.

1.3 Shaping the Volunteer

Starting with the Westmoreland camp, chosen due to the AFSC’s work in rural coal mining areas over the previous decade, camp locations in the following years were

⁴⁸ *The Friends Service Camper* 1, no. 1, July 9, 1934. AFSCA.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Samuel Clark to Clarence Pickett. September 30, 1934. Coal Relief Section, Subsistence Homesteads, Westmoreland, PA. Work Camp, 1934. AFSCA.

⁵¹ To Eugene Randolph Smith. December 10, 1934. Coal Relief Section, Subsistence Homesteads, Westmoreland, PA. Work Camp, 1934. AFSCA.

in areas one 1940 pamphlet described diplomatically as “America’s problem areas facing major economic readjustments.” The AFSC program organizers intentionally identified areas of structural “tensions and conflict.”⁵² The camps were meant to assist those struggling with hardship that was the result of larger social forces, or as Ed Miller, who oversaw the Work Camp Committee for the program’s first decade, described, to serve “people caught in a disaster not of their own making.”⁵³ They sought communities that stood on the fault lines of American society where social, industrial, class, and racial tensions met, dynamics all exacerbated by the strains of the Depression years. The camps, typically with twelve to twenty youth each, could be found in the years after 1934 popping up across the country in locales that served as a veritable checklist of the nation’s social flashpoints. Their presence served as a physical testament to what one internal AFSC document called “the tangled disaster of our economic order.”⁵⁴ As a 1939 pamphlet demonstrated, among other locations work camp volunteers could be found in a migrant camp in California’s San Joaquin valley made up of “Russian, Negro, Oriental, Mexican and White groups;” in Flint, Michigan, focusing on the lives of industrial laborers in General Motors plants and the politics of union organizing; and in Chicago’s Fifth Ward exploring “problems of the city political machine and of Negro-White relations.” Other camps could be found further south in places like Scotts Run, West Virginia, a stricken mining community, and the Highlander Folk School, a center for union organizing.⁵⁵

⁵² Work Camps conducted by American Friends Service Committee (Quakers), June 28-August 23, 1940. AFSCA.

⁵³ Miller, “A Philosophy of Religious Voluntary Service,” I-15. BHLA.

⁵⁴ “Friends Service Camp--1934.” Coal Relief Section, Subsistence Homesteads, Westmoreland, PA. Work Camp, 1934. AFSCA.

⁵⁵ Ibid; The Highlander Folk School was a center for labor and later civil rights organizing in the South, making it a central institution in these movements, as well as a lightening rod for criticism as a

Many of these programs, such as the original Westmoreland Project, were held in areas that were often the site of a New Deal initiative. It was not by coincidence. The AFSC's executive secretary in this period, Clarence Pickett, simultaneously served in the Roosevelt administration helping to run the Division of Subsistence Homesteads within the Department of Interior, which helped run projects like the Westmoreland host community.⁵⁶

From the beginning, the work camp experience was not just about the immediate results of these short-term voluntary labors. The direct results of the project were important. But as a longer, though less concrete aim, the camps were meant to inspire the volunteer to a lifetime of transformative and constructive social action. As an AFSC staff member described this twofold aim in 1940, they were meant to be "unique opportunities for study and service."⁵⁷ Key to this process was the work camp emphasis on building common bonds and relationships across class and racial lines, a product of Rufus Jones' desire that the AFSC enact social change through "interracial, interclass, and international action."⁵⁸ The campers were meant to reach out to their temporary neighbors, to learn of their lives, their troubles, and the personal and structural issues they faced. As David Richie, an early AFSC work camp organizer explicitly described, the work camp was "intended predominantly as an educational instrument," an immersion experience that enabled "young men and women of privileged groups to buy, with hard

"communist" institution. It later became a central organizing and training ground for the Civil Rights Movement. For more on the institution and its founder see Myles Horton, *The Long Haul* (New York: Doubleday), 1990 and John Glenn, *Highlander: No Ordinary School* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press), 1996.

⁵⁶ For a biography of Clarence Pickett, see Lawrence McK. Miller, *Witness for Humanity: A Biography of Clarence E. Pickett* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1999).

⁵⁷ Rebecca Janney Timbres. "Evaluations of 12 Quaker Summer Work Camps, by Campers, 1940." Project for New York School of Social Work. March, 1941, 11. AFSCA.

⁵⁸ Donna McDaniel and Vanessa Juyle, *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship: Quakers, African Americans, and the Myth of Racial Justice* (Philadelphia: Quaker Press of Friends General Conference, 2009), 216.

physical labor, their ticket into troubled communities where they could learn at first hand about the problems and the people concerned.”⁵⁹

The experience was meant to teach and transform volunteers, who were almost entirely white and from middle and upper class urban and suburban backgrounds, and instill within them a knowledge of social ills and a desire to work against them long after they had returned home with a new understanding of unjust racial and economic structures, “the root causes of violence.”⁶⁰ It was this process of the personal encounter, as Dan McKanan has described it elsewhere, that was central to the work camp experience.⁶¹ As a work camp participant wrote in a 1941 issue of the *Baptist Leader*, a Baptist youth magazine, while working in West Virginia, despite frustrations with an initial lack of community support, “We learned to regard these people as individuals who really have bucked up against the things that we saw only as textbook problems in economics and sociology, in college.”⁶² It was an education only the encounter could provide.

In addition to the value placed on the encounter, the camps had other explicit educational components. Months before a camp’s start, volunteers received information regarding their camp placement, including a reading list. Much of the readings were focused on providing background information on the area they would be working in and the local people they would be working with. For instance, one 1945 race relations–focused camp in Paoli, Pennsylvania, suggested Booker T. Washington’s *Up From*

⁵⁹ David S. Richie, *Memories and Meditations of a Workcamper* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1973), 2.

⁶⁰ McDaniel and Juyle, *Fit for Freedom*, 216.

⁶¹ Dan McKanan, *Prophetic Encounters: Religion and the American Radical Tradition* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2011). McKanan’s analysis examines the encounter within the exchange between radical politics and religion throughout U.S. history, but his definition of encounter also makes it a fit for this context.

⁶² R. Alfred Hassler, “Brotherhood in A-C-T-I-O-N.” *Baptist Leader*, February, 1941, 36.

Slavery, Roi Ottley's *New World A-Comin'*—the nationally-renowned journalist's award-winning book on life in black Harlem, Richard Wright's fictional *Native Son*, his photo-heavy depiction of black life in the Depression, *12 Million Black Voices*, Charles Johnson's scholarly *Patterns of Negro Segregation* (the scholarly foundation for Gunnar Myrdal's *An American Dilemma*), and James Johnson's fictional story about racial passing, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*. As this list demonstrates, it was not light reading, and often quite different and even subversive compared to what the students would have read as part of their regular schooling.⁶³ For this camp's readings and others, the AFSC did not shy away from critical analyses of American society when they felt there were large and complex problems that needed to be confronted.

Typically these reading lists also included a title or two on cooperative economics such as co-op stores. This reflected a more general emphasis on cooperative economics that became popular within Christian pacifist circles in this period. This was part of a general resurgence of the social gospel during the Depression that was modernist in its vision of the Kingdom emerging in human culture, while simultaneously antimodern in its anticapitalist outlook.⁶⁴ A common suggested pre-camp resource across AFSC camps was the film "Here is Tomorrow." A film produced by the Brooklyn-based Eastern Cooperative League, one academic journal described it as a "stirring documentary" about farmers and workers building "people's business."⁶⁵ Where appropriate, books highlighted cooperative ventures in the same region as the camp. For instance, participants at the 1945 Stonington, Maine, camp were asked to read *The Lord Helps*

⁶³ "Paoli Junior Work Camp." Social-Industrial Section, Work Camps, Paoli, Pa., General, 1945. AFSCA.

⁶⁴ Appelbaum, *Kingdom to Commune*, 49.

⁶⁵ *The Journal of Education Sociology*, "Books." 16, no. 8. (April, 1943): 530.

Those, a book on cooperative economic efforts in relatively nearby Nova Scotia.⁶⁶

Between the readings on cooperative economics and camp location and related social ills, it was definitely a socially critical curriculum that the AFSC brought to its volunteers.

Though given the voluntary nature of the camps, those that self selected to partake in the experience were most likely open to these general ideas already.

The process of formal volunteer development continued throughout the summer. Of course the centerpiece of the work camp education was the personal encounter and a hard day's labor. As one AFSC camp director's manual wrote, "The work camps are based upon seven or eight hours a day of hard physical labor. It is thought that through this work the campers can make a contribution to the community, and give evidence of their belief in the way of love." For the relatively privileged young men and women who participated in the camps, it was meant to be an experience in the dignity of labor. Though the work had to be beneficial and purposeful, as the manual went on to warn, "There is nothing more degrading than ineffectual work."⁶⁷ Further, the work had to be cast in some capacity as "an expression of friendship" to the host community. This latter emphasis was a conscious effort by the AFSC, as work camp organizers feared having too heavy-handed an approach that might come across too strongly as "an attempt from the outside to solve the community's problems."⁶⁸

The labor was largely unskilled, though it was typically no light task and required sustained exertion. The range of the work was broad and dependent on the camp's focus and location, from digging wells to clearing fields to painting community centers, to

⁶⁶ "Stonington Work Camp." Social-Industrial Section, Work Camps, Stonington, ME., General, 1945. AFSCA.

⁶⁷ AFSC Work Camp Director's Manual. Philadelphia: American Friends Service Committee, 1947.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

clearing rubble from a city lot. Certain camps called for even more specialized tasks like giving goats blood tests and “anti-tick dip” as one Shannondale, Missouri, camp counted among its accomplishments.⁶⁹

In the first decade of these work camp programs tasks were often, though not always, assigned on the basis of classic gender roles. The precedent began at the first camp at Westmoreland. The young men mixed concrete and helped build a pipeline for the community’s reservoir, while the women—who numbered only a third as many as the young men, spent their days watching children in the community, as well as working with Westmoreland mothers on domestic projects, what the AFSC referred to as “household arts.”⁷⁰ As a work camp manual wrote, camp directors were encouraged to think about “Girls’ Special Projects.” As the pamphlet further suggested, successful projects in the past in this regard had included, “nursery schools, girls’ clubs, boys’ clubs, sewing bees, canning and preserving groups and classes of various kinds, including homes economics, shorthand and typing.”⁷¹ The assumption was that projects that required more physical strength would be given to males. When responsibilities of the camp could be assigned along gender lines, they often were. Males built fences, sowed fields, and constructed dams. Female volunteers often did this work as well, but when the tasks arose were frequently assigned duties such as laundry and cooking.

The group work, whether it was in the Appalachian region of northeast Georgia, rural upstate New York, or a black neighborhood in Chicago, was from the AFSC perspective not only about fostering interracial and interclass encounters. It was also

⁶⁹ Social-Industrial Section. *Work Camps*. Shannondale, Missouri, Diary, 1945. AFSCA.

⁷⁰ “Friends Service Camp--The Project.” Coal Relief Section, Subsistence Homesteads, Westmoreland, PA. *Work Camp*, 1934. AFSCA.

⁷¹ AFSC Work Camp Director’s Manual. Philadelphia: American Friends Service Committee, 1947.

meant to be an experiential education. In contrast to the atomizing pulls of a capitalist economy and modern life that placed a premium on the individual above all, the camp was meant to offer a counterbalancing experience in collective processes. It was a space of praxis, where campers could put the cooperative theories from their pre-camp reading into action. As one camper described in their evaluations, it was “a group exploration of a new way of life.”⁷² This included building relations with the host community—which was not always the easiest of tasks as the first campers at Westmoreland in 1934 experienced. The organization and functioning of the camp was also supposed to be a collective process. Campers were expected to rotate duties and responsibilities among themselves, make decisions affecting the whole group together and, while there was always several AFSC adults in charge of the experience, in the face of challenges or issues throughout the course of the summer campers were expected to first “handle the problems involved in their own life and work.”⁷³ Instructions to camp directors from the AFSC stressed that they were there “to give guidance but not to dictate” as the decision making process lay in the hands of the campers, instead.⁷⁴

The educational process during the camp was not just limited to learning through service. Through the weeks, in addition to social outings, campers often hosted guests who would give talks and lead pointed discussions on cooperative economics or creative non-violence. The speakers were most often a mix of professors, ministers, political and union organizers, as well as respected members from the host community. This practice began with the Westmoreland camp in 1934, whose guests that summer included nonviolent resistance pioneer Richard Gregg, a textile worker from nearby Philadelphia,

⁷² Timbres, “Evaluations,” 12. AFSCA.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ AFSC Work Camp Director’s Manual. Philadelphia: American Friends Service Committee, 1947.

a minister and Fellowship of Reconciliation member from Antioch College, and a professor of economics from Amherst College.⁷⁵ When an outside speaker was not leading the campers, they still had regularly scheduled evening discussions. As one 1939 article in the magazine *Independent Woman* described, at night tired campers still gathered “to discuss constructive and non-violent means of solving local social problems, to explore the possibilities of a better social economic order.”⁷⁶ While the AFSC helped shape the topics, it gave campers significant authority in shaping the discussions. They were encouraged to create “education committees” to help individualize their summertime nonviolent and cooperative curricular choices. The AFSC instructed camp directors to make sure that, at least in the beginning of a summer, discussions not be “loaded” with pacifist doctrine.⁷⁷ But again, one imagines that as voluntary service experiences the campers who chose to partake in such an experience were at least somewhat familiar with the AFSC and the organization’s pacifist orientation.

The one common practice across the camps was a morning gathering with an opening meditation and “Quaker silence” to start the day.⁷⁸ Religious belief was important to the work camp experience, but not in a restrictive sense. The camps and the AFSC nurtured a spirit of collaboration always meant transcend the various boundaries that may separate individuals from one another. As it was with the Westmoreland camp, there was no rule about specific denominational affiliation, nor was it even necessity that camp directors or campers were Quakers. While some level of Quaker meditation was encouraged, with resources provided by the AFSC, the love-in-action spirit that

⁷⁵ *The Friends Service Camper* 1, no. 1, July 9, 1934. AFSCA.

⁷⁶ Alice Mary Kimball, “Work Camps,” *Independent Woman*, June, 1941, 172-173.

⁷⁷ AFSC Work Camp Director’s Manual. Philadelphia: American Friends Service Committee, 1947.

⁷⁸ See for example Social Industrial Section. Work Camps. Shannondale, Missouri, Diary, 1945, AFSCA.

animated the camps appealed to a broader swath of campers, a larger culture of youth interested in pacifism and social action that could not be confined by confessional identity.

The great majority came from mainline Protestant and peace church denominations. But in a period still strongly defined by denominational affiliation, the AFSC volunteers were a religiously diverse group. For example, in 1945 the largest number of affiliated campers were Friends, but the following largest groups were, in order, those without affiliation (“None”), Methodists, and Jews. The ranks further included Catholics, Unitarians, and members of the Evangelical and Reformed church, to name others. The only requirements for volunteer applicants set by AFSC were those willing to “Live cooperatively as part of a group; Do hard physical labor; Impose self-discipline as a member of a democratically organized group; Study sympathetically the social and economic problems of the area in which the camp is located.”⁷⁹

Geographically, the volunteers came mainly from the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, and upper Midwest. Of the summer of 1945 group, several came from large state schools, including the University of Minnesota, Iowa State, and the University of New Hampshire. More came from private colleges, including Barnard, Bucknell, Denison, Cornell, Middlebury, Oberlin, Swarthmore, the University of Chicago, Yale, and Brown. The schools speak further to the relatively privileged background of the volunteers. This privileged dynamic was even more heightened at the junior work camp level, as the

⁷⁹ “Work Camps Conducted by American Friends Service Committee (Quakers), June 28-August 23, 1940” (Philadelphia: American Friends Service Committee, 1940).

students came from well to do suburbs, and often—elite northeast private schools such as Phillips Andover in Massachusetts.⁸⁰

For these volunteers the work camp was an intensive, vigorous, challenging, and quite rewarding affair. One camper, George Abernathy, described his experience in detail in a 1937 article of *The Intercollegian*, the Y.M.C.A.'s youth magazine, about his summer in the struggling coal-mining community of Dillonvale, Ohio. The most exhaustive part of the experience, by design, was the seven hours a day he and his peers spent working on their projects. Then there was the slow process of explaining the “queerness” of their unpaid voluntary venture to befuddled locals as they worked to gain their trust. The process involved both careful explanation, as well as careful listening, as Abernathy and others came to understand that they had much to learn from their hosts. As Abernathy wrote with insightful self-awareness, “Privileged and emancipated college students do not always find it easy, even when they so desire, to put themselves in a frame of mind to respect and to learn from those who are less privileged and enlightened.” Hours not laboring to help the community were spent on field trips and in discussions to “get an understanding of the human problems involved in the present decline of the soft coal industry.” They met with miners, union officials, mine operators, and visited “shaft mines, strip mines, company towns, steel mills, C.I.O. meetings, arbitration meetings, and government homestead projects for the rehabilitation of minors.”⁸¹ At night, while their bodies ached their minds came alive as they talked about national labor unrest, Section 7-a of the National Recovery Act, and the rise of the C.I.O. led by John Lewis of the United Mine Workers Union.

⁸⁰ Social Industrial Section, Work Camps, Administration. Statistics, 1945. AFSCA.

⁸¹ George Abernathy, “There Must Be a ‘Catch’ In It . . .,” *The Intercollegian and Far Horizons*, May 1937, 170-171.

The time in Dillonvale was rich and invigorating. But Abernathy and his camp friends also realized that their completed work and newfound relationships with their hosts were in a way small victories, as they had to come to terms with the limits of their efforts in the face of the deep social roots of violence. As he wrote, “Always we were aware of the inadequacy of what we were doing in the light of what needed to be done. It was this realization more than anything else which destroyed the facile optimism and the simple faith in intelligence which we brought with us from our college classrooms.”⁸² While it was a sobering realization, in this way Abernathy represented the ideal volunteer experience. For the results of hammers, hoes, and paintbrushes were only one part of the camp’s education. It was designed as an experience of personal growth for the volunteer, a rite of passage by which a camper was transformed by the bonds they made, communities they helped, discussions they had, and new understanding of the larger social problems they faced. AFSC work camp volunteers were supposed to head home with a greater understanding of the complex social ills of the “real world” that could not be explored nor fully unpacked in the same way within the confines of the classroom. The immediate task at hand was completed, though the men and women of the AFSC hoped that the full returns of the work camp experience would follow in the years afterward, when George Abernathy and his peers would become leaders in their fields and communities and challenge unjust social ills like racism or runaway capitalism.

1.4 The Model Spreads

Outside enthusiasm for the new Quaker service camps readily came from the cultural community of interwar mainline Protestantism, as the camps appealed to this

⁸² Ibid, 171.

audience's affinity for pacifism and social Christianity outreach. As Patricia Appelbaum has convincingly demonstrated, in the 1920s up through the start of World War II, in addition to the peace churches, most mainline denominations had antiwar stances. These denominations further focused on parachurch organizations to help mobilize a larger movement of the growing number of high school and college youth for activities related to pacifism and social outreach.⁸³ Organizations like the YMCA were important nodes for student "deliberations on war, peace, and pacifism," among other progressive stances on social issues.⁸⁴ The more specific aims of the work camps was also familiar within certain reaches of these circles, as illustrated by the "Summer Industrial Service Groups" the YMCA ran starting in the 1920s which allowed students to study during their summer breaks "the problems of the social order" up close.⁸⁵

Within this institutional and cultural context, one of the common tropes of the pacifist vernacular was a call for "creative" work. Creative works covered an array of constructive efforts, active structural changes, and alternative institution building that would lead towards a more just, cooperative, and peaceful world.⁸⁶ In addition to the privileged place liberal Quakerism had in Protestant pacifist culture in this period, within this framework of creative work the volunteer camps were received as prime practical examples of the type of spiritually and socially renewing work many proponents had in mind. For example, in their 1937 *Creative Pioneers*, George Sherwood Eddy and Kirby Page, giants of Christian pacifism and social action, specifically cited and applauded the

⁸³ For a discussion of parachurch organizations and their relationship to formal denominational structures, see Jerome Baggett, *Habitat for Humanity: Building Private Homes, Building Public Religion* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001).

⁸⁴ Appelbaum, *Kingdom to Commune*, 28.

⁸⁵ Clarence Prouty Shedd, *A Century of Christian Student Initiative* (New York: Association Press, 1945), 395.

⁸⁶ Howard Brinton, *Swarthmore Lecture, 1931* (London: George Allen and Unwin LTD, 1931).

AFSC work camps.⁸⁷ As they wrote, the camps were important training ground in the making of “creative pioneers” in the “technique of social change without the use of violence.”⁸⁸ They further approved the camp’s underlying convictions that, “pacifism applies not only in the case of international war, but that we need to discover ways of bringing about the essential changes in the social order by methods and devices which are creative rather than destructive.”⁸⁹ The camps were an exemplar of preventative pacifism and working toward building a new society rather than waiting to rebuild one wrecked by armed struggle. Consequently, as the AFSC promoted its new volunteer summer opportunity, it found fertile ground among high school and college youth who were open to the “creative” ideals the camps were founded upon and had the opportunity and leisure to explore them.

In addition to the “creative pioneers” of Protestant circles, the Friends’ work camps caught the eyes of a far less outwardly religious crowd. A circle of education scholars, teachers, and parents supported the growth of the AFSC work camps primarily because of their educational benefits, apart from its Christian pacifist foundations. Indeed, some saw within the camps the seed of an idea they thought had the potential to transform the nation’s system of secondary education.

Among many education professionals in the period, there was a shared concern that traditional school curriculums and methods of instruction failed to give students all the “practical” knowledge they needed for life outside of the classroom. These individuals and their criticisms and suggested reforms all tended to follow under the

⁸⁷ Nancy Roberts, *American Peace Writers, Editors, and Periodicals: A Dictionary* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1991), 90, 216.

⁸⁸ Sherwood Eddy and Kirby Page, *Creative Pioneers: Building a New Society through Adventurous Vocations and Avocations on the Frontiers of Industrial Relations the Political Movement, the Cooperative Movement, Race Relations, and Socialized Religion* (New York: Association Press: 1937), 123.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 124.

broad category of “progressive” education. While the progressive vs. traditional was, and remains, an oversimplified dichotomy, in general progressive educators tended to follow the writings of John Dewey and favored more flexible curricular approaches with greater experiential and hands-on learning experiences.⁹⁰ Literary discussions, fractions, and historical dates were important, but these critics found this to be too narrow a set of learning outcomes. Schools needed to focus on a broader understanding of knowledge and skillsets, and instead of what they perceived as the limited scope of traditional education models, progressive educators called for an “education of the whole child.”⁹¹ This was not just a matter of improved pedagogy. These calls for reform were undergirded by larger existential concerns that students would be ill-equipped from their education to tackle the complex problems facing the nation from within and abroad. These concerns were certainly exacerbated by the class and racial tensions brought by the Depression, and the distant drumbeats of war from the other sides of both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

These educational critiques were not new. They fit into a longer-running vein of concern among white upper middle and upper class Americans that the comforts of modern living were having a detrimental affect on their children. As the argument went, these youth were lacking in resilience due to the relative ease of their lives. As a result, they were enfeebled and not fit for the challenges of adulthood, not to mention the greater struggles of leadership in complex world. As one scholar wrote in a 1940 paper, “Over-schooled and under-experienced young Americans sometimes encounter difficulties in

⁹⁰ For a brief summary of the progressive education movement and problems with the definition, see the introduction of William Hayes’ *The Progressive Education Movement: It Is Still a Factor in Today’s Schools?* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006).

⁹¹ Lloyd B. Sharp and Ernest G. Osborne, “Schools and Camping,” *Progressive Education* 17 (April 1940): 236.

leaving the state of adolescents and becoming adults.”⁹² These heavily gendered and male-centric concerns had helped catalyze the development of the camping movement and the start of organized sports a half-century earlier.⁹³ Similar fears over youth losing touch with nature and becoming weak in terms of body, mind, and overall resilience in the face of hardship animated progressive education reformers. Indeed, an assertion from John Dewey at the time could have very well come from an argument for summer camps some forty years earlier as he was quoted, “The average American child seldom comes in direct contact with nature. In school he learns a few dates from books, to press a button, to step on an accelerator, but he is in danger of losing contact with primitive realities ...”⁹⁴ Not only were youth not prepared for an adulthood, many of these same individuals felt that there was no proper constructive outlet for their leisure energies, as well. Alice Keliher, a professor of education at New York University wrote in a June 1941 issue of *Parents Magazine*, “The leisure problem of youth is a serious one. We are suffering violently in an age when whole nations have failed to use human energy constructively Idleness is a kind of vacuum into which we may expect any kind of behavior to fly. Nature abhors a vacuum, so do youth.”⁹⁵

The AFSC work camps came to the attention of several progressive education proponents soon after the program began. Part of the appeal was that the AFSC camps fit easily into the pre-existing framework of youth camping in the U.S. Since the turn of the twentieth century the camping movement had long been seen as one means of ameliorating the feminizing effects of modern life. Both religious and secular camps took

⁹² Richard Gothe, *An Introduction to Work Camps* (Washington D.C, 1940).

⁹³ See Clifford Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).

⁹⁴ Dewey quoted in Lloyd B. Sharp and Ernest G. Osborne. “Schools and Camping,” 237.

⁹⁵ Alice Keliher, “Summer Experiences for Youth,” *Parents Magazine*, June 1941, 28.

part in the commodification of nature to give anxious white middle class parents a place for their children to be spiritually, physically, and socially rejuvenated and strengthened in a way that only a pastoral environment could provide.⁹⁶

But the AFSC camps were seen as an improvement over other youth camp options due to the explicit emphasis on work and physical labor. As Ormsbee Robinson of the Ethical Culture Society in New York City argued in a 1939 issue of *Curriculum Journal*, “Hard work as a fundamental educational experience has been more or less ignored by the schools.”⁹⁷ A 1940 American Education Council report, *What the High Schools Ought to Teach*, offered a vigorous endorsement of integrating various types of physical labor and work into the secondary school curriculum, which they felt had become a place that focused too much on the mind and not on the whole person. As the report bluntly stated, “Young people need to learn to work. Labor is the lot of man and it has not been recognized as it should have been in arranging institutional education.”⁹⁸ The experience of physical work was an important point of transition from “dependent childhood into independent, self-supporting adulthood,” a means to “cultivate physical stamina” alongside the mind as a more holistic educational experience.⁹⁹ Pointing to the benefit of the work camp, one report wrote in 1940, “Today there are millions of boys and girls who do not know how to do any sort of work except that of the classroom. The

⁹⁶ See Abigail A. van Slyck. *A Manufactured Wilderness: Summer Camps and the Shaping of American Youth, 1890-1960* (University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

⁹⁷ Ormsbee W. Robinson, “Work as Education: An Experiment,” *Curriculum Journal* 10 (February 1939): 73-75.

⁹⁸ American Youth Commission, *What the High Schools Ought to Teach; The Report of a Special Committee on the Secondary School Curriculum* (Washington, D.C.; American Council on Education, 1940), 25.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 16.

work camp is an attempt to give these young people an opportunity to learn something about manual work, done in a group for the benefit of others”¹⁰⁰

Kenneth Holland, a former education adviser to the Civilian Conservation Corps, was particularly influential among educational circles in arguing for the potential value of the AFSC camp model, including two studies he produced for the American Council on Education, *Work Camps for High School Youth*, and *Work Camps for College Students*.¹⁰¹ For Holland the work camp model as presented by the AFSC had the power to touch youth across the country. In his 1941 *Work Camps for High School Youth*, he made his case by writing about a hypothetical future wherein 1.5 million city high school juniors and seniors, rather than the fifty-eight campers studied in his book, took part in summer work camps. “The campers themselves gained the satisfaction that comes from helping others. But that was not their only satisfaction. For the first time in their lives many of them learned what it means to work, for in today’s America it is rare for city high school youth to have had actual work experience, no matter what their economic level may be. The satisfaction and the drudgery, the aching back and slowly acquired knack of handling tools and instruments correctly, the sweat and the grumbling over the stupidity of the supervisor, the painstaking attention to each detail and the over-all view of the completed job, all were theirs as novel experiences.”¹⁰²

Of course at that time youth work camps of great scale did exist, those run by the CCC and National Youth Administration, respectively. These government programs provided a comparable framework for the programs, as well as a point of comparison for

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Kenneth Holland and George Bickel, *Work Camps for High School Youth* (Washington D.C: American Council on Education, 1941); Kenneth Holland, *Work Camps for College Students* (Washington D.C.: American Council on Education, 1941).

¹⁰² Ibid, 3-4.

them to be defined against. As Holland, himself a former CCC employee, and other proponents argued, while the government camps dwarfed the AFSC program in scale, they did not have the same formative and educational potential. They were programs that provided work out of the necessity of economic crisis. While they put food in the stomachs of the youth in their ranks and a few dollars in their pockets, these government programs were a response to the struggles of the less well off, and as such were not an acceptable model for education reform.

For educators like Holland, the ideal work camp volunteer was the more privileged high school or college aged youth, as their advantaged upbringing made a service camp experience all the more important. Like Céréssole, proponents of progressive education also used William James' essay as a guiding canonical document. But where Céréssole had used William's envisioned peace army to help put his pacifist beliefs in action, Holland and others stuck closer to James' more secular concerns of finding a means of training what James called "our gilded youth" so they might learn the problems faced by "the unemployed workers and farmers and their problems."¹⁰³

For the AFSC organizers, the work camp was meant to help strengthen general bonds of humanity in a way that at least began to transcend class, racial, and political boundaries. But progressive educators in support of the model focused less on its theological and pacifist roots and viewed the camps' potential value through a more secular civic lens, in a real way subverting the original foundations of the work camp. For instance, progressive educators saw the model as boot camps for democracy with the specter of totalitarian regimes in Europe looming. As Holland wrote in one of his

¹⁰³ Kenneth Holland, "The European Work-Camp Movement," *Junior-Senior High School Clearing House* 10, no.3, (November 1935): 150-151.

arguments for expanding work camps, “the moral and physical fiber of youth must be toughened and made more sinewy if we are to withstand the onslaught of totalitarian forces. The work camp for youth is an important and vital means by which we can increase the stamina of our democracy.”¹⁰⁴ The encounter here was not just about common human connection, but tightening the country’s fibers. As one work camp organizer from the private Fieldston School in New York City wrote, the camp gave student participants, “a chance to rub shoulders with others who are carrying on the work of our country—farmers, miners, men who spend their lives in factories.”¹⁰⁵ The result was not just transformed young men and women, but stalwart citizens. Strengthened bodily, mentally, and civically, as another proponent wrote in the aftermath of a camp, “They were better prepared to take their places as intelligent, alert, public-spirited citizens.”¹⁰⁶

In this regard, the arguments carried greater weight as the work camp model did have a direct point of comparison with Germany, in which a vibrant work camp tradition took root starting in 1925. It was first started by students under the advisement of Professor Eugene Rosenstock-Hussy at the University of Breslau. Originally a means of strengthening social ties in the Weimar Republic, by the late 1930s it had taken on new scale and ideological bent with the Hitler Youth.¹⁰⁷ Nazi Germany was one dystopian possibility of youth energies gone awry, a frustration that had been captured by Hitler for

¹⁰⁴ Holland, *Work Camps*, 26.

¹⁰⁵ Ormsbee W. Robinson and Martha Munzer, “High School Students’ Experiences in the Hudson Guild Summer Work Camp, *Progressive Education* 16 (December, 1938): 637.

¹⁰⁶ Holland, *Work Camps for College Students*, 1.

¹⁰⁷ Holland, “The European Work Camp Movement,” 146-48. The European work camp movement continued to spread throughout the 1920s and establish branches throughout the continent.

his own purposes. As such, for some the creation of a U.S. equivalent was all the more imperative a model to invest in and scale up.¹⁰⁸

Despite these respective more secular and nationalist interpretations of the youth work camp's promise and potential, this support did make for a fruitful relationship with the AFSC. The AFSC's camp organizers from the beginning had embraced the idea that they were a supplemental educational experience to classroom learning, but not to the extent pursued by these professional educators. Staff members of the AFSC worked with the Progressive Educational Association and New York City-based Ethical Culture schools to help camps of their own in the late 1930s in places such as the Appalachians of Eastern Kentucky and rural upstate New York. Private high schools associated with the progressive educational movement like Vermont's Putney School provided a steady stream of volunteers to the Friends' Junior Work Camps. Ken Holland organized the non-Quaker work camps under the organization Work Camps for America.¹⁰⁹ Under this organizational banner—one that attracted no less than Eleanor Roosevelt to its board—Holland and others continued to argue for expanding the Quaker's model to a nationwide scale, until the outbreak of World War II shifted national priorities, and potential young male campers, elsewhere.

1.5 Serving Whom?

For both the AFSC and their progressive education supporters, despite differences in emphasis, the focus of the work camp experience clearly was on the youth volunteer.

¹⁰⁸ See also Kenneth Holland, *Youth in European Labor Camps*. Washington, D.C: American Council on Education, 1939.

¹⁰⁹ For more on this progressive education vein of the work camp movement, see Roy B. Chamberlin, "Camp William James: A Case Study" in Donald Eberly, ed. *A Profile of National Service* (New York, Overseas Educational Service, 1966), 28-31; Algernon D. Black, *The Young Citizens: The Story of the Encampment for Citizenship* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1962).

As AFSC executive secretary Clarence Pickett described, the camps were meant “to sensitize the consciences of our younger generation with regard to the social order, to toughen the moral, spiritual, and physical fiber of youth, and insure it to hard work, and withal to sensitize ... to the needed alternation and development in our present social structure.”¹¹⁰ Whether it was to help shape the next generation of pacifists or mold future leaders in the face of the enfeebling luxuries of modern living, the camps were meant to provide young women and men a novel experience of education and encounter, especially so they could come to understand, as one camper put in a 1941 article, “that common men, unemployed, and social outcasts, are people very much like themselves.”¹¹¹ As the article demonstrates, the volunteer experience was in a real way the product of, and an attempt to address, an unequal dynamic. Campers had to have the luxury of being able to give up time and potential pay elsewhere to pursue a summer’s worth of hard work for and with “common men.”

Those served by AFSC work campers themselves were both primary and secondary foci of the experience. In the promotional and internal documentation on the camps, the host communities were largely absent. Tellingly, from early on the AFSC gave campers evaluations at the end of their camp experience. The evaluations, which campers were allowed to go home and reflect upon before mailing them back to the Committee’s Philadelphia offices, asked for comment on all facets of the camping experience. This included the pace of work, the value of speakers and field trips, group dynamics, and, keeping with the camp’s theological foundation, “How effectively could the “way of love and brotherhood” and of non-violent solutions be applied to the

¹¹⁰ Miller, “A Philosophy of Religious Voluntary Service,” I-8. BHLA.

¹¹¹ R. Alfred Hassler, “Brotherhood in A-C-T-I-O-N.” *Baptist Leader*, February, 1941: 36.

problems with which the camp dealt?”¹¹² Included in these questions was how relations with the local community were, but no such questionnaires were distributed to members of the local community for similarly thorough feedback.

The women, men, and children of the host community were of course important, and the AFSC and most campers labored diligently to get to know their temporary neighbors, work with them as allies, and at least try to avoid being heavy handed and paternalistic in their work. But even with these efforts, the focus was about the volunteer camper and their transformative encounter through their temporary sojourn across class, racial, and cultural lines into another world. As one write up in *Independent Woman*, the imprint of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women’s Club wrote, the camps were “the most strenuous sort of vacation routine I’d ever heard of.”¹¹³ While not as relaxing and far more altruistic than a typical summer vacation, the work camp, like a vacation, was a limited experience. Privileged in both resources and geographic mobility, volunteers returned home after their summers at the flashpoints of American race and economic relations. But those they served, whether they were sharecroppers in the Mississippi Delta, miners in Kentucky, or stuck in the ghettos of Chicago, had no such luxury.¹¹⁴ They were already home.

In contrast to the aspirational language of the promotional literature for the camps, this private voluntary effort remained small. Through the 1930s and into the 1940s several hundred students participated in the projects. It certainly paled in comparison to the somewhat similar government work camp programs that were born of

¹¹² Social Industrial Section Work Camps Hazel Green, Kentucky, 1945. AFSCA. Though the questionnaires were consistent throughout the camps.

¹¹³ Kimball, “Work Camps,” 172.

¹¹⁴ Keliher, “Work Experiences,” 60.

necessity and driven by unemployment rather than voluntary aspirations. There were indeed limits to this private voluntary impulse.

The work camps were certainly not local panaceas, but nor did they harbor such aspirations. The work they did was helpful but, as George Abernathy wrote of his Dillonvale experience, limited in the face of the social issues that had led to those local realities of hardship and deprivation. Volunteer youth service from these beginnings was always ameliorative at best, a bandage rather than a disinfectant over societal wounds, relief rather than reform. But the Friends of the AFSC were not naive to these realities. The emphasis on the transformative encounter indeed was recognition of the camps' explicit educational aim. The camps were not the front lines but the training grounds for preventative pacifism. As AFSC camp organizer David Richie wrote, the initiative was meant to "provide an educational opportunity for both pacifist and non-pacifists students to better understand the economic and social injustice which cause violence, and to feel deeply through involvement the plight of human beings trapped in unemployment and desperate poverty."¹¹⁵ The real challenge of rooting out poverty, racial tension and violence was the task of the former volunteers, equipped with their new understanding of the "plight of human beings" elsewhere in the country, in years to come.

Award-winning young adult author and Quaker Marjorie Hill Allee captured this ideal in her 1941 book, *The Camp at Westlands*, a fictional AFSC work camp loosely based on the first camp at Westmoreland. The central character of the book is Alice, a rich young woman from Chicago and college student who, at the book's beginning, is self-centered, short with others, and barely capable of washing her small dog, Tuffy. She goes to the camp mainly to spite her parents who wished her to take a desk job offered by

¹¹⁵ Richie, *Memories and Meditations of a Workcamper*, 5.

a family friend. Throughout the book she is challenged by her experiences, locals, and volunteer friends at the Westlands camp, whether it is making new connections, or even running the camp's washing machine correctly. By the book's end she is a changed individual. As the book closes, Allee writes that the campers did not succeed much in the ways of their projects, "But they had begun to understand what needed to be done, not only at Westlands but in the wider world. They would go on trying, not just for the few more days of camp, but for all of their lives."¹¹⁶

Some campers indeed seemed to be thusly moved by the experience. For others the result was not nearly so deep or nuanced. Rather, they just enjoyed what was a different and challenging summer break option. As one parent in article remarked of the camp's effect on her son, "Since his summer in a work camp John is not only healthier, but *happier*, than I have ever known him to be."¹¹⁷

These dynamics aside, this novel volunteer program continued to flourish in the years following its start at Westmoreland, even in spite of challenges posed by the outbreak of World War II, including a pronounced gender imbalance among campers as young men were conscripted into the army or found work within the greater war effort. For some camp proponents, another world war made the Friends' program even more necessary an outlet for creative, constructive, and practical work, as "waging peace" became even more of an imperative.¹¹⁸ As one student author of *The Intercollegian* argued in January 1941, "We often think of *making* war and of *keeping* peace, whereas we must learn to think of *making* peace." Citing the Quakers and their great success with the work camp programs, the author went on to write, "They have had work camps in the

¹¹⁶ Marjorie Hill Allee, *The Camp at Westlands* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1941), 240.

¹¹⁷ John French, "Pick-and-Shovel Holiday," *Survey Graphic*, April 1937, 233.

¹¹⁸ Roy J. McCorkel, "We Must Wage Peace," *The Intercollegian*, January 1941, 61.

summer, designed to give young men and women a chance to express in action their deepest Christian convictions in needy places.”¹¹⁹

By this time, the Quakers were also no longer alone in their pioneering efforts to creatively and constructively work for a more peaceful world through the labors of well meaning youth. In addition to the education-minded camps, other Protestants had followed their example, including the Church of the Brethren, the Congregationalists, Mennonites, Methodists, Unitarians, the Evangelical and Reformed Church, Disciples of Christ. This growth was in large part due to the deliberate and intentional policy of the AFSC, who encouraged the adoption of the program they had started. To this end, the AFSC would often co-sponsor a camp with another denomination, such as a 1937 camp in Quaker Bridge, New York with the Church of the Brethren and the Mennonites, or a 1941 Meron, Indiana Camp with the Congregational Work Camp Committee, to lend their expertise to the start of these new work camp ventures.¹²⁰

The seed first planted by Pierre Cérésolé in the ashes of World War I had by the time of another world war blossomed and yielded fruit of a new kind. Through the late Thirties and Forties well-meaning high school and college youth could be found giving their time and energies in the coal fields of the Appalachians, rural reaches of Georgia, neglected black neighborhoods in Chicago and Detroit, and migrant work camps in California and Washington.

In a 1940 article for the journal *Christian Century*, the author wrote of the first AFSC work camp at Westmoreland in 1934, recalling that “In 1934 the Friends declared war on negativism and passivism. That summer they set up a peace army camp forty

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 62

¹²⁰ Miller, “A Philosophy of Religious Voluntary Service,” I-9.

miles southeast of Pittsburgh. Enlistment notices involved only those willing to serve without pay at hard physical labor, willing to submit to rigid self-discipline, and able to live as menials in a community where conflict was brewing.”¹²¹ Years later a 1945 article in the Methodist youth periodical *motive* reflected on the continued success of this “campaign” first launched a decade earlier. “They work for nothing—and pay for the privilege... . It is an astonishing reversal of our usual conception of the way things are done, and yet in the ten years the American Friends Service Committee has been sponsoring work camps in Maine and Mexico, in Missouri and New Jersey, over two thousand young people have done just that.”¹²² Indeed, contrary to what one might expect from young women and men who answered the call to fight the likes of “passivism,” the AFSC had served as creative pioneers of a new type of youth service that helped shape the volunteers as they worked to serve others. This new venture in youth development, combining direct service with a process of education that aimed for larger long-term results, helped begin a larger youth volunteer movement that would continue to grow and sprout new variations of the model in the decades to come.

¹²¹ Herman Keiter, “Soldiers of Peace,” *Christian Century* (October 2, 1940): 1202-1204;

¹²² Elizabeth Janet Gray, “Working for Nothing—Paying for the Privilege: A New Technique for Democracy,” *motive*, 1945, 28-29, 39.

2.0 Social Action in an Age of Anxiety

In May 1943 the end of World War II remained a distant hope. But this did not stop Donald Lemkau, a recent graduate of Chicago's Garrett Theological Seminary and work camp veteran, from imagining the task of rebuilding in the conflict's wake. His vision was published in the pages of *motive*, the popular youth magazine of the Methodist Student Movement. He argued that victory over the likes of Nazism would bring with it a whole new set of challenges. Given the war's incomparable scale of death and devastation, recovery constituted a moral, religious, cultural, political, and economic task "vast beyond our imagination."¹²³

But rather than bemoan this daunting endeavor, Lemkau instead concretely suggested "one important thing that can be done." Though it was, he reminded readers, no panacea, he believed the work camp movement offered one means among many of constructively, creatively, and effectively responding to the challenges of a postwar world. He argued that the work camp model, as a concept conceived in response to World War I, was a proven "instrument of reconciliation." The encounter and fellowship at the heart of the work camp experience made the labors of volunteers a powerful leaven for peaceful renewal. Lemkau called for a "world scale" of work camps, writing, "Post-war Europe ought to be dotted with work camps as a means to overcome suspicion and

¹²³ Donald R. Lemkau, "Through Labor in Fellowship: Work Camps Offer an Effective Method for Reconstruction." *motive*, May, 1943, 23.

hatred, and as centers of encouragement in the almost superhuman tasks of rebuilding. ... As far as possible, people of different races, nations, and religious groups should work together in each camp, under the direction of the people of the neighborhood.” He even made a point of suggesting that work camps, as a Protestant movement, might even entail “Roman Catholic cooperation,” a powerful endorsement in what remained a largely pre-ecumenical period.¹²⁴

Lemkau’s concerns over the complexities of the postwar world were not unique. In the years following World War II Americans found much to be anxious about in addition to the challenges of the new postwar order. These concerns flourished despite the country’s newfound global hegemony and relative domestic peace and prosperity.

But for many mainline Protestants these challenges also offered opportunities. Several years after Lemkau’s piece, Garrett Theological Seminary professor and social gospel advocate Harris Franklin Rall wrote with millennial optimism in an October 1946 *motive* article. In the face of so fraught and fragile a time, he declared, “Never was there such a chance for men of goodwill ‘to serve the present age.’”¹²⁵ These new anxieties of the postwar period gave even more impetus for the spread of the work camp movement pioneered by the Quakers of the AFSC. Through the 1940s and 1950s youth, ministers and church service committees turned to the idea of the work camp model as, in the words of Lemkau, “one important thing” that could be done in response to the times. Work camps were a concrete form of what the editors of *motive* and others within

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Harris Franklin Rall, “One Many, Three Dimensions.” *motive*, October, 1946, 10.

mainline Protestantism simply called “Christian Action,” an obligation rather than an option in such a weighty historical moment.¹²⁶

This context would serve to accelerate the growth of the work camp movement in multiple ways. Not only did the number of camps proliferate in the years following the end of World War II, so did their reach. As Lemkau had hoped for in his 1943 piece, the American work camp movement spread overseas to help rebuild shattered European communities. Further, this impulse evolved into a wider movement of youth volunteer service projects in ways that Lemkau did not anticipate. Through the late 1940s and 1950s work camps and other new types of youth service projects based on the work camp model became a fixture of mainline Protestant denominations. A summer service project became a less novel and more normal opportunity for college and high school youth. By the end of the 1950s some advocates even argued that such service projects were a necessary component of any church’s youth program.

The postwar age of anxiety was a time of growth, evolution, and eventually, professionalization for this impulse of youth social action. These developments meant new types of service programs, new volunteers, and new organizations. But throughout these dynamic changes, essential characteristics of the impulse remained the same. Volunteer service grew as an established opportunity for young adults to reach across class and racial lines to take part in socially constructive work. It also remained an activity of twofold benefit. It was helpful to others, but by design still a means to also enrich the volunteer in both specific and intangible ways.

¹²⁶ For example see *motive*, February 1946, 28-29.

2.1 Responding to an Anxious Time

The image of postwar America before the cultural and social tumult of the 1960s tends to conjure images of tidy suburbs, stable nuclear families, ample employment opportunities, and a nation unified by its collective endurance of the Great Depression and triumph in a second world war. But as scholars like Robert Wuthnow have demonstrated, this is a far from complete picture of the era. Social and economic tensions abounded, particularly for demographics long thrust to the margins of American society.¹²⁷ But even for suburban, middle-class, white Americans, far and away the greatest beneficiaries of postwar prosperity, these rosy realities were tempered by strong sentiments of insecurity and uncertainty. For many, it was “an Age of Anxiety.”¹²⁸

The postwar landscape abounded with menacing threats and trauma. Of course, the greatest was the shock of World War II. The conflict had swallowed up the lives of millions, maimed millions, and displaced millions. The twin tragedies of the Holocaust and Hiroshima showcased the cataclysmic possibilities of modern warfare. Fascism had been defeated, but a new and vigorous communist threat took its place. Stalin’s Iron Curtain sealed off Eastern Europe and Mao ultimately seized control of China in 1949. The chill of the Cold War settled across the globe. America’s icy relationship with the USSR took an even more ominous turn with the latter’s successful detonation of their own atomic bomb in 1949, making nuclear warfare an all-too-real possibility.

Adding to the dangers overseas were tensions at home, even though the country no longer was strained by the duress of the Depression. One source was what historian

¹²⁷ See Robert Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith Since World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

¹²⁸ See chapter one of Andrew Finstuen, *Original Sin and Everyday Protestants: The Theology of Reinhold Niebuhr, Billy Graham, and Paul Tillich in an Age of Anxiety* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

Andrew Finstuen has called the “the misnomer of ‘postwar America.’” While millions of GI’s flooded home after the war’s end, hundreds of thousands did not, leaving families to struggle with the pain of losing a father, brother, or son.¹²⁹ Other veterans struggled with the war’s physical and psychological scars. Further, as described by Gunnar Myrdal in his influential 1944 study of national acclaim, the “American dilemma” of race relations continued to strain the country and stain its conscience. The short-lived New Deal interregnum between labor and management began to crack as the economy shifted to peacetime production and businesses and politicians alike sought to roll back recent union gains.¹³⁰ McCarthyism exposed deep and entrenched public fears over the specter of domestic Communist infiltration. Even the period’s postwar prosperity did not come without a psychological cost. The explosion of consumer choices, the growth of the suburbs, and the very nature of white collar jobs begat its own concerns as seen through both secular and religious jeremiads like David Riesman’s *The Lonely Crowd* and Gibson Winter’s *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches*.¹³¹

Even the tremendous postwar surge in religious vitality was not without anxious introspection. New churches were constructed at a dizzying rate in the expanding suburbs. Church attendance rates spiked. Sunday schools were filled with ever-growing numbers of children. Seminaries were packed with men studying for ordination. Billy Graham filled stadiums with his revivals. Bishop Fulton Sheen was a television superstar

¹²⁹ Ibid, 16.

¹³⁰ Jefferson Cowie, *The Great Exception: The New Deal & the Limits of American Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).

¹³¹ While dated, a classic exploration of this impulse remains James Hudnut-Beumler’s *Looking for God in the Suburbs: The Religion of the American Dream and Its Critics, 1945-1965* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994).

with his show *Life is Worth Living*.¹³² But even this outpouring of religious piety was subject to public scrutiny and debate over whether this awakening was an authentic or “captive” and shallow revival. While there was much to be cheerful and hopeful about in these years, a deep vein of unease and angst pulsed through American society. Among religious historians who have studied this moment, Robert Wuthnow has most eloquently summarized this undercurrent, as he has written, “The prevailing mood, then, was by no means one of untrammelled opportunism. Some rays of hope had broken through at the conclusion of the war, but much of the sky remained dark.”¹³³

The nuanced and varied challenges of the postwar world were not lost on the nation’s young people. In mainline Protestant youth circles, preachers, periodicals, and pamphlets stressed the urgency of the moment and the hidden perils of the new normal. As a 1948 pamphlet from the United Christian Youth Movement (UCYM), an office of the National Council of Churches, exclaimed, “A Second World War in one generation has run its course. Democratic nations which stood against the threat of aggression have banded together for the work of peace in the United Nations. The task ahead—of building real peace—is indeed tremendous.” But it was not all doom, gloom, and collective hand-wringing. In the framework of a social action-oriented Christian faith, a full understanding of the moment meant meeting its challenges. As the same pamphlet went on to argue, “There is no hope for success unless we search deeply in our religious faith and apply it to the actions in the political order.” As it pointedly concluded, “To do

¹³² See Seth Jacobs, *America’s Miracle Man in Vietnam: Ngo Dinh Diem, Religion, Race, and U.S. Intervention in Southeast Asia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 60-87.

¹³³ Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion*, 43.

nothing is to go backward.”¹³⁴ In the postwar period, there was no room for a shallow or captive expression of religious faith.

Similar youth Protestant literature in the period emphasized dynamic of social action. The call of the world was a task Christian youth were obligated to respond to. As one author wrote confidently, “Those who are now young people had no choice about being born to live in such an hour of destiny. But because they are youth now, they are earmarked for greatness.”¹³⁵ As another author mused in the pages of *motive* in 1946, not only was it an opportunity to help rebuild, but to get to the deep social sources of such catastrophic violence. As he wrote, “So is it with war which represents the breaking out of an infection which has underlying causes. Once the hostility and its accompanying aftermath have been treated, the urgent necessity is to search for and eradicate the sources of infection.”¹³⁶ The message was clear, Christian service was needed in both reactive and proactive ways.

But how to take action? As a 1951 UCYM pamphlet helpfully suggested to its audience of young women and men ready to meet the demands of the moment but in need of an outlet, “The work camp is an answer to the oft heard comment of church young people, ‘Sure, we know the world has lots of problems, but what can WE do about them?’”¹³⁷ The work camp movement, and other new forms of youth volunteer service based on the work camp premise, offered one concrete way to answer the call.

¹³⁴ *Christian Youth and Political Responsibility: A Guide to Action for Christian Young people and Their Leaders in the United Christian Movement* (Chicago: United Christian Youth Movement, 1948), 4.

¹³⁵ Claire Bowman, *Ways Youth Learn* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952).

¹³⁶ Wesley Matzigkeit, “Attention: Youth Item: Service,” *motive*, May, 1946, 11-12, 38.

¹³⁷ United Christian Youth Movement. *Community Service through United Christian Youth Action: A Guide to Weekend Work Camping* (Chicago: United Christian Youth Movement, 1951).

2.2 The Influence of Civilian Public Service

Fraught cultural anxieties were not the only influence on the work camp movement in the postwar period. Another was the Civilian Public Service (CPS), the World War II program that offered conscientious objectors an alternative to military service.¹³⁸ The lessons and experiences of CPS, a combined initiative of the pacifist Church of the Brethren, Mennonites, and Quakers, would further shape the work camp movement and its evolution into a wider array of youth service opportunities.

The path to the creation of the CPS began in 1940. Officials from the historic peace churches saw war on the horizon and wanted to avoid much of the harsh treatment conscientious objectors, particularly young men in their denominations, had experienced during World War I. During that struggle, there was no government-sanctioned alternative to military service. Conscientious objectors were sent to military camps and military prisons where they still underwent military drilling. Prison and camp officials often subjected CO's, who they typically saw as cowards and subversives, to a wide array of harsh physical and emotional treatment, including shrinking rations and solitary confinement.¹³⁹

Thus, in the lead-up to World War II, officials of the historic peace churches worked to provide a less punitive nonmilitary service option for conscientious objectors. Along with the War Resisters League, American Civil Liberties Union, among others, they lobbied members of Congress, and even had a meeting with President Roosevelt to

¹³⁸ One of the best historical resources on the larger CPS story, including oral histories of CPS participants, is the website "Civilian Public Service: Living Peace in a Time of War," <http://civilianpublicservice.org>. The website is sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee, and utilizes archival sources from the AFSC Archives, Brethren Historical Archives and Library, Mennonite Church USA Archives, and Swarthmore College Peace Collection.

¹³⁹ Nicholas Krehbiel, *General Lewis B. Hershey and Conscientious Objection during World War II* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011), 5.

plead their case.¹⁴⁰ As a result of their efforts, section 5(g) of the 1940 Selective Service Act allowed conscientious objectors to be “assigned to work of national importance under civilian direction.”¹⁴¹ To coordinate such a program, the peace churches worked with the head of the Selective Service, General Lewis Hershey, to establish the Civilian Public Service under the oversight of the National Service Board for Religious Objectors (NSBRO), a collaborative effort of the American Friends Service Committee, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), and Brethren Service Committee (BSC). Though other church and pacifist organizations joined NSBRO, the founding peace churches largely ran the program until the last CPS camps closed in 1946. The program was flawed in several ways, but it still provided a viable, if imperfect, pacifist alternative for the twelve thousand conscientious objectors who filled its ranks over the course of the war.¹⁴²

For the Mennonite and Brethren communities in particular, the CPS experience coincided with these churches’ own process of opening up to the world. Formerly these Anabaptist communities had been relatively cloistered. But throughout the 1930s and the 1940s the leadership of these churches and their service committees moved quickly from a previous stance of nonresistance to a more activist pacifist position. This shift entailed a more outward-looking and proactive peacemaking.¹⁴³ For many Mennonite and Brethren young men, Civilian Public Service accelerated this process. The young men who served were often changed by the experience. Their horizons were broadened and many returned

¹⁴⁰ For more detailed account of this lobbying process, see “The Story Begins,” <http://civilianpublicservice.org/storybegins>.

¹⁴¹ “The Burke-Wadsworth Bill,” <http://civilianpublicservice.org/storybegins/krehbiel/burke-wadsworth-bill>.

¹⁴² See chapter two of Jeffrey Kovac, *Refusing War, Affirming Peace: A History of Civilian Public Service Camp #21 at Cascade Locks* (Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 2009); see also Heather T. Frazer and John O’Sullivan, *We Have Just Begun to Not Fight: An Oral History of Conscientious Objectors in Civilian Public Service during World War II* (New York: Twayne, 1996).

¹⁴³ Brock and Nigel, *Pacifism in the Twentieth Century*, 345.

with a sense that work remained to be done in a troubled world. As one Mennonite Central Committee veteran, Edgar Stoesz, described, the face of the church was “no longer old bearded guys,” but rather Brethren and Mennonite young men ready to go out and sow the seeds of peace in the wider world.¹⁴⁴

Many CPS personnel were veteran work camp organizers and participants, which is not surprising given that the AFSC, MCC, and BSC were heavily involved in organizing both. They tended to see their CPS activities as a direct application of the work camp model to help fill the need for alternative service created by the draft.¹⁴⁵

While in this way the work camp movement helped shape the Civilian Public Service, CPS also helped spur new types of youth volunteer service. The first example of this came during the war. Most CPS assignments were a “base camp” model. From a fixed base, often an old Civilian Conservation Corps site, the young men of a CPS “unit” focused on projects like soil conservation, forestry, or provided agricultural labor to nearby farms. But some units were based in mental health institutions. As the war progressed, CPS opportunities were expanded in response to new needs of “national importance,” such as the development of a staffing crisis at mental hospitals around the country. These institutions suffered from staffing shortages before the war began. The problem was exacerbated as hospital staffs were “decimated” by the draft as well as the pull of better-paying wartime industry jobs.¹⁴⁶ In response, the Civilian Public Service

¹⁴⁴ Author interview conducted with Edgar Stoesz, October 21, 2014.

¹⁴⁵ Donald Durnbaugh, *Pragmatic Prophet: The Life of Michael Robert Zigler* (Elgin: Brethren Press, 1989), 129.

¹⁴⁶ “Work of National Importance,” The Civilian Public Service Story.
<http://civilianpublicservice.org/nationalimportance>.

organized “institutional units” to help staff these institutions and provide a baseline level of care for patients.¹⁴⁷

In 1943 a group of young women at Goshen College, a Mennonite school, began to lobby the Mennonite Central Committee. Even though they were obviously exempt from military service and had no need for a CPS-type program, they wanted to serve in mental health institutions in units of their own.¹⁴⁸ It was an extraordinary request, not only because the young women did it unprompted by the threat of the military draft, but also given that the institutional units were particularly challenging CPS placements. CPS ward attendants often worked upwards of 70 hours a week, and in some cases were responsible for one hundred or more patients.¹⁴⁹ Even with CPS units, mental health institutions were still chronically understaffed. Further, they were typically underfunded, patients often faced crude and even abusive treatment, and the institutions tended to suffer from a systemic lack of oversight. But the “CO girls,”—often referred to as “COGs”—were undeterred. They continued to request that the MCC provide them a similar means of applying their pacifist beliefs like their male peers. As a result of their lobbying efforts, in the summer of 1944 the MCC offered its first voluntary institutional units through which these women could volunteer their efforts, a decision that was followed shortly after by the Quakers of the AFSC.¹⁵⁰

These requests from below did not stop even after the end of the war and the winding down of the Civilian Public Service. The offices of the Mennonite Central

¹⁴⁷ The sad state of the nation’s mental institutions in the middle of the twentieth century and the attempts of troubled CPS volunteers to expose these neglectful conditions is a unique and important story unto itself. Thankfully it has been documented in Steven Taylor’s *Acts of Conscience: World War II, Mental Institutions, and Religious Objectors* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2009).

¹⁴⁸ Edward Miller, “A Philosophy of Religious Voluntary Service . . .,” I.12. Harold Row Papers at the Brethren Historical Archives, hereafter BHA.

¹⁴⁹ “Work of National Importance,” The Civilian Public Service Story.

¹⁵⁰ See Taylor, *Acts of Conscience*, 225-235,

Committee continued to receive earnest requests by young adults for a permanent CPS–style volunteer service program. It was apparent to these women and men that there was no less a need for their service in a postwar world. The leadership of the MCC shared this acute awareness. As one internal MCC memo from 1946 argued in support of such a new volunteer program, “We live in a world of need and confusion. A growing consciousness of the suffering, the hopelessness, and the evil of a war–torn world has caused us to become restless in our own favored situation. We cannot help but contrast the need with that or our own spiritual opportunities and our abundance of material wealth we so often take for granted. The realization of the love of God and the fruits of His Blessings constrain us to give ourselves to a greater service of love during peace as well as war time.”¹⁵¹

Thus, in response to the lobbying of Mennonite youth, and the example set by the CPS units and the work of the COGs, the MCC created the Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) in 1947 to, as the organizers wrote, “provide channels of Christian Service for young people.”¹⁵² Through the MVS program, volunteers would serve for a year in “units” around the country. Early locations included the MCC’s Akron, Pennsylvania office as support staff and coordinating the logistics of sending donations of food and clothing overseas, to a unit in Gulfport, Mississippi that worked on various projects for a rural African American community.¹⁵³

This voluntary peacetime extension of the CPS program represented a wider understanding that though the guns of war had fallen silent, significant work remained to

¹⁵¹ “Reports on Standards and Plans for a Possible Voluntary Services Program during 1947. Submitted to Special Meeting of MCC, October 31, 1946.” Mennonite Voluntary Service collection of the Mennonite Central Committee Archives, hereafter MCCA.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Detailed files for each unit placement available by location at MCCA.

be done. As one early volunteer wrote, “The situation of the world today demands that somebody bring forth a workable solution for understanding among men. If this is not done today, tomorrow may never come for most of us. Each of us has a responsibility to look for this solution.”¹⁵⁴ The MVS’s first director, Elmer Ediger described the program as a “recast” of the work camp movement started by the American Friends Service Committee. But more directly, MVS was the product of the lessons learned through Civilian Public Service. As he stated, “It was CPS that helped our churches to an awareness of the human resources which by the grace of God we possessed. The leadership discovered and developed by CPS at many different levels was only one aspect of that. ... Even more important ... was the realization that ordinary people with Christian character were genuinely needed in the world.”¹⁵⁵

The example of Civilian Public Service had a similar influence within the Church of the Brethren. In 1938, Dan West, a charismatic member of the Brethren Service Committee, had proposed an extended volunteer program. In a pamphlet entitled *The Coming Brotherhood*, he challenged the youth of the church “to give their lives in constructive service to meet elemental human needs in America or abroad.”¹⁵⁶ But it was not until after the war that this vision came to fruition. Under his guidance, a group of Brethren youth lobbied for the creation of a new volunteer service program modeled off

¹⁵⁴ *Mennonite Voluntary Service Newsletter*, February, 1956. Folder: IX 12--Mennonite Voluntary Service Newsletter. MCCA.

¹⁵⁵ Similar to the Brethren, the Mennonites have benefited from a rich tradition of internalist historians. Much of the information on the beginnings of Mennonite Voluntary Service come from Wilfred Unruh’s *A Study of Mennonite Service Programs* (Elkhart: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1965), 51. Wilfred’s father, John Unruh, was also a historian and wrote a history of the early decades of the Mennonite Central Committee, *In the Name of Christ: A History of the Mennonite Central Committee and its Service, 1920-1951* (Scottsdale, Pa: Herald Press, 1952).

¹⁵⁶ Dan West, *The Coming Brotherhood* (Elgin, IL: Elgin Press, 1938), 40; For some of Dan West’s retrospective comments on the program’s early years see, “The Next Ten Years of Brethren Volunteer Service.” *Brethren Life and Thought* 3, no.3 (Summer 1958): 22-32.

of the Civilian Public Service. Their efforts came to a culmination at the church's Annual Conference in 1948, highlighted by an impassioned speech by a young man named Ted Chambers who pleaded with church elders for a permanent volunteer service program. The scene was all the more so as Chambers, due to his diminutive height, had to stand on a soapbox to reach the microphone.¹⁵⁷ Like their Mennonite peers, the young Brethren women and men made a compelling case for a peacetime volunteer program, and as a result the Brethren Service Committee started a yearlong program, Brethren Volunteer Service (BVS).

The Mennonite Voluntary Service and Brethren Volunteer Service, two new yearlong service programs, were two of the most concrete ways the Civilian Public Service shaped the wider impulse of Protestant volunteer service. But that was not the only CPS legacy. Another was volunteer service placements in mental health facilities. Like the CPS units and COGs before them, "institutional units" became a mainstay of Protestant volunteer service opportunities for youth for years to come.¹⁵⁸ Further, the CPS experience served as a training ground for a cadre of future leaders of a growing phenomenon of youth volunteer service. It gave new vision and energy to these efforts to constructively respond to the needs of a fraught world. As Elmer Ediger, the aforementioned first leader of the MVS, wrote, "Through CPS came an awareness of needs in the world and the realization that these needs were a call to our church communities to give people."

¹⁵⁷ For the full story, plus additional information on the history of BVS within BSC, see Kreider, *A Cup of Cold Water*.

¹⁵⁸ For example, see *Invest Your Summer 1947*. Unitarian Service Committee. Home Projects Department. Administrative Records, 1948-1953, Box 2. Unitarian-Universalist Institutional Records. Harvard Divinity School. Hereafter UUIR.

2.3 International Work Camps

The original AFSC work camp at Westmoreland was very much a product of Atlantic connections, as it was an American application of the idea first tried by Pierre Céréssole in 1920 near Verdun. Whereas World War I had been the original catalyst for the work camp model that eventually came to the United States, at the end of World War II leaders of Protestant work camps in America looked back across the Atlantic to lend a hand in the work of reconciliation and reconstruction. As a May 1947 *Christian Science Monitor* article remarked, “A broad program of rehabilitation, social work and educational service will be carried out this coming summer on this continent and in Europe by a ‘small army’ of young people working through the American Friends Service Committee.”¹⁵⁹ This AFSC contingent was a small representation of the explosive growth of international work camps in the postwar years. With no shortage of work to be done, these overseas camps gave eager young women and men in the U.S. a new international means to put their faith to work in the service of others.

The first international work camps in Europe were held in Norway, Finland, Italy, and France in 1946. The two institutional shoots that had sprouted from Céréssole’s 1920 Verdun seed, the European-based Service Civil International (SCI) and its transatlantic pioneer of the American work camp movement, the AFSC, jointly ran them. The camps themselves had both European and American participants.¹⁶⁰ The venture was not the first international work camp run by the AFSC. In the 1940s the AFSC and Youth

¹⁵⁹ “Quaker Group Plans Program of Work for World Peace,” *Christian Science Monitor*, March, 24, 1947.

¹⁶⁰ David S. Richie, “Working Together in International Work Camps” in Christian Arndt and Samuel Everett, eds, *Education for a World Society: Promising Practices Today* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951), 107.

Division of the Methodist Church had both organized camps in Mexico, but these paled in comparison to the scale of work camp growth that occurred in postwar Europe.

After the successful example of the first SCI/AFSC camps, the same mainline and peace church Protestant groups that comprised the heart of the work camp movement in the U.S. quickly moved to open camps of their own. In response to the rush of efforts to establish European work camps, work camp organizers held a conference in Askov, Denmark, to help in October of 1947 coordinate these activities. The participants of the Askov gathering further created a shared statement of values, a vision of pacifism and peace building that stated, “Our common aim is to build peace through small international groups of volunteers working, living, and learning together.”¹⁶¹ The newly-formed UNESCO also organized a Coordination Committee for International Voluntary Work Camps in Paris to serve as a clearinghouse for information on international work camps and provide another space where various programs could cooperate with one another.¹⁶² The camps themselves were for both Americans and Europeans, though in most instances the latter far outnumbered the former. But a steady stream of American high school and college youth headed to Europe to engage in reconstruction activities. There they looked to take advantage of this expanded horizon of volunteer service by participating in an encounter across national lines that they hoped would help rebuild homes, heal the wounds of war, and through their manual labor lay the foundation to build a future world marked by peace.

The growth of European work camp programs, both in number and breadth across Protestants denominations, was swift, and was no doubt aided by the larger context of the

¹⁶¹ *Ecumenical Work Camps: A Handbook* (Geneva: World Council of Churches,, 1957) 1.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

Marshall Plan, as these camps, for both volunteers and organizers, fit within this unprecedented effort and ethos of postwar reconstruction.¹⁶³ By the summer of 1948 a young adult interested in an overseas work camp had an abundance to choose from. Camp offerings included programs run by the AFSC, the Mennonite Central Committee, the Congregational Christian Service Committee, the Northern Baptist Service Committee, the World Council of Churches, the Unitarian Service Committee, and the Fieldston School (a private progressive high school in New York City that was an early adopter of the AFSC work camp model in the 1930s). Two years later, this buffet had expanded even further to include programs offered by the Brethren Service Committee, Evangelical and Reformed Church, Episcopal Church, Universalist Service Committee, National Lutheran Council, and YMCA.¹⁶⁴ By 1950 it was the rare mainline Protestant denomination whose service committee or youth office did *not* have an international work camp opportunity of some sort.

The story of the Ecumenical Work Camp program offers a more specific example of this remarkable growth. Joseph Howell, a minister and member of the Boston-based Congregational Christian Service Committee, started the program in response to requests from young women and men who reached out and inquired how they could actively participate in reconstruction efforts in Europe. The first camp was held in 1947 in Le Chabom-sur-Lignon in southern France. After the success of the original camp, the program quickly gained steam. The Congregational Christian Service Committee partnered with the World Council of Churches, and by 1956 there were over thirty

¹⁶³ Alan S. Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe 1945-51* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

¹⁶⁴ See *Invest Yourself 1950*, Unitarian Service Committee. Home Projects Department. Administrative Records, 1948-1953, Box 2. UUIR.

international Ecumenical Work Camps a year, and over one thousand young people from over forty nationalities had participated in the program.¹⁶⁵

Despite the obvious difference in location, European work camps were quite similar to their American counterparts. The camps had the same focus of engaging young women and men in constructive manual labor and fostering new social bonds that transcended boundaries like national identity. The world was in need of “creative pioneers,” and these programs actively worked to answer that call. Furthermore, while the work camps undoubtedly did much local good and shaped the lives of campers and those served, the camps themselves remained a limited force for social transformation. It was a noble voluntary effort, but no panacea to Europe’s needs. It took the government–run Marshall plan to more adequately address the scale of need.

Much of the work was focused on literally cleaning up the debris from war, rebuilding new structures, and trying to respond to the needs of the continent’s displaced peoples. *motive*’s service directory for the summer of 1951 provides some illustrative examples. Baptist Youth Service Committee camps in Germany helped reconstruct a youth seminary destroyed by the war, as well as build a chapel for refugees near Hamburg. World Council of Church camps in Europe focused on “clearing rubble, constructing [a] stone classroom building and training center for Christian workers” and “transforming stables on old estate into residence quarters for young refugees.” The AFSC European program did not give any specifics on what sort of work would be done. But if there was any doubt to the work ahead, the organizers did specify in the program description, “Good physical stamina necessary.”¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁵ *Ecumenical Work Camps: A Handbook*, 3.

¹⁶⁶ Eddie Lee McCall, “How to Spend Your Summer *Creatively*,” *motive*, March, 1951, 36-37.

The international work camps also remained a predominantly middle and upper class affair, at least for the American participants. Not only did students need to be able to afford the luxury of being able to forgo paid jobs for a summer of manual labor, they also needed to be able to at least partially fund the expense of transatlantic travel. Organizing programs often tried to accommodate students of lesser means, as they did for domestic work camps in the U.S. But the costs of an international work camp remained quite high. For instance, in the summer of 1950 a domestic AFSC work camp cost a participant \$135. An AFSC work camp in Germany cost American participants four times more, \$600.¹⁶⁷ To put the latter figure in greater perspective, \$600 would cover the full cost of a year's tuition at many private universities at the time.¹⁶⁸ It certainly affected who could make the trek to sow the seeds of peace in Europe.

The international camps also maintained a loose educational element, though they did not have the same detailed curriculum and reading lists as early AFSC camps. As literature from the period shows, it was largely understood that the experience itself was a worthwhile education. As one 1947 *Christian Science Monitor* article wrote, the camps were meant, "to add to the education of the participants and increase their international understanding."¹⁶⁹ Further, the mix of American and European campers also tempered the focus of the camps, as explained by Kate White, a writer for the pacifist *Catholic Worker* who spent time in both domestic and international American Friends Service Committee-run camps in 1954. As she wrote, "I think work camps in the U.S. are more oriented to the individual development of the camper—bringing him in contact with the

¹⁶⁷ *Invest Your Summer 1950*, UUIR.

¹⁶⁸ For example, see the University of Pennsylvania's helpful list of tuition and fees for the years 1950 through 1959. <http://www.archives.upenn.edu/histy/features/tuition/1950.html>.

¹⁶⁹ "Quaker Camps To Aid Italy And Finland," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 31, 1947.

suffering of another and having him share that suffering. But in Europe physical suffering has come to everyone in the war, regardless of class.”¹⁷⁰ American camps could focus on the encounter, and bringing campers to face suffering they had not seen before. For European camps, almost all the native participants had suffered in some way, making the focus of the experience more explicitly a process of collective rebuilding.

A tension-ridden world proved to be fertile soil for international camps to take root in and bloom not only in Europe, but elsewhere in the world. By 1950 Protestant programs were running camps in places like Jamaica, Guatemala, Paraguay, India, Cuba, and Malaysia. A prospective American volunteer with the means to do so could serve, learn, and, forge new relationships around the globe; whether it was digging sanitation systems for a college in France, clearing land for athletic fields in Germany, building homes for refugees in Finland, putting together playgrounds in Japan, or constructing a group home for underprivileged boys in Jamaica.¹⁷¹

2.4 From Work Camp Movement to Volunteer Movement

Back in the United States, work camps remained a robust outlet for young women and men who wanted to do something different with their summer breaks. As a 1947 article of the *Christian Herald* exclaimed, “Students of more than a hundred colleges and high schools all over the United States voluntarily gave up canoe-and-hammock vacations last summer to work with their hands at hard labor. They dug ditches, crushed

¹⁷⁰ Kate White, “Work Camps in Europe, *Catholic Worker*, December, 1954, 3.

¹⁷¹ Richie, “Working Together ...,” 111.

rock, renovated buildings... . They were enlistees in the fast-growing army of summertime work campers.”¹⁷²

As the article rightly observed, the ranks of this “army” were swelling with new “recruits.” The same postwar rhetoric of promise and peril that fueled work camps overseas also fueled the spread of domestic camps. But the postwar years were not just a time of increasing numbers of work camps. Through the late 1940s and 1950s the work camp movement evolved into a more general Protestant volunteer phenomenon comprised of a wider array of opportunities. While work camps remained at the core of this impulse, young men and women looking to put their labor and time to constructive efforts could choose from an increasing amount of, as one AFSC staff described them, “mutations” of the summer work camp model.¹⁷³

One of these new options was the “weekend work camp.” David Richie, an AFSC staff member, came up with the concept, which became quite popular in the years after World War II. As Richie explained, the self-explanatory weekend project was meant to expand on the summer work camp model, and broaden the base of potential volunteers. In his experience, he had found that the summer work camps “generally attracted relatively privileged young people who were already persuaded of the rightness of voluntary service.”¹⁷⁴ Moreover, the cost and time of commitment further served as a barrier to potential volunteers. As he wrote, “My idea was to crowd as much as possible of the working, living, and learning together of the summer camps into weekends in the winter!”¹⁷⁵ In contrast, the weekend work camp offered a more flexible and accessible

¹⁷² Harvey Holmen, “They Pay to Lend a Hand,” *Christian Herald*, April 1947, 24.

¹⁷³ Miller, “A Philosophy of Religious Voluntary Service,” I-13.

¹⁷⁴ Richie, *Memories and Meditations of a Workcamper*, 9.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

option weekend work camps could be held in local communities, and reach individuals that were less inclined to such socially conscious activities, or at least less able to give up the time to participate in a summer-long work camp experience. In addition to expanding the base of work camp participants, the weekend work camp also made the experience easier to organize. As the shorter experience required far less resources to run from start to finish, individual churches, youth groups, or college clubs could run a weekend project, instead of having to rely on a church service committee like the AFSC to set up a project for them to take advantage of.

The weekend work camp was one of many new volunteer service opportunities. In a 1948 book published by the Presbyterian Church (USA), *Vacations that Count*, the author noted the flurry of new volunteer programs projects cropping up. As she observed, “There are dozens of variations on the summer service theme, and each year someone comes up with a new one or two.”¹⁷⁶ To keep track of the growing options, in 1946 the popular Methodist youth magazine *motive* began publishing an annual directory of programs for its readers. It was a concrete reflection of how young people were looking to respond to the perceived pressing imperatives of the moment, and how church service committee organizers were working to meet this demand.¹⁷⁷ As the 1949 directory stated, the directories offered young women and men a summer “spent with purpose and meaning.”¹⁷⁸

In addition to work camps, weekend work camps, institutional units, and yearlong programs like the Mennonite Voluntary Service, there was also the resurgence of youth

¹⁷⁶ Mary Lago, *Vacations that Count: The Blue Book of Summer Service* (New York: Home Mission Councils, 1948), 8.

¹⁷⁷ “Directory of Summer Volunteer Service Projects,” *motive*, May, 1946, 14-15.

¹⁷⁸ “Go This Summer,” *motive*, March, 1949, 17.

caravans with a new volunteer service dimension. The AFSC and other mainline churches had previously run youth caravan programs in the late 1930s, where small groups of college youth toured churches and youth groups touting a message of pacifism. In the postwar period caravans added an intentional “work” element whenever they stopped at a church. Typically these were not the pick and shovel manual labors of a work camp. Rather, college volunteers helped their often understaffed and financially struggling hosts reach out to local youth through programming like vacation bible schools or other fellowship–building activities.¹⁷⁹ But caravan participants, as one guide warned, also had to be ready to “pitch into whatever work needs doing.” For some pastors were always ready to take advantage of the extra hands to put new coat of paint on the church or help patch a leaky roof.¹⁸⁰

As the summer service directories of *motive* from this period illustrate, there was no shortage of new volunteer service programs. Other options for prospective volunteers included the AFSC’s “Students–in–industry” program. A work camp with explicit focus on labor relations, students would spend a summer in an industrial city like Flint learning about and observing industrial relations between labor and management up close. In a similar vein they might also participate in the “student–in–cooperative program.” Reflecting a wider interest in Protestant pacifist circles on cooperative economics in the postwar period, students would learn about the benefits and challenges of cooperatives in hubs of cooperative activity like the Twin Cities of Minnesota.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ Eddie Lee McCall, “For Fun Work and Learning this Summer: *motive*’s annual summer service directory,” *motive*, March 1952, 37.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ For the role of cooperative politics in Protestant pacifist culture, see chapter 9 of Appelbaum, *Kingdom to Commune*.

Some church organizations also offered general “community service” summer programs for both groups and individuals. Volunteers would spend a summer or more offering general staff support at a struggling church or church–related ministry like a settlement house or community center. As a 1948 description of community service projects assured readers, “Although summer volunteers may not be professionals in social work or religious education, they can make an invaluable contribution to the lives of many children and young people if they are genuinely concerned for the individuals among whom they work.”¹⁸²

Some opportunities, however, did require more specialized skills. As one *Christian Herald* article observed, “Vacations of the pay–your–own–way work camps have sprung up. One of the most interesting has been the “seagoing cowboy” project of the Church of the Brethren.” As the article went on to subscribe, the Church of the Brethren had taken advantage of the farming background of many of its young men so that in the years after World War II “sea cowboys” manned cattle boats to Europe and Asia to provide milk for undernourished children.¹⁸³ From work camps to asylums to cattle ships, there was a host of creative ways for Protestant youth to stand up and serve in the age of anxiety.

Like international work camps, many of the new service programs lacked the same rigorous camp criteria that had been a fixture of the original AFSC work camps. But there remained the explicit understanding that summer service was at least an education, if not a transformative encounter, on its own. One could not help but emerge

¹⁸² *Invest Your Summer 1948*, 12. Unitarian Service Committee. Home Projects Department. Administrative Records, 1948-1953, Box 2. UUIR.

¹⁸³ Holmen, *They Pay*, 87; See also Thurl Metzger’s chapter in Donald Durnbaugh and M.R. Zigler, eds., *To Serve the Present Age: The Brethren Service Story* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 1975). The Church of the Brethren’s “Sea Cowboy” project eventually became Heifer International, a popular NGO that still exists today. See <https://www.heifer.org/>.

from a summer of service a different person. As one 1950 article in *motive* argued in support of summer service, “You won’t make money at the job, but you will gain valuable experience in vocational planning, make a stack of new friends, and have the knowledge that you got out and did something about the things you have been talking about for a long time. What more can you expect from a summer?”¹⁸⁴ As these proponents argued, service offered up a curriculum that could not be replicated elsewhere.

There are a few hints that some schools even began to recognize the education of summer service as academic credit-worthy in this period. As early as 1947 service programs began noting in their descriptions that college volunteers should check with their professors or school to see if they might get credit for their experience.¹⁸⁵ This explicit institutionalization of service as learning by colleges was not uniform or widespread, not even at religious schools. But it offered another means of recognition of the value of service as an educational experience.

In addition to the types of programs, there was another shift among these programs in the postwar period. In the first decade of the works camp movement, the context of the Great Depression made class a central concern of work camps. In the late 1940s and into the 1950s, more volunteer opportunities focused specifically on themes of race relations. Fostering an interracial encounter was not a new component of work camp and work camp-type programs and their majority white volunteers. But in the postwar period the relative prosperity brought by wartime production and America’s newfound economic hegemony made class tensions a less pressing concern. However, the country’s

¹⁸⁴ “Now is the time . . . To plan your summer service,” *motive*, March, 1950, 45.

¹⁸⁵ See *Invest Your Summer 1947*, Unitarian Service Committee. Home Projects Department. Administrative Records, 1948-1953, Box 2. UUIR.

second-class treatment of African Americans, if anything, became a more salient issue. Given that during World War II Americans had hailed their country as a defender of freedom and democracy, the dilemma of American race relations was thrown into even starker relief. Black veterans returning home from victory abroad to pursue victory over Jim Crow at home were quick to point out this societal dissonance, helping to catalyze what would become the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 60s.¹⁸⁶

In a reflection of this larger cultural backdrop, along with the relatively progressive stance on race relations within mainline Protestant circles staked out in previous decades by the YMCA, organizations like the AFSC, Methodist Youth Division, and MCC organized summer projects with a specific emphasis on questions of race and promoting interracial encounters.¹⁸⁷ There were work camps in rural and urban African American communities, weeklong interracial workshops, and a concerted effort by many organizations to run camps with an intentionally interracial mix of campers.¹⁸⁸ As one student wrote after their 1950 Methodist-run interracial camp in New York City, “The main thing my work camp experience has done touches my feeling toward the Negro. I have had little contact with Negro students either in grade school or college. After working in a mixed project this summer, I feel a deep, genuine concern and love for them. We have no Negroes on our campus.”¹⁸⁹

These encounters captured both the value of the volunteer service encounter, as well the relative homogeneity of the growing Protestant volunteer impulse. It remained

¹⁸⁶ See chapter one of Yohuru Williams’ *Rethinking the Black Freedom Movement* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

¹⁸⁷ For example, the MCC set up an MVS community in Atlanta to focus on race relations. Further site documentation available at MCCA.

¹⁸⁸ For examples, see McCall, “For Fun Work and Learning this Summer: motive’s annual summer service directory,” 37042.

¹⁸⁹ Robert Manners, “New York Work Camp,” *motive*, March, 1950, 34.

mostly a movement of white high school and college aged individuals who had to seek an interracial experience. But given this limitation, these efforts were notable exceptions in their period, creating encounters that crossed both ways. As the aforementioned *Catholic Worker* writer Kate White wrote of her experience at an AFSC camp in a black Indianapolis neighborhood in a

January 1954 issue, “One of the main purposes of a Work Camp is this effect of physical and spiritual growth on the part of the camper. But there is also the hope of having some effect within the community in which you are working. In our particularly case the sight of Negro and white working together in harmony was a new experience for most of the community. The Builders had us into their homes, where we had a chance to meet the whole family. Some of us spent our spare time with the children of the families living in the condemned home soon to be torn down. And here it was not just a question of overcoming the barriers between black and white but between poor and well to do.”¹⁹⁰

2.5 Vocation and Service

In addition to the perils and opportunities of the postwar world, new anxieties over the upbringing and development of Protestant youth further complemented the growth of volunteer service programs. One of these was a concern in mainline Protestant circles over vocation—best understood as the integration of Christian faith and one’s professional life, or more likely, a distinct lack thereof. The topic of vocation in the postwar world was fodder for publications from a variety of prominent Protestant and secular publishers, such as Abingdon–Cokesbury, Association Press, Friendship Press,

¹⁹⁰ Kate White, “The Need for Work Camps,” *Catholic Worker*, January, 1954.

Christian Education Press, and Harper and Brothers.¹⁹¹ A main theme among these books was the concern that young adults would compartmentalize their faiths from their jobs. They would not think about the latter through the framework of the former, and live a life without faithful introspection or influence from 9 to 5, Monday through Friday.

As an example, for the authors of the 1949 Association Press book *Young Christians at Work*, living one's faith through their professional lives was actually a proactive means of meeting the general needs of the age. As they argued, "The life of the young Christian might be better spent in the industrial or commercial world. His best chance to serve God and his neighbor might come through his Christian influence at an everyday job in the rough-and-tumble world."¹⁹² Alexander Miller's 1946 *Christian Faith and My Job* echoed this same idea. Living one's Christian vocation, no matter what the job, was the "most radical kind of social criticism and action."¹⁹³ This integration of faith and life was a way of fully living out what these writers often referred to as "Christian action." Vocation at its best brought one's faith and one's paycheck into harmony with one another, and resulted in a life in which one could help the world while paying their bills. These works echoed larger undercurrents of professional anxiety in the postwar period, as many cultural critics expressed growing unease over the tedium of white-collar jobs, an *ennui* that came as a cost of becoming, in the words of William Whyte's best-selling book, an "organization man."¹⁹⁴

Authors of this vocational literature frequently cited work camps and similar volunteer projects as an ideal means through which teenagers and college students could

¹⁹¹ For example see Emma Paul Ferrari, *Careers for You* (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1953; Ferrari, *It's Worth Your Life* (New York: Friendship Press, 1955); Elton Trueblood, *Your Other Vocation* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952).

¹⁹² T. Otto Nall and Bert Davis, *Young Christians at Work* (New York: Association Press, 1949).

¹⁹³ Alexander Miller, *Christian Faith and my Job*, (New York: Association Press, 1946).

¹⁹⁴ William H. Whyte, *The Organization Man* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1956).

practice Christian vocation. Volunteer service offered a lesson in how even what seemed to be menial tasks of manual labor could be an expression of one's Christian faith.¹⁹⁵ For instance, one of the more popular books on vocation and Christian youth, *Work and Contemplation*, was written by noted Quaker theologian Douglas Steere, who based his vision of a "Christian philosophy of work" on his experiences as chairman of the AFSC's Work Camp Committee.¹⁹⁶

Youth volunteer service was not only a means of getting young adults to think symbiotically about work and faith. In a less philosophical and more practical vein, many Protestant ministers and professionals involved in youth programming argued that volunteer service was a practical means to keep youth involved in their church communities, period. As Henry Tani, director of the Evangelical and Reformed Church's youth outreach in this period wrote in his 1957 book, *Ventures in Youth Work*, "Two questions that youth workers in the church often ask are, "How do we get young people to come?" and "How do we hold their interest?"¹⁹⁷

Volunteer service programs were cited as one answer to these ministerial questions. As one esteemed leader in Protestant youth ministry wrote, volunteer service was an explicit form of "Christian group living," an integration of faith and lived experience that would go a long way in making "the Christian church meaningful to [high

¹⁹⁵ *Christian Youth and Christian Vocation* (Chicago: United Christian Youth Movement, 1951).

¹⁹⁶ Douglas Steere, *Work and Contemplation* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), ix. Steere was a popular public intellectual, who was one of the limited Protestant observers invited to the Second Vatican Council.

¹⁹⁷ Henry Tani, *Ventures in Youth Work* (Philadelphia: The Christian Education Press, 1957). See also, Rowena Ferguson, *Teen-Agers--Their Days and Ways* (New York: National Council of Churches, 1951); Oliver deWolf Cummings, *The Youth Fellowship* (New York: The Judson Press, 1956); Nevin Harner, *About Myself* (Philadelphia: Christian Education Press, 1950); Virgil Foster, *How a Small Church Can Have Good Christian Education* Virgil Foster (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956); Rudolph Wittenberg *How to Help People* (New York: Association Press, 1953).

school] seniors and older youth.”¹⁹⁸ As a result, throughout the 1950s, volunteer service was not just an exercise of Christian social action obligated by the needs of the times, it increasingly was a normalized part of any school or church’s youth group, and a helpful example of what Christian vocation looked like in action.¹⁹⁹

2.6 A Movement Comes Together

At the beginning of the postwar surge in Protestant volunteer service programs, the American Friends Service Committee organized a conference for representatives from various church service committees in December 1945. The reason, as described by an AFSC staff member, was “because of a felt need among the church leaders for a nation-wide clearance of voluntary service projects.”²⁰⁰ Faced with the blessing of a growing movement that was no longer limited to the work camp model, the meeting’s participants wanted to provide some cohesion to their activities, and to come up with some means of sharing information and standards so their programs could best meet the needs of their volunteers and those their projects served.

The meeting was held in New York City, a practical choice given its high density of mainline Protestant denominational offices. The gathering included the AFSC, as well as representatives from other organizations involved in work camps and similar projects, including the Brethren Service Committee, Mennonite Central Committee, Unitarian Service Committee, Universalist Service Committee, Methodist Youth Division. Even though the array of denominations was wide, certain confessional boundaries of the

¹⁹⁸ D. Campbell Wyckoff, *In One Spirit: Senior Highs and Missions* (New York: Friendship Press, 1958), 137.

¹⁹⁹ For example, see Dorothy M. Roberts, *Leadership of Teen-age Groups* (New York: Association Press, 1950).

²⁰⁰ Carl Bede, “A Brief Historical Sketch of the Commission on Youth Service Projects,” by Carl Bede. Administration 1960—Comms. & Organs.-Comsn./Youth Serv. Proj. AFSCA.

movement still remained well-defined. As yet, there was no Catholic organization present.

After a day's worth of deliberations the participants agreed to create a clearinghouse organization to help coordinate and jointly market their efforts, the Commission on Youth Service Projects (CYSP). As the Commission members clearly stated in the new organization's mission statement, their voluntary service was grounded in a Christian understanding of social action. Volunteer service was "... an attempt to connect the compelling love of Christ with the needs of the world. It is intended to deepen the fellowship with and beyond the church and to increase the tensions between what is and what ought to be. It must service as a leaven, both in the church and in the community, pioneering for the Kingdom of God."²⁰¹

Though at face value the creation of this administrative body, and with it another abbreviation in the alphabet soup of church organizations and service committees might come across as banal. But this meeting was a seminal moment in the evolution of Protestant youth service in several ways. For instance, the new organization's focus on "Youth Service Projects" marked an important self-recognition that, while work camps had been the foundation for this movement, it now represented just one of many types of projects. Further, as a means of fostering joint projects, combining resources and outreach to prospective volunteers, and exploring shared standards for volunteer programs to help define the movement's expanding boundaries, the Commission marked a crucial step towards a professionalization of youth service.²⁰²

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Ibid.

One of the more important tasks of the Commission was the publication of a yearly summer brochure of volunteer summer opportunities entitled *Invest Your Summer*. The first issue appeared in 1947, with an introduction that again encapsulated the call and response dynamic of Christian social action in the postwar world. Without mincing words, it stated, “In a world that is slowly digging itself out of the rubble of the most devastating war in history and trying at the same time to rise out of the moral decay and apathetic despair which this war has left in its wake, Christian young people are responding to demands on their time and talents that go far beyond the ordinary conceptions of comfortable Christian idealism.”²⁰³ Work camps and other types of similar programs were, it went on to state, “testimony to that self-giving, creative spirit which some day must rule the lives of men and nations if the world is to regain its faith in the future and build the foundations of lasting peace.”²⁰⁴ In the postwar period, the need for proactive pursuits of peace remained the movement’s *raison d’être*.

The name *Invest Your Summer* also succinctly and intentionally encapsulated the twofold benefits of volunteer service. The investment of the volunteer was both in a better future and in the betterment of their own future self. Ideally the volunteer would contribute to a socially constructive endeavor, and be transformed by the experience. As the 1950 introduction of *Invest Your Service* wrote, service projects, “promise to stretch the mind and imagination of the volunteer, so that he not only comes to a broader understanding of people and problems, but begins to think more intelligently and creatively about the situation he encounters and the part he will play in the future as a

²⁰³ *Invest Your Summer 1947*. UUIR.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 3.

Christian,” adding, “ The possible returns on your investment cannot be completely described nor guaranteed, but the opportunity is yours to make of it what you will.”²⁰⁵

In addition to the central resource of *Invest Your Summer*, the Commission also held a yearly conference for its members. These gatherings were typically four or five-day affairs, and through the Fifties were most often held at a defunct college-turned Brethren Service Committee compound in New Windsor, Maryland.²⁰⁶ Every year, this meeting drew a growing number of adult representatives from across the expanding landscape of Protestant youth service. The growing attendance list through the 1940s and 1950s provided testament to the movement’s growth. A typical gathering included vanguards of the movements such as the peace church—representing AFSC, BSC, and MCC, but also representatives from the American Baptist Youth Service Committee, YMCA, Methodist Youth Fellowship, World Council of Churches, Ecumenical Work Camps, Presbyterian Church, USA, Evangelical and Reformed Church, Unitarian Service Committee, and Universalist Service Committee, among others. Together, representatives of these groups took advantage of the shared space to discuss and explore a mix of practical, logistical, professional, and even philosophical matters regarding their self-identified youth volunteer service movement.

One of the constant points of discussion during these meetings was the very definition of volunteer service itself. The movement’s key terms indeed posed a challenge in terms of their broad definition, and consequent broad leeway for interpretation and application. A clear example of this effort comes from the Fourth Annual Conference on Youth Service Projects held in October, 1949. The keynote

²⁰⁵ *Invest Your Summer 1950*. UUIR.

²⁰⁶ See R. Jan Thompson and Roma Jo Thompson, *Beyond Our Means: How the Brethren Service Center Dared to Embrace the World* (Elgin, IL: Brethren Press, 2009).

presentation of the gathering was a series of three lectures given by Edward Miller entitled “A Philosophy of Religious Voluntary Service.” Few were in a better position to give such an overview than Miller. At the time he served as chaplain at the historically-black Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia. But for most of the previous decade Miller had led the AFSC work camp program. His lectures did not create all-defining ideological boundaries for the movement, but his comments are helpful indications of the broader self-understanding shared by the Commission’s participating members.

Miller began his address by first establishing the very foundations of their efforts. He situated the proliferating youth volunteer service programs as one new chapter within a broader narrative of social Christianity. As he stated, “One can safely say that the 20th Century has seen a real development of the social implications of the Christian message. The social action commissions, the service committees, home mission councils, the federal, state and local councils of churches; the pronouncements on nearly every social problem that have come from a wide variety of official church gatherings, all indicate that the inherent social concern of Jesus’ message had a resurgence needed in our time.”²⁰⁷ In this regard he was preaching to a choir of social action-oriented Protestants who felt positive works were more important than ever, but his comments reflect how central this belief was to the organizers of these programs.

While Jesus Christ provided the movement’s foundations, as Miller laid out a genealogy of volunteer service, William James provided the more practical vision they drew from. Miller emphasized the importance of James’ 1910 “Moral Equivalent of War” as a defining framework for the development of voluntary service. From there he outlined Céréssole’s adaptation of James’ idea, its import to the U.S. by the AFSC, the growth of

²⁰⁷ Miller, “A Philosophy of Religious Voluntary Service,” I-4. BHA.

the work camp movement, and its evolution into something larger. As Miller reflected on the movement's recent growth, "Not only did the work camp idea spread as to numbers of camps, campers and organizations sponsoring them, but the idea of voluntary service in varying forms spread."²⁰⁸ As he and his audience all understood, the work camps had served to open up a broader effort. They stood at the forefront of a unique form of social action shaped by creative Christian social action, James' ideas, and pacifism.

But while the movement definitely had shape in the form of programs, it also lacked formal definition. Miller attempted to craft one in his remarks, saying that religious voluntary service, "might be described as those experiences in which the whole person —physically and mentally—is involved meaningfully in seeking to help others to help themselves (toward God and the good life), and in which remuneration (though sometimes included) assumes a secondary importance in the light of the whole experience and its growth influence on the individual and those with whom he associates."²⁰⁹ Miller's suggested definition, while qualified and somewhat dense, did capture the balance of youth volunteer service as well as the challenges of describing it. At its root it remained a task of helping others, but was also deeply beneficial to the volunteer.

As Miller went on to describe in another of his lectures, the developmental value of the volunteer service experience was all the more important as a pushback against modern life. As he argued, modern Americans were faced with a "de-personalization of life. Jobs become routine; pleasure housing, clothing—everything becomes purchasable. The tempo of living is increased, squeezing out the times of neighboring, visiting and

²⁰⁸ Ibid, I.10.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, iii.

group discussion.”²¹⁰ In such an age, the experience of the work camp or the caravan was a needed injection of personal encounter, both with one’s peers and with those they served.

On a less central but still important note of distinction, Miller importantly specified that, at least as he understood it, religious voluntary service was also first and foremost an outward-looking venture in social action, distinct from straightforward missionary and evangelical work. It was separate for volunteers and those they served, and he warned against churches using it for their own institutional ends. He pushed against projects “designed to directly perpetuate the institution of the church—either as to continuation of membership therein, or the improvement of the property owned by the church.”²¹¹ If volunteers were to proselytize, it would be by their example of Christian service.

Miller’s talks are indicative of the important exercises in self-reflection that occurred at these conferences. But the majority of the time at these gatherings was focused on the logistics of volunteer service programs, such as common standards of recruitment, program management, and program evaluation. The 1951 meeting program offers a typical example. Besides from a keynote overview of summer projects from the previous year, the presentations and working groups explored straightforward issues such as the process of recruiting and orienting volunteers, “community relations” (described as “selection of projects, advance explanations to the community of purposes and programs, community participation in project, planned community contacts through speakers, recreation sessions, etc.”), handling of administrative costs and scholarship funds,

²¹⁰ Ibid, II-14.

²¹¹ Ibid.

fundraising, and program evaluation.²¹² Even high hopes to help humanity and bring the vision of social Christianity to fruition could not escape basic administrative obligations. But in this way the Commission on Youth Service Projects' conferences served as key nodes of professionalization for this growing and evolving movement.

2.7 From Work Camps to Service Projects: Changes and Continuities

Throughout the 1950s, one of the most frequently cited books within these voluntary service circles was *In the Direction of Dreams*, a 1949 publication by Violet Wood, who worked for the Missionary Education Movement, an educational office within the Presbyterian Church (USA) and later the National Council of Churches.²¹³ The start of the book reflected the wider general sense of social imperative that helped drive the volunteer service movement's growth. Wood wrote in the introduction, "In every community, state, and nation in the world there are situations calling for change, situations that good people talk about endlessly, situations about which nobody does a thing. 'What can we do?' they say, while the problems of nations and men are left unsolved, waiting for some magic answer that never comes."²¹⁴ The rest of the book stood in contrast to this passive point of contrast. In an age of anxiety, Christian social action was necessary. Moreover, for Protestant youth there was an increasing number of creative options through which they could do so. Further, in the nature of volunteer service as they actively helped others in the process they would further be shaped and grow themselves. As Woods wrote, through their efforts they helped create "the story of

²¹² Fifth Annual Conference on Youth Service Projects. Interdenominational Commission on Youth Service Projects, 1952. Unitarian Service Committee. Home Projects Department. Administrative Records, 1948-1953, Box 2. UUIR.

²¹³ Violet Wood, *In the Direction of Dreams* (New York: Friendship Press, 1949).

²¹⁴ Ibid, ix.

how with Christian purpose they worked in the direction of their dreams and turned common hours to magic for themselves and others.²¹⁵

The book itself offered snapshots of different projects and interviews with volunteers from projects that took place in the summer of 1948. Together, the chapters richly illustrated the evolution of Protestant youth service in the postwar period, even at this relatively early point. Work camps remained the heart of the movement. As such, several chapters were devoted to different camps, such as the one depicting Alice Jordan who left her “sheltered college town where she had always lived.” Her migrant work camp placement was challenging, and transformative, though initially she found to her disappointment that the camp’s “Italian and Polish pea and bean pickers were not the least bit exciting or romantic.”²¹⁶ As a point of comparison Woods also wrote about the high school students from the Laboratory School at the University of Chicago who spent a summer pouring concrete for foundations and a well at an Evangelical and Reformed mission in the rural Ozarks.²¹⁷

But *In the Direction of Dreams* also depicted the growing diversity of volunteer projects. Her service vignettes included a Methodist youth caravan that was “an oasis of revival and rehabilitation to many churches that have no adequate youth programs,” an interracial camp in Phoebus, Virginia, students-in-industry in Hartford who explored “with the framework of their Christian faith the economic, racial, political, and social problems of a great industrial city,” and Brethren Volunteers spending a year in agricultural “Town’s End,” Kansas.²¹⁸ As Wood emphasized throughout, the projects

²¹⁵ Ibid, xi.

²¹⁶ Ibid, 1.

²¹⁷ Ibid, 22.

²¹⁸ Ibid, 109.

were both constructive for their host communities, and moreover, important means of inspiring volunteers to a lifetime of Christian action, a vocation of social change. She encapsulated this in the final pages of the book, wherein one volunteer asserted, “Each of us in this room has moved in the direction of his dream of a better world, but let’s not kid ourselves one minute. The dream will disappear unless we go on and on in the direction it points, not only for a few weeks of volunteer service but in every one of the common hours of our lives.”²¹⁹

The work camp movement pioneered by the AFSC in the 1930s had sparked a new broader movement of youth volunteer service among peace church and mainline Protestant denominations. It was a movement of new projects and new organizations. By 1950, the Commission on Youth Service Projects estimated that three thousand students participated in summer service projects, alone. Throughout the decade many more participated in weekend work camps throughout the year, or summer camps or community service programs too small to find a listing in *motive* or *Invest Your Summer*. In Protestant youth outreach literature, service programs became a necessary part of a balanced church youth program. It was an impressive, optimistic, and increasingly normative impulse of social action in an age of anxiety.

The movement had not only diversified, it had begun to professionalize. As illustrated by the Commission on Youth Service Projects, volunteer organizations explored questions of administration, volunteer management, marketing, and program evaluation. One of the more significant steps in program evaluation was a 1952 publication by Harvard professor Henry Riecken that offered both a program evaluation and psychological evaluation of AFSC work campers. As Riecken wrote in the studies

²¹⁹ Ibid, 163.

preface, the study acknowledged that programs like the AFSC work camps were “important potential sources of social change and therefore worthy of study in their own right,” and that his work was an important first step in “evaluating the effectiveness” of the programs in how the volunteers were shaped by the experience.²²⁰

Riecken’s findings revealed both the value of youth service, as well as its limitations, characteristics that had been part of the work camp model and were consequently imbued into the wider movement. For one thing, it remained a constructive and creative outlet for the desire of many young people to take action in an anxious age. As he remarked, “Many young people—perhaps most young people—want to ‘do something’ to lessen human misery and to rectify injustice. Their practical idealism constitutes a bright beacon on today’s stormy sea of world discord and social disruption.”²²¹

Despite the promise of change within the volunteer experience, Riecken concluded that most of the volunteers he analyzed were not radically transformed. Overwhelmingly they were already predisposed towards social action before their work camp experience, which did, however, strengthen their previously held beliefs. In short, they were a self-selected group.²²² Further, Riecken warned that some volunteers ran the risk of becoming less, rather than more, connected to their fellow citizens, that their actions might buttress sentiments of superiority over “Average Americans.” This led

²²⁰ Henry Riecken. *The Volunteer Work Camp: A Psychological Evaluation* (Cambridge: Addison–Wesley Press, 1952), xvi.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, xiii.

²²² *Ibid.*, xvi.

Riecken to warn against the “danger that such alienation may lead to a species of self-complacence and the separation of campers into a morally elite ‘in-group.’”²²³

As Riecken’s study also pointed out in more clinical language, for all of its rhetoric and anecdotes of concrete social action, volunteer service remained a limited exercise unto itself. As he further wrote, a program’s purpose could only, “Whet their [a volunteer’s] appetites for constructive service to others.”²²⁴ It remained a model by which short-term labor was thrown at long-term problems. The results of the most productive volunteer project could not get to the systemic root that had engendered the project’s need. Volunteer service was an effective flag of areas of social tension and conflict. Throughout the 1950s, domestic volunteer placements continued to be in black inner city neighborhoods, Indian reservations, rural white communities in the broadly construed “Appalachia,” and rural black communities in the South. But volunteer service was still an ameliorative rather than a curative exercise. As an enduring limitation of the phenomenon, it could only “whet” a volunteer’s appetite for greater works and greater social change.

By the close of the 1950s the landscape of Protestant youth volunteer service had undergone tremendous shifts and changes. Shaped by World War II and the many overlapping concerns of an age of anxiety, the work camp movement grew into a wider, more professional, more normative movement of volunteer service. Thousands of high school and college students took advantage of these opportunities for Christian action.

Despite the movement’s growing spirit of cooperation and collaboration, as seen through the Commission on Youth Service Projects, it remained a Protestant endeavor.

²²³ Ibid, xvii.

²²⁴ Ibid, 174

But during this period a similar movement of Catholic youth volunteer service began to take shape as well. In many ways this Catholic parallel looked the same, as middle class college youth volunteered a year of their lives for little more than the value of the experience. But a deeper look reveals that this movement's backstory and animating ideals were, as a product of a unique confessional context, quite different.

3.0 Catholic Lay Apostles

In March of 1954, Fleurette Arpin was a teacher of both religion and science at St. Catherine's, a Catholic mission school for Navajo and Apache children in Santa Fe, New Mexico. A recent graduate of Regis College, an all-women's Catholic College located in Weston, Massachusetts, Fleurette's day-to-day experience at the school was very similar to that of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament she lived and worked with at St. Catherine's. She shared the same teaching duties, struggled with the restrictions of the school's shoestring budget and, like the sisters, her labor was essentially free. Fleurette received no compensation for her work besides room and board, a tiny stipend to cover living expenses, and a sense of satisfaction—some days greater than others, no doubt—that came with her service to the church. Despite these similarities, Fleurette was not a nun, nor was she teaching at St. Catherine's with the intention of ever becoming one. Fleurette was a laywoman. With her time at St. Catherine's she was committing only a year instead of a lifetime to the church, and in doing so identified with a new phenomenon. As she wrote in a letter from this time, "We are definitely the pioneers of this movement and at times the going is rough. The sisters need us but they will have to learn to use us."²²⁵

Fleurette was at the forefront of a Catholic lay volunteer movement that began in

²²⁵ Fleurette Arpin to Sister Mary John Sullivan, March 21, 1954, Box 118, Folder 1, Regis College Archives Special Collections. Hereafter RCA.

the early 1950s. Young Catholic women and men, mostly recent college graduates, began committing one to two years of their lives to teach without wages alongside sisters, brothers, and priests in understaffed and underfunded mission schools throughout the U.S., and increasingly, around the globe. Under the label of “lay missionaries” or “lay apostles,” volunteers like Fleurette taught, coached, ran extracurricular programs, and did other countless tasks without pay that allowed schools like St. Catherine’s to keep their doors open.

This distinctly Catholic volunteer movement paralleled the Protestant volunteer phenomenon that had begun with work camps in the 1930s. Both mobilized middle and upper class young women and men to give their time and energies without pay. Each placed tremendous emphasis on the great experiential value to the volunteer of serving in lieu of cash compensation, and both were fueled in part by a sense of postwar imperative. But besides general similarities, these respective volunteer endeavors shared little overlap in a period where ecumenical currents were weak and cultural confessional walls, especially between Catholics and Protestants, remained high. Some Catholic high school and college students had participated in Protestant volunteer programs like work camps as early as the 1930s. One of these outliers was Kate White, a writer for the pacifist *Catholic Worker*. She participated in both an international and domestic AFSC work camp, and as a result of her experiences argued in a 1954 article that Catholics should adopt a similar program. As she wrote, “The Quakers have given us a wonderful example—we have all the tools necessary to gradually build a similar organization through which our Catholic High School and College students can be of service in

Christ.”²²⁶ But she remained an exception to the rule. The work camp and derivatives of its model achieved little penetration into the wider Catholic cultural ghetto.

These parallel movements were also catalyzed by a different matrix of influences. Protestant youth volunteerism was shaped by a mix of gender and class anxiety, social gospel concerns, pacifist belief, and criticisms of classic classroom education. The Catholic lay volunteer movement of the 1950s came together amid a confluence of factors that included demographic changes for an increasingly middle-class Catholicism, new ideological currents centered on the concepts of “Catholic Action” and the “Lay Apostolate” that served to empower Catholic laity, and a practical staffing dilemma in Catholic missions schools with their unique reliance on the largely unpaid labors of vowed religious men and women. As a whole this Catholic movement developed in a more informal manner than its Protestant parallel. This was particularly apparent in regards to volunteer development, as these new Catholic volunteer opportunities lacked the specific programmatic and specific educational components that were more of a fixture of Protestant programs like work camps.

It was in this context that volunteers like Fleurette began to “give a year,” as some observers first called the phenomenon, at institutions like St. Catherine’s starting in the 1950s. At first, both laity and clergy viewed “lay missionaries” like Fleurette as a stopgap measure. They were temporary substitutes until sisters could take their place. But by the start of the 1960s it was clear that this was not just a placeholder position, but also a new and enduring volunteer option for Catholic young women and men. True to her words, Fleurette was not just a part of the movement, but in its vanguard as a participant of the Regis Lay Apostolate, a pioneering program that was pivotal in the start of this new

²²⁶ Kate White, “The Need for Work Camps,” *Catholic Worker*, January, 1954.

Catholic volunteer enterprise.

3.1 The Lay Apostolate Awakens

One of the most significant currents in mid-century American Catholicism that helped make volunteer opportunities like Fleurette's possible was an increased empowerment of lay people. As Deborah Campbell has written, it was "an age in which the responsibilities of people in the pews were taken increasingly seriously."²²⁷ This new trend was in part a reflection of changes in the socioeconomic status of American Catholics. As the editors of *Empowering the People of God* have rightfully noted, "The demographic shift from an immigrant, urban, working-class Church to an educated, suburban middle-class Church would prompt the development of an entirely new definition of lay responsibility."²²⁸ With professional skillsets, as well as the privilege of time and resources that came with rising levels of socioeconomic prosperity, Catholics were ready to work in the name of the church.

Clergy and lay leaders alike challenged Catholics to self-appropriate the teachings of their faith and apply them in their day-to-day lives. The laity was no longer comprised of passive cheerleaders supporting priests, brothers and sisters. Rather the work of the church was their responsibility, too. As many proponents saw, their collective abilities and talents constituted a massive reservoir of untapped potential. For example, in a May 1952 address to the Catholic Daughters of America, Boston Archbishop Richard J. Cushing praised the phenomenon, extolling that "Signs of awakening are visible

²²⁷ Debra Campbell, "The Heyday of Catholic Action and the Lay Apostolate" in *Transforming Parish Ministry: The Changing Roles of Catholic Clergy, Laity, and Women Religious*, Jay P. Dolan et al. (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 222.

²²⁸ Jeremy Bonner, Christopher Denny, and Mary Beth Fraser, eds, *Empowering the People of God: Catholic Action before and after Vatican II* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 4.

everywhere. Countless men and women are gradually coming to the realization of the power for good that is in them and are exercising every means to exert it. ...” He went on to emphasize that, “The Lay Apostolate will bring about the transformation of human society. Its development in our age is as much the plan of divine Providence as was the origin of each religious order in its respective age.”²²⁹ Whereas the needs of the church had been answered before by new religious orders such as the Franciscans or the Jesuits, it was now the laity’s moment.

In this fashion women and men were thus called to “Catholic Action” or to participate in the “Lay Apostolate,” as these two terms were used interchangeably in reference to the same concept.²³⁰ These ideas helped fuel a blossoming of Catholic lay organizations in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, including the Sodality, the Catholic Youth Organization, Young Christian Workers, and the Christian Family Movement. The nationally-renowned Jesuit Daniel Lord trumpeted the value of Catholic Action in his journal *The Queen’s Work*, and even further organized “Summer Schools of Catholic Action” at parishes and schools across the country.²³¹ In addition to these better-known examples, there were innumerable local groups organized within specific dioceses and parishes.²³² Given the wide array of proliferating organizations, and the elastic nature of the terms Catholic Action and lay apostolate, by the late 1940s these expressions had

²²⁹ Richard J. Cushing, D.D., “The Age of the Laity. Address delivered at the state convention of the Catholic Daughters of America at Worcester, Mass., May 25, 1952” in *A Call to the Laity: Addresses on the Lay Apostolate* (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1957), 10-11.

²³⁰ One of the best overviews of Catholic Action and the proliferation of lay organizations in mid-century American Catholicism is James O’Toole’s chapter “The Church of Catholic Action” in *The Faithful: A History of Catholics in America* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008).

²³¹ See for example *The Summer School of Catholic Action: 1947 Season* (St. Louis: The Queen’s Work, 1947).

²³² See also Charles Curran, “The Social Mission of the Catholic Church in the First Part of the Twentieth Century” in *The Social Mission of the U.S. Catholic Church: A Theological Perspective* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2011) ; Mary Irene Zotti, “The Young Christian Workers,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 9 (Fall, 1990): 387-400; Florence Henderson Davis, “Lay Movements in New York City during the Thirties and Forties” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 9 (Fall, 1990): 401-418.

become a sort of shorthand, a catch-all phrase that was, as Campbell has written, “the accepted way for bishops to describe whatever the laity were doing under their jurisdiction.”²³³

While Catholic laity were by no means entirely passive subjects in generations before, as John Cogley, editor of the lay Catholic magazine *Commonweal* wrote in 1951, this new flourishing of activity stood markedly in contrast to earlier Catholic generations who held only “the crudest ideas” about lay participation in the church. As he went on to write, self-deprecatingly, “We had the idea that the ‘religious’ ones among us grew up to be priests or nuns. A zealous lay person was suspected of having resisted a religious calling or of having made a great mistake somewhere along the line.” But instead a new era of lay activity in the church had arrived. No longer did a Catholic need to join a religious order as a true mark of religious commitment. Instead, anyone could be a “religious” Catholic in their daily lives. As Cogley finished his editorial he mused, “I hope that the lay apostolate doesn’t become a certain kind of Catholic, but that every Catholic becomes a certain kind of lay apostle. That is the real challenge. And we have a long way to go.”²³⁴

The call to the lay apostolate took on even greater weight after World War II with the challenges of the postwar world and the particular specter of communism always looming large domestically and abroad in the Catholic imagination.²³⁵ Catholic Action was an even greater imperative in a postwar age of anxiety, much like the calls for “Christian Action” that could be found on the pages of Protestant periodicals like *motive*. At a time when Catholics were as a whole entering the cultural and political mainstream

²³³ Campbell, *Transforming Parish Ministry*, 225.

²³⁴ John Cogley, “The Professional Approach.” *Commonweal*, July 20, 1951, 350.

²³⁵ O’Toole, *The Faithful*, 196.

of American life, it was a challenge many were ready and willing to accept.

For the most part, it was understood that any activity undertaken under the banner of Catholic Action or the lay apostolate would still be at some level under the leadership of the hierarchy. Even if women and men were called to become leaders within the lay apostolate, as Daniel Lord wrote in a 1950 article published in both the *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* and *Catholic Digest*, clergy maintained a privileged position as they were “to become the leader of the leaders, the priest of the lay apostles.”²³⁶ Though in practice this increasingly energized current of lay assertiveness was not always so easily constrained by clergy oversight, the rhetoric of the lay apostolate began to redefine the relationship of the laity and church hierarchy, though not as dramatically as would occur in the 1960s as a consequence of the reforms of Vatican II.

3.2 A Challenge for Church Missions

As a subset of this larger impulse of Catholic Action and the lay apostolate, there was a great deal of lay interest in the church’s missionary work. Catholics could subscribe to a host of mission-focused magazines, among them *Catholic Missions*, *Jesuit Missions*, *Marist Missions*, and *Extension Society Magazine*.²³⁷ Missions were of interest to both the young and old. As Angelyn Dries has illustratively described, Catholic grade school children “saved their pennies in mite boxes” in order to help “pagan babies” in China.²³⁸ One of the strongest displays of this missionary zeal was the Catholic Students’ Mission Crusade (CSMC). Founded in 1920 with aims to “educate American Catholic

²³⁶ Daniel Lord, S.J., “The Priest Can’t Know Everything,” *Catholic Digest*, August, 1950, 87-90.

²³⁷ Angelyn Dries, O.S.F., *The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History*, American Society of Missiology 26 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998): 347-351. Dries’ work remains the leading scholarship on Catholic missiology.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 134-137.

youth about the work of missions ... and to bolster the support of the missions among Americans,” the CSMC became an organization with nationwide reach.²³⁹ By the late 1940s, the CSMC had established chapters—or “units”—in Catholic seminaries, elementary schools, high schools, and colleges across the country. The group published a magazine of its own, *The Shield*, held mass rallies that drew tens of thousands, and at one point claimed membership of over one million members.²⁴⁰

Within an early Cold War context, Catholic missionary activities took on even greater urgency. The “Cold War Missionary” became a frontline soldier in this international struggle against an ascendant and atheistic global threat.²⁴¹ Communism was a dynamic and ever-present foil to the need for missionary labors both domestic and abroad. Orders sent more sisters, priests, and brothers overseas. In a reflection of these expanded missionary labors, the American bishops in 1949 created the Mission Secretariat, a national office to coordinate and manage the manifold and multiplying mission activities. For Catholic laity, providing auxiliary support to the missions by donating funds or offering prayers were the most common ways they could actively assist in the work of the church under the rubric of Catholic Action and the lay apostolate.

But in these same postwar years, between the upswing in mission activity overseas and a baby-booming Catholic population back home, an unforeseen but critical problem began to unfold, a relative shortage of sisters. Even though religious vocations saw an absolute increase, reflective of the country’s general uptick of religious activity, the expanding ranks of various orders could not keep up with an ever-widening gap

²³⁹ David J. Endres, *American Crusade: Catholic Youth in the World Mission Movement from World War I through Vatican II*, (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010), ix.

²⁴⁰ Ibid, x.

²⁴¹ Dries, *The Missionary Movement*, 144.

between supply and demand. In the decade after World War II the number of American women religious grew overall by twenty-one percent. But as the baby boom gained steam, the student population they were expected to teach grew approximately ten times faster. This dynamic was exacerbated as American Catholics began to leave urban neighborhoods and moved out into rapidly growing suburbs, with a consequent building of even more Catholic schools.²⁴² This was a significant development as nuns were crucial to the staffing of any Catholic school, in large part as a matter of economics. Catholic schools were able to operate on significantly slimmer budgets compared to their non-Catholic counterparts because of the very low wages paid to the sisters that mostly staffed them. In some instances the stipends nuns received were so low that they often had to find other income-generating activities on top of their teaching duties.²⁴³ Even by the standards of male religious orders, women religious were paid significantly less. Priests and brothers were a “luxury to be replaced whenever possible with less expensive sisters” when staffing Catholic schools.²⁴⁴ Lay teachers were few and far between in this early postwar period, and their need of a more substantial salary made them cost-prohibitive for many Catholic schools. Even as their numbers grew in the following decades, they were often met with distrust or disappointment by Catholic parents who preferred having the more familiar image of a sister or brother at the head of a classroom.

Reflecting this relative shortfall, the influence of the lay apostolate, and the church’s reenergized postwar missionary efforts, in the late 1940s both clergy and laity

²⁴² Mary J. Oates, *The Catholic Philanthropic Tradition in America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 135.

²⁴³ Amy L. Koehlinger, *The New Nuns: Racial Justice and Religious Reform in the 1960s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 26.

²⁴⁴ Oates, *The Catholic Philanthropic Tradition in America*, 154; See also Patricia Byrne, “Saving Souls and Educating Americans, 1930-1945” in *Transforming Parish Ministry: The changing Roles of Catholic Clergy, Laity, and Women Religious*, Jay P. Dolan et al. (New York: Crossroad: 1989), 123-24.

alike began to discuss and propagate a potential solution. Nicholas Maestrini, an Italian priest who had served in Chinese missions and often wrote on the subject for American Catholic periodicals, was a strong public proponent of this relatively novel idea. As he wrote in a 1949 issue of the Jesuit-run periodical, *America*, “To practically everyone the word ‘missionary’ means a priest or a nun or a brother. But there is something new in the mission fields—lay missionaries.”²⁴⁵

As far as many Catholics were concerned, it was an unorthodox proposal. Traditionally, direct mission work was the domain of priests, brothers, and sisters, while laity had provided a supporting role through organizations like the CSMC. Robert L. Reynolds wrote in *Catholic Mind* in 1951, “As laymen and women our obligation to the missions has always seemed pretty clear: we donate money or subscribe to a mission magazine, and that’s that.”²⁴⁶ But for a growing number of Catholics, the new demands of the times necessitated this new role for them. As Maestrini stressed in another 1949 article, missionary work was now a “challenge” for the laity to respond to. Given “an inadequate number of priests and nuns ... it is simply impossible for them to do everything that must be done, especially in the present crucial time.”²⁴⁷ The historical example of the Protestant missionary tradition provided for some a glimpse of what was possible if the lay apostolate was fully utilized for the mission fields (The Protestant example provided further impetus for lay missionaries as a “competitor” for souls). In the Cold War-inflected moment of the late 1940s and 1950s, the notion was received by many as a creative solution to the urgency of the times. It quickly gained the approval of

²⁴⁵ Nicholas Maestrini, “Lay Missionaries: Their Role and Goal,” *America*, April 2, 1949, 715-716.

²⁴⁶ R.L. Reynolds, “Lay Missionaries,” *The Catholic Mind*, November 1952, 685.

²⁴⁷ N. Maestrini, “Challenge to Lay Apostles; Abridged,” *Catholic Mission Digest*, January 1949, 1-5; See for example, “Laymen in the Missions,” *Commonweal*, January 11, 1951, 354.

many noted luminaries of the hierarchy, such as the president of Notre Dame, Fr. John Cavanaugh, C.S.C., the superior general of the missionary Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, Raymond Lane, M.M., and prelate and improbable media star, Monsignor Fulton Sheen.²⁴⁸

3.3 “I am not going to be able to do it without some help”

It was amid this dynamic context that one of the pioneering programs of Catholic volunteer service, the Regis Lay Apostolate, began to take shape starting in November, 1949. The individual spark came from a professor of English at Regis, Sister Mary John. Described in one 1963 article as “a big person . . . with big ideals,” this charismatic visionary had the single most decisive impact on the creation and growth of the program, as well as the adaptation of its model elsewhere.²⁴⁹ Born Margaret Agnes Sullivan of Irish immigrants in 1907, she was raised in Merrimac, Massachusetts, the only girl in a family of boys. She had remarkable intellectual abilities, as evidenced by her unusually prestigious schooling when compared to other lay Catholic women of her generation. She attended Trinity College in Washington, D.C. as an undergraduate, received her M.A. in English from Boston College, and earned a Ph.D. in English from Catholic University, the last degree being attained after she had taken vows and become a nun.²⁵⁰ Even among Catholic women religious her training was exceptional. She received her last degree approximately a decade before reforms in 1950s profoundly changed—and greatly

²⁴⁸ “Lay Missionaries,” *Ave Maria*, December 16, 1950, 771; George Eckel, “Students called to be missionaries,” *New York Times*, August 27, 1948.

²⁴⁹ “Can Teach-Will Travel,” *Columbia*, July 1963, 17-20, 39-40.

²⁵⁰ Courtney Lynn Carlson, “Women Responding to their Call to Action: The Lay Apostolate Program of Regis Massachusetts, 1950-1972 (Master’s thesis, University of Dayton, 1998): 37-40; Untitled Memoir, Sister Mary John, Box 116, Folder 1, RCA; Sister Mary John’s thesis was “A Study of the Themes of the Sacred Passion in the Medieval Cycle Plays” (PhD diss., Catholic University of America, 1943).

improved—the training and education American sisters received.²⁵¹

After both high school and college she attempted to enter religious life. Her father, perhaps wanting to keep her close after the premature death of her mother, rebuffed her on both occasions. The third time around, between her M.A. and Ph.D. studies, he acquiesced and she entered the Sisters of St. Joseph, taking the name Sister Mary John. As she completed her dissertation in 1942, she was assigned as an English professor to Regis College, an all-women's college of 700 students in suburban Weston, Massachusetts that the Sisters of Saint Joseph had founded in 1927.²⁵²

Soon after Mary John's arrival, the president charged her with the additional task of organizing a college "Mission Unit," a club that raised awareness and funds for missions that was a fixture on many Catholic campuses. From its creation in 1942, under Sister Mary John's guidance the Mission Unit became one of the school's most popular student clubs. Its very first meeting drew 176 members, approximately one-fourth of the entire student body.²⁵³ The organization supported Catholic missions through a myriad of fundraising, social, and devotional activities. Among these efforts, the young women of the Mission Unit organized dances, put on plays, and published and sold a bi-weekly student newspaper, *The Mighty Mite*. The yearly high point of the club's work was "Mission Week." Taking place in the fall semester during the 1940s, the event entailed a week of mission-centered activities, replete with devotions, guest missionary speakers, and numerous fundraising sales.²⁵⁴ These activities were typical of mission clubs at other Catholic colleges in the period, and represented the extent to which laypeople at that

²⁵¹ For more see Koehlinger, *New Nuns*, 24-40.

²⁵² Carlson, "Women Responding," 38.

²⁵³ *Regis Herald*, November 11, 1942. RCA.

²⁵⁴ 1946 Mission Week Schedule, Regis Lay Apostolate Scrapbook, RCA; "The Mission of Regis College presents The Women Wrapped in Silence by Reverend John W. Lynch" Program Regis Lay Apostolate Scrapbook. RCA; *Mighty Mite* March 1947, Regis Lay Apostolate Scrapbook. RCA.

time, particularly college students, could contribute to missionary work. But in November of 1949, Sister Mary John and the women of Regis' vibrant Mission Unit were presented with a unique opportunity that would offer a whole new means of taking action in the spirit of the lay apostolate.

It began with a letter to Sister Mary John from Sister Inez Underwood, R.S.M., whom Sister Mary John described as a "very dear friend and former classmate" from their respective Ph.D. studies at Catholic University. Sister Inez wrote from Guam, where she was in charge of the Sisters of Mercy community and their mission work on the island.²⁵⁵ Sister Inez had plans to open a Catholic high school the upcoming fall, but as she wrote to her friend at Regis, "I am not going to be able to do it without some help."²⁵⁶ Illustrating the growing scarcity of nuns, she was short-staffed and without the bare minimum of teachers she needed for the school to be able to open for the start of the academic year. Unable to find a spare sister, she urged her old friend to join her in the Pacific.²⁵⁷ Sister Inez was most likely aware that Mary John had long harbored an interest in overseas mission work. Not only was she the advisor of Regis' Mission Unit, during her undergraduate years she had been an active leader of Trinity College's "Wekanduits" (We can do it) mission club. As tempting as the offer may have been, especially as an invitation to head to a tropical island in the middle of New England November weather, Sister Mary John remained committed to Regis and she declined the personal offer.²⁵⁸

But that was not the end of the matter. Sister Mary John promptly took the letter to one of her English classes and, after presenting the situation, inquired to her students

²⁵⁵ Untitled history of Regis Lay Apostolate, Sister Mary John, Box 116, Folder 2. RCA.

²⁵⁶ Sister Inez to Sister Mary John, November 13, 1949, Box 116, Folder 17. RCA.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Untitled history of Regis Lay Apostolate, Sister Mary John, Box 116, Folder 2. RCA.

what they thought was a reasonable alternative plan of action. From the back of the room one suggested, “Send a substitute!”²⁵⁹ The rest of the class readily agreed, and they did not mean that Sister Inez should find another nun. Putting the ideology of Catholic Action and the lay apostolate into practice, they agreed that one of them could go to Guam to ensure that the school would open as scheduled. This classroom outbreak of lay empowerment apparently aligned with Sister Mary John’s intentions, as she replied to her students’ suggestion, at least according to later accounts of this pivotal moment, “That’s just I wanted to hear.”²⁶⁰

3.4 The Regis Lay Apostolate Experience

Sister Mary John soon found her “substitute,” graduating senior and president of the Mission Unit, Marie McCormick. Before Marie embarked for Guam, however, she, Sister Inez, and Sister Mary John first had to figure out the logistics of their innovative plan as they had little precedent to follow. They eventually decided that Marie’s commitment would be for one year, with the option to stay longer if she so desired. It would be a volunteer year, as Sister Inez could not pay Marie any more than she could have a nun, which was not much at all. Marie would receive room, board, and a very small living stipend. The fundraising activities of Regis’ Mission Unit would pay her travel expenses.

Apart from these practical details, Marie also had to address the concerns of her father. He expressed great hesitation at the idea of his daughter going off into the far reaches of the Pacific, much of it grounded in crude stereotypes, writing in one letter,

²⁵⁹ Marguerite Flavin, “Lay Apostolate--A Tradition of Service,” *Regis Today*, Fall 1985, 6-7.

²⁶⁰ Marguerite Flavin, “Lay Apostolate--A Tradition of Service,” *Regis Today*, Fall 1985, 6-7; “Can Teach-Will Travel,” *Columbia*, July, 1963, 17-20, 39-40.

“You cannot understand how dull and endless time is until you go there. The oriental mind is another thing that to us is beyond understanding, and their customs are no different. They will shock you and they will disgust you. You will get the feeling, when talking to them, telling them anything, or trying to teach them, that you are talking to and looking at a blank wall. In fact the wall has more expression than they—it has at least color. Hygiene means less to them than to the dumb animals in the field.”²⁶¹ Despite his concerns and racist generalizations, he ultimately concluded that Marie’s decision, as a choice to give a year of her life to the church, was worth pursuing. He later wrote to her that, “If Christ could give up His life in heaven for thirty years and then suffer a ... painful death for us, then giving a year from our life surely is a small payment.”²⁶² Thus in May of 1950, while Catholic periodicals and the American bishops’ newly-formed Mission Secretariat still debated the potential of deploying laypeople in the missions, Marie headed off to teach freshman and sophomore girls at Our Lady of Guam, commencing Regis’ lay volunteer experiment.

It is worth noting that Marie was no ordinary guinea pig for the task. As letters back to Sister Mary John show, Marie was particularly well-versed in what she referred to as “the modern Catholic revolutionaries” of the day.²⁶³ Among others, she regularly read the likes of Jacques Maritain, Leon Bloy, and the small but influential (and by Catholic standards, more radical) lay-run magazine *Integrity*. Her reading list of, as she referred to them, “thinkers and doers,” represented an especially action-oriented corpus of Catholic thought.²⁶⁴ This praxis of faith and action resonated with her, as she wrote in

²⁶¹ Pa to Ming, February 3, 1950, Box 116, Folder 17. RCA.

²⁶² Pa to Ming, February 17, 1950, Box 116, Folder 17. RCA.

²⁶³ Marie to Sister. May 23, 1950. Box 116, Folder 17. RCA.

²⁶⁴ *Integrity* and its editorial staff is one of more fascinating lay Catholic periodical enterprises of the

a letter to Sister Mary John shortly before her departure, “We need intense Catholics whose love for Christ will so illuminate the world that the darkness will dispel and all men will see the outstretched arms of the risen Christ,” though with deprecating self-awareness she also added, “However, I am very young and very unwise as yet; and in all probability I don’t know what I’m talking about.”²⁶⁵ As these excerpts and her preferred reading material suggests, more so than the typical Catholic college graduate, Marie was ready and willing to translate Catholic teachings into Catholic action.

Once on the island, along with the heavy demand of teaching, and learning—by—doing in that regard, Marie came face-to-face with her own relative privilege in comparison to the poverty she witnessed for native Guamanians. “We Catholic college graduates have everything,” she wrote, “and millions have nothing.”²⁶⁶ She also learned to live with unfamiliar daily challenges of a developing world environment, like frequent power failures, inconsistent running water, and as she bemoaned, “lots of mosquitoes and ants and insects.”²⁶⁷ Similar to Protestant volunteer programs like the work camp, Marie’s experience was most definitely one of cross-cultural and cross-class encounter, but unlike the work camp program this remained a secondary detail rather than primary focus of Marie’s experience. Her only insights on that aspect of her experience came from personal reflections, rather than through any formal approach.

Despite these inconveniences, Marie truly took to her volunteer experience. She enjoyed her work, and found the native Guamanians, albeit in a romanticized way, to be

period. The best summary of the magazine’s origins, audience, and substance can be found in chapter 4 of James Fisher’s *The Catholic Counterculture in America, 1933-1962* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989).

²⁶⁵ Marie to Sister. May 23, 1950. Box 116, Folder 17. RCA.

²⁶⁶ Marie to Sister John, Third Sunday of Lent, Box 116, Folder 17. RCA.

²⁶⁷ Marie to Sister John, Box 116, Folder 17. RCA.

“very friendly, very generous, and most loving and thoughtful.”²⁶⁸ In addition to the personal relations she built with the community and her students, as she expressed in a letter back to seniors at Regis who were contemplating joining her, the value of the experience more than outweighed the temporary poverty of volunteer teaching and its myriad of other inconveniences. For one thing, it was a concrete application of the ideas she had learned in school, as she put bluntly, “In place of theory, you practice.” Further, she wrote, “I’ve learned enough about people, including myself, which alone would make my stay on Guam worthwhile. Everything is so different from life in the U.S.A that every day is an education in itself.” Like Protestant volunteer programs, while she worked without wages the payoff was in the education of experience. As she assured her Regis peers, “And as surely as the dawn follows the dark, God will return your gift a thousand-fold, wrapped in golden graces, and imperishable.”²⁶⁹

The experience must have been worth it, as in December of 1950, halfway through her year, she informed Sister Mary John that she was staying for another. As she explained her decision, she wrote, “I promised God a year—and I want to give him two . . . I want to return his graciousness in my own small way.”²⁷⁰ Marie’s time in Guam was both a personal and a programmatic success, for her volunteer year immediately became a model for other graduates to follow. The regular letters she wrote back to Sister Mary John and her friends in the Mission Unit served as inspiration to others. In the summer of 1951 two more Regis women, Suzanne Gill and Marie O’Connell, came to bolster the staff at Our Lady of Guam.²⁷¹

²⁶⁸ Marie to Katie and Suzanne, March 1951, Box 116, Folder 17. RCA.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Marie to Sister John, December 13, 1951, Box 116, Folder 1., RCA.

²⁷¹ Untitled history of Regis Lay Apostolate, Sister Mary John, Box 116, Folder 2. RCA.

Even from this early period, Sr. Mary John's successful experiment garnered outside attention and praise. The most important of these initial supporters was Boston's Archbishop Cushing, who held a particular interest in mission work throughout his ecclesiastical career. Upon hearing word of Marie's triumph in the mission and her subsequent successors, he wrote to Sr. Mary John in a brief congratulatory note, "I am thrilled to know that Marie McCormack will stay in Guam another year. Have Suzanne Gill and Marie O'Connell call to see me before they go," adding in jest, "If I wasn't going to Spain I think I would take the trip with them."²⁷² In the following years more Regis seniors sought out Sister Mary John to participate in this new postgraduate volunteer path. From Sister Inez's predicament, Sister Mary John's vision, and Marie's willingness, a new program, quickly named the Regis Lay Apostolate, was born.

Through the 1950s, Regis women continued to, as Sr. Mary John called it, "give a year" by working as volunteer teachers. The improvised arrangement for Marie's trip to Guam became the model for those who followed in her footsteps. A religious community in need would host them and provide room, board, and a small stipend, while the fundraising activities of the Regis Mission Unit would pay for the volunteer's travel costs. Volunteers lived in community and worked for the church without wages. As such, the experience was somewhat similar to religious life, but with a sunset clause.

While Guam had been the first destination, most taught in schools that served impoverished children of marginalized, nonwhite populations within the borders of the United States. These schools were typically underfunded to begin with, even by Catholic school standards. For example, in the 1956–1957 school year, sixteen Regis graduates volunteered for the Lay Apostolate. Seven were divided among two schools in New

²⁷² RC to Sister, March 28 1951, Box 116. RCA.

Mexico that taught Native American children. Six others were split between two El Paso, Texas schools that served predominantly Mexican and Mexican–American populations. One volunteer taught at St. Ann’s in Rock Hill, South Carolina, a rare integrated Southern school.²⁷³

Many newspaper and magazine articles referred to them as “lay missionaries.” But the Regis women were primarily teachers, and this role defined their volunteer experience above all else. Of course the task of teaching in itself was exhausting. The difficulties of the job were often further compounded by the limited resources of the schools in which they served. Ranging from a lack of basic resources to overcrowded classes, the dynamics of impoverished schools made for many noteworthy challenges. One volunteer serving in Augusta, Georgia, in 1952 wrote to Sister Mary John and vented about her own peculiar conundrum. She exclaimed, “I have 12 first graders and 18 second graders in the same room and yegods!, [sic] it is quite a strain on my energy to keep one side quiet and teach the other simultaneously.”²⁷⁴ Teaching was most likely even more taxing for those volunteers who had not taken any education classes during their undergraduate studies. They learned on the job as the extent of their training for the year consisted of a simple three part verbal contract made with Sister Mary John. They had to remember that they were serving the church, promise to make the best of the situation at their placement school, and be mindful that they were “to serve and not lead,” a particularly helpful reminder given the novelty of the Regis program and potential for

²⁷³ 1956-1957 Regis Lay Apostolate Roster, Special Collection Box 905.06, RCA; Untitled history of Regis Lay Apostolate, Sister Mary John, Box 116, Folder 2. RCA. It was only in the 1960s, after the Peace Corps was created, that Regis Lay Apostles would consistently go to international mission schools.

²⁷⁴ Polly to Sr. John, Feast of St. Raphael, Box 117, Folder 5. RCA.

conflict with a volunteer's religious community hosts.²⁷⁵ Some found this dearth of preparation to be a real shortcoming to the volunteer year. But given the diversity of locations and circumstances in which they collectively served, it is doubtful that any training could have fully prepared them for what they had committed to. They taught all subjects and all grade levels from elementary through high school. For many, their duties extended beyond the classroom to various other extracurricular activities. These ranged from coaching athletic teams to daily administrative tasks, music lessons, manual cleaning and upkeep of the school and, for one young woman who taught in Alaska, skinning moose meat for the teaching community.

Even with all the many challenges, discomforts, and relative penury of the Lay Apostolate, like Marie McCormick's time in Guam, volunteers found their year to be worth the challenges, and a valuable experience by itself. As four volunteers teaching on the island of St. Thomas declared in a 1960 letter back to Sister Mary John, "We consider ourselves very lucky, in spite of the cockroaches."²⁷⁶ The monetary benefits of the year were nonexistent, but it was the emotional, developmental, and experiential gains that constituted the volunteers' true compensation. For these young Catholic women, the Regis Lay Apostolate was a remarkable opportunity to both serve the church's lay apostolate and broaden their own worlds with a unique and novel experience.

As testament to the aptitude, work ethic, and dedication of the volunteers, for the most part their services garnered high praise from the heads of the schools at which they taught. As one grateful mission school staff member wrote back to Sister Mary John, "The girls are admirable in their generosity and devotion. ... Our Lord made the

²⁷⁵ "The Fields Are White" Sister Mary John, C.S.J., Box 116, Folder 5. RCA

²⁷⁶ Valerie, Eileen, Jean, and Julie to Sister John, September 26, 1960, Box 117, Folder 24. RCA.

touchdown with the help of a winning team from New England.”²⁷⁷ For most, the relationship between these young women and the priests and nuns they served with was a symbiotic affair, as all were bonded by a shared sense of mission. One volunteer teaching in Georgia remarked in a letter, “I like working with the nuns, for we’re all working for the same Boss.”²⁷⁸ But for volunteers, priests, and nuns, alike, the novelty of the Regis Lay Apostolate created new and unfamiliar dynamics that, if not navigated carefully, carried all sorts of potential for conflict. In many instances, friction between volunteers and their hosts was a product of trial and error as both parties tried to figure out what worked and what did not when a volunteer first arrived. Even though everyone worked for “the same Boss,” the volunteers were not always suited to the same lifestyle as the nuns and priests they lived and work with. One letter to Sister Mary John from a New Mexico mission school illustrated these low-intensity growing pains of the volunteer teaching model. A nun diplomatically wrote, “As you know, the matter of housing the girls in the convent with the sisters did not offer the most compatible arrangement and was abandoned in the fall.” She added that, “Our advancement is sometimes by our mistake.”²⁷⁹

For many, serving in the Regis Lay Apostolate was a matter of taking the ideas of Catholic Action and the lay apostolate and putting them to work. As one alumna of the program recounted, she and her peers volunteered “To give a year of our lives for the good of the church and the glory of God!”²⁸⁰ Many volunteers also saw their work as a necessity due to an insufficient numbers of nuns available to teach. Mary Reynolds, who

²⁷⁷ Advertising pamphlet for Regis Lay Apostolate, RCA.

²⁷⁸ Polly to Sr. John, Feast of St. Raphael, Box 117, Folder 5, RCA.

²⁷⁹ Sr. Helena to Sister John, March 28, 1961. Box 117, Folder 8. RCA.

²⁸⁰ Survey of Regis College Lay Apostolate Alumnae, 1998, 905.07. RCA.

taught in Hobbs, New Mexico for the 1958–1959 school year, revealingly wrote years after her experience “at the time I volunteered for the lay apostolate there seemed to be a shortage of women religious. . . . We were there to do the work of a school teacher, thus keeping the school open until nuns were available.”²⁸¹ Thus, for many volunteers the perceived needs of their church as they understood them and the challenges of the language of the lay apostolate served as incentive enough to travel so far away and work so demanding year without real pay.

But of course, faith alone was not the sole motivator for these volunteers, the majority of which were native to New England, and came from middle class Catholic families, reflective of the overall demographics of American Catholics in this period.²⁸² As Mary J. Oates has written, “The message that approved life options were either marriage or convent came to Catholic college women from the wider church community throughout the 1950s.”²⁸³ The reality was not so stark, but for Regis graduates, as well as college-educated women as a whole, postgraduate opportunities at this time were limited in many ways. Indeed, as a whole the 1950s saw a resurgence of traditional family norms, going against long-term trends.²⁸⁴ As such, for many the Regis Lay Apostolate provided its volunteers with a unique volunteer opportunity to live independently, with the added benefit of being immersed in a different culture and often exotic locale.

Since the experience was viewed as a service to the church, the volunteer year was not only a socially acceptable decision; it was one worthy of praise, as seen in the

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Mary J. Oates, “The Development of Catholic Colleges for Women, 1895-1960,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 7 (Fall, 1988), 419.

²⁸⁴ Though dated, one of the best considerations of this renewal of traditional family norms in the postwar period is still Elaine Tyler May’s *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988).

laudatory newspaper articles that appeared periodically throughout the greater Boston area every spring that congratulated the newest crop of Regis volunteers. One former volunteer called the experience a “respectable way to leave home before marriage,” another saw it as an “opportunity for adventure.”²⁸⁵ It was thus a mix of religious, charitable, and more personal motivations that motivated Regis women to volunteer a year or two of their lives, a formula that differed from volunteer to volunteer. Not all had the same zeal as Marie McCormick, nor did they need the same grounding in Catholic social thinkers to fuel their decision to head to the missions. Sister Mary John seemed to grasp this cocktail of incentives as well, as seen in one of her brochures for the program. In it she heralded the volunteer year as “doing Christ’s work on earth,” while also adding the more worldly argument that the year was indeed “a wonderful adventure.”

3.5 The Model Spreads

Within the context of 1950s American Catholicism, the Regis Lay Apostolate was a unique and novel enterprise that gave its volunteers a newfound volunteer opportunity. But its success was not localized to the Regis community and the mission schools its volunteers went to. Rather, the model pioneered by the likes of Marie McCormick helped catalyze a larger movement of Catholic college lay volunteers.

From an organizational and institutional standpoint, the Regis Lay Apostolate never consisted of more than the indefatigable Sister Mary John. She viewed her work essentially as a “grass-roots, people-to-people activity ... unhampered by organization.”²⁸⁶ Instead of building an institution, she had bigger plans of forging a

²⁸⁵ Survey of Regis College Lay Apostolate Alumnae. RCA.

²⁸⁶ Sister M. John, C.S.J., “Ten Years Later: the Collegiate Lay Teaching Apostolate,” *Catholic Charities*

larger lay Catholic volunteer movement that would not be dependent on any single person or program. This vision subsequently guided her efforts to build a movement in an organic, unsystematic way.

From the start, the demand side of volunteer service helped drive the growth of the Regis program. Sister Mary John did not “market” the Regis Lay Apostolate and the availability of volunteers to mission schools, dioceses, or religious orders, but she did not have to. As heads of struggling Catholics schools in need found out about this staffing lifeline, whether it was through word of mouth, reading an article, running across a Regis volunteer at another school, or hearing Sister Mary John at one of her many speaking engagements, many clamored to take advantage. Most wrote letters describing their situation, and in many instances cited a lack of nuns for their staffing difficulties. One lay businessman in New Mexico wrote in a 1951 letter, “The problems of obtaining teaching sisters appears insurmountable and I am convinced the inception of your program must have been directed by God and could well be the solution to our blackened horizons.”²⁸⁷ A few chose to go the extra mile and make their case in person, like the Rev. Gerrard McDaniel. In 1955, he made the long trip from El Paso, Texas to Weston, Massachusetts. He walked right onto the Regis campus “with a roll of blueprints under his arm” for the school he had planned, knowing he needed Regis volunteers to help realize his goal.²⁸⁸ Unfortunately, many of these pleas went unfulfilled, as from the start of the Regis Lay Apostolate Sister Mary John always had more requests than volunteers available to meet them.

Review, January 1961, 6-8.

²⁸⁷ Walker Famariss, Jr. to Sister Lucilla (President of Regis College), August 21, 1951, Box 117, Folder 8. RCA.

²⁸⁸ Untitled history of Regis Lay Apostolate, Sister Mary John, Box 116, Folder 2. RCA.

Aside from schools in need, the desire to volunteer in such a program was not limited to Regis students either, especially in the age of the lay apostolate. Only a few years after Marie McCormick first went to Guam, word of the pioneering postgraduate path some of the Regis women were embarking on began to spread throughout the Boston Archdiocese. Subsequently, Catholic seniors from nearby colleges began to contact Sister Mary John and ask if they, too, could participate. Faced with a constant overabundance of requests for help from beleaguered schools, Sister Mary John was more than happy to oblige these willing outside students. By the middle of the 1950s, Catholic graduates from nearby Catholic and non-Catholic schools, alike—including Merrimack, Bridgewater State, Lowell State, Elms College, and the Newton College of the Sacred Heart—had gone to teach at mission schools in the name of the Regis Lay Apostolate. By the second half of the decade, Regis soon became the epicenter of a much wider regional movement of lay Catholic postgraduate volunteers. A 1957 article from Boston College’s newspaper, *The Heights*, illustrated this evolution of the Regis Lay Apostolate in one advertisement that called for volunteers to serve in “the under-staffed mission schools in and around the United States.” Interested individuals were directed to contact, Sister Mary John, identified as “the organizer of the Lay Apostolate in the Boston area.”²⁸⁹

Through an ambitious speaking schedule, Sister Mary John reached an even wider national audience of Catholic colleges and universities. Through these engagements, she presented the Regis Lay Apostolate as a model low-cost, high-impact lay volunteer venture that other schools could replicate with relative ease. At schools like Emmanuel in Boston, the College of St. Teresa in Winona, Minnesota, Mundelein College in Chicago,

²⁸⁹ “Teachers Needed for Missions in America.” *The Heights*, March 8, 1957, 3.

and Albertus Magnus in New Haven, she addressed student audiences directly and called on them to volunteer and help meet the need of mission schools, inspiring some as she had inspired her students back at Regis. At conferences, she was able to connect directly with Catholic college leaders and administrators. Under these circumstances, she often presented the workings of the Apostolate; how it began, how it was funded, how to work with mission schools, the process of recruiting volunteers, and other operating details. She would then challenge those in attendance to return to their home institutions and follow her example, having already laid out the need of the mission schools, and then giving her audience a veritable step-by-step guide of how to respond. Speaking to a gathering of the National Catholic Educational Association, she stated, “What we accomplish through this program is infinitesimally small against the need. For this reason I would like to see all Catholic colleges to do a like work.”²⁹⁰ In addition to these addresses were a myriad of other associations, high schools, and parish groups like communion breakfasts.²⁹¹

As presented by Sister Mary John, by design the start-up costs of such a volunteer program were, as she recounted in a 1964 address, “extremely simple; its projects must not be overambitious; and its expenses as near \$0.00 as possible.”²⁹² This not only allowed the program to be readily adopted elsewhere, it was a useful strategy for navigating the politics of a college campus where a volunteer program, however noble its aims and trendsetting its practices like the Regis Lay Apostolate, was nowhere near

²⁹⁰ “Christian Leadership – A Challenge to the Colleges,” N.C.E.A Meeting, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Box 116, RCA; See also Speech from National Federation of Catholic Colleges, Box 116, Folder 7, RCA

²⁹¹ RLA untitled list of speaking location, Box 116, Folder 7, RCA; See, for example, “National Conference of Catholic Charities: To the Heart of the Problem in the Heart of the Nation!” Society of St. Vincent De Paul. Annual Meeting, Kansas City, Missouri, September 14-18, 1957, Box 116, RCA.

²⁹² National Catholic Educational Association, *Proceedings and Addresses / 61st Annual Meeting* (Washington, D.C: NCEA, 1964), 163.

the top of administrative priorities. As she went on to say, “When the college is aspiring to a science wing, money flowing out via the volunteer program causes some concern.” Thus the cost of sending volunteers, mainly the expense of transportation while the rest was provided by host schools and communities, was largely up to students to raise themselves, similar to earlier initiatives to donate to missions, but now to send one of their own.” As Sister Mary John advised, “Our operating budget comes each year anew from whatever the students can contribute,” adding, as for many a tight-budgeted operation, “After that we must rely on the Providence of God.”²⁹³

Surviving transcripts from these speeches further show that Sister Mary John always saw the work of the program, and any others that might follow, as part of a new movement of the church, a lay student-driven concrete appropriation of their Catholic faith in the spirit of the lay apostolate. As she said in one 1958 speech at her alma mater, Trinity College in Washington, D.C., “This generous service which our graduates are giving is something of far deeper import than merely assisting where there is a need because of lack of religious. It is certainly not simply an emergency measure which the Holy Spirit has inspired to supply workers for those with a harvest too great for the available clergy to gather for the lord. Such service does fill a definite need and it may also be almost our only answer to the overwhelming problem of staffing our Catholic schools.” As she went on to make very clear, “Its success and its great value, however, do not lie in the things which it has accomplished but rather in the fact that it is an attempt by Catholic girls, who know their birthright and their responsibility, to help in the labors of the Church.” Finishing with a fixture of her many addresses she stated, “It is, indeed,

²⁹³ Ibid, 164.

the apostolate of the laity in action.”²⁹⁴

As she stressed in a later speech, this “apostolate of the laity in action” was perhaps a little more radical than the “leader of leaders” style advocated by priests like Daniel Lord. In one conference, when prompted to give reason behind the success of the “student-inspired movement,” she responded, “If I were to give you one word for success, I would say ‘freedom.’ The absence of moderator-directiveness, the opportunity to make up one’s mind, the possibility of personal choice—these open doors, or better green pastures, provide the best soil for the seeds planted by the Holy Ghost.”²⁹⁵ It was a striking vote of confidence by Sister Mary John in the capabilities of the young lay apostles. This was particularly noteworthy at a time when many of the Church hierarchy would be far more reticent to let laity make their own decisions in their work for the church.

3.6 A New Movement Grows

Due to the work of Sister Mary John and the example of volunteers like Marie McCormick, throughout the 1950s Catholic schools began adopting programs of their own. Boston College provides an example of the more informal means by which such a program was adopted, and the student impetus that drove it. Two young women from Boston College’s education school familiar with the Regis program led the way as they volunteered in 1956 to teach at St. Michael’s, a Catholic school for Native American children in Arizona. Both men and women from the education school continued to volunteer to teach at mission schools in the following years, though women were the

²⁹⁴ Sister Mary John, “We can do it!” Trinity College, Washington, D.C., 1958, Box 116. RCA.

²⁹⁵ National Catholic Educational Association Bulletin, 164.

majority of early volunteers. Soon a Jesuit volunteered to oversee BC's own official lay apostolate teaching program. While the Boston College program grew into a notable one itself, it gave credit where credit was due for the idea, as a *Heights* article recounted several years later, "Sister John, of the Sisters of St. Joseph, had originated the plan and had already sent several contingents of Regis graduates to teach in understaffed mission schools in both the United States and in such outlying territories as Guam. The Regis experience provided not only inspiration but much practical help."²⁹⁶

As the Boston College program also serves to illustrate, these volunteers were mostly teachers in understaffed and underfunded schools. Despite their titles, they were "missionaries" in a very loose sense. One helpful example comes from 1959 when no less than ten BC graduates volunteered to staff a parochial school with a severe budget crunch in suburban Richfield, Minnesota, located just south of Minneapolis. But as the recipient pastor wrote in an article for the *Minneapolis Star*, "We should realize that for a Bostonian to come to Minnesota is as 'missionary' an enterprise as a Minnesotan to volunteer to go to Laos. . . . A teacher in a parochial school, like teachers everywhere, has the tremendous responsibility of contributing to the formation of children," going on to praise his temporary teaching staff by writing, "These 'missionary teachers' took this responsibility very seriously."²⁹⁷ To be fair, this was not entirely a stretching of definitions. Within the framework of the lay apostolate, every day offered Catholics an opportunity to be a "missionary" of the Catholic church and its teachings in their daily lives and professions. Teaching in any capacity still was a strenuous task, as two other

²⁹⁶ William Leonard, S.J., "BC's Expanding Missionary Horizons: Five Fruitful Years of Apostolic Activity," *The Heights*, April 21, 1961.

²⁹⁷ Rev. Alfred C. Longley, reprinted from *Minneapolis Star*, "BC Service in Minnesota," *The Heights* April 21, 1961.

graduates wrote back to the student body, “We both teach seven periods a day, seven days a week. The teaching, preparing of classes, making out and preparing of tests, and helping students after class keeps us very busy.”²⁹⁸ But even with these challenges the volunteers urged their fellow students, “... the need for Catholic teachers is great! I hope that several B.C. men will respond to the need.”²⁹⁹

In this way through the 1950s other schools, orders, and diocese began to adopt volunteer teaching programs of their own, using similar language of “lay apostolate” or “lay missionary” to describe the initiatives. The Northeast, with its large Catholic populations and consequently wide array of Catholic colleges and universities, was the center of this lay phenomenon. One of the most notable of these programs, at least in terms of press coverage and capturing the imagination of prospective volunteers, developed at the Copper Valley School, one of the rural Jesuit missions in southern Alaska. Not only was it a volunteer destination that enjoyed popular attention, especially in this run up to Alaskan statehood, its evolution helps illustrate the dialectic of school need and volunteer willingness that allowed this movement to grow.

By the postwar period, the Jesuits’ Alaska missions maintained unique allure in the popular American Catholic imagination. Images of Jesuits, barely recognizable under thick fur coats while riding dog sleds, periodically splashed the pages of Catholic periodicals. If one was interested in greater details they could pick up a book like Jesuit Paul O’Connor’s 1946 *Eskimo Parish* about his pastoral work in frigid temperatures.³⁰⁰ But in the mid-1950s one Jesuit in particular garnered attention for his ambitious efforts

²⁹⁸ “Frank Sheehan, Jim Roche, ‘57, “Lay Apostolate Teachers in Jamaica,” *The Heights* January 31, 1958, 3.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Paul O’Connor, S.J., *Eskimo Parish* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1946).

to build the Copper Valley School, a chain-smoking Chicago native, John “Jack” Buchanan, S.J. In 1949 he was tasked by his superior with overseeing a 74,00 square mile Alaskan “parish,” and, according to one account, told to start a school with no more than the bishop’s approval and a five-dollar bill. Undeterred, Fr. Buchanan proceeded to spend the next several years splitting time between his Alaska station and Washington state seeking out money, building supplies, equipment, and construction expertise for his school. He had a knack for fundraising, and his efforts garnered the attention of both Catholic and non-Catholic media, such as one September 1953 *Newsweek* article that referred to him as “Father Pack Rat.”³⁰¹

Within several years Fr. Buchanan hoped to finally open the Copper Valley School for the 1956 school year but ran into the need for more teachers to supplement a staff that consisted of several Sisters of St. Anne, who themselves had long worked with the Jesuits running Alaskan mission schools. The growing movement of lay college volunteers provided a self-subsidizing solution. One member of the Copper Valley community, Sister Edmund George, learned of the Regis Lay Apostolate program while visiting the Sisters of St. Anne-run Anna Maria College, located outside of Worcester, Massachusetts. Working with Sister Mary John, they recruited six recent Catholic college graduates for the task. To add further color to the story, Sister Edmund proceeded to win \$3,000 on the game show “Strike it Rich,” which was used to fly the intrepid young men and women to their volunteer years on the tundra.³⁰² The entire episode also made for

³⁰¹ “Father Pack Rat,” *Newsweek*, September 7, 1953.

³⁰² “Lay Women from Diocese Pause in Seattle En Route to Alaskan Missionary Assignment.” *The Catholic Free Press* August 24, 1956. “Strike it Rich” started as radio show, and while billed as a gameshow, as described in John Dunning’s *On the Air: The Encyclopedia of Old-Time Radio* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), “radio’s show with a heart” rewarded all comers and left little suspense over the outcome. The contestants were sympathy stories, ranging from those in need of operations to those like Sr. Edmund wishing to help a charitable cause, and they all won some amount of money after

good copy, as Fr. John's work, his new volunteer teachers, Sister Edmund's game show—winnings, and future plans for a “Catholic University of Alaska” even made it to the pages of the *New York Times* in a November 1956 article.³⁰³

Soon after, this program for the Copper Valley and other Alaskan mission schools was adopted by the students at Gonzaga University, the Jesuit school in Spokane, Washington. From 1956 onward lay teachers continued to give a year or more at Copper Valley. The program drew volunteers from the two—Jesuit run schools in Washington State, Gonzaga and Seattle University, but through the 1950s volunteers applied from Montana, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Chicago, Brooklyn, Minnesota, Long Island, and Ohio.

Like similar programs at the time, prospective volunteers learned about the opportunity to teach on the tundra at Copper Valley through a variety of means. The most effective feeder was the large network of Jesuit colleges and universities, where individual Jesuits could recommend the program to particular students, or where a senior was more likely to stumble upon an issue of the periodical *Jesuit Missions* or story about the missions in a provincial newsletter like the *Oregon Jesuit*. But word of the Alaska missions was not limited to Jesuit circles, by the end of the 1950s news of the program could be found elsewhere, as illustrated in one 1960 letter to Sister Edmund wherein a graduating college senior from Pennsylvania wrote, “When your letter appeared in our *Pittsburgh Catholic* I was very surprised to find that there were lay missionaries in Alaska. I was wondering if you would take a few precious moments to tell me a little

answering a few simple questions. Even if a contestant did not answer questions correctly, there was a “heartline” that individuals and organizations could call and make donations too. No one walked away empty-handed. As Dunning has written, “It was a charity show masked as a quiz.”

³⁰³ “School in Alaska Built By Priest: Classes for Indians Fulfill ‘Life Mission’ for Creator of Parish in Wilderness.” *New York Times*, November 11, 1956.

about the work and life of lay missionaries in Alaska.”³⁰⁴ Indeed, the Alaska mission schools maintained a romantic and exotic allure, as word of the volunteer program could also be found outside of the world of Catholic print, such as one 1958 *Boston Herald* article that wrote of how “Imbued with a spirit of social service and self-sacrifice not too common in today’s younger generation, five Massachusetts girls are serving as volunteer workers in Alaska, helping a chain-smoking Jesuit priest from Chicago to realize his ‘real mission in life.’”³⁰⁵

As the model of volunteer teaching spread to Copper Valley and elsewhere, the “lay apostles” consistently found the experience, despite the challenges of their jobs and the sometimes-contentious relations with their host religious communities, to be one of great experiential value through the travel, work, and new contacts made. As one Boston College graduate wrote from his work at a Jesuit-run school in Jamaica, “I realize that the benefits far outweigh the sacrifices involved. I sincerely believe that, at this time next year, the twelve of us will say that we have gained a year.”³⁰⁶ Volunteers shared a language of growing and gaining from “giving” a year, though the gains remained largely abstract and hard to quantify or qualify. As another graduate from St. Joseph’s College (Maryland) echoed in a 1960 letter to *The Shield* magazine from her volunteer teaching position in New Mexico, “To me, the only sacrifice is being away from my family for another year. Balanced against this are all the experiences that I will never forget.”³⁰⁷

Further, as is clear in statements from numerous volunteers from this period, these

³⁰⁴ Donna to Sister M. George Edmund, S.S.A., May 18, 1960. RG-Alaska Missions and Houses Box 1—Copper Valley School: Correspondence, Jesuit Oregon Province Archives, hereafter JOPA.

³⁰⁵ “Five Massachusetts Girls Help at Alaska Mission: Board, Experience Only Compensation.” *Boston Herald*, November 17, 1958, 4; For further example, see also, “‘A School is Born: Worcester Volunteers Aid Alaska Missionary,” *Worcester Telegram*. November 11, 1956.

³⁰⁶ John F. Sheehan, ‘60. “Letter from Jamaica,” *The Heights* December 9, 1960.

³⁰⁷ Sister Denise, “Lay workers needed!” *The Shield*, May 1960, 24-25.

young Catholics drew on the rhetoric of the lay apostolate and Catholic Action. They acted not as potential priests and nuns, but as a new presence in these church ministries. As one prospective volunteer illustrates in a 1960 letter to the Copper Valley School, “I have thought seriously about religious life, but whether because of lack of courage, the improper moment, or the absence of a true vocation, I have not been convinced that God calls me to serve Him in that way—not yet, at least. I sincerely believe, however, that He now beckons me to the Alaska Mission. ... It will give me the chance to give rather than receive as I have been doing for the past 23 years.”³⁰⁸

3.7 A Lay Missionaries Boom

In a November 1959 article for *America*, David O’Shea, a chief coordinator for lay organizations in the archdiocese of Chicago, wrote “Participation of lay people in overseas missionary work is not a novelty in the Church. Definitely new, however, is the emergence of a widespread lay missionary movement that finds expression in a variety of organizations.”³⁰⁹ By the end of the 1950s the idea of lay missionaries of any type, largely an abstract idea ten years earlier, had become an accepted, though still evolving, part of the Catholic social landscape.³¹⁰ Catholic periodicals lauded what one referred to as a “new boom in lay missionaries.”³¹¹ Another wrote that lay missionaries were now no less than a “vital foundation of the mission.”³¹² Groups that focused on more explicit missionary work, such as the Lay Mission Helpers of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles,

³⁰⁸ Constance Langois to Sister George Edmund, S.S.A, January 21, 1960. JOPA.

³⁰⁹ David O’Shea, “Lay Missionary Apostolate,” *America*, November 28, 1959, 274.

³¹⁰ “New Directions for Lay Missionaries,” *Perspectives*, June 1960, 24-25,

³¹¹ D.J. Roche, “New Boom in Lay Missions,” *Sign*, 36-38, 1959; See also “New Directions for Lay Missionaries” *Perspectives*, 24-5. June 1960, part of a special issue for those “whose interest in the missionary aspects of the Church has been awakened;” See also Edward Murphy, S.J. *Teach Ye All Nations: The Principles of Catholic Missionary Work* (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1957), 230.

³¹² Cover of May 1961 *Jesuit Missions*.

the Grail Movement, and the Association for International Development (a lay missionary organization based out of the Archdiocese of Newark, not to be confused with the federal agency by the same name) received much of the acclaim as exemplars of the new lay missionary spirit.³¹³ In the spirit of Catholic action and the lay apostolate, lay women and men were able to claim roles of their own apart from just being assistants to members of the hierarchy.

Within this framework, volunteer teaching programs like the Regis Lay Apostolate continued to grow as a now-accepted and ever-needed resource for underfunded Catholic schools, together sending by conservative estimates well over a hundred recent graduates a year mostly to schools in the South, West, and on Native American reservations throughout the U.S.

This distinct movement of volunteer teachers was not uniform in size or scope. Some, like the Boston College program, sent upwards of ten or twenty volunteers a year. Others, like Newton College of the Sacred Heart just down the street from the BC campus, could only support one or two a year. But as one article from Sacred Heart's student newspaper 885, indicates, these young women and men saw themselves as a distinct movement within the broader category of lay mission work, one that could be found at "many other campuses across the nation."³¹⁴ Given the movement's informal and fluid nature, no comprehensive list of programs from the period exists, but a pamphlet from the promotional material for the Regis program offers a glimpse at its spread, claiming programs at Emmanuel College (MA), Anna Maria College (MA), Boston College, Newton College of the Sacred Heart (MA), Stonehill College (MA), St.

³¹³ R.W. Dellinger, "*For We Are God's Helpers*": *The Life of Monsignor Anthony Brouwers -- Visionary of the Lay Missionary Movement*. Mansfield, OH: Bookmasters, 2004.

³¹⁴ "Apostolate on Location." 885 October 1961.

Joseph's (MD), New Rochelle (NY), Trinity (DC), Framingham State Teachers College (MA), Our Lady of the Elms (MA), Cardinal Cushing College (MA), as well as Notre Dame (MD), Fairfield University (CT), Gonzaga University, College of St. Teresa (MN), University of St. Joseph (CT), Albertus Magnus (CT), Salve Regina (RI), Mercyhurst (PA), Fontbonne (MO), Rivier College (NH), Georgetown University, and Georgian Court (NJ). Looking forward, the pamphlet also noted "recent enthusiastic inquirers" from elsewhere, including Le Moyne College (NY), Clarke (Dubuque), St. John's University, Fordham, Marquette, St. Mary's College (IN), Mundelein College, and St. Louis University.³¹⁵ The volunteers mostly came from the Northeast and upper Midwest, where a majority of American Catholics lived. Significantly, a majority of these early adopters of this type of volunteer program were all-female schools like Regis. This suggests that the volunteer year was particularly appealing to young women as a temporary alternative to traditional family or career norms. This reflected a much longer tradition of women Christian missionaries in the United States wherein women enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy in a missionary role that they did not always enjoy in other spheres of their lives.³¹⁶ Further, men may have also been more reticent to take part in a movement that was spearheaded by women, and to take on teaching positions often in the place of women religious.

Similar to Protestant volunteer programs from the same period, the spread of this volunteer teaching movement was driven by both supply and demand. Catholic middle class college graduates took advantage of this opportunity to serve the church as

³¹⁵ Advertising pamphlet for Regis Lay Apostolate. RCA.

³¹⁶ The literature on women Christian missionaries is extensive. One of the most helpful overviews is *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon: Mercer University Press), 1996.

members of the lay apostolate. But like Protestant college volunteers from the period in work camps or caravans, the motivations were a mix of altruistic and self-serving impulses. As Catholic “lay missionaries” made clear, they, too, benefitted in many ways from the experience of giving a year or two to a mission school, as they traveled to new parts of the country and partook in a rich experience, however difficult it may have been at times, particularly without any pay for the many demands placed on them. While this movement of volunteer teachers unfolded with less explicit emphasis on volunteer development than Protestant volunteer programs, particularly the work camp movement with its roots in Progressive education and criticisms of the limits of classroom experiences, both shared an emphasis on the experiential value of volunteering to the volunteer as they served their students. While in less explicit terms than Protestant programs, the volunteer teaching year was still often presented by organizers like Sister Mary John and recounted by veterans as a transformative personal experience.

For the priests and sisters who ran underfunded schools, the prospect of self-subsidizing volunteer teachers offered a convenient, if only temporary, labor lifeline. Without extra men and women religious, eager Catholic college graduates working for free were, from an institutional standpoint, the next best thing for stretched budgets. By the end of the 1950s some orders even began their own volunteer programs to attract college graduates to their schools specifically. One notable example was the 1958 creation of Volunteer Teachers Mission Service by Frank Underwood, C.S.C., to create a volunteer teacher pipeline for the Holy Cross Fathers’ mission churches of the U.S. in areas like central Texas and South Dakota.³¹⁷ Similarly, the Jesuits of the Oregon

³¹⁷ Harry Baker, C.S.C., “New Name for Teaching Apostolate,” *Notre Dame Alumnus*, June-July, 1964, 20.21,

Province created the LAMBs (Lay Apostle Mission Boosters), based out of Gonzaga University, to funnel teachers to the Copper Valley School and other Alaska mission institutions.³¹⁸

Though these programs helped, they in themselves could not solve the chronic shortage of staff faced by many of the schools. If the Regis program offers any indication, the movement of volunteer teachers often fell short in its limited ability to help schools keep their doors open for another year. Sister Mary John often lamented in her many talks, “of the countless appeals—from Japan to Jamaica, from Panama to Peru, from Minnesota to Massachusetts—which have to go unanswered.”³¹⁹ By 1960s Catholic schools as a whole were faced with a growing shortfall of priests, brothers, and sisters. As one article in *Catholic World* wrote, “Let’s face it: there are not enough religious teachers to meet current demands and there won’t be enough for some time to come—if ever again.”³²⁰ With so widespread a crunch, volunteer teachers would remain an important, if inconsistent, norm for Catholic mission schools. Like Protestant volunteer programs, this teaching movement was at best an ameliorative rather than curative solution. As Sister Mary John herself admitted in a speech bluntly speaking of her own program, “The Regis volunteers are a stopgap service and claim to be no more.”³²¹ In the short term, the volunteer year helped schools, helped religious communities, helped students, and in more abstract ways, helped the volunteer. But once a term was up, the volunteer teacher often went back home, leaving both schools and their students back where they started in

³¹⁸ “‘Zag LAMBs are Not Like Sheep,’” *Gonzaga Bulletin*, February 5, 1960. See also Simon Hendry, “‘Ruined for life’: The Spirituality of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps” (Phd diss., Graduate Theological Union, 2002).

³¹⁹ Sr. Mary John, “College Students and the Missions,” *Perspectives*, March-April, 1960, 21.

³²⁰ Paul M. Donovan, O.S.S.T., “Lay Teachers are a Blessing,” *Catholic World* April 1960, 15; See also “About Lay Teachers in Catholic Schools,” *The Liguorian*, August, 1960, 31-35.

³²¹ National Catholic Educational Association Bulletin, 164.

a perpetual resource crunch.

While most placements brought volunteers across class and racial lines, race relations were not a central concern of these programs as it was for some Protestant volunteer organizations from the same period. This reflects the larger reality that, as Amy Koehlinger has aptly summarized, “There was no uniform response to the civil rights movement among American Catholics.”³²² Some, such as those belonging to Catholic Interracial Councils in northern cities like New York and Chicago, worked diligently to address civil rights issues like *de facto* segregation in their own backyards.³²³ Others vehemently opposed new black neighbors who came as part of the Great Migration.³²⁴ Given this lack of a clear Catholic position in the 1950s, work with African American populations often was cast as just another opportunity to give a year for the church as a whole. One example comes from a 1958 visit to the College of the Sacred Heart from Father Mullaney of St. Jude’s Educational Institute, a Catholic high school that focused on serving Montgomery, Alabama’s African–American population. In his pitch for volunteer teachers, rather than presenting the opportunity to teach at St. Jude’s in light of race relations, instead poised it to graduating seniors as a matter of service to God, asking, “What better way to repay God for the four years of Catholic education He has given you than by giving Him one year of your lives working as a Lay Apostle? The rewards will be innumerable and eternal.”³²⁵

Altogether, these forces helped shape a robust movement of Catholic volunteer teachers by the start of the 1960s. The path pioneered by the Regis Lay Apostolate and

³²² Koehlinger, *New Nuns*, 49.

³²³ See David Southern’s *John LaFarge and the Limits of Catholic Interracialism, 1911-1963* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996).

³²⁴ See John McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth-Century Urban North* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

³²⁵ “Lay Catholics Needed in South.” 885, May, 1958.

Sister Mary John helped forge a new volunteer opportunity for young women and men to give a year to struggling schools. One 1960 article in the Malden, Massachusetts, newspaper captured the dynamic of the movement as it wrote of a volunteer teacher headed to Puerto Rico, writing, “Wanted: Teachers, many extra–curriculum duties, poor living conditions in some cases, no health insurance or retirement plans, no salaries, only those with high qualifications and excellent references need apply. Impossible to attract applicants for such positions?” But despite the lack of incentives on paper, the article went on to point out that “On the contrary, many capable young college graduates have already taken such jobs.”³²⁶ Indeed, the sum of the volunteer year was for many worth the costs of this temporary detour from a traditional postgraduate path.

But even after a decade, this volunteer movement still had room to grow and develop. In particular, it remained largely informal and decentralized, factors that had allowed the phenomenon to grow initially, but now left room for centralization and professionalization. At the First National Lay Mission Conference in 1959, held at Loyola University Chicago, Edward Murphy, S.J., associate editor of *Jesuit Missions* and a proponent of this lay initiative, made a point that, in spite of its achievements, “At present the movement suffers from a lack of coordination.”³²⁷ Further, in comparison to other denominations, the movement was relatively small. In the following year’s National Lay Mission Conference, one lay missionary enviously exclaimed of her experience that, “There were five of us Catholic lay mission workers in Samoa. We thought that was pretty good until we counted up the Mormon boys and girls. They had 47.”³²⁸ While

³²⁶ “Malden Girl’s Teaching Salary Lower Than Low! Marianna Doyle Puerto Rican Apostle,” *Malden Press* April 7, 1960.

³²⁷ John L. May, “Extension’s New Frontier for the 60’s” *Extension*, March 1961, 13.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

some saw room for improvement in organization and size, others saw even further untapped potential, with more boundaries to transcend. As Sister Mary John had spoken of her own program at approximately the same time, “I believe that such a lay apostolate of service need not be reduced to a method or to an activity surrounded by spiritual exercises and external regulations. ... So, while in practice the Regis Lay Apostolate has meant teaching in understaffed schools where religious teachers were not available, there is no reason why such volunteer service could not or should not be extended to ‘community welfare’ of any other kind.”³²⁹ Teaching represented only one type of volunteer service to Catholic college students, other ways remained to be discovered and developed

Between this volunteer movement and its Protestant parallel, by the start of the 1960s there was a wide array of religious volunteer service opportunities for young women and men, even if there was not much overlap between the Protestant and Catholic manifestations of this same phenomenon. Work camps, volunteer teaching, and similar programs allowed middle class young people to give some of their time and energy to institutions and communities in need, even if only for a short time, with consequent positive and negative results for both those serving and those being served. Even together, this growing movement of Catholic and Protestant youth volunteer opportunities was still relatively small. But as the “New Frontier” of the 1960s began, it would bring a new nationwide volunteer program for college students on a scale unseen before thanks to the tremendous resource of the federal government. This new initiative would reflect in many ways these earlier Protestant and Catholic volunteer programs, but would also go on to define a nationwide paradigm of volunteer service.

³²⁹ Sister Mary John, “We can do it!” Trinity College, Washington, D.C., 1958, Box 116, RCA.

4.0 To Service God and Country

In the very early morning of October 14, 1960, presidential candidate John F. Kennedy arrived at the University of Michigan's Ann Arbor campus. Only hours earlier he had been in New York City participating in his third national debate with Richard Nixon. Despite the 2:00am arrival time, a remarkable and enthusiastic crowd of some ten-thousand students awaited him.

Though weary, Kennedy was not one to disappoint such enthusiastic supporters. He thanked the students and immediately began to emphasize the importance of the upcoming election, declaring, "I think in many ways it is the most important campaign since 1933, mostly because of the problems which press upon the United States, and the opportunities which will be presented to us in the 1960s." While he acknowledged that much of the future burden rested with the presidency and with Congress, he reminded his crowd that they, too, would and should help the nation face the complex challenges that lay ahead, especially regarding the United States' relationship to the rest of the world. Challenging the students, he asked, "How many of you who are going to be doctors, are willing to spend your days in Ghana? Technicians or engineers, how many of you are willing to work in the Foreign Service and spend your lives traveling around the world? On your willingness to do that, not merely to serve one year or two years in the service, but on your willingness to contribute part of your life to this country, I think will depend the answer whether a free society can compete." As he began to wind down his remarks,

he added, “So I come here tonight to go to bed! But I also come here tonight to ask you to join in the effort.”³³⁰

This impromptu address struck a chord that resonated not only with the Michigan crowd, but with young Americans across the country. Almost immediately college students began submitting petitions and letters to Kennedy’s campaign offices demanding that he propose a government program through which they could concretely answer this call to public service. In the week before the election Kennedy more formally proposed the creation of a “peace corps” in a November 2 address at San Francisco’s Cow Palace arena. It would be a volunteer corps comprised of “ambassadors of peace,” that would mobilize the talents of Americans for greater good throughout the world. As he stated, “I am convinced that our men and women, dedicated to freedom, are able to be missionaries, not only for freedom and peace, but join in a worldwide struggle against poverty and disease and ignorance.”³³¹

As a result of the chain of events catalyzed by the early morning address in Ann Arbor, Kennedy established the Peace Corps in his first year in office, first by executive order in March of 1961, with full congressional approval coming in September of that year. Almost immediately the agency enjoyed iconic status as the creation of a dashing young president, further cemented by the able leadership of his equally amiable brother-in-law Sargent Shriver. For many, it was idealistic aspiration incarnated by executive order, an initiative that represented the best of what the United States was and wanted to be. As the agency’s associate director Harris Wofford described, “In the American mind,

³³⁰ Full transcript of remarks available at Peace Corps website, <https://www.peacecorps.gov/about/history/founding-moment/>; See also Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 11.

³³¹ Full transcript available at the University of California-Santa Barbara’s *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=25928>.

it took its place somewhere between the boy scouts and motherhood.”³³² Historian Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman has written that it “reassured a broad cross-section of Americans during a turbulent period that there was at least one aspect of their nation’s policy that was indisputably good. It symbolized what America wanted to be, and what much of the world wanted America to be: superhero, protector of the disenfranchised, defender of the democratic faith.”³³³

The sentiment was widespread throughout the country, especially among potential volunteers on college campuses. As the editors of Boston College's *The Heights* wrote in an April 1961 article, “Perhaps no idea has captured the imagination of the American youth in the past decade so dynamically as the Peace Corps program of the last few months. One would almost think that young people were languishing in wait for just such an opportunity to serve mankind.” But as the writers pointed out, at least in Chestnut Hill the premise was somewhat old news. As they reminded their readers, “Boston College students are testimony to the fact that American youth is willing to sacrifice its affluent conveniences for a more rigorous life, while giving personal service to less fortunate persons both in this country and abroad. As far back as 1956 Boston College launched its Lay Apostolate Program when two students volunteered to work in the United States.”³³⁴

As these writers at *The Heights* knew, along with veterans of AFSC work camps, and subscribers of *motive* familiar with the magazine’s yearly directory of summer service programs, the Peace Corps was in many ways a new chapter in a larger and older tradition of youth volunteer service. As Samuel Hayes, an early consultant to the

³³² Marshall Windmiller, *The Peace Corps and Pax Americana* (Washington, D.C: Public Affairs Press, 1970), 1. While Windmiller cited this positive image in the very beginning of the book, it was a launching pad into his critique of the Peace Corps due to its inextricable ties to America’s larger foreign policy aims, including its presence in Vietnam.

³³³ Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 1.

³³⁴ “A United Effort,” *The Heights*, April 21, 1961, 8.

initiative wrote at the time, “The peace corps proposal is not new, by itself. Similar ideas for government programs have been advanced for fifty years. Private agencies have a long and successful record of activities of this kind.” Rather, the one important new factor was its executive endorsement. As Hayes pointed out, “But never before had a president endorsed the idea and made it an important part of his program.”³³⁵

The Peace Corps institutional story is well-worn historical ground. Previous histories have covered the nitty-gritty details of the program’s start, successes, and challenges. In addition to these “Peace Corps politics,” historians, most notably Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman, have rightly placed it in its context of Cold War struggles, pointed out international “cousins” of the Peace Corps started in Australia, Britain, and Canada in the same period, and explored the American cultural context and how it shaped the Peace Corps and the program’s broad reception. Other more recent studies have placed the program within larger narratives of economic developmental theory in U.S. policy-making circles, as well as explored some of its acute gendered dynamics.³³⁶

For all their detail, these earlier works have understated, if not overlooked, the relationship between the Peace Corps and the vibrant mix of Protestant and Catholic volunteer programs that preceded it.³³⁷ It would be an oversimplification to say that the

³³⁵ Samuel P. Hayes, *An International Peace Corps: The Promise and Problems* (Washington, D.C: Public Affairs Institute, 1961), 12.

³³⁶ More general recent studies of the program include Stanley Meisler’s *When the World Calls: The Inside Story of the Peace Corps and Its First Fifty Years* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2011); and Molly Geidel’s *Peace Corps Fantasies: How Development Shaped the Global Sixties* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015). Geidel in more particular focuses on one of the great contradictions of the program, its image of selfless altruism as preserved in the popular American imagination, and some of its more harmful and gendered aims of modernization. Daniel Immerwahr’s *Thinking Small: The United States and Lure of Community Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015) is another example of more recent economic development-focused studies.

³³⁷ Though some recent research has begun to explore these roots, though rather than looking at a larger context of religious volunteer programs the focus has been on the Peace Corps. See E. Timothy Smith, “Roots of the Peace Corps: Youth Volunteer Service in the 1950s,” *Peace and Change* 41, no. 2 (April 2016): 221-254.

Peace Corps was a government remake of a religious volunteer service model. But while the Peace Corps' genealogy was not solely religious, as this chapter shows, a closer look reveals the many indelible fingerprints left by these earlier programs. There was a wide array of connections, both direct and indirect, between the government program and this pre-existing wider movement of volunteer service.

The story of the Peace Corps is incomplete without these Catholic and Protestant predecessor programs. Further, the story of these religious volunteer service organizations would likewise be incomplete without the Peace Corps, given the ways the program would change the larger landscape of American youth volunteer service. In part due to its tremendous popularity and recognition, the Peace Corps became the new national point of reference for youth volunteer service programs. Further, it helped spur new religious service programs and encouraged introspection among older ones. Finally, for prospective volunteers, this new opportunity broadened the options of how they might serve others and in turn be transformed, whether they were driven by religious motivations, the pull of civic duty, or some combination of both.

4.1 Political Roots

The Peace Corps' genealogy was anything but linear and mono-causal. The program was shaped by an array of different ideas, aims, and individuals. While it was given life by Kennedy's endorsement, it was very much a work-in-progress before the pivotal speech at Ann Arbor that has since gone down in Peace Corps history as the "founding moment."³³⁸ To more clearly understand the relationship between the Peace

³³⁸ "The Founding Moment," found on Peace Corps agency website.
<https://www.peacecorps.gov/about/history/founding-moment/>.

Corps and earlier volunteer programs, it is helpful to look at some of the other main factors that helped lead to the Peace Corps' creation.

The crucible of the Cold War was undoubtedly the dominant catalyst. Similar to the post war proliferation of Protestant volunteer organizations and the development of Catholic lay missionary organizations, the fraught geopolitical context of the 1940s and 1950s helped shape and spur support for such a program within foreign policy circles. One of the earliest seeds was planted by President Truman in his January 20, 1949, inaugural address. He suggested a government program to send Americans overseas to provide technical assistance to developing nations, a soft power thrust that would help shore up the United States' public image in an increasingly decolonizing world.³³⁹ As it was the fourth major foreign policy point of his speech, this broad idea became known thereafter as the "Point Four" concept.

Henry Reuss, a Democratic congressman from Wisconsin, was the first advocate of translating Truman's "Point Four" idea into a service program, or "Point Four Youth Corps," for young Americans. As Reuss wrote in a February 1961 article for *The Progressive*, he was inspired by a 1957 Congressional delegation trip to Cambodia where he came upon four Americans working with the International Volunteer Service (IVS), a nondenominational Christian volunteer organization. They were building community schools. Reuss found the intimate personal connections between the IVS volunteers and their host communities a welcome contrast to the "giantism" of larger but more impersonal U.S.-funded developmental projects like dams that he had seen elsewhere on the trip.

³³⁹ See Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, chapter 4; Jonathan Bingham, *Shirt-Sleeve Diplomacy: Point 4 in Action* (New York: The John Day Company, 1954), xi.

Reuss was inspired by what he saw, and wished to replicate such efforts on a much grander scale. He later wrote, “I could only regret that there were four, rather than forty or four hundred, Americans working on the project.”³⁴⁰ Shortly after his return from abroad, he presented the concept in a speech at Cornell, later observing that “The response there—and wherever else I have discussed it—was electric.”³⁴¹ Reuss continued to push the premise over the next several years. He was particularly motivated by the idea of such a program serving as a nonmilitary alternative for young Americans in the spirit of William James’ “moral equivalent of war.” As he argued in a May 1960 article in *Commonweal*, not only would such a program of assisting the “have-not nations of Asia and Africa” be beneficial from a foreign policy perspective, it would be beneficial for the volunteers themselves. As he went on to write, it would provide young Americans “a sense of purpose—the excitement and stimulus of taking part in great events.”³⁴²

Through the late 1950s and into 1960s Reuss slowly gained a following for the idea, including an endorsement of the National Student Association (NSA). The NSA was itself no stranger to volunteer service programs, as it had for over a decade prior promoted overseas work camps like those run by the AFSC.³⁴³ In early 1960, Reuss and Senator Richard Neuberger of Oregon introduced measures to Congress calling for a nongovernmental study of the “advisability and practicability” of such a program, resulting in a \$10,000 appropriation in August to the Colorado State University Research Foundation.³⁴⁴ By this time Minnesota Senator Hubert Humphrey had begun to voice his

³⁴⁰ Henry S. Reuss, Henry S. “Youth For Peace,” *The Progressive*, February 1961, 16.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² Henry Reuss, “A Point Four Youth Corps,” *Commonweal* May 1960, 146,

³⁴³ See *Work, Study, Travel. . . Abroad* (Madison, WI: United States National Student Association, 1948), 26-28.

³⁴⁴ Maurice Albertson, Andrew Rice, and Pauline Birky, *New Frontiers for American Youth: Perspectives on the Peace Corps* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1961), 11.

support for a similar program. Whereas Reuss used the language of the older “Point Four” premise, Humphrey is the first to have coined the phrase “Peace Corps,” both during the Democratic presidential primaries and in a June 1960 Senate proposal.³⁴⁵

While Reuss and Humphrey advanced the idea of such a program, it took Kennedy’s embrace to vault it into the national limelight. Even though it clearly was not his brainchild, as Hoffman has observed, “coming from Kennedy the notion seemed newer and better.”³⁴⁶ A broad range of editorial pages across the country voiced their endorsement, from newspapers like the *Boston Globe* to the magazine *Science*.³⁴⁷ It also attracted bipartisan support. As an early Peace Corps promotional flyer pointed out, it was the rare program that could claim the support of a liberal stalwart like Humphrey as well as conservative firebrand Barry Goldwater.³⁴⁸ A Gallup Poll taken in January 1961 shortly after Kennedy’s inauguration showed that a remarkable 71% of respondents were in favor of the proposed program.³⁴⁹

The fanfare was not entirely unanimous. Richard Nixon argued that it was a flashy gimmick, an idea that looked good on paper but lacked substance.³⁵⁰ Outgoing president Dwight Eisenhower dismissively referred to it as a “juvenile experiment.”³⁵¹

The Daughters of the American Revolution passed a resolution at their 1961 annual

³⁴⁵ Hubert H. Humphrey, edited by Norman Sherman, *The Education of a Public Man: My Life and Politics* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1976), 229; Helpful annotations of both the Reuss and Humphrey bills can be found in the bibliography of Donald Eberly, ed., *National Service: A Report of a Conference* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1968), 584-585.

³⁴⁶ Hoffman, *All You Need is Love* 12; There is no consensus as to when Kennedy first became keen to the idea or picked up the phrase “Peace Corps.” There are numerous competing accounts of when this happened.

³⁴⁷ Editorial Board, “The Peace Corps.” *Boston Globe* March 3, 1961, 8; “Idealism for Export,” *Science*, March 31, 1961, 133, no. 3457.

³⁴⁸ “A Pleasant View . . . from Capitol Hill.” Shriver Papers, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, hereafter JFKPL.

³⁴⁹ Albertson, *New Frontiers*, 158.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Julius A. Amin, *The Peace Corps in Cameroon* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1992), 21; Joseph W. Hafensher, “Peace Corps Defended,” *Chicago Tribune* November 4, 1961, 12.

gathering that asked Congress to ban the Peace Corps out of a fear that the program “would send inexperienced youths to countries where they were likely to face highly trained communist–bloc technicians.”³⁵² As Sargent Shriver later recalled, there was no shortage of critics who took aim at “Kennedy’s Kiddie Korps.”³⁵³ But these criticisms largely fell along political lines, and paled in comparison to the outpouring of public support.

There were no greater supporters than prospective Peace Corps volunteers. In the interim between the Ann Arbor speech and the end of the presidential campaign, petitions and letters of support continued to pour into the national headquarters of the Democratic Party from college students around the country to ensure that Kennedy would keep to his promise.³⁵⁴ The flood of enthusiasm continued, as an article from the *Christian Science Monitor* remarked shortly after the agency’s official creation in 1961, “The President’s appeal for peace corps volunteers has switchboards jammed, mail boxes spilling over, and the temporary headquarters of the corps in a state of happy chaos.”³⁵⁵ Kennedy’s call was willingly received by a wide number of young adults eager serve on the frontlines of his “New Frontier.” As the administration proclaimed in a January 1961 press release, they were witness to “a mounting flow of incontestable evidence that there are large and growing numbers of Americans in their twenties deeply motivated to place their energies and talents at the service of constructive world causes.”³⁵⁶ This push from below was similar to earlier religious volunteer programs, such as the female Mennonite college

³⁵² “Peace Corps Attacked in Vote by D.A.R.,” *Chicago Tribune* April 20, 1961, E3.

³⁵³ Sargent Shriver, *Point of the Lance* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), 13.

³⁵⁴ For example, see “Service Plan Urged for Poorer Nations,” *New York Times*, November 13, 1960, 95.

³⁵⁵ Josephine Ripley, “Flood of Peace Corps Queries Brings Happy Chaos,” *Christian Science Monitor*, March 6, 1961, 1.

³⁵⁶ “International Youth Service,” Press Office of John F. Kennedy. Stanhope Hotel, New York, New York, January 9, 1961. Shriver papers. JFKPL.

students who wanted to work at mental health institutions as “COG’s” during World War II, or the seniors at other New England colleges who wrote to Sr. Mary John about the Regis Lay Apostolate, to the high school students who wanted to help rebuild Europe through international work camps. The enthusiastic response of young women and men wanting to serve, though on an exponentially larger scale and with a greater emphasis on national pride, provided the popular pressure that ensured the Peace Corps made the jump from a campaign promise to a reality.

4.2 Waging Peace: Similarities and Differences

Like the Quaker-led work camp movement, and the Brethren and Mennonite volunteer service organizations created as an alternative to the draft, the Peace Corps had shared ideological roots as a nonmilitary form of service. At least in the early years of the program, the Peace Corps was popularly seen and treated as an altruistic alternative to armed duty. For instance, a 1963 *Time* article remarked, “From the front porches of the U.S., the view of the Peace Corps is beautiful. The image is that of a battalion of cheery, crew-cut kids who two years ago hopped off their drugstore stools and hurried out around the world to wage peace.”³⁵⁷ The Peace Corps was more than just a powerful rejoinder to the worry and handwringing over America’s postwar image wrought by works such as William Lederer and Eugene Burdick’s bestselling novel *The Ugly American*, which portrayed American foreign service members in Southeast Asia as arrogant, self-serving individuals who were detached from the local population. A political cartoon from the *Christian Science Monitor* further portrayed this public image. It depicted a young man who resembled a soldier, with a close-cropped haircut and outfit that

³⁵⁷ Quoted from Windmiller, *The Peace Corps*, 3.

resembled an army uniform. But the young man, labeled “U.S. Peace Corps,” was no traditional soldier. With a toolbox in one hand and farming tools resting on his opposite shoulder, he marched off, as indicated by a directional sign, to “Battle against hunger, inexperience, and apathy.” As the cartoon’s caption wrote, it was “To Wage a Better Type of War.”³⁵⁸ With its combination of military language but highly altruistic aims, the Peace Corps made nonmilitary forms of service not only acceptable, but even heroic in the national imagination like never before.

As a Cold War initiative, the Peace Corps was not entirely benevolent, as critics then and historians now have pointed out.³⁵⁹ It could not be divorced from its foreign policy context wherein it was inextricably bound to the heavy hand of American military excursions in the larger struggle against global communism. If the Peace Corps’ aim was building peace, it was a *Pax Americana*. Despite similarities to the Christian pacifist roots and aims of the Protestant volunteer service movement, Peace Corps volunteers by the nature of their program were not the “shock troops of peace” in the same way the AFSC work campers in Westmoreland had proclaimed themselves to be.³⁶⁰

While it would be an error to overstate the program’s altruism and overlook the Peace Corps’ ties to larger Cold War aims, it would also be wrong to overstate the opposite case and view the program through an overly-cynical lens. At the Peace Corps’ highest level of leadership, there were hopes that the program would lead to a less war-torn future. For while the Peace Corps is popularly remembered as a product of the 1960s, it was also a product of the 1940s and World War II. As Sargent Shriver

³⁵⁸ Image from Albertson, *New Frontiers*, 3.

³⁵⁹ As Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman eloquently put, America’s military might in the Cold War, particularly the doomed foray into Vietnam, was the Peace Corps’ “evil twin.” See Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 4.

³⁶⁰ The comparison is even more strained when one considers that, despite early indications, the Peace Corps was not offered as a substitute for military service. In part this was in response to early criticisms from opponents to the program who charged that it would become a haven for draft-dodgers.

biographer Scott Stossel has rightly pointed out, “the founding fathers of the Peace Corps, from Kennedy and Shriver on down, were almost all World War II veterans.”³⁶¹ Kennedy had his famous near-death experience in the Pacific as captain of the *PT-109*, and further knew the pain of losing his older brother Joseph, who died in Europe flying for the navy. Shriver served on the battleship U.S.S. *South Dakota* in the Pacific in command of a battery of anti-aircraft guns. Harris Wofford was a pilot. As Stossel has further observed, the experience of serving during World War II had a twofold effect on these men. The men who launched the Peace Corps had the confidence of victors. But they also had the grim distinction of knowing the full horrors of military combat.

One intimate exchange in particular shows how World War II cast a shadow on the Peace Corps’ highest echelons. In June of 1963, Shriver received a letter from a John Johnson of Attleboro, Massachusetts. Johnson wrote that his daughter had just been accepted into the Peace Corps, as informed by a letter signed by Shriver. He went on add, “Twenty years ago my brother was killed on the U.S.S. South Dakota. At that time I received a very lovely letter from a Lt. R.S. Shriver, Jr. describing the circumstances under which my brother was killed. It was such a thoughtful letter and so beautifully written that I have kept the letter all these years.” Johnson went on to add, “Is it possible that twice in my life news concerning my immediate family would come from the same person?”³⁶²

Shriver wrote back, “Your letter carried me back 20 years.” He recalled the pride of serving with Johnson’s brother, while soberly noting, “I can remember, too, writing to

³⁶¹ Scott Stossel, *Sarge: The Life and Times of Sargent Shriver* (Washington, D.C: Smithsonian Books, 2004), 194. For Stossel’s detailed examination of Shriver in relation to the early Peace Corps years, see 189-296,

³⁶² John J. Johnson to Mr. R. Sargent Shriver, June 14, 1963. Shriver Papers. JFKPL.

your mother telling her about her son's death." As he went on to write, "Your daughter will never be involved in any shooting war, I hope and pray, but she will be rendering a service to her country and to her fellow man worthy of the tradition established by your brother, who gave his life so that some of us living today could have a chance to make the world a better place."³⁶³ As this letter suggests, Shriver as one who had witnessed war, had high hopes that the Peace Corps might prevent others from having to do so.

While too young to have had the experience of serving in World War II, the young adults who flocked to the Peace Corps were very motivated to serve overseas and help build a better world. As has been described elsewhere, the Peace Corps tapped into a powerful existential current among many young Americans. It offered an opportunity to do something with their lives with purpose and that was out of the ordinary. One encapsulation of this sentiment comes from *Breaking the Bonds*, a 1963 novel about a Peace Corps volunteer written for a youth audience. Early on in the book its main character, Anne Elliot of Des Moines, Iowa, ponders the allure of the program. As the author wrote, "From the moment she had read a newspaper account of the Peace Corps plan, Anne had dreamed of doing some kind of work which—well—she never knew exactly how to express it—but she longed for some kind of work which would make her feel useful. *Really* useful."³⁶⁴ While Anne Elliot may have been fictional, many prospective volunteers undoubtedly felt the same pull she did, and recognized a part of themselves in her. For those who wanted to take action, to be part of a greater cause, few options at the time were as compelling as the Peace Corps. The incentive must have been

³⁶³ Robert Sargent Shriver, Jr., to Mr. John J. Johnson, June 20, 1961. Shriver papers. JFKPL.

³⁶⁴ Sharon Spencer, *Breaking the Bonds: A Novel About the Peace Corps* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1963), 2. The Peace Corps spurred a substantial amount of youth-focused novels. These can be found, along with a helpful overview of much of the early news and scholarly responses to the agency's founding see Robert B. Marks Ridinger, ed, *The Peace Corps: An Annotated Bibliography* (Boston: G.K. Hall and Company, 1989).

made greater by the added exotic appeal of serving overseas in contrast to a suburban or small-city environment, be it Des Moines or elsewhere. This general call to serve, to take some sort of social action, echoed those for Catholic and Protestant volunteer programs, whether it was as a lay apostle or as a creative pioneer. Though where these latter calls were grounded in specific theological contexts, the Peace Corps' sounded a more general call to action whose appeal was not confined by denominational identity, and as such was one that a far greater swath of the country's young people could answer.

Additionally, like Catholic and Protestant volunteer programs before it, the Corps' demographic of college students were not motivated by purely altruistic aims alone. For those middle and upper class women and men, the Peace Corps offered a unique opportunity to see the world and reap the personal developmental benefits of such a tour of duty. Harris Wofford described the mix of motivations in an August 1961 letter, remarking, "I was very much surprised to find such a clear consensus in both the United States and abroad with respect to the necessity for a two-fold motivation—namely a humanitarian interest in helping other people and a pioneering spirit. Everywhere we went in our study this double motivation came to the surface as being very important."³⁶⁵ Like earlier volunteer programs, the Peace Corps offered middle and upper class individuals a unique transformational experience as their ultimate, if undefined, reward. As one early volunteer wrote in a letter from his time in Colombia, "The bugs and the food start to get to you," but despite such inconveniences, "All in all, it will be an experience that you will never forget and will enjoy reviewing and seeing whether you did a worthy job."³⁶⁶ It would not always be easy, but for many it seemed that a tour in

³⁶⁵ Harris Wofford to Ruth Parks, August 17, 1961. Harris Wofford papers, box 6. JFKPL.

³⁶⁶ Iris Luce, ed., *Letters from the Peace Corps* (Washington, D.C.: Robert B. Luce, 1965), 106-107.

the Corps would be worth whatever struggles they encountered. Those struggles, compared to the relative doldrums of somewhere like Des Moines, were part of the appeal.

4.3 Religious Roots

Beyond these similarities, the Peace Corps shared more direct connections with earlier religious programs. These links to the earlier impulse of religious service programs have been understated in the extensive Peace Corps institutional literature.³⁶⁷ Generally, most of the literature follows a political genealogy, starting with Reuss' initial proposal in 1957, or Humphrey's initial use of the specific term "Peace Corps." Mentions of religious precursors are, save for passing references to groups like the AFSC and IVS, vague. There are often repeated general references to Christian missionaries—typically grouped into a monolithic block—as distant forerunners to the Peace Corps. Sometimes these more specific references confuse more than they explain. For instance, one early history made the stretched claim that Franciscan friars in the missions of North America were early exemplars of "the effectiveness of the grassroots, people-to-people approach which came to distinguish the Peace Corps."³⁶⁸ These descriptions are truncated at best, misleading at worst, and overlook much more direct religious precursors. Moreover, given the narrow Peace Corps focus of this literature, these citations often take a teleological bent. Earlier programs, if mentioned at all, are not examined on their own

³⁶⁷ E. Timothy Smith's article on Peace Corps connections to the Brethren Volunteer Service and International Voluntary Service is one notable exception. See Smith, "Roots of the Peace Corps."

³⁶⁸ Gerald Rice, *The Bold Experiment: JFK's Peace Corps* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985), 1.

terms. They are cast as having existed only as steps on the evolutionary ladder leading to the Peace Corps as the final and finished product.

At the time of the Peace Corps' original creation, though, religious volunteer programs were frequently and directly cited as important predecessors. The Henry Reuss-sponsored 1961 Colorado State University Foundation study that gave critical intellectual backing to the viability of the Peace Corps is a helpful example. The report's opening pages first cited William James' enduring argument for a "moral equivalent of war" as a key intellectual pillar for the premise behind the Peace Corps. It also pointed to the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) as an important programmatic forerunner. As the authors wrote, the CCC "demonstrated that young Americans could build both their country and themselves in a program of national service,"³⁶⁹ In reality, the CCC was at best a rough analog to the Peace Corps, as it was to the AFSC-led work camp movement. As mentioned in chapter one, the CCC was a means of keeping young men employed and consequently out of trouble during the height of the Depression. CCC participants were less volunteers clamoring to serve their country than they were cash-strapped young men in need of a paycheck a meal, and a roof over their heads. Both the Peace Corps and older Protestant work camp movements were targeted largely at more privileged young women and men. Despite the differences, the CCC did provide an early example of a government-run program offering non-military service. As such, from the Colorado State Study onwards, the CCC-as-Peace Corps-predecessor has become a constant trope

³⁶⁹ *The Peace Corps: Final Report* (Fort Collins, CO: Colorado State University Research Foundation, May 1961), 1-10.

in efforts by proponents of programs like the Peace Corps (and later VISTA) to create a longer, if flawed, narrative of national service.³⁷⁰

The authors of the report went on to cite the array of already-existing religious youth service programs, which it summarized as the “new and experimental programs of voluntary service at home and abroad [that] have charted new ways of personal participation in programs of social progress.”³⁷¹ The report’s bibliography better illustrated the extent to which these groups collectively served as models for the Peace Corps. It included reports from the American Friends Service Committee, the Commission on Youth Service Projects and its *Invest Your Summer* brochures, Kenneth Holland’s writings on work camps from the 1930s and 1940s, and separate reports from the Brethren Volunteer Service and its director Harold Row, and the International Voluntary Service.³⁷² The International Voluntary Service was a particularly important point of inspiration, as it was an IVS team that Reuss ran into in the jungles of Cambodia. Though not evident from its title, the IVS was a joint venture of the Mennonites, Brethren, and Quakers. It was founded in the early 1950s as a “Point Four” program focused on development projects overseas. As E. Timothy Smith has pointed out, IVS allowed these historic peace churches to utilize federal funding. Keeping with their earlier service opportunities, IVS opened up new resources for overseas humanitarian

³⁷⁰ Another less prevalent but repeatedly used stretched example of “national service” cited in this literature was the “Thomasites,” American teachers who came to the Philippines at the end of the Philippine-American War that followed the Spanish-American War. For more, see Peter James Tarr, “The Education of the Thomasites: American School Teachers in Philippine Colonial Society, 1901-1913” (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 2006).

³⁷¹ Colorado State University Research Foundation, *The Peace Corps*, 10.

³⁷² Ibid, Appendix A.

work, and provided young men from these denominations with yet another option for non-military service.³⁷³

The Catholic presence at this groundwork level was far less pronounced as the Colorado State report also demonstrates. For this foundational study, the only organizational input from Catholic sources came from John Connor of the Association for International Development, a lay missionary program; John Considine, M.M., a Maryknoll priest who was a nationally renowned expert in Catholic missions and a key promoter of lay missionary programs within the American Catholic hierarchy; a separate report from Considine's mission-focused Maryknoll order; and Notre Dame President Theodore Hesburgh, C.S.C, who was an early supporter of the program.³⁷⁴ In this way, Protestant volunteer programs had a much more pronounced role as models for the planning of the Peace Corps. But this is not surprising given that Catholic lay missionary and volunteer programs were still a relatively young and still decentralized part of the wider movement.³⁷⁵

³⁷³ The International Voluntary Service, besides from its frequent mentions in relation to the Peace Corps, remains a largely understudied, yet fascinating, program. The main published works on it are Thierry Sagnier's, *The Fortunate Few: IVS Volunteers from Asia to the Andes* (Portland: NCNM Press, 2015), a production by the IVS alumni association that offers many rich oral histories from former volunteers, and Stuart Rawlings, ed., *The IVS Experience: From Algeria to Viet Nam* (Washington, D.C.: International Voluntary Service, 1992). But research remains to be done on this program on its own accord: E. Timothy Smith, 230.

³⁷⁴ For more on Considine and his impressive impact on Catholic missions see Robert Hurteau, *A Worldwide Heart: The Life of Maryknoll Father John J. Considine*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2013. Hesburgh's relationship to the Peace Corps was in many ways a personal one. He was close with Shriver, and introduced Harris Wofford to him, as Wofford served as Hesburgh's legal assistant for the United States Commission on Civil Rights. See chapter six of Hesburgh's autobiography, *God, Country, Notre Dame* (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 93-105.

³⁷⁵ John S. Connor, "Organization and Operational Outline of a Youth Corps Program" (Patterson, NJ: Association for International Development, 1961); John J. Considine, M.M., *The Missionary's Role in Socio-Economic Betterment* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1960); Maryknoll Fathers, "Maryknoll Policy on the Proposed Youth Corps Program" (Maryknoll, NY: 1961). Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., "Plan for a Peace Corps in Conjunction with American Universities and Colleges" (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1960).

Maurice Albertson, the lead investigator on the Colorado State study, made the connection between the Peace Corps and earlier religious volunteer groups more explicitly in the version of the study that was edited and published for a wider public audience, *New Frontiers for American Youth*. In this updated volume, in addition to those programs cited in the original study, he went even further to include the peace church–organized Civilian Public Service program and Pierre Cérésolé’s Service Civil International as exemplars of the same concepts at the heart of the Peace Corps.³⁷⁶ Later in the book, Albertson went on to point to the examples of the Brethren Volunteer Service, Mennonite Voluntary Service, the Congregational Service Committee’s Ecumenical Work Camps program, as well as the Jesuits, most likely for their volunteer teachers in the Alaska missions.³⁷⁷ As Albertson and his co–authors pointed out, the Peace Corps was in important ways part of a larger movement of youth volunteer service shaped by these earlier, smaller, private organizations.

While inflected to serve national ends, the Peace Corps indeed owed its existence to the same ideas of constructive nonmilitary service that had sparked the programs that populated the pages of brochures like *Invest Your Summer*. Often the connection between the two was quite explicit, as Albertson explicitly suggested that potential Peace Corps volunteers utilize the resource of *Invest Your Summer* and participate in one of its featured programs. As he saw it, whether it was a work camp, institutional service unit, or another community service opportunity, as part of the same phenomenon it was all helpful preparation for a possible tour in the Peace Corps.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁶ Albertson, *New Frontiers*, 6–7.

³⁷⁷ Ibid, 201.

³⁷⁸ Ibid, 158.

In other small ways, the fingerprints of these volunteer programs, particularly those run by the Quakers Brethren, and Mennonites, were clear in the run-up to and rollout of the Peace Corps. In addition to his 1957 trip to Cambodia and IVS encounter, Reuss' familiarity with such a program most likely began even earlier when Frank Wallick, a former participant in the Brethren Voluntary Service, served on his staff in 1955.³⁷⁹ In a June 1960 meeting, months before Kennedy's famed October speech at Ann Arbor, staff from both Reuss and Senator Humphrey's offices met with representatives from the AFSC in Washington, D.C., at the offices of the Friends Committee on National Legislation (the lobbying arm of the Quakers) to discuss how "to expand the opportunities for young people to serve overseas and in technical assistance programs sponsored by non-governmental and governmental agencies."³⁸⁰ In a preview of how programs like the AFSC were to receive the Peace Corps, in their own notes the AFSC representatives stressed that any government volunteer program would only be a new option among those already in place. They made clear to Reuss and Humphrey's staff that, "The Youth Corps is a supplement to existing programs, not a substitute for them."³⁸¹

The peace church input continued after Kennedy's Michigan speech and his election to the presidency. A December 20, 1960 "Point Four Youth Corps" meeting was held by Reuss in Washington, D.C. that included representatives from the AFSC, IVS, MCC, and BSC. They gave feedback on the proposed Peace Corps, such as its potential size, whether it should be an explicit alternative to the draft, the types of projects it

³⁷⁹ Godfrey Sperling, "Genealogy of the Peace Corps," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 11, 1961, 16.

³⁸⁰ Curiously, though, Reuss does not mention this connection in his own autobiography. Instead he cites the November 1957 Cambodia trip and his IVS encounter. See Henry S. Reuss, *When Government Was Good: Memories of a Life in Politics* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 58-59.

³⁸¹ Report -- Point Four Corps, June 21, 1960. American Section, AFSCA.

should undertake, and what the selection process and qualifications for volunteers might be.³⁸² In a February 1961 internal report by the president's Peace Corps Working Group, the authors specifically cited the American Friends Service Committee and the larger "specialized youth Community service of work–camp programs and seminars, with dedicated teams of young men and women serving at low pay in many countries of Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas" as well as International Voluntary Service, as clear examples of the sort of work they hoped to achieve with the Corps and type of eager young adults they hoped to recruit.³⁸³ In June of 1961, before congressional approval made the agency permanent, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee brought in representatives of the AFSC, BSC, and MCC.³⁸⁴

These examples do not, even in their totality, constitute a "smoking gun" of direct programmatic lineage. To reiterate, the Corps had at best a mixed genealogy of ideas and aims, as well as private and governments programs that its organizer drew from. Still, together these instances show how earlier voluntary programs, mainly those rooted in pacifist theology for a more just and peaceful world, helped shape the Peace Corps in not insignificant ways. As a 1961 article in the *Christian Science Monitor* concluded, drawing from input by Reuss' former staffer and BVS alumni Frank Wallick, "everything the Peace Corps intends to do has been done, in a smaller way, by the Quakers, the International Voluntary Services, the Church of the Brethren, and by other religious denominations ever since World War II. Therefore, it is these church groups that

³⁸² "Attendees at Point Four Youth Corps Discussion Meeting: Banking and currency Committee Room, December 20, 1960, Called by Congressman Henry S. Reuss. Shriver Papers. JFKPL; Notes of the Point Four Discussion in Washington. Peace Corps files. AFSCA.

³⁸³ Program for the Peace Corps (Official Use Only), Peace Corps Working Group, February 20, 1961 draft, Shriver Paper. JFKPL.

³⁸⁴ Senate Foreign Relations Committee, June 22 and 23, 1961. Shriver Papers. JFKPL.

probably should be credited with originating the basic concepts that are being developed by the Peace Corps.”³⁸⁵

4.4 Shared Credit

For many familiar with existing Protestant and Catholic youth volunteer service organizations, the Peace Corps was clearly a new iteration of an older tradition, and as such they were not hesitant to point out the perceived connections. An April 1961 issue of the *Gospel Messenger*, the official organ of the Church of the Brethren, under a spread of photos from BVS-sponsored work camps in New York, Germany, and France, the editors pointed out that the new Peace Corps “parallels many postwar church projects in the U.S. and abroad.”³⁸⁶ In a September issue one E.F. Sherfy wrote to the editor and stated matter-of-fact that the BVS “must have given our President the idea and inspiration for the Peace Corps.”³⁸⁷ Authors of the 1963 issue of *Invest Your Summer* pointedly proclaimed of the brochures contents, “These projects were the forerunner of the Peace Corps. Some of the agencies have had service projects since the beginning of the century while most have developed since World War II.”³⁸⁸

If any religious groups could lay a claim to helping shape the Peace Corps, it was those started by the historic peace churches like the BVS and more broadly the Protestant programs featured in *Invest Your Summer* coordinated by the Commission on Youth Service Projects. But other organizations, with far less of a relationship, were also happy

³⁸⁵ Sperling, “Genealogy of the Peace Corps,” 16.

³⁸⁶ *Gospel Messenger* April 13, 1961, 26. See April 1 issue for a more formal favorable statement BVS director Harold Row gave on the Peace Corps, 18-19.

³⁸⁷ E.F. Sherfy to Editor, *Gospel Messenger*, September 2, 1961, 2.

³⁸⁸ *Invest Your Summer Catalog of Service Opportunities, 1963* (New York: Commission on Youth Service Projects, 1963), 4. Later in the decade the Commission began including the Peace Corps in *Invest Your Summer*.

to take credit as well. One example is Sister Mary John, the force behind the Regis Lay Apostolate and the wider movement of Catholic volunteer teachers it helped spawn. As she recounted in her memoirs, while on the campaign trail in 1960, Kennedy came across two Regis volunteer teachers in New Mexico and was impressed with their program and service. For her, and many within the Regis community since, this was proof enough that they had inspired the president-to-be. As she wrote in memoirs, though her program ended in 1972, “The Regis Lay Apostolate accomplished its objective. The Peace Corps lives on!”³⁸⁹ While there is no direct link between this program and the Peace Corps, others in the Boston area shared her sentiments. The *Boston Sunday Herald* declared in an early 1961 headline, “Regis Nun Top Recruiter for Diplomacy.” The author went on to write, “President Kennedy has lost to another, but friendly top-notch foe ... for his new ‘Peace Corps.’ She is Sister Mary John, chairman of the English Department at Regis College in Weston and a pioneer in the ‘people to people’ approach in diplomacy.”³⁹⁰

This phenomenon was not limited to religious volunteer organizations. To give another Boston-area example, a student club at Boston College, the World Relations League, managed to get the story of its early endorsement of a youth corps service program printed in the *Boston Globe* under the misleading headline of “B.C. Pioneered the Peace Corps.”³⁹¹ It was a large group of programs that took credit for the Peace Corps in some way or another, whether it was merited or not. But the claims speak to the

³⁸⁹ Sister Mary John, unpublished memoirs, 29. RCA. Years later, there also is an unsubstantiated myth among the Boston Sisters of St. Joseph that Sargent Shriver visited the order’s motherhouse to meet with Sr. Mary John in a clandestine nighttime meeting.

³⁹⁰ *Boston Sunday Herald*, 1961. Reference in files at RCA.

³⁹¹ “B.C. Pioneered Peace Corps.” *Boston Globe* March 5, 1961, 24. Perhaps surprisingly, at least from the limited information available this club had no relations to BC’s Lay Apostolate volunteer teaching program.

agency's intricate mix of influences, and the popular enthusiasm behind it in which so many wanted to share.

4.5 Through Peace Corp–tinted Lens

In the same April 1961 issue of Boston College's *The Heights* that the editors reminded students of the college's Lay Apostolate program, student Don Treacy further reminded his fellow students in a separate article that, despite its novelty and acclaim, the Peace Corps was the newest program in a tradition the school was already a part of. He wrote, "The New Frontier, the Peace Corps; perhaps such as these are becoming the by–words of the present, the motif of the future: but before we become engrossed in the future we should take a quick glance over our shoulder to see how we prepared for it in the past. For five years B.C. has had its own peace corps. We have been sending students abroad and to various parts of the United States. Baghdad, Kingston, and Anchorage sound romantic but for the young men and women going there this is no vacation. These young people have given a year of their lives to act as missionaries in under–staffed areas, to teach for a year, at no salary, when they could be establishing themselves in their chosen professions."³⁹²

While the Peace Corps was in many ways a new spin on an old tradition, the government agency also transformed the wider landscape of volunteer service programs. One of the immediate changes was that, given its size, nation–level recognition, and almost universally favorable public image (further aided by the Madison Avenue marketing firms who volunteered time and energy to promote it), the Peace Corps cast an

³⁹² Don Treacy, "Not a Vacation," *The Heights* April 21, 1961, 8.

inescapable shadow on already-existing programs and programs to come.³⁹³ As Don Treacy illustrated with his reference to B.C.'s "own peace corps," the government agency provided a new national frame of reference for volunteer service programs. What might be called a Peace Corps-centric understanding of youth volunteer service transcended the denominational boundaries and identities that had previously defined much of the earlier movement of religious volunteer programs.

One example of this larger effect was the use of Peace Corps language to describe other programs. One illustrative instance comes from a July 1962 *Christian Science Monitor* article on the AFSC's Voluntary International Service Assignments (VISA) program, then the newest opportunity for volunteer service in a long line developed by the Quaker organization. The VISA program was already recruiting its first class when preparation for the Peace Corps began. As the article pointed out, VISA organizers were even "called on for information and advice at the time the Peace Corp was organized."³⁹⁴ But as the article also demonstrated, the Peace Corps had already become a popular means for defining other service programs. Despite preceding its government cousin, VISA was described as the "Quaker Corps," a "Quaker-sponsored, smaller-scale version of the United States Peace Corps."³⁹⁵ Similarly, a March 1962 article from Philadelphia's *Bulletin* on VISA similarly wrote, somewhat dismissively, that the AFSC had created a "little peace corps of its own," even though the rest of the article highlighted VISA's role in influencing its federal counterpart.³⁹⁶ In the article, VISA director Eric Johnson

³⁹³ Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 54.

³⁹⁴ Youth Services Division of the American Friends Service Committee, "observations Relevant to the Proposed Point IV Youth Corps Program Based on Experience with AFSC Youth Programs, December 1960. AFSCA; Kenneth Gehret, "Quaker Corps Aids Villagers," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 10, 1962.

³⁹⁵ Gehret, "Quaker Corps Aids Villagers."

³⁹⁶ Frederick Pillsbury, "Little Peace Corps: Quakers Helped Show the Government How It's Done, *The Sunday Bulletin Magazine* March 4, 1962, 4-5

reiterated the differences between the two programs, including VISA's "totally non-governmental" status, and its ability to offer alternative service to conscientious objectors—the latter point an important one given the pacifist roots of AFSC's volunteer service programs, and the fact that the Peace Corps did not provide volunteers safe harbor from the reaches of the draft. But despite these key differences, for a wider audience VISA was now cast within the terms of the Peace Corps.

This phenomenon is further exemplified in a 1961 *Washington Evening Star* article that focused on a community of BVS volunteers serving and living in the Adams Morgan neighborhood of Washington, D.C. In explaining the volunteers' work with their largely poorer African American neighbors, the author called it, "an unofficial test" of the "Peace Corps concept."³⁹⁷ But for the volunteers, and the BVS program they represented, this type of volunteer service had already been "tested" and proven decades earlier. But they could not escape the Peace Corps as an unavoidable frame of reference for any domestic or international service program for young women and men. Going forward, anything that looked like the Peace Corps, regardless of its unique theological or philosophical basis, was often depicted as a smaller private Peace Corps. It was the new national lens through which the wider public would view and comprehend these programs.³⁹⁸

In addition to being used by outside observers, the terminology of the Peace Corps was readily adopted by religious volunteers programs, as the familiar language provided a ready and quick means for describing their work. As the organizers of the Mennonite Voluntary Service described in their 1963 *Summer Service* newsletter, they

³⁹⁷ Reprint in *Gospel Messenger* George Wilson. June 3, 1961, 19.

³⁹⁸ Another example of this can be seen in James McCartin's *Prayer of the Faithful*, when he writes about the rise of

were an exemplary “miniature version of a domestic Peace Corps,” and, anticipating future developments, demonstrative of the utility and need for a government–run domestic service program to aid in the sort of work they were engaged in.³⁹⁹ Some programs went a step further and formally changed their name to not so subtly mirror that of the Peace Corps. One of the earliest examples was the Volunteer Teachers’ Service, a program the Holy Cross Fathers order used to help staff their mission schools in Texas with volunteers. In 1964 the program changed its name to the Catholic Lay Mission Corps. As the chaplain made clear in an article at the time, even though the name had changed, “Our apostolate is essentially the same.”⁴⁰⁰ No reason was given for the name change, but the purpose behind it was clear enough. A few years later, the Jesuits’ volunteer program in Alaska followed suit, as the organizers officially renamed their initiative the Jesuit Volunteer Corps.⁴⁰¹ First and foremost, these name changes were directed at future volunteers. For program organizers, it was a means of harnessing the popular allure of the Peace Corps, even if these programs served first God rather than country.

4.6 Mixed Responses

For some organizers of Catholic volunteer and lay missionary programs, the Peace Corps’ success led to an identity crisis. This was in large part because this movement was still a work in progress, and some were unsure as to how to define their efforts in relation to the Peace Corps. In part to address these issues, representatives from

³⁹⁹ Summer Service 1963, 4. MCCA.

⁴⁰⁰ Harry Baker, C.S.C., “New Name for Teaching Apostolate,” *Notre Dame Alumnus*, June-July, 1964, 20-21.

⁴⁰¹ Hendry, “Ruined for Life,” 52. Also The use of “Corps” language in religious volunteer programs has been a constant since the 1960s. A later example was when organizers in Washington, D.C., formed the Lutheran Volunteer Corps in 1976.

many of these lay missionary organizations gathered in 1963 for a conference at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, New York. Summarizing one of the central issues, one participant bluntly admitted, “The lay missionary movement is so undefined, it's all wooly around the edges even to those of us who are intimately connected with it, that the whole thing is just a complete blur to anybody who doesn't live in it 24 hours a day.”⁴⁰² For some, the Peace Corps offered an easy solution. Richard Otto of Seattle University explained that he now found it much easier to tell potential volunteers thinking about giving a year or two in places like the Copper Valley School that the program was “the Catholic Peace Corps in Alaska.”⁴⁰³

Others were more keen on keeping the differences between the Peace Corps and any “Catholic Peace Corps” clear. As one 1964 article in Boston College's *Heights* newspaper went at length to specify, “Like the Peace Corps, the Boston College Lay Apostolate is aimed at helping people in underdeveloped areas to help themselves However, the Lay Apostolate is different from the Peace Corps in that it is equally concerned with man's spiritual good as well as his material need.”⁴⁰⁴ Catholic programs still had to be concerned ultimately with higher priorities. Robert Manning, S.J, co-director of the B.C. Lay Apostolate program, was unequivocal in a 1966 lecture to students entitled “Who the Lay Apostle Is and Is Not.” He declared “THE SALVATION OF MEN IS AT STAKE. This, too is WHY for SOME Catholics the needs of the Lay

⁴⁰² *A Report of Missions: The Le Moyne Conference* (Syracuse, NY: 1963), 60.

⁴⁰³ *A Report of Missions*, 80,

⁴⁰⁴ Gerry O'Malley, “Lay Apostolate,” *The Heights*, October 9, 1964.

Apostolate MUST take precedence over the needs of the Peace Corps, “FOR ULTIMATELY THE SALVATION OF MEN IS AT STAKE [emphasis in original].”⁴⁰⁵

Overall, though, Catholic volunteer programs in particular benefitted from the national wave of interest in volunteering the Peace Corps helped set off. The story of Patricia Mader and her brother, diocesan priest George Mader, and the creation of the first formal clearinghouse of Catholic volunteer service programs, demonstrates this symbiotic dynamic. In 1963, Patricia, inspired by what her brother later described as the “era of Kennedy” and the “hey-day of volunteer activity,” decided she wanted to “do more.”⁴⁰⁶ While she was moved by the popular rhetoric surrounding the Peace Corps, she instead decided to answer this call through a Catholic volunteer program. She chose to give a year to a lay missionary group that mainly worked in North Carolina. During her year of service, George took a break from his duties as an associate pastor in suburban Cedar Grove, New Jersey, to visit his sister and her fifteen fellow volunteers (demonstrative of larger trends in Catholic volunteer programs, they were all women).

During his visit, George was struck with the realization that, while these young women worked under the title of lay missionaries and the local bishop saw them as “potential vocations” to religious life, his sister and her colleagues instead felt that they represented a new type of service to the church. As Mader later recalled, he and his sister felt that such work marked “a transition from the traditional missionary thrust ... to the new dimension spearheaded by the laity.”⁴⁰⁷ Like Regis Lay Apostle Fleurette Arpin a decade earlier, Patricia and her cohort understood themselves as laywomen involved in a

⁴⁰⁵ Lay Apostolate General Info Box 33, File 5, Holy Cross Jesuit New England Province Archives, hereafter JNEP, though records have since been moved to the Jesuit Archives of the Central United States in St. Louis.

⁴⁰⁶ Rev. George Mader, *Catholic Network of Volunteer Service* (Holy Trinity, AL: Missionary Cenacle Press, 1993), 4. Reiterated in conversation with author November 19, 2014.

⁴⁰⁷ Mader, *Catholic Network*, 10.

new ministry, rather than being in the minor leagues of religious life with hopes to work up to the majors. They were more focused on their general work as laywomen with the youth of the impoverished rural African–American community in which they lived. Though whereas earlier volunteers saw their work through the lens of the lay apostolate and serving the church, Patricia Mader’s motivation was further inflected by Kennedy’s New Frontier. Her experience thus revealed a dual motivation to serve. One source came from her Catholic faith, the other from her Catholic president.

The Maders recognized that Patricia was not alone in her sentiments, and that at least for many Catholics, there existed no central clearinghouse to help connect interested volunteers with service opportunities that might be available to them. Thus, the two of them gained the approval of Newark’s Archbishop Thomas Boland to fill the void. With Fr. Mader acting as head and his sister as secretary (some dynamics remained the same even in an age of change), they began a Catholic counterpart to the older Protestant–rooted Commission on Youth Service Projects and its yearly brochure of volunteer programs, *Invest Your Summer*. Starting in 1965 Catholic college students interested in Catholic volunteer programs could begin to explore a felt call to serve in some volunteer capacity by thumbing through the pages of the aptly–titled *Response*. The Maders carried out their work from borrowed space in the offices of Seton Hall University as the “International Liaison of Lay Volunteers in Mission.” In practice, reflecting their mix of influences, and the wider language of the Peace Corps that had come to dominate matters of volunteer service, they tellingly referred to themselves as a “Church Peace Corps,” The Maders even recycled Peace Corps promotional materials for their own use.⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid, 6.

The Maders' new umbrella organization for prospective volunteers and organizations willing to receive them was an important development for Catholic volunteer programs. The Peace Corps, serving as both a source of inspiration and pressure, led to a spurt of professionalization for this previously disjointed movement.⁴⁰⁹ George Mader was at the center of many these discussions given his interest and growing expertise in volunteer processing and screening. This included innovations such as the adoption of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, a frequently-used omnibus tests of psychopathology and personality assessment, for screening volunteers by getting a sense of response styles and social and emotional strengths.

While the Peace Corps catalyzed growth and introspection among Catholic volunteer programs, for Protestant volunteer service programs the immediate impact was less dramatic save for the rise in "Corps" descriptive language. This was largely because Protestant programs had, starting with AFSC work camps, been around longer, and had truly helped pioneer the model the Peace Corps sprang from. As such, from a programmatic perspective the Peace Corps' impact was more muted by comparison for these older and more established programs.

4.7 God and Country

A February 1961 edition of Notre Dame's *Religious Bulletin*, an undergraduate newsletter focused on religious devotion, noted that Kennedy's new program and the larger conversations about needs overseas "have touched the hearts of many here and resulted in a wide-spread interest in the lay missionary movement and the President's

⁴⁰⁹ For further example of accelerated professionalization among Catholic lay missionary organizations, see "AID on the March, *Jesuit Missions*, February 1962, 23-27.

Peace Corps.”⁴¹⁰ As the article revealed, both volunteer options benefitted from this spike in interest among the South Bend student body. It reflects one of the more positive impacts of the Peace Corps on smaller religious volunteer programs. Its popular appeal led a rising tide of national interest in volunteer service that lifted other organizational boats instead of swamping them. Maryknoll priest Fr. John Considine noted this benefit in an interview with *The Sign*, a Catholic magazine, in May, 1963. Asked if the Peace Corps’ tremendous publicity had hurt the efforts of a particular Catholic volunteer program Considine responded, “On the contrary, it has helped. Five years ago, any lay Catholic who volunteered for work overseas was looked upon by some people as an oddball. The Peace Corps has brought the idea of personal service around the world into every nook and cranny from Maine to California.”⁴¹¹

The Peace Corps was obviously a secular program, and Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman has argued that it was part of a wider “secular volunteer movement” of the 1960s. But this language, while useful in distinguishing the Peace Corps from religious volunteer programs, is an oversimplification, at least when it comes to describing the volunteers themselves. Many prospective volunteers in the period did not view the Peace Corps as a starkly secular alternative or competitor to pre-existing religious volunteer options.⁴¹² Instead, the Corps was just one, albeit very different, choice among many volunteer service programs through which relatively privileged young men and women could give

⁴¹⁰ “Lay Missions,” *Religious Bulletin* Friday February 24, 1961.

⁴¹¹ “Two Ways to Aid the Latins: An Interview with Father John J. Considine, M.M.,” *The Sign* May, 1963, 12; Considine oversaw, among his other duties, the Papal Volunteers for Latin America (PAVLA), another Catholic lay missionary program launched in 1960 that blended development and missionary purposes. While it was launched with high hopes and acclaim, the program had several issues and struggled for much of its short existence. The PAVLA story still remains largely untold, but the best monograph-length resource available is Gerald Costello, *Mission to Latin America: The Successes and Failures of a Twentieth-Century Crusade* (Maryknoll, N.Y. : Orbis Books, 1979).

⁴¹² Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 8.

their time and talents for some greater cause. Fr. Considine also remarked on this dynamic in his 1963 *Sign* interview. Describing the choice for potential volunteers, he remarked that, “You might say it’s about the same as a girl who becomes a nurse and then considers whether to work in a general or a Catholic hospital. She doesn’t usually struggle with this decision; it comes casually.”⁴¹³ Like the array of programs available, volunteers’ motivations were a religious and civic mix that led them, as the fictional Anne Elliot felt, to do something “really useful” in the world. Like Patricia Mader, one did not have to join the Peace Corps to serve in the Kennedy–inspired “heyday of volunteer activity.”

Nor did one have to join a religious volunteer organization to be a part of the lay apostolate. As former Peace Corps director of program evaluation Charles Peters remarked years later about the agency’s success, “I think the hidden secret of the Peace Corps was that it was about forty–five percent Catholic,” going on to exclaim that the Peace Corps was for many of them a familiar model of service.⁴¹⁴ It would be a stretch to say that Catholic college students were the program’s early secret weapon. Peters’ estimate also cannot be substantiated, as the agency never tracked the religious affiliations of its volunteers. But the Catholic embrace was noteworthy. It is likely that a program so closely tied to the nation’s first Catholic president led by his Catholic brother–in–law may have given the Peace Corps a special confessional seal of approval, particularly at a moment when Catholics were leaving their previous cultural ghetto and entering the American mainstream.

⁴¹³ “Two Ways to Aid the Latins,” 12.

⁴¹⁴ Hoffman, *All You Need is Love*, 125.

Shriver, who was quite unabashed in the way his Catholicism shaped his public service, in particular was able to put the government Peace Corps in a framework that had both civic and religious components. As he described the program in a 1962 commencement speech at the Jesuit-run Saint Louis University, the Peace Corps was part of a larger struggle that went beyond geopolitical ends. “As much as we improve our performance here at home, it is overseas that the battle is being fought. And it is a battle for more than men’s minds it is also a battle for their souls. . . . I believe that when Our Lord told the apostles, ‘You shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, in Judea, in Samaria, and even to the ends of the earth, He had Sao Paulo in mind, and St. Louis, too.’”⁴¹⁵ Like Fr. Manning’s speech at Boston College, Shriver put prospective volunteers’ efforts within the context of a larger transcendent struggle that included both body and soul. But unlike Manning’s appeal to Boston College students, Shriver made clear the Peace Corps was as fine an option as any for Catholic men and women to lend their time and talents.

In her insightful study of young women serving in the Lay Extension Volunteers, Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello has also helpfully described the way volunteers in this period interpreted both national and religious calls to serve together, instead of viewing them as separate and exclusive options. The Lay Extension Volunteers was started in 1960 to help support chronically underfunded mission parishes in parts of the country with low concentrations of Catholics. Drawing from both archival sources and oral histories, she wrote that the ELV “fit perfectly with *both* the secular and religious moods of the time.”

⁴¹⁶ It offered volunteers a way to “engage with both their Catholicism and the secular

⁴¹⁵ St. Louis University Commencement Speech, June 2, 1962. Shriver Papers. JFKPL.

⁴¹⁶ Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello, “Relevant Transformations: The Young Women of the *Extension Lay Volunteers, 1961-1971*.” In, *Empowering the People of God*, 149.

social-justice efforts of the day, while doing something truly significant.”⁴¹⁷

Recollections of former members of the Regis Lay Apostolate echoed these findings. As one recalled, she served in mission schools because of the “zeitgeist,” going on to say that “We were all still Kennedy-inspired to change the world.” As another more practically admitted, “I was more interested in joining the Peace Corps but three years seemed *so* [emphasis hers] long when I was 21!”⁴¹⁸ In her case, the Regis Lay Apostolate provided a shorter, but similar, volunteer experience, showing that for many, the Peace Corps was just one available option to serve among many.

This blurring of religious and secular motivations was of course not limited to Catholics. Shortly after the Peace Corps’ creation, the Executive Committee of the Methodist Church’s Board of Missions released a statement, printed in *motive*. In addition to praising the program, they went on to state that “The Peace Corps might become a new pattern through which numbers of Methodist young men and women can make their Christian witness in this day.”⁴¹⁹ As many of the magazine’s wide audience of high school and college youth probably agreed, the service itself was more important than the program under which it was pursued.

A 1965 marriage announcement in the Boston Archdiocese’s *Pilot* further encapsulates the union of religious and non-religious programs within the wider impulse of volunteer service. Celebrating the wedding of a Regis College and a Boston College graduate, respectively, the announcement began, “What makes a man join the Peace Corps? Why does a woman join the lay missionaries? We do not know, any more than we know what makes some people want to serve others. Psychologists aren’t too clear about

⁴¹⁷ Ibid, 153.

⁴¹⁸ Survey of Regis College Lay Apostolate Alumnae, 1998, 905.07, RCA.

⁴¹⁹ From reprint in *motive*, October 1961, 25.

this particular subject and concentrate on other matters. But in August two persons who share this inexplicable character trait, John Gallivan and Catherine O'Connell, will wed in St. Theresa's Church, West Roxbury."⁴²⁰ John and Catherine had served in different programs with ostensibly different goals. One was meant to put America's best face forward. The other was meant to enlist the talents of the laity in service to the Catholic church, but as the author pointed out, the programs, and in this case the people, were united by a general desire to serve others.

The shared desire to serve, and the mix of influences that shaped it, was further captured in another article on the same page. Under the headline, "Boston Sends 87 Lay Missionaries This Year," *Pilot* staff writer Edward Madden, S.J., celebrated the almost ninety men and women from area Catholic schools who had chosen to participate in some extended volunteer service. Some were headed to teach overseas, like Boston College's John Quinn on his way to the Jesuit-run college in Baghdad.⁴²¹ Others, like Cardinal Cushing College's Joanna Freund and Maureen Hawkins, were headed to North Carolina, where they would serve alongside Patricia Mader and help inspire her and her brother George's organizational efforts. As Madden noted, while they were in service to the church, their motivations were now part of a much larger framework of youth service, writing, "Thanks in part to Pope John and President Kennedy they have a desire to serve God and country which was unknown to the previous few generations."⁴²² For many young women and men looking to participate in the growing number of volunteer service

⁴²⁰ Henry Lord, Jr, "John Gallivan and Catherine O'Connell." *Pilot*, 1965.

⁴²¹ The story of the New England Province Jesuits and their work at Baghdad College, along with the volunteer teachers they recruited from Boston College, Holy Cross, and Fairfield University (CT) stands on its own as a notable chapter of lay mission work. See Joseph MacDonnell, *Jesuits by the Tigris: Men for Others in Baghdad* (Boston: Jesuit Missions Press, 1994).

⁴²² Edward Madden, SJ, "Boston Sends 87 Lay Missionaries This Year," *Pilot*, May, 1965.

programs, their motivations were on a spectrum consisting of religious and non-religious ideals driving them to serve God, country, and for many if not most, both.

But while the Peace Corps was shaped by this earlier impulse of volunteer service, it in turn changed the framework. It became the new central lens through which volunteer service in the United States would be viewed. Further, it catalyzed a wave of national interest in youth volunteer service. Into the late 1960s and through the 1970s, programs like work camps, caravans, and teaching years would become part of an increasingly large and professionalized world of youth service that would continue to accelerate in size and scope.

5.0 A Nationwide Movement

Arthur Gillette began his 1971 study for the United Nations' Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *New Trends in Service by Youth*, by reflecting on the unprecedented levels of recent student activism. As he wrote, "Rejection, riot, revolt: these notions replaced the traditional 'three R's' (reading, writing and arithmetic, in other words, formal education) as the central concern, chief occupation and marching orders of an influential minority of the world's young people during the First United Nations Development Decade. ... No continent, no political grouping and hardly a country was spared an upsurge of protest and turmoil among youth." As many commentators then and historians since observed, students across the North Atlantic engaged in a wide range of protests and other types of social activism as part of a transnational moment, if not cohesive movement, to try and shape a more egalitarian world.⁴²³

But Gillette, a veteran of the work camp movement and Pierre Cérésolle's Service Civil International, asserted that this wave of student activism had another less-noticed manifestation. As he pointed out, "The 1960s also witnessed the unexpected and unprecedented growth of another youth activity: voluntary service." Gillette further

⁴²³ Gerd-Rainer Horn, *The Spirit of '68: Rebellion in Western Europe and North America, 1956-1976* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2007), 2. Horn's book provides a helpful and constructive take on this loaded historical moment, and serves as a counterpart to earlier decidedly negative interpretations of student outbursts in the 1968 moment. As Horn helpfully states, "Idealism was far more universal than nihilism and cynicism at the time."

argued that when mentioned, if at all, student volunteers were depicted as a different group than student protestors. As he wrote, “The demonstrators tended to be looked on as wayward youth, while the volunteers were often seen as model youngsters.” He suggested that it was more accurate to recognize these activities as two sides of the same coin, going on to say that “the volunteer is often an activist. ... voluntarism has become a widely known, accepted and encouraged form of youth activism.”⁴²⁴

While the pace of growth of new volunteer programs was new, Gillette also noted that student volunteering was anything but. He went on to trace the movement’s origins and evolution, highlighting William James’ “moral equivalent of war,” Cérésolé’s first camp on the outskirts of Verdun, and the proliferation of international work camps after World War II. But he admitted that until the 1960s, this movement was relatively small in scale until the rising tide of student activism had lifted this older impulse with it. The resulting proliferation of programs led Gillette to conclude, “The development of voluntary service programmes of various kinds all over the world during the 1960s was nothing short of spectacular.”⁴²⁵

The surge of student activism in the 1960s and early 1970s was truly one of this era’s defining characteristics. Among other catalysts, the example of the Civil Rights movement, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and efforts like the 1964 “Freedom Summer” in Mississippi provided white middle class Americans especially strong motivation to get involved in some sort of social or political activism, even if it was not as physically dangerous or radically subversive as some of these efforts.⁴²⁶ But

⁴²⁴ Arthur Gillette, *New Trends in Service by Youth* (New York: United Nations, 1971), 1-2.

⁴²⁵ Ibid, 3.

⁴²⁶ The classic study of the links between Civil Rights activism and larger student activism in the period is Doug McAdam’s *Freedom Summer* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); See also Elizabeth Grace

as historian Jennifer Frost has rightly pointed out, much of the media attention and subsequent scholarship on student activism in this period focused on dramatic actions like mass demonstrations and sit-ins.⁴²⁷ These moments were undeniably important. However, they have also overshadowed less singularly sensational manifestations of student activist energy in this period, such as volunteer service.

As Gillette pointed out, the same motivations that inspired student protests also fueled student volunteering and a proliferation of new programs. The growth was not limited to summertime or postgraduate programs. The country's colleges and universities became hubs for volunteer service programs of all kinds. Driven by a combination of student activism, the continued influence of the example of the Peace Corps, Civil Rights struggles, opposition to the draft, and the War on Poverty, by the early 1970s youth volunteer service was truly a nationwide movement.

Catholic and Protestant volunteer service programs also continued to grow and evolve. If anything there were more programs than ever featured in the pages of *Invest Your Summer* and *Response*. But these organizations were an increasingly small slice of the expanding phenomenon that they had helped pioneer and shape. As such, this final chapter focuses less on these religious groups, and more on the larger milestones that marked the arrival of youth volunteer service as a ubiquitous national impulse.

Hale's chapter "New Negroes in Action: Students for a Democratic Society, the Economic Research and Action Project, and Freedom Summer" in her book *A Nation of Outsiders: How the White Middle Class Fell in Love with Rebellion in Postwar America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011): 163-203.

⁴²⁷ Jennifer Frost, *An Interracial Movement of the Poor: Community Organizing and the New Left in the 1960s* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 3.

5.1 Peace Corps Progeny and the War on Poverty

Joseph G. Colmen, the Peace Corps Associate Director of Planning and Evaluation, wrote in a 1965 article for the *Journal of Marriage and Family*, “the response to the Peace Corps proved there still remains a deep reservoir of motivation in this country toward public service. We seem to be happiest as a nation when we have something to do, above and beyond self.”⁴²⁸ As Colmen further observed, those looking for similar outlets had a growing number of options to choose from. Writing about a hypothetical Peace Corps returnee, Colmen pointed out, “Upon his return to the United States he is finding that the spirit of volunteerism which was so obscure when he left is appearing now on many fronts.”⁴²⁹ Many of these new fronts were direct responses to the example of the Peace Corps, which continued to serve as inspiration for new private as well as government volunteer programs throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s.

One of the most high-profile of these Peace Corps progeny was its domestic counterpart, the Volunteers in Service to America program, or VISTA. The first class of Peace Corps volunteers were still on their initial assignments when the Kennedy administration began exploring the possibility of a “domestic Peace Corps.” In 1962 then-attorney general Robert Kennedy and his task force on juvenile delinquency officially endorsed the idea. As historian Wesley Phelps has aptly summarized, the administration envisioned VISTA as an explicit application of the Peace Corps model, “What Peace Corps volunteers had done in remote villages in distant lands, VISTA volunteers were to do domestically—that is, helping poor families navigate some of the

⁴²⁸ Joseph G. Colmen, “Volunteerism: A Constructive Outlet for Youthful Energy,” *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 27, no.2 (May 1965): 175.

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

challenges associated with poverty.”⁴³⁰ The concept not only had great potential practical impact, it was an opportunity to replicate some of the resoundingly popular public response that had rained down on the Peace Corps.

The “Peace Corps in Reverse,” as it was oftentimes referred to in newspapers and magazines, was originally a Kennedy premise. But the program came to fruition under Lyndon Johnson.⁴³¹ While VISTA was often described in the language of the Peace Corps, as a consequence of their respective national and international contexts their central aims were quite different. Whereas the Peace Corps volunteer was a soft power soldier in the Cold War, VISTA volunteers were the shock troops of the “War on Poverty,” Johnson’s ambitious constellation of government initiatives aimed at ameliorating the scandal of grinding poverty amid the relative prosperity of postwar America.

As has been well-documented, in the early 1960s much of middle and upper class America “discovered” the nation’s have-nots. Michael Harrington’s 1962 best-selling book, *The Other America*, made famous by Dwight MacDonald’s favorable review in the *New Yorker*, helped catalyze a surge in public concern over poverty as a national dilemma. Harrington’s short and pointed book exposed many readers to the plight of the country’s “invisible” poor, from the Bowery of New York City where he had spent time as part of Dorothy Day’s Catholic Worker community, to the “negro ghettos” of Harlem

⁴³⁰ Wesley G. Phelps, “Ideological Diversity and Implementation of the War on Poverty,” in *The War on Poverty: A New Grassroots History, 1964-1980*, ed. Annelise Orleck and Lisa Gayle Hazirjian (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 95.

⁴³¹ For example, see Sue Reinert, “Domestic Peace Corps At Work in the Bronx,” *The New York Herald*, March 7, 1965; “‘Peace Corps in Reverse’ Helps City,” *The Washington Post* November 6, 1968; “Attitudes of College Students Toward VISTA” (U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington DC, June, 1968). RG 362. ACTION Library Collection, National Archives. Hereafter ALCNA; Sargent Shriver provided some continuity. For several years he directed Peace Corps as well as the Office of Economic Opportunity under which VISTA was originally placed

and Atlanta, to the migrant worker camps of California's Imperial Valley.⁴³² He provided glimpses of the desperate daily struggle that was the grim reality for so many families. Harrington's indictment was unequivocal. Such poverty was "a monstrous example of needless suffering in the most advanced society in the world."⁴³³ One part academic thesis and one part prophetic witness, Harrington's popular study was at the crest of a rising tide of national attention over how such crushing poverty could still be the fate of so many Americans.

While *The Other America* is the most often-cited prologue to this spike in popular concern over enduring poverty, the book was only one of many works that brought this sobering reality to the national stage. Television also played a central role in bringing poverty to the forefront of middle class American's attention. As historian Annelise Orleck has described, "Scenes of unimaginable deprivation—of rickets and swollen bellies, of cardboard-patched shacks and backyard outhouses—were beamed into millions of middle-class American homes."⁴³⁴ Whereas one might not pick up a book like *The Other America*, it only took a momentary look at the television screen to see striking images that were hard to ignore or forget. Further, as Orleck has rightfully emphasized, concerns over poverty were "inextricably tied" to the concurrent Civil Rights movement.⁴³⁵ The combined weight of these affronts to the American dream weighed heavily on the consciences of much of middle and upper class America. It was in this context that Johnson, with New Deal-style faith in the ability of government

⁴³² Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York: Touchstone, 1997), 64; Dwight MacDonald, "Our Invisible Poor," *New Yorker*, January 19, 1963.

⁴³³ Harrington, *The Other America*, 191.

⁴³⁴ Annelise Orleck, "Introduction: The War on Poverty from the Grass Roots Up, *War on Poverty*, 5; See also Sasha Torres, *Black, White, and in Color: Television and Black Civil Rights* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

⁴³⁵ Orleck, *War on Poverty*, 15.

programs to tackle great social ills, declared an “unconditional war on poverty” in his January 1964 State of the Union address.⁴³⁶ He reiterated this declaration later that year in April from the front porch of Tom Fletcher, an unemployed coal miner in Inez, a small town located in rural eastern Kentucky.

The legacy of what followed under the banner of the War on Poverty is still a contested narrative. Some point to the success of individual programs like Head Start and Medicaid, while others invoke Ronald Reagan’s later 1986 quip that ultimately, “poverty won the war.”⁴³⁷ Martin Luther King famously said that the effort was “shot down on the battlefields of Vietnam,” as the conflict ate up government funds dollars and greater national goodwill.⁴³⁸ The War on Poverty has spawned innumerable partisan–inflected verdicts of “victory” or “defeat.” The result was an equally charged early historiography. Only recently has a second wave of War on Poverty scholarship, led by Orleck, begun to deliver more even–handed analysis of this complex political and social event.⁴³⁹

As these new works have been able to show, the War on Poverty was anything but simple. As the eminent historian of American public welfare policy, Michael Katz, has demonstrated, even its roots were a complex intellectual mix.⁴⁴⁰ The “War” itself was carried out through a wide array of policies and programs. Their reception, successes, and failures were shaped by an interplay, and oftentimes struggle, between federal policy

⁴³⁶ Transcript of 1964 State of the Union address available at American Presidency Project. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=26787>.

⁴³⁷ For example, see Reagan’s February 15, 1986 radio address on welfare reform. Transcript available at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=36875>.

⁴³⁸ Thomas Jackson, *From Civil Rights to Human Rights: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Struggle for Economic Justice* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 319.

⁴³⁹ Orleck’s volume, *Caesar’s Palace: How Black Mothers Fought Their Own War on Poverty* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2005), provides another helpful example of relatively newer takes on the War on Poverty, particularly those that look at the experience of poorer communities as they organized to take advantage of the newly-available.

⁴⁴⁰ See Katz’s masterful and updated overview, “Intellectual Foundations of the War on Poverty and the Great Society” in the second edition of *The Undeserving Poor: America’s Enduring Confrontation with Poverty* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013): 102–155.

makers, grassroots activists, community organizers, the Civil Rights movement, state and city officials, public intellectuals and, quite often, the young women and men who served as VISTA volunteers. The many battles of the War on Poverty played out differently depending on local context.

Within the still-evolving War on Poverty historiography, the VISTA program remains remarkably understudied.⁴⁴¹ This contrast is even starker in comparison to the amount of literature on its Peace Corps predecessor. In large part this has been a matter of sources. VISTA, while a national initiative, was a mosaic of different local experiences. As Phelps has further pointed out, “it has been difficult to discover exactly what these volunteers were doing in the country’s poor neighborhoods.”⁴⁴² VISTA volunteers were placed with thousands of different local community programs across the country. From a historian’s perspective, this decentralized program has consequently left behind a decentralized source base. Unlike the Peace Corps, there are no larger oral history projects that have captured the diverse experiences of VISTA volunteers. A more extensive history of VISTA and its aspirations, limits, and impact remains to be written. That task is far outside the scope of this dissertation. But more than enough information is available to place the program within the wider movement of youth volunteer service that it sprang from.

⁴⁴¹ Exceptions to this are Thomas Kiffmeyer’s *Reformers to Radicals: The Appalachian Volunteers and the War on Poverty* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2008); Wesley Phelps’ *A People’s War on Poverty: Urban Politics and Grassroots Activists in Houston* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2014); and more recently Michael Woodsworth’s *Battle for Bed-Stuy: The Long War on Poverty in New York City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016).

⁴⁴² Phelps, *A People’s War on Poverty*, 51.

5.2 The Poverty Warriors of VISTA

Despite their different orientations, the Peace Corps and VISTA shared certain characteristics that further echoed those of the larger tradition of youth volunteer service from which both programs grew. For instance, the VISTA program typically conveyed its altruistic aims in militaristic language. As Lyndon Johnson told twenty of the program's first volunteers in a December 1964 meeting, they were "the first frontline volunteers in our war against poverty."⁴⁴³ The same explicit military language was also a common trope in VISTA's promotional material. As one pamphlet bluntly stated, "VISTA is a volunteer army, part of the nation's War on Poverty."⁴⁴⁴ As it further described, it was "tough war of liberation in which the weapons are friendship, knowledge and guidance."⁴⁴⁵ Like the Peace Corps before it, VISTA was meant to wage a "better kind of war."

In terms of the demographics of its average participant, VISTA very much reflected the larger tradition of volunteer service programs. As one 1969 analysis of the program politically put, VISTA volunteers had a "middle-class-orientation."⁴⁴⁶ As the same account went on to describe, they were "mostly young, mostly middle-class, mostly college-educated, mostly white"⁴⁴⁷ Like other volunteer service programs for young women and men, it was a constructive outlet for largely white, middle class American young women and men who felt called to respond to the urgencies of the moment.

Additionally, politicians and program organizers promised volunteers great experiential, if somewhat intangible, rewards as one of the incomparable benefits of

⁴⁴³ Transcript of the address available at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=26756>.

⁴⁴⁴ VISTA, "Now We Need an ARMY to Fight Poverty."

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁶ Crook and Thomas, *Warriors for the Poor*, 77.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid, 76.

being a VISTA volunteer. Their commitment would lead to a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment that would make the obstacles and challenges worthwhile. As Johnson told the same first group of VISTA volunteers in December 1964, “Your pay will be low; the conditions of your labor often will be difficult,” adding, “But you will have the satisfaction of leading a great national effort, and you will have the ultimate reward which comes to those who serve their fellow man.”⁴⁴⁸ Beyond the sense of the fulfillment, there was also the experiential education of the VISTA experience. As one volunteer wrote, VISTA was for volunteers “a possible solution to feelings of disillusionment, inactivity, alienation, and as a way of learning what education is for and really means.”⁴⁴⁹

But VISTA also had its own unique attributes, especially in contrast to the Peace Corps. Foremost among these, VISTA was a far more politically charged program due to its contentious War on Poverty context. Whereas the Peace Corps enjoyed tremendous bipartisan support, VISTA was much more of a political lightning rod. In large part this was a product of VISTA’s domestic focus. The fact that the volunteers worked within marginalized American communities gave the program far more explosive political potential. It was one thing for Peace Corps volunteers to help aid poorer communities overseas and highlight issues with development and governance in a foreign nation. It was more radically subversive to level this charge at an American town, county, or state’s government.

Quickly, VISTA volunteers found that their work often brought them into direct confrontation with local government. As one former War on Poverty official described

⁴⁴⁸ Full transcript available at “<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=26756>.”

⁴⁴⁹ David Gottlieb, principal investigator, *VISTA and Its Volunteers: A Study Conducted Under a Grant from the Office of Economic Opportunity* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1971), 165.

this common trajectory, “It didn’t take the VISTA volunteer a hell of a long time, whether he was in Harlem or in the South Side of Chicago or in Appalachia or in a Navajo reservation ... to figure [out] who the bad guys are in these dramas.”⁴⁵⁰ As Phelps has further demonstrated with his grassroots history of the War on Poverty in Houston, VISTA volunteers, often to the surprise of federal policymakers, quickly came to embrace community organizing and confrontational tactics, particularly those developed by community organizer Saul Alinsky, to empower their host communities in the face of intransigent local officials.⁴⁵¹ A 1967 *Christian Science Monitor* article encapsulated this contentious and widespread dynamic. As the author noted, for the program’s 4,200 volunteers, discomfiting local officials was part of the job. VISTA’s “vocal and exuberant workers have stepped on toes wherever they have labored to change the existing order, to spark reform, or to head off despair.”⁴⁵² He added that as a result, “Mayors have been angered by their outspoken criticism of city government. Congressmen have been alarmed by their role in registering voters.”⁴⁵³ Unsurprisingly, many local government officials were none too pleased at having federally-funded volunteers outside of their authority upsetting the previous status quo.

Consequently, from its very beginnings VISTA was a target of criticism, particularly its “radicalizing” effects on its volunteers. Given the nature of the VISTA experience, as volunteers were immersed in the poverty of communities like Appalachian coal towns or Latino “barrios” in California cities, and the nature of volunteer service programs as a whole, it would have been more surprising if the VISTA experience did

⁴⁵⁰ Phelps, *A People’s War on Poverty*, 52 .

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.

⁴⁵² William Szlover, “Peace Corps twin: VISTA approaches maturity,” *Christian Science Monitor*, December 8, 1967.

⁴⁵³ Ibid.

not shape its volunteers in some dramatic and personal way. For at the heart of the volunteer experience, reflective of the larger tradition of youth volunteer service, was the eye-opening encounter. As one volunteer described the transformative effects of their sojourn into poverty, “Sometimes I think it’s very discouraging, you know, when you live with roaches, the john gets plugged up, the ceiling starts cracking. Then I tell myself that I’m a middle-class softie and think what it would be like to be a mother with five kids. ... Their poverty stays with you much more and makes it possible for you to go on working. It wouldn’t be this way if you just worked with them on a nine-to-five basis and talked with them as professionals.”⁴⁵⁴ Like the work camp experience and other volunteer service opportunities before it, the short-term VISTA experience was in part meant to inspire the volunteer to enact long-term social change. As another volunteer reflected, “VISTA simultaneously showed me the complexity and seeming hopelessness of our domestic problems, but also the importance and need for people to work on them.”⁴⁵⁵

As a 1971 internal program survey further demonstrated, many of the VISTA volunteers were deeply shaped if not transformed by their experience. In a section that attempted to measure the effect of the program on volunteers’ political beliefs, the vast majority reported that their time in VISTA had pushed them “more left” in their political worldview, even though the majority reported liberal leanings before joining.⁴⁵⁶ About a third went further and said that living and working with marginalized segments of the population had “radicalized” them, embracing the very term VISTA’s political opponents

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid, 78.

⁴⁵⁵ Gottlieb, *Vista and its Volunteers*, 164.

⁴⁵⁶ Ben A. Franklin, “Life In VISTA Called Radicalizing,” *New York Times*, May 21, 1974; Gottlieb, *Vista and its Volunteers*, 95.

used as an indictment of the program.⁴⁵⁷

Of course not all volunteers were inspired by their experience. The scale of social problems, restrictions within VISTA itself, and resistance from local power structures were all sources of frustration. In the same 1971 survey one volunteer wrote that "VISTA is like a bandage for cancer ... Unless VISTA administrators have become more radicalized, this whole survey is bullshit."⁴⁵⁸ Another bemoaned, "When a VISTA attempts to change the social structure he is met with 'No's' and legalities and threats and cops."⁴⁵⁹

But despite these frustrations, as the survey concluded, "the majority come out of the VISTA experience knowing more about themselves, the poor, and our social system. The majority come out still intending to work in programs where they can assist in making our society a better place for all of our citizens."⁴⁶⁰ As many volunteers found, the encounter of service was a powerful education that could, and often did, shape their lives going forward once they had seen social problems up close, and knew the extent of work that needed to be done to address them. As another volunteer wrote, "We have a long way to go before the problems are solved, but I know VISTA has accomplished a great deal and can and will continue to do so."⁴⁶¹

Due in large part to its politicalized image, VISTA never achieved the same national acclaim as its more glamorous predecessor. When college students indicated equal preference between the two volunteer programs in a 1969 Gallup poll, the *Washington Post* noted that it "represented an amazing gain for VISTA, a lackluster

⁴⁵⁷ Gottlieb, *Vista and its Volunteers*, 95-96.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid, 162.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid, 163.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid, 149.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid, 164.

appendage to President Johnson's War on Poverty."⁴⁶² But despite this disparity in public perception, the program was in many ways a success. As the same 1969 article remarked, these men and women wanted to be "where the action is—in the urban and rural poverty pockets" of the country where racial, class, and social divisions were abundantly clear. There was no shortage of evidence of these tensions, as encapsulated by scenes of urban revolts of black communities in Watts, Newark, or Detroit, or the economically ravaged areas of eastern Kentucky as depicted in documentaries like the popular 1964 CBS report, *Christmas in Appalachia*.⁴⁶³ In response, VISTA had "enlisted" thousands of young Americans who heard these stories, saw these images, and wanted to do something more. Thus, through the 1960s and into the 1970s, between three and four thousand young women and men every year left their middle class lifestyles to be a part of the "action." As part of the War on Poverty they were deployed to inner city communities, Alaskan hamlets, migrant labor camps, and elsewhere to, if only temporarily, try and make the lives of their new neighbors a little easier, even if it did not win them any friends in local government.⁴⁶⁴

For religious volunteer groups this was not new ground. Programs like the AFSC, MCC, and Regis Lay Apostolate had sent young middle class women and men into these same stretches of the "Other America" for years prior to VISTA's ascendance. As the editors of the 1965 edition of *Invest Your Summer* explicitly reminded their readers, its

⁴⁶² "Vista Overtakes Peace Corps at Colleges," *Washington Post* March 4, 1969.

⁴⁶³ The "inner city" and "Appalachia" were particularly salient general problem areas of the postwar period, both in terms of popular perception, and actual economic and social problems. See Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996) and Ronald Eller, *Uneven Ground: Appalachia Since 1945* (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 2008).

⁴⁶⁴ These communities were both accurate descriptions of common VISTA placements, as well as tropes of the VISTA promotional material. See VISTA files. Promotional materials. ALCNA.

programs, too, were a means of getting involved and doing some more.⁴⁶⁵ Like the Peace Corps, VISTA eclipsed these private programs in terms of scale and national visibility, but it did not succeed at the expense of these earlier pioneers of youth volunteers. Rather, it represented another new, albeit much larger option, on the expanding landscape of youth volunteer service.

The choices a college student had in this period to serve somewhere in greater Appalachia helps illustrate the interplay between religious and nonreligious volunteer service programs in this period and the overall growth in volunteer activity. Whereas the image of the “inner city” was the urban face of poverty, Appalachia, broadly—construed to include a wide stretch of states from Pennsylvania and Ohio down through Georgia, served as the face of entrenched rural poverty. As a result, it was the focus of old and new volunteer service programs. For many students willing to give a year or more, there were numerous VISTA opportunities. But if they did not want to give a year, they could spend a shorter time with the Appalachian Service Project (ASP), which was a product of the Protestant work camp movement. A Methodist minister, Glenn “Tex” Evans, who was familiar with Methodist work camps, utilized the model to start the ASP program in 1969. He looked to take advantage of the growing interest in the region, and harnessed the energies of high school and college students from the Northeast and Midwest to repair and improve homes in the region over the course of a week during the summer.⁴⁶⁶ A potential volunteer could also spend a part of their summer break with the Christian Appalachian Project (CAP). CAP was similar to the Appalachian Service Project in aim, scope, and volunteer base, but was the 1964 creation of a Catholic priest of the rural

⁴⁶⁵ *Invest Your Summer 1965* (New York: Commission on Youth Service Projects, 1965), 32.

⁴⁶⁶ The historical files for the program are located at the Appalachian Service Project central office in Johnson City, Tennessee.

Diocese of Covington, Kentucky.⁴⁶⁷ These programs did not exist in a zero–sum context where one’s growth came at the expense of others. While different, these respective federal, Methodist, and Catholic programs were all products of the same impulse. Together they were lifted by the same rising tide of student involvement and activism that, among results, swelled the number of volunteer service programs and students that filled their ranks.

5.3 Towards National Service

Through the latter half of the 1960s and into the 1970s, additional government volunteer programs continued in the wake of the Peace Corps to channel the idealist energies of socially–conscious young Americans. For instance, those interested specifically in teaching could join the National Teacher Corps (NTC), a War on Poverty program that was aimed at improving the level of instruction in inner–city schools.⁴⁶⁸ Like VISTA, the NTC was described by both observers and participants as another domestic application of the Peace Corps model. As one NTC administrator observed at a 1967 conference “There are probably schools in the United States—in Newark, Harlem, Boston, and Chicago—that offer challenges as great as any found in the Peace Corps anywhere in the world.”⁴⁶⁹ Not only was the NTC just modeled on the Peace Corps, it was in a way initially staffed by it. The program was first piloted in 1963 by two experienced teachers and ten returned Peace Corps volunteers at Cardozo High School in

⁴⁶⁷ For more on the Christian Appalachian Project and its founder Fr. Beiting, see Anthony Salatino’s *A True Man of God: A Biography of Father Ralph William Beiting, Founder of the Christian Appalachian Project* (Ashland, KY: The Jesse Stuart Foundation, 2001).

⁴⁶⁸ The NTC, even more so than VISTA, remains a largely under examined program, save for Bethany Roger’s excellent article, “Promises and limitations of youth activism in the 1960s: The case of the National Teacher Corps,” *The Sixties* 1, no. 2 (December 2008).

⁴⁶⁹ Richard Graham, “The Teacher Corps,” in *National Service: A Report*, 317.

Washington D.C's historic black neighborhood near Howard University.⁴⁷⁰ Like VISTA and other volunteer programs, the NTC was in large part a direct beneficiary, if not product, of generally heightened levels of social and political activism at the college campuses. As one former NTC volunteer recalled, "Teaching in the inner city ... was my way of being able to react to the society that was willing to take us and keep us in Vietnam ... that was willing to assassinate leaders who were different, that was willing to accept the capitalist drive without caring about the consequences."⁴⁷¹ While this one example obviously cannot be applied to all volunteers in this period, it helps illustrate how a general desire for social activism, itself often a complex array of motivations for each individual, manifested through volunteer service.

Numerous other federal programs in the period were created to expand the scope of volunteers beyond the white, middle class, college-educated young adults who comprised the typical Peace Corps or VISTA volunteer. This new alphabet soup of volunteer programs included the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), the Active Corps of Executives (ACE), the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP), and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).⁴⁷² Together with the Peace Corps and VISTA, these were all combined in 1971 under one single federal agency charged with promoting volunteer service, the aptly named ACTION.⁴⁷³

This proliferation of government-sponsored volunteer programs was not limited to federal endeavors. For instance, in New York City, the mayor's office oversaw the

⁴⁷⁰ "Legislative History of the National Service Corps." RG 362 Reorganization. ALCNA.

⁴⁷¹ Rogers, "Promises and limitations," 1.

⁴⁷² See Center for Action Research, "Action Institutes," no. 43, January 1974. RGS 362. ALCNA; ACTION Annual Report, 1972 (Washington D.C: ACTION, 1972).

⁴⁷³ T. Zane Reeves has argued that the consolidation that resulted in ACTION was in part a political calculation by the Nixon administration to reign in the more activist organizational cultures of the Peace Corps and VISTA. See *The Politics of the Peace Corps and Vista* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1988).

launching of the “Urban Corps” in 1966. The Urban Corps operated similarly to VISTA, but was focused squarely on serving the needs of communities throughout the city’s five boroughs. The program received the eager backing of the Ford Foundation whose administrators hoped the program would serve as a model for other cities.⁴⁷⁴ At the state level, officials in Massachusetts organized a Commonwealth Service Corps in 1965, just ahead of the first wave of VISTA volunteers. As a *Boston Globe* article from the time proudly noted, “The corps will always be the first domestic peace corps in the nation, no matter how many states follow suit, and the first truly living memorial to John F. Kennedy.”⁴⁷⁵

Amid this continued growth of volunteer service opportunities, a growing number of politicians and public policy experts began to lobby for the creation of a national service program. Proponents saw it as a means of further utilizing the service of young Americans on a military scale, an enterprise in the spirit of William James’ “moral equivalent of war.” Calls for national service was also deeply intertwined with growing discontent over the Vietnam War and the military draft. Other government officials, professors, and policy experts felt that national service could serve as a civic counterbalance to widespread student protests that they felt indicated a lost sense of public service among America’s middle class youth.⁴⁷⁶ Thus, the premise of national service had the appeal of a Swiss Army knife. It was one programmatic tool that could

⁴⁷⁴ Internal memo, “Urban Corps.” ALCNA.

⁴⁷⁵ Jean Dietz, “Service Corps’ Problem: It’s Been Too Successful,” *Boston Globe* December 7, 1965, 13.

⁴⁷⁶ Since the 1960s, scholars and policy experts have consistently argued for some sort of national service program, spawning a niche literature on the subject, with a particular surge of literature in the early 1990s. See Peter Frumkin and JoAnn Jastab, *Serving Country and Community: Who Benefits from National Service?* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010); Allan Metz, *National Service and Americorps: An Annotated Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1997); Donald Eberly and Michael Sherraden, eds., *The Moral Equivalent of War? A Study of Non-Military Service in Nine Nations* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1990); Williamson M. Evers, ed., *National Service: Pro and Con* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1990).

potentially help tackle many different pressing national to-dos. As *Harper's* senior editor Marion Sanders summarized in an August 1966 issue of the *New York Times Magazine*, “Enthusiasts for national service see it as an outlet for youthful idealism, as an antidote for the moral lassitude of our time, and as a practical means of tackling the immense problems of our society and of the world’s less affluent nations.”⁴⁷⁷

The idea had enough currency that the Carnegie Corporation, Russell Sage Foundation, and Alfred P. Sloan Foundation altogether contributed funds to back the founding of the National Service Secretariat in 1966. The new organization’s mission was the promotion of the idea of national service by conducting research, publishing research, and holding conferences.⁴⁷⁸ Its executive director was Donald Eberly, whose personal path to becoming a leading advocate for national service in itself reflects the manifold influences that helped shape the wider impulse of youth volunteer service and its rapid rise to national prominence in the 1960s.

Brought up in upstate Watertown, New York, Eberly was the son of a pacifist, social gospel–preaching Methodist minister who, as Eberly recalled “was committed to constructive social change.”⁴⁷⁹ While he later wrote that his father never discussed military service with him, as a young man Eberly felt ambivalent towards military service. Shortly after graduating from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1951, Eberly received notice to report to his draft board for a physical exam due to the outbreak of the Korean War. In response, Eberly leapfrogged the military chain of command, to say the least, and wrote directly to none other than President Truman. Eberly suggested

⁴⁷⁷ Marion Sanders, “The Case for a National Service Corps,” *New York Times Magazine*, August 7, 1966, 32.

⁴⁷⁸ *Invest Yourself 1968: Involvement and Action; A Catalogue of Opportunities* (New York: The Commission on Youth Service Projects, 1968), 40.

⁴⁷⁹ Donald J. Eberly, “National Service: A Forty-Three-Year Crusade,” *Courier* 28, no. 1 (Spring 1993), 35.

that he could better “serve mankind” teaching in a poor country than becoming a military draftee.⁴⁸⁰ An official from the Selective Service promptly wrote back and said in no uncertain terms that it was not an option. Ultimately, due to Eberly’s training as a physics major, he served his military term as a non–combatant researcher. During this time that he continued to reflect on the idea and benefits of non–military national service, such as by reading William James’ essay on the “moral equivalent of war.”

After his army stint, inspired by the example of his father’s missionary friends, Eberly searched for a means of serving abroad. He was able to take advantage of the International Development Placement Association (IDPA). Co–founded by future Peace Corps architect Harris Wofford, the IDPA was a small, private, development–focused volunteer service organization inspired by President Truman’s “Point Four” concept. Eberly eagerly took advantage of this opportunity and with his wife spent two years working at Molusi College in Nigeria. From the vantage point of having both military and nonmilitary service, he returned from Nigeria in the mid–1950s convinced of the advantages of non–military service for all young Americans, particularly as an alternative to the draft for men. By the end of the decade, Eberly drafted a proposal entitled “National Service for Peace,” and sent it to dozens of congressmen and senators. His only positive reply came from Senator Hubert Humphrey. He incorporated Eberly’s idea into his original Peace Corps bill to make the program to an alternative to military service, though this proposal was later dropped from the Peace Corps in its final form to head off charges that it would harbor draft dodgers. While disappointed by the outcome, Eberly had by then marked himself as a leading advocate of national service. He rose to public

⁴⁸⁰ Donald J. Eberly, *National Service: A Promise to Keep* (Rochester, NY: John Alden Books, 1988), 15.

prominence on the wave of interest in the idea that the Selective Service had so readily dismissed in his case a decade and a half earlier.⁴⁸¹

At its high point in the sixties and early seventies, the idea of national service attracted a diverse array of supporters. As one might expect, many were from the ranks of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. Among these none was more vocal than Harris Wofford, who saw America's youth as "a major underdeveloped resource" whose full potential, both as individuals and from the vantage point of a country with so many pressing needs, could be fully tapped by a national service program.⁴⁸² Tellingly, the concept also drew support from a wider array of individuals from public and private volunteer agencies, foundations, universities, and elsewhere. Attendees at conferences the National Service Secretariat hosted in 1966 and 1967 give some indication of this diversity, as the crowd comprised individuals like Margaret Mead, noted peace activist and Presbyterian clergyman William Sloane Coffin, Director of Brethren Volunteer Service Wilbur Mullen, as well as representatives from the Red Cross, Peace Corps, Boy Scouts of America, and the offices of Congressman Henry Reuss.

The idea of a national service program also received endorsements at the highest levels of national politics. The Democratic Party's 1968 platform embraced the concept as a means of both employing the constructive capabilities of youth and ameliorating their feelings of alienation from the country's civic life. As described in the party platform, national service was a way "to further broaden volunteer opportunities to the nation's youth to address their deep concern for social justice" as well as a "simultaneous

⁴⁸¹ While the concept of a national service program lost much of its steam after the end of the draft, Eberly continued to advocate such a program for the rest of his life. See for example with Michael W. Sherraden, *National Service: Social, Economic and Military Impacts* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1982); "Base-line for a Future National Service," *Youth Policy* 10, no.1 (January 1988).

⁴⁸² Harris Wofford, "Draft without Guns," in *National Service: A Report*, 30.

feeling of exclusion from the nation's political process.”⁴⁸³ The 1968 Republican Party platform did not embrace the idea of a national service program as explicitly as their Democratic counterparts. Reflecting a “law and order” approach, the platform only suggested support for a general “service corps” that would vaguely “augment cooperation and communication between community residents and the police.”⁴⁸⁴

Many politicians and government officials saw national volunteer service as a powerful release valve for the frustrated energies of the country's college students. This is best illustrated in the 1970 President's Commission on Campus Unrest. Also known as the Scranton Report, the commission was charged with investigating the causes of national campus turmoil after the 1970 Kent State and Jackson State shootings. Among the report's many recommendations, it called for the testing of national voluntary service programs, as well as increasing the range of service opportunities available to students after high school. As the commission suggested, possibilities included expanding VISTA, the Peace Corps, and the Teachers Corps, or providing financial assistance to a clearinghouse of private volunteer options to help expand the options available to the nation's young people.⁴⁸⁵

National service certainly was an enticing ideal. As Eberly described in one 1971 article, it was hard to oppose “a voluntary corps of 2,000,000 young people devoted to a peaceful war on the enemies that threaten our society—ignorance, poverty, and lack of opportunity, as well as emergencies.”⁴⁸⁶ But for a myriad of reasons, a national service program never came to be. One obstacle was the thorny specifics of what such a program

⁴⁸³ See transcript at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29604>.

⁴⁸⁴ See transcript at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=25841>.

⁴⁸⁵ President's Commission on Campus Unrest, *The Report of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest* (New York: Commerce Clearing House, 1970), 224-225.

⁴⁸⁶ Donald J. and Louise K. Eberly, “Many ‘peace corps’ on the home front,” *Christian Science Monitor* January 13, 1971, 9.

would actually look like. Some advocates like Eberly often argued that national service would not necessarily be a centralized “peace army” that would mirror its military counterpart. This was a particularly important position in an age where many Americans, college students especially, were suspicious of large institutions. As he made clear at one conference, “National service is not envisioned as a hierarchical, overly–centralized monster,” and suggested instead that “service through groups like the AFSC, Commonwealth Service Corps, Peace Corps, or international agencies like UNICEF, a flexible system could be created.”⁴⁸⁷ But proponents struggled to detail what this sort of complicated balance would actually look like.

A related unresolved tension of these conversations was whether national service would be voluntary or obligatory. This was an especially pressing question as many viewed it as an alternative to military service. Proponents could not agree, as they heralded examples of both private volunteer organizations as well as other country’s obligatory service programs as examples of what a U.S. equivalent might look like.⁴⁸⁸ Ultimately these questions went unanswered. Moreover, when the military ended the draft in the early 1970s, the idea of national service, particularly as a nonmilitary alternative, lost much of its appeal and urgency.

Even among its advocates, the concept of national volunteer service, whatever voluntary or obligatory form it might take, was also hamstrung by concerns that it would not be the social panacea some hoped it would be. As historian Michael Katz pointed out at a 1967 conference hosted by the National Service Secretariat, “national service, which is defined as largely an educational innovation, repeats the familiar pattern of evasion.

⁴⁸⁷ Donald Eberly, ed., *A Profile of National Service* (New York: Overseas Educational Service, 1966), ix.

⁴⁸⁸ See for example Terrence Cullinan’s “National Service and Military Obligation,” *Social Progress* 57, no.2 (November 1966): 22-25.

That is, national service advocates identify serious and real social problems, which they hope to attack. Yet they fail to analyze either the true dimensions and sources of the problems or the extent to which their proposed solutions will actually have an impact upon these underlying factors.”⁴⁸⁹ Or as he put more strongly, “For, like much of educational history, national service represents an evasive non solution of social problems in the best American tradition.”⁴⁹⁰ While Katz’s analysis represented one of the more pointed critiques, his observation cut to the reality that volunteer service was in itself a rich experience for volunteers, but not a suitable solution to deeply entrenched social problems and inequalities.

While a national service corps was never realized, the widespread support of the idea from the educational, governmental, and philanthropic sectors was itself a significant indication of how far the concept of volunteer service had evolved as a normalized national idea. When Eberly had first written his draft board in 1950, his then–fringe proposal had been dismissed without hesitation. But by the end of the 1970s it was a decidedly more mainstream concept. Further, as director of VISTA training Donald Brown observed at the same 1967 conference, in many concrete ways volunteer service was, if not a national program, already a national phenomenon. As he asserted, “A National Service Corps is not an abstract concept at the present time. In fact, today we already have a National Service Corps. ... We have thousands of Americans—young, middle-aged, old, wealthy, middle class and poor—who are serving their fellow man and

⁴⁸⁹ Katz, “National Service as Education: Historical Reasons for Pessimism,” *National Service: A Report of a Conference*, 184.

⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 193.

at the same time contributing to their own, their nation's, and the world's futures."⁴⁹¹ To see such a national movement in action, one just needed to look to college campuses.

5.4 (Off) Campus Growth

At the same 1967 conference on national service, Reed Martin, Secretary for International Affairs of the United States Youth Council, argued that higher education needed to take a central role in promoting volunteer service. "Universities should begin to occupy the central role in developing the ideal of service—of giving service not only after the student leaves the university but, in fact, while he is still on the campus."⁴⁹²

Martin's comments were ultimately quite prescient, as seen four years later in a 1971 article by Ken Allen, a dean at the University of Illinois. Allen was writing in response to the remarkable increase of volunteer service activities on his campus and at others across the country. He remarked, "College students are as much off campus as on these days—in inner city recreation centers, mental hospitals, homes for the aged, storefront offices, and any of the thousand places where there are people in need of help to solve personal problems. They are there because the concept of volunteer service, once symbolized by community construction of a neighbor's barn, has matured to the point where today it is a pervasive and dynamic force throughout the nation."⁴⁹³ His comments illustrated one of the most significant developments in youth volunteer service in the late 1960s and 70s. As Reed Martin had hoped four years earlier, college campuses became home to a massive blossoming of volunteer programs. But the institutions themselves did not lead the way. Rather, it was the grassroots efforts of students drove that proliferation

⁴⁹¹ Donald Brown, "VISTA," in *National Service: A Report of a Conference*, 335.

⁴⁹² Reed Martin, "Youth and National Service," in *National Service: A Report of a Conference*, 143.

⁴⁹³ Ken Allen, "What Motivates Volunteers?" *Synergist*, Fall 1971, 49.

of programs, while college administrators responded to and institutionalized such activities.

The development of Boston College's PULSE service program provides one example of this larger explosion of college programs and its student-driven nature. The origins began with the school's Sodality chapter. This student organization was a common fixture of Jesuit universities through the first half of the twentieth century and was primarily concerned with devotional activities. In the 1940s and 50s Sodalities adopted some service activities as a means of partaking in "Catholic Action," but they still largely religious in focus. But by the mid-1960s, the BC chapter began to shift its central focus to social action. As former student Pat Byrne recalled, "Most of us were there because of Civil Rights activities." In the spring of 1965 several of its members traveled to Selma to participate in the Civil Rights protests there after the nationally-televised March 7 "Bloody Sunday" assault of marchers by local police at the Edmund Pettus Bridge.⁴⁹⁴

Taking to heart the clarion calls of the Civil Rights movement, Sodality members began tutoring in the city's African American neighborhoods like Roxbury to help address the racial divides in Boston. Out of these activities, the students organized a new program, the "Revitalization Corps." Soon, this student-driven initiative attracted the attention of one of the school's faculty, Joseph Flanagan, S.J. Flanagan was a philosophy professor who was also interested in the relationship between education and service. He helped the students create a pilot program that combined the student's service activities with academic credit through a seminar-style course. By the early 1970s, the rechristened PULSE program was an established part of the school's undergraduate curriculum that

⁴⁹⁴ Zachary Jason, "Being There," *Boston College Magazine*, (Winter 2015).

drew upwards of one hundred student participants a year. While Flanagan's support was critical for the program's institutionalization, he was a late arrival to what was a distinctly student-led activity.⁴⁹⁵

Concordia Teachers College, a small Lutheran school in rural Seward, Nebraska, further exemplifies the grassroots emergence of many college volunteer programs. In 1969, a group of students with supporting faculty gathered for a weekend retreat to reflect on how they might develop a concrete social outreach program. The result of these conversations was the student organization IMPACT—Immediate Mobilization of Persons Agreeable to Committing Themselves. Immediately students began a neighborhood preschool project near the college campus. They soon after expanded their outreach efforts to teaching on a Montana Native American reservation, as well as immersion into inner-city neighborhoods of Chicago.⁴⁹⁶ In this way the students at Boston College and Concordia Teachers College represented just two of the many programs with similar origin stories that students organized through the latter half of the 1960s as outlets for social action. As respective Catholic and Lutheran schools, it is likely that religious mission shaped the activities of PULSE and IMPACT. But these were most likely part of a larger mix of motivations to get outside the classroom and get involved in a more direct way.

Of course, college students partaking in some form of volunteer service were not an entirely new phenomenon. Harvard University's Phillips Brooks House, founded at the beginning of the 20th century, stands as one prominent early example. But table 1 (see appendix A) illustrates the unique explosive spread of college service programs that

⁴⁹⁵ Interview conducted with Pat Byrne September 29, 2016.

⁴⁹⁶ Charles Dull and James Nelesen, "Concordia Teachers College: IMPACT in Nebraska," *Synergist*, Winter 1972, 61.

occurred as a product of student activism in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The table's information comes from a 1972–1973 federal directory of 558 college volunteer programs.⁴⁹⁷ While it is not comprehensive, it is still highly instructive. Of the 481 schools that provided a starting year for their program, 405, or 84% were founded between 1965 and 1973. An additional 42 had been founded between 1960 and 1964. Programs started earlier than 1960 tended to be at schools with a Protestant or Catholic heritage, such as Wheaton College (Evangelical Christian), Fordham (Catholic, Jesuit), and Chestnut Hill College (Catholic, Sisters of St. Joseph). But these were largely an exception to the rule. It was quite clearly in the 1960s and the 1970s that the majority of schools in this sampling—public, private, religious, four-year, and two-year institutions, alike—saw their students develop volunteer service programs during a general period of dynamic social activism.

In 1968 federal officials launched the National Student Volunteer Program (NSVP) to further encourage the growth of college volunteer programs. The NSVP helped provide an important central resource for the hundreds of locally-organized programs that had recently sprouted across the country. The NSVP-published journal *Synergist* was the most influential of the agency's resources. As the editorial staff noted in the first issue in the fall of 1971, *Synergist* was “designed solely to assist the volunteer movement on the campuses around the country where such aid is appropriate and is wanted by the students involved in the program.”⁴⁹⁸ Its pages regularly featured forums of experts who tackled questions relating to a variety of topics such as community outreach, volunteer retention, fundraising, program evaluation, recruitment, and more

⁴⁹⁷ *Directory of College Student Volunteer Programs: Academic Year 1972-1973* (Washington D.C: National Student Volunteer Program/ACTION, 1973).

⁴⁹⁸ “NSVP Forum: Publicity and Public Relations,” *Synergist*, Fall 1971, 6.

specific topics like “What key factors make for a successful student volunteer program in a rural setting?”⁴⁹⁹ Issues of *Synergist* also included profiles of specific school programs from around the country, such as the “Service Corps” at Furman College in South Carolina that organized recreational activities for local school children, or the “Mini-Corps” of California’s Chico State that provided a variety of services to the community’s many agricultural migrant workers.⁵⁰⁰ The journal was particularly eager to publish accounts that showcased how NSVP assistance had helped a specific college program, such as a 1973 account of how NSVP assistance helped student leaders revamp the fledgling volunteer program at Rutgers University. As the article boasted, thanks to NSVP guidance, “Within a year, Rutgers student volunteers had set up a training system that prepares volunteers for specific service tasks, quadrupled their financial support from the university, and started a continuing evaluation process for volunteers and volunteer projects.”⁵⁰¹ The final product was an impressive and sophisticated effort with over seven hundred students in twenty different types of volunteer activities, including tutoring, and prison outreach.⁵⁰²

Synergist not only helped provide practical resources for students looking to start or expand a volunteer program. Its pages also helped provide contours to this national impulse. As students worked through the journal’s pages, they were exposed to the breadth of programs at four year, two year, public, and private schools across the country that comprised, as the pages of *Synergist* called it, the “volunteer movement.” In this way students of various local initiatives, whether it was Boston College’s PULSE program or

⁴⁹⁹ Abraham Bailey and Thomas Sawyer, “The myth of rural non-involvement,” *Synergist*, Fall 1971, 22.

⁵⁰⁰ “Furman’s Service Corps: A Big Program at a Small School,” *Synergist*, Fall 1971, 44; “How Volunteers Aid Migrant Workers,” *Synergist*, Winter 1972, 66.

⁵⁰¹ “‘RCA’ helps link Rutgers with the community,” *Synergist*, Fall 1973, 43.

⁵⁰² Ibid.

Operation Give a Damn at Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota, could easily see how their unique efforts were also part of a much wider phenomenon.

5.5 Accrediting Service

As the number of college volunteer programs continued to grow, an increasing number of administrators, professors, educational professionals, and students embraced volunteer service not just as a constructive route for social activism, but specifically as an educational experience. More precisely, they saw it as a helpful, and even necessary supplement to the shortcomings of a classroom education. Much like progressive education proponents of Quaker work camps thirty years earlier, these advocates saw service programs as means of giving students the kinds of hands-on experience and education that could not be replicated in a traditional school setting. As one professor wrote in a 1971 issue of *Synergist* about the educational value of volunteer service, “The learning aspect is never eliminated. The volunteer who seeks to help others also helps himself. Talking to Peace Corps returnees leads me to believe that I can almost spot one in a crowd. Their poise, their sense of themselves, the clear focus of commitments—there are all characteristics that derive from the insight gained in serving others.”⁵⁰³

Proponents recognized that volunteer service was an invaluable educational experience of encounter for its largely white and middle class demographic. For many, whether they were tutoring in a nearby school or taking a week to repair houses in some corner of eastern Kentucky, the crossing of racial and class lines was as valuable an educational experience as any lecture or lab. The socially transformative effects of volunteer service were elucidated by Dorothea Woods, a Social Affairs Officer of the

⁵⁰³ Virgil Peterson, “Education and Volunteerism: The Twain Converge,” *Synergist*, Fall 1971, 4.

United Nations, at a 1969 conference on service and the university held at Princeton. As she asserted, “The service project may be a laboratory for developing a political conscience, for creating effective means of communication, for promoting the cross-fertilization of ideas. For many, voluntary service is the inter-cultural, inter-racial, inter-faith experience which decisively changes the shape of their lives.”⁵⁰⁴

Other arguments for integrating learning and service grew out of enduring concerns that the privileges of a middle class lifestyle had left the nation’s youth unprepared for adulthood. In the aforementioned 1967 conference on national service Leon Lessinger, Superintendent of the San Mateo Union High School District (located south of San Francisco), made this class-anxiety case in arguing that “It is impossible to overstress the place of work and service in the development of responsible and wholesome youth.” Echoing some of the arguments that had been used in favor of the work camp movement three decades earlier, he went on to argue that “We have eradicated the burden of child labor, but we have removed youth too far from the strengthening fires of work and service alongside adults engaged in the reality of earning a living or going about the actual processes of life.”⁵⁰⁵ As he went on to specify, he felt volunteer service offered one effective means of giving young women and men the needed experiences in those “actual processes of life,” that he found lacking in their upbringing.

⁵⁰⁴ *The University and Voluntary Service: A Consultation sponsored by the Commission on Youth Service Projects; Princeton, New Jersey, 8-10 September, 1969* (New York: Commission on Youth Service Projects, 1969), 21.

⁵⁰⁵ Leon Lessinger, “A Role for Socially Valued Service in the Educational Process,” *National Service: A Report of a Conference*, 217; See also “Action Learning: A New Option for American Youth” by Robert Havighurts, Richard A. Graham, and Donald J. Eberly, in *Let the Entire Community Become our University* Philip Ritterbush, ed. (Washington, D.C.: Acropolis Books, 1972), 49-60.

Further embedded in some of these arguments for service as a means of learning and growing were some new anxieties over the specter of the student activist and protestor. As Arthur Gillette and others pointed out, the volunteer and the protestor were often the same student, and if not, they often shared the same motivations to take up a form of social action to make their community and country a more just place. It would be wrong to say that many saw volunteer service as a means of student social control. But some government officials, educational professionals, and schools administrations may have harbored hopes that volunteer service programs might draw energy away from more confrontational outbursts like direct protests. Some college administrators may have encouraged the growth of service programs in the hopes that they would curtail protests, but these more cynical approaches, if they happened, were the exception rather than the rule.

Most of these proponents of “service learning,” as the term began to appear in educational literature in the late 1960s, more likely saw these programs in a less Machiavellian light. They saw integrating service directly into course curriculums as a unique and valuable educational opportunity, a means for addressing student frustrations and harnessing them for growth and social change. Robert Sigmon, the former Director of the North Carolina Internship Office who is popularly credited in educational circles as a service-learning pioneer, explained the benefits of service learning in a June 1970 speech at the University of North Carolina’s Charlotte campus.⁵⁰⁶ He began, “Most of us would acknowledge that a significant portion of today’s students are alienated. The signs

⁵⁰⁶ While the methodological and pedagogical literature on service learning is extensive, the historical literature is by contrast quite thin. Some more helpful overviews can be found in Sigmon’s *Journey to Service Learning*; Maureen Kenny and Laura Gallagher, *Teenagers and Community Service: A Guide to the Issues* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003); Eric Sheffield, *Strong Community Service Learning: Philosophical Perspectives* (New York: Peter Lang, 2011).

of this alienation are many: extensive drug use, long hair, and the development of communes and other intensive communities.” He went on to argue that a classic classroom experience often exacerbated these feelings of alienation, asserting that, “Within formal education, a premium is placed on dispassionate analysis, which most often results in unrealistic and abstract concerns. I am sure, however, that students’ concerns are never as humane and realistic as they are when these concerns grow out of direct contact with people who have problems. Service learning internships have as their intent the development of open, flexible, competent, learning, and caring individuals.” Or, as he more bluntly summarized, “it is only in ‘giving a damn’ about one’s brother that one’s own experience, however well–conceptualized, can begin to have meaning.”⁵⁰⁷ Service learning was, for proponents like Sigmon, an effective and holistic educational tool. It gave students “real world” experience and imbued their learning with the meaning that came from “giving a damn” for others.

Driven by these kinds of arguments, and the overall growth of volunteer service programs, more colleges began to offer academic credit for volunteer service through explicit service-learning courses. In a few rare instances some schools, like SUNY–Old Westbury and Franconia College in New Hampshire, attempted to make service learning a cornerstone of their entire undergraduate academic experience, though this more extensive adoption of service learning curriculums had limited success.⁵⁰⁸ This growth of service learning was complemented by a general rise of interest in experiential learning

⁵⁰⁷ *Service-Learning in the South: Higher Education and Public Service, 1967-1972* (Atlanta: Southern Regional Education Board, 1973), 17-18.

⁵⁰⁸ SUNY-Old Westbury in itself is a case study into many of the overlapping tensions of college student life in this period. The only significant study on this educational experiment is George Trumon’s “The Experimental College at Old Westbury 1966-971: A Case Study,” EdD, Indiana University, 1973.

opportunities, included internships and types of social science field research.⁵⁰⁹ In this case, too, federal resources helped further encourage this trend. Starting in 1971, the federal volunteer agency ACTION rolled out the University Year for Action (UYA), an initiative designed to provide grants to colleges and universities for service learning programs.⁵¹⁰

5.6 Religious Programs: Tributaries to a River of Service

In the spring 1972 issue of *Synergist*, the magazine's editors listed the Commission on Voluntary Service and Action (formerly the Commission on Youth Service Projects), the original umbrella organization for mainline Protestant and peace church volunteer service programs, as a useful resource for its readers. The editors further noted the Commission's long-running yearly conferences and annual directory of mainly Protestant service programs. By that time instead of *Invest Your Summer* the directory was entitled *Invest Yourself* to reflect the growth of yearlong service opportunities. But the Commission was not the only game in town, so to speak. It was listed alongside a variety of other resources relating to volunteer service. They included new private clearinghouses such as the Center for a Voluntary Society and the National Center for Voluntary Action, the federal volunteer agency ACTION, and the Association of Voluntary Action Scholars, a body of professors who found the growing world of

⁵⁰⁹ For a helpful overview of experiential learning, including service learning, literature in this period, see Jane Porter Stutz and Joan Knapp, eds. *Experiential Learning: An Annotated Literature Guide* (Columbia, MD: Cooperative Assessment of Experiential Learning, 1977).

⁵¹⁰ Michael J. Caffney and Joan C. Baratz, "Action's Education Programs: Alternative Roles" Washington D.C.: Educational Policy Research Institute of Educational Testing Service, 1979, 1. RG 362 Reorganization. ALCNA; Anne Trask, Robert Feldmesser, and Ernest W. Kimmel, "The Awarding of Academic Credit in the University Year for Action: Policies and Practices," (Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service, 1975). ALCNA.

volunteer programs to be a phenomenon worth studying.⁵¹¹ The Commission on Voluntary Service and Action remained an important network of volunteer opportunities, but as its neighbors on the pages of *Synergist* illustrated, these Protestant programs, along with Catholic parallels, were only a small part of a larger movement that they had pioneered.

Catholic and Protestant volunteer programs continued to develop and multiply through the 1960s and into the 1970s. In addition to the wider growth of volunteer service programs across the country, these groups were further shaped by shifts on the American religious landscape. As Robert Wuthnow has pointed out in his classic study *The Restructuring of American Religion*, denominationalism became a less important characteristic of American religious life. Previous divides between Methodists and Baptists, Episcopalians and Presbyterians, and Protestants and Catholics became less salient.⁵¹² Instead, new fault lines opened along whether one was a religious “liberal” or “conservative,” to the extent that a liberal Catholic and liberal Baptist may have more in common than conservative members of their own denominations.

Within the liberal camp of American religion, which included mainline Protestant traditions that were long-running sponsors of volunteer service programs, social action remained an important focus. If anything, this dynamic was strengthened in the 1960s due to new theologies with an existentialist inflection that emphasized the importance of “action in the world” as a reflection of Christian faith.⁵¹³ Nor were these trends limited to liberal Protestants. As James McCartin has shown, particularly in the wake of the reforms

⁵¹¹ “Contact,” *Synergist*, Winter 1972, 49-51.

⁵¹² See chapter 5, “The Declining Significance of Denominationalism” in Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion*.

⁵¹³ Hugh Mcleod, *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 101; see also Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

of the Second Vatican Council, many Catholics increasingly turned to types of social action as part of a newfound emphasis on “publically oriented spirituality.”⁵¹⁴ These trends were not entirely unique to the 1960s, as seen in previous decades in the pages of periodicals like *motive*, or the various manifestations of “Catholic Action.” But through the 1960s and into the 1970s, these currents flowed with greater strength.

The impact of these overlapping trends are exemplified by the 1971 conference of the Commission on Voluntary Service and Action. The opening address was given by Randle Dew, Director of the United Methodist Voluntary Service. The following discussion featured a panel that included George Marshfield, Director of the AFSC’s Summer Projects, Richard Graham, founding Director of the National Teacher Corps, John Dickson, Director for the Washington, D.C.-based Center for a Voluntary Society, and, Sister Catherine Kelly, director of Volunteer Services at Baltimore’s Loyola College. As the makeup of this opening session exemplified, the various Protestant, Catholic, private non-religious, and federal streams of this impulse flowed like tributaries into one river of volunteer service.

Sister Catherine Kelly’s presence further illustrated the new ecumenical nature of the volunteer service movement. Behind the scenes Fr. George Mader, who with his sister Patricia had organized the first clearinghouse of Catholic volunteer service programs in the 1960s, worked as a conference organizer, and also served executive board member of this formerly Protestant organization.⁵¹⁵ This marked a departure from earlier decades, as through the 1950s and into the 1960s there were two distinct Protestant and Catholic

⁵¹⁴ James P. McCartin, *Prayers of the Faithful: The Shifting Spiritual Life of American Catholics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 168.

⁵¹⁵ From “Is the Bubble Bursting?” Commission on Voluntary Service and Action, 1971.” Fr. George Mader papers at Seton Hall University Archives. Hereafter SHUA.

volunteer impulses. The former had been spearheaded by Peace Churches and mainstream Protestant denominations, and reflected a mix of pacifist, social gospel, and education concerns. Its latter counterpart was formed in a crucible of Catholic Action and accelerated by a pressing practical labor shortage of sisters, and was uniquely shaped by young women and nuns. These parallel movements led to different organizations and different clearinghouses of information. For young Protestants interested in service opportunities there was *Invest Yourself*, while Catholic counterparts could flip through the opportunities in *Response*. But by the early 1970s these denominational boundaries had begun to fade. While different groups like the Jesuit Volunteer Corps or Methodist Volunteer Services maintained unique characteristics, the distinctions between the previously separate Catholic and Protestant volunteer movements faded. Volunteer service instead was one means of common ground for liberal Catholics and liberal Protestants in a time of shifting denominational strands.

In addition to the changing face of religious volunteer programs, in his keynote address to the 1971 gathering, United Methodist Voluntary Service director Randle Dew further noted ways in which the wider world of youth volunteer service had changed, and ways the phenomenon had stayed the same. The dominant trend at that point, of course, was the recent proliferation of programs. As he told the audience, they were amid “an upturn in the voluntary service world,” going on to cite, among other examples, “the new Center for a Voluntary Society, the new Center for Voluntary Action, proposed and new metro-regional offices for Voluntary Action, ACTION itself, the new United Nations Volunteers, and a host of other developments.”⁵¹⁶ As he noted, the even theme of their gathering, “Is the Bubble Bursting?” also reflected this significant growth, as they were

⁵¹⁶ Ibid, 3.

now in the position to debate whether such a bubble existed in the first place, and whether the pace of new programs might slow in future years.

While the remarkable growth was exciting, Dew cautioned his audience not to overlook the limitations of volunteer service. As he reminded them, service introduced volunteers to how they might “change the system” for the better. But as vehicles for social change by themselves they were even at best a series of “band aid efforts.” As he argued, “The totality of all individual, small groups, private sector effort, as glorious and wonderful as it might be, does not have the power to make root changes to eliminate the problem. Only powerful systems can deal with powerful systems.”⁵¹⁷ Volunteer service was only the first step in a longer process. It could expose volunteers to societal ills, allow them to start with a “band aid effort,” and hopefully inspire them to go on to find other ways of diagnosing and disinfecting social wounds.

5.7 A Student Volunteer Movement

A 1972 pamphlet from the National Student Volunteer Program opened with the exclamation of “Riot! Protest! Confrontation!” As it went to state, “In recent years a new student activism has come into being. The news media have been filled with the signs and sounds of the latest demonstrations.” Like Arthur Gillette at the start of this chapter, the authors of this pamphlet went on to add that fiery speeches, rallies, and takeovers of buildings were just one dimension of the recent surge of student activism. “For all the shouting, however, we miss a far more important characteristic of this generation. All across the country, in every region, in major universities and small colleges, a steady and deepening interest in community affairs is emerging. ... Through community agencies

⁵¹⁷ Ibid, 8.

(public and private) and citizen groups of all kinds, they are sharing in the struggle for a more just society.”⁵¹⁸

Even as the more dramatic instances of student activism that marked turbulent years like 1968 began to ebb, volunteer programs, as one lasting outgrowth of this activism, not only remained and flourished through campus programs and the various community organizations they served. As a 1973 article in *Transition*, the journal for former VISTA and Peace Corps volunteers, wrote, “the student volunteer movement” had grown over the previous decade to include 400,000 students in over 2,000 programs representing 80% of all colleges in the country.⁵¹⁹ Even if the estimate were generous, the article was one of many signs that youth volunteering, with all of its benefits and limitations, had truly become a nationwide movement.

⁵¹⁸ *Volunteering: A Manual for Students* (Washington, D.C: National Student Volunteer Program, 1972), 1.

⁵¹⁹ “A way to make a difference ... Student Volunteer Service,” *Transition*, February 1973, 15.

CONCLUSION

Every year, colleges around the country host a “Postgraduate Service Fair.” The event is similar to a career fair in format and the target audience of senior students that are contemplating what to do after graduation. But instead of representatives from Fortune 500 companies and other local tech, financial, and engineering firms, this fair offers students a buffet of possible volunteer service opportunities they can pursue for a year or more.

The University of Notre Dame’s fall 2016 fair provides an illustrative example.⁵²⁰ It further echoes some of the key developments of the wider movement of youth volunteer service explored in the previous chapters. As one might expect at this flagship Catholic school, most organizations present were Catholic. While there was no Regis Lay Apostolate table—the program ended in 1972—there were plenty of organizations carrying on the tradition this group helped pioneer.⁵²¹ For instance, there was the Alliance for Catholic Education, which places volunteers in under-resourced Catholic primary and secondary schools around the country. Older exemplars of this Catholic impulse were present, too. The most notable in this regard was the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, the program

⁵²⁰ Taken from listing of 2016 fair participants. Available at <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/14ResswTVkOpfBZ2LfBJtXpII4faOPDvNqRIbM59eiP8/edit#gid=1265864202>.

⁵²¹ Details about the end of the Regis Lay Apostolate can be found in Staysniak, “We are definitely the pioneers”

started in Copper Valley, Alaska, whose origins were made possible by a Catholic sister's "Strike it Rich" game show winnings.

Other Catholic representatives also used the "Corps" language in their name, as seen in programs like Franciscorps, the Holy Family Service Corps, and the Vincentian Mission Corps. Most of these were catalyzed by the same factors that had sparked earlier Catholic programs like the Regis Lay Apostolate. In the decades since the 1950s, Catholic schools and religious orders have continued to develop volunteer programs to help staff their various institutions and ministries in response to an increasingly acute, well-documented shortage of sisters, priests, and brothers.⁵²² Today, these lay volunteers have become more of a fixture and less of a novelty in their work at church institutions, in contrast to early years when nuns and priests often struggled with what to do with their "lay missionaries."

The Notre Dame fair's Catholic tilt was pronounced, but not complete. Among the non-Catholic programs present was the Mennonite Central Committee. This program reflected the pacifist Protestant tradition that had been so influential as a vanguard of Protestant youth volunteer service programs. MCC administrators were early adopters of the AFSC work camp model, and had further influenced the development of yearlong service programs as a result of their experience with the Civilian Public Service program for conscientious objectors. The other Protestant volunteer group present, the Lutheran Volunteer Corps, is a relatively newer program. In contrast to the older vein of peace church and mainline Protestant volunteer service that coalesced in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, the LVC was more reflective of the ecumenical melding of the previously separate

⁵²² The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) based at Georgetown University has numerous studies that examine and chart this decline. Accessible write ups of this research on CARA's research blog, "1964," <http://nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com/>.

Catholic and Protestant volunteer impulses that occurred in the late 1960s. As the LVC's promotional literature states, it is the product of a religiously-mixed tradition of volunteer service programs, as it was specifically modeled off both the MCC's Mennonite Voluntary Service and the Jesuit Volunteer Corps.

Alongside these religious "Corps," the actual Peace Corp itself had representatives at the Notre Dame fair, as well. As the names of many of the other programs demonstrate, the Kennedy creation remains an iconic point of reference for volunteer service of all types.

Other programs at the fair, while not federal initiatives like the Peace Corps, were the beneficiaries of federal funding. One example is the Christian Appalachian Project (CAP), a Catholic volunteer program started in 1964 as part of that period's surge of interest in the "Other America." As noted in the CAP fair listing, several of their volunteer positions (all related to non-religious work like construction) were made possible by AmeriCorps funding, a federal program volunteer program descended from VISTA.⁵²³ Other programs were also recipients of federal support, such as the Alliance for Catholic Education, which could provide volunteers with small AmeriCorps grants specifically earmarked for volunteer teaching positions. These benefits continue the longer trend of federal funding and support of volunteer youth service programs that began during the 1960s through agencies like the National Student Volunteer Program, blurring the lines between public and private volunteer organizations in the process.

On top of these Catholic, Protestant, and federal volunteer options, there were other non-religious, private volunteer programs at the Notre Dame fair. One was City

⁵²³ AmeriCorps was the product of a 1994 restructuring of federal volunteer programs. For an overview of related resources, see Metz, *National Service and AmeriCorp*.

Year, a Boston-based private organization that places volunteers at schools and social service agencies in cities across the country. Another was Teach for America, which places volunteer teachers in under-resourced public schools around the United States. Both of these organizations were founded in the late 1980s, and illustrate how the larger phenomenon of youth volunteer service has continued to evolve in more recent decades.

Together, this line up of programs helps illustrate the mix of Protestant, Catholic, private, and federal programs that have all come to be parts of the wider movement of youth volunteer service as it has evolved in the United States since the 1930s. Even this helpful snapshot at Notre Dame is a limited sampling that does not fully do justice to the richness of this tradition. But my hope is that this dissertation has been more thorough in charting this development. As these chapters have shown, it was an intricate constellation of programs, characters, catalysts, tensions, and limitations that have shaped this movement into a normative and national presence for many young Americans.

But the narrative here is by no means a comprehensive one. This initial framework also points the way towards future studies in this area. For example, there is a need for a more comprehensive and updated analysis of the VISTA program. It employed thousands of volunteers, empowered thousands of marginalized Americans, and helped reset, if only temporarily in many cases, the power dynamics in local communities across the country. Its remarkable story, or mosaic of smaller stories, is more than worthy of continued exploration.

As much of the source base I have found and utilized comes from the perspective of program organizers and observers, there could also be far more collection and preservation of volunteer voices and experiences. Oral histories of some of the programs

touched upon in these pages would help fill this void. Such an initiative could shed further light on what these women and men think of their experience with the hindsight of several decades. What motivated them to volunteer? Was their experience educational? Disillusioning? Transformational? To what extent did the encounters of their experience shape their personal and professional decisions afterward, if at all? There are several Peace Corps oral histories that provide a roadmap for what this type of project might look like.⁵²⁴

Further, the narrative can, and eventually should, be extended through the rest of the 1970s and into the 1980s and even the 1990s. This expanded narrative would show how this impulse continued to change in more recent decades. It would explore the growth of larger private non-religious volunteers programs like City Year and Teach for America. It would also provide a glimpse into how this movement was shaped by the “New Voluntarism” of the 1980s, a period of tremendous growth for the nonprofit sector as a whole, but also a time when conservative governmental officials called for private volunteering in part as an excuse for cutting social service programs.

Finally, future studies might also examine volunteer service from the other side of the encounter. I have focused here on program organizers and participants. But it remains to be further explored how local neighborhoods and rural towns received and reacted to volunteers.

But even with these areas for future research, this dissertation still stands as a historiographical contribution to an otherwise sparse literature. Clearly this volunteer

⁵²⁴ In addition to published examples like Karen Schwarz’s *What You Can Do for Your Country: An Oral History of the Peace Corps* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1991), there are extensive oral histories available as part of the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers Collection at the JFK Presidential Library.

impulse has grown in leaps and bounds from obscure beginnings as a Depression-era “educational instrument” in Westmoreland, Pennsylvania, to becoming a normal presence at any college and university in the country. It is not just a Protestant or a Catholic phenomenon but a general youth phenomenon, one that, as the Notre Dame fair suggests, can encompass a wide range of groups.

While it has changed and grown, some defining characteristics of youth volunteer service are the same. It still is, for better and for worse, a largely white and middle class phenomenon. The experience is in many ways a recognition and navigation of privilege, as volunteers choose to broaden their worldview through an encounter of crossing class and racial lines to work with others on the margins of society.

Further, this paradigm of youth volunteer service has always had a twofold aim. In serving others, the volunteer also learns and grows and in this way, serves themselves. In a best-case scenario volunteer service is a transformative encounter that spurs a young woman or man to work on larger social issues throughout their life. For the most part, this movement has been a positive one that has touched the lives of countless volunteers and those they have worked alongside and with. This model of volunteer service cannot fix large social problems itself, but that has never been its aim.

To recall the work of 1937 American Friends Service Committee work camp participant George Abernathy, “Always we were aware of the inadequacy of what we were doing in the light of what needed to be done. It was this realization more than anything else which destroyed the facile optimism and the simple faith in intelligence which we brought with us from our college classrooms.”⁵²⁵ “Inadequate” as much of this

⁵²⁵ George Abernathy, “There Must Be a ‘Catch’ In It . . .,” 171.

work may seem at the time, it remains an important introduction to the greater work that is to come.

APPENDIX A

Source: *Directory of College Student Volunteer Programs: Academic Year 1972-1973*.
Washington D.C: National Student Volunteer Program/ACTION, 1973.

<u>Organization name</u>	<u>School (reflects name in 1973)</u>	<u>Public/private</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Year started</u>
Student Government Association	Auburn	Public, 4-year	Auburn	AL	1970
Civitans/Civinettes	Snead College	Public, 2-year	Boaz	AL	1971
Student Tutoring Services	NW Alabama State Jr. College	Public, 2-year	Phil Campbell	AL	1971
Tutorial Assist Program	University of Alabama	Public, 4-year	Tuscaloosa	AL	1966
T.I. Volunteer Action Corps	Tuskegee Institute	Public, 4-year	Tuskegee	AL	1970
Student Activities	Ouachita Baptist University	Private, 4-year	Arkadelphia	AR	n/a
Community Service Program	College of the Ozarks	Private, 4-year	Clarksville	AR	1962
Students Together for Educational Participation	Arizona State College	Public, 4-year	Flagstaff	AZ	1971
Projects in Community Service	Glendale Community College	Public, 2-year	Glendale	AZ	1970
Community Services Program	Arizona State University	Public, 4-year	Tempe	AZ	1970
LINK	University of Arizona	Public, 4-year	Tucson	AZ	1968
Tutorial Program	Chaffey Community College	Public, 2-year	Alta Loma	CA	1966
Student Volunteer Services	Cabrillo College	Public, 2-year	Aptos	CA	1970
Youth Education Services	Humboldt State College	Public, 4-year	Arcade	CA	1967
Christian Service Department	Azusa Pacific College	Private, 4-year	Azusa	CA	1967
Volunteer Tutoring Program	California State College at Bakersfield	Public, 4-year	Bakersfield	CA	1970
ASB	Barstow College	Public, 2-year	Barstow	CA	n/a
Community Services	College of Notre Dame	Private, 4-year	Belmont	CA	1959
Community Action Volunteers in Education	Chico State College	Public, 4-year	Chico	CA	1966
UYA Program	Pitzer College	Private, 4-year	Claremont	CA	1971
OCC Volunteer Bureau	Orange Coast College	Public, 2-year	Costa Mesa	CA	1971
Student Volunteer Services	De Anza Community College	Public, 2-year	Cupertino	CA	1972
Student Educational Development Center	Cypress College	Public, 2-year	Cypress	CA	1969

Community Services Council	University of California, Davis	Public, 4-year	Davis	CA	1963
EPIC	California State College at Dominguez Hills	Public, 4-year	Dominguez Hills	CA	1971
Students to Assist You	Ohlone College	Public, 2-year	Fremont	CA	1969
Project Concern	Southern California College of Optometry	Private, medical	Fullerton	CA	1969
Volunteer Bureau	California State College at Fullerton	Public, 4-year	Fullerton	CA	1971
Student Advisement Center	California State University, Hayward	Public, 4-year	Hayward	CA	1972
Tutorials Instruction Center	Chabot College	Public, 2-year	Hayward	CA	1969
Project: Volunteer	Golden West College	Public, 2-year	Huntington Beach	CA	1972
Community Projects	University of California, Irvine	Public, 4-year	Irvine	CA	1968
Community Relations Board	Biola College	Private, 4-year	La Mirada	CA	1969
Social Action Corps	Loma Linda University	Private, 4-year	Loma Linda	CA	1968
No formal title	Long Beach City College	Public, 2-year	Lone Beach	CA	n/a
EPIC	California State University, Long Beach	Public, 4-year	Long Beach	CA	1970
Community Action Coordinating Council	University of South California	Private, 4-year	Los Angeles	CA	1969
Community Projects	Occidental College	Private, 4-year	Los Angeles	CA	n/a
EPIC	California State University, Los Angeles	Public, 4-year	Los Angeles	CA	1965
No formal title	Loyola University of Los Angeles	Private, 4-year	Los Angeles	CA	1950
Volunteer Student Coordinating Center	Pepperdine University	Private, 4-year	Los Angeles	CA	1972
EPIC	San Fernando Valley State College	Public, 4-year	Northridge	CA	1971
Volunteers in Action	Cerritos College	Public, 2-year	Norwalk	CA	1970
Community Tutorial Program	Los Angeles Valley College	Public, 2-year	Van Nuys	CA	1964
Human Relations	Holy Names College	Private, 4-year	Oakland	CA	1960
IN-PAC	California Concordia College	Private, 4-year	Oakland	CA	1964
No	Merritt College	Public, 2-year	Oakland	CA	n/a
Community Clinic and Child Study Center	Chapman College	Private, 4-year	Orange	CA	1971
Pasadena College Tutorial	Pasadena College	Public, 2-year	Pasadena	CA	1968
Student Aide Program	Diablo Valley College	Public, 2-year	Pleasant Hill	CA	1968
Social Action Corps	Loma Linda University - La Sierra	Private, 4-year	Riverside	CA	1968
CIP	Sonoma State College	Public, 4-year	Rohnert Park	CA	1971
Field Experience in Socio/Psych	American River College	Public, 2-year	Sacramento	CA	1969

No formal title	Hartnell College	Public, 2-year	Salinas	CA	n/a
Campus Tutors	California State College at San Bernardino	Public, 4-year	San Bernardino	CA	1970
Associated Students Community Service	San Diego Evening College	Public, 2-year	San Diego	CA	1969
CIB	San Diego State College	Public, 4-year	San Diego	CA	1966
Operation Share	San Diego Mesa College	Public, 2-year	San Diego	CA	1971
Child Care Center	San Francisco State University	Public, 4-year	San Francisco	CA	1972
Community Involvement Program	University of San Francisco	Private, 4-year	San Francisco	CA	1968
No formal title	Lone Mountain College	Private, 4-year	San Francisco	CA	n/a
One-to-One Tutoring	Cuesta College	Public, 2-year	San Luis Obispo	CA	1965
Student Community Services	California Polytechnic State University	Public, 4-year	San Luis Obispo	CA	1972
MECHA	Palomar College	Public, 2-year	San Marcos	CA	1969
Santa Clara Community Action Program	University of Santa Clara	Private, 4-year	Santa Clara	CA	1966
Community Service Projects	University of California, Santa Cruz	Public, 4-year	Santa Cruz	CA	1967
Student Body Service Commission	California Lutheran College	Private, 4-year	Thousand Oaks	CA	1968
Operation Share	Stanislaus State College	Public, 4-year	Turlock	CA	1969
Voice of El Camino College	El Camino College	Public, 2-year	Via Torrance	CA	1968
Mountie Outreach	Mt. San Antonio College	Public, 2-year	Walnut	CA	1965
Volunteers of Pierce	Los Angeles Pierce College	Public, 2-year	Woodland Hills	CA	1972
Volunteer Service Center	Claremont College	Private, 4-year	Claremont	CA	n/a
Crisis Line	Adams State College	Public, 4-year	Alamosa	CO	1970
Auraria Student Government	Community College of Denver	Public, 2-year	Denver	CO	1971
No formal title	Community College of Denver, Red Rocks Campus	Public, 2-year	Denver	CO	1970
Community Services	Colorado State University	Public, 4-year	Ft. Collins	CO	n/a
Outreach	Western State College of Colorado	Public, 4-year	Gunnison	CO	1968
Help Anonymous	South Colorado State College	Public, 4-year	Pueblo	CO	1968
Apostolic Program	St. Thomas Seminary	Private seminary	Bloomfield	CT	1965
Volunteer Services Project	University of Bridgeport	Private, 4-year	Bridgeport	CT	n/a
No formal title	Tunxis Community College	Public, 2-year	Farmington	CT	1970
No formal title	Hartford College	Private, 4-year	Hartford	CT	1970
Office of Community affairs	Trinity College	Private, 4-year	Hartford	CT	1969

Voluntary Action Club	Manchester Community College	Public, 2-year	Manchester	CT	1972
Office of Volunteer Affairs	Central Connecticut State	Public, 4-year	New Britain	CT	1969
Dwight Hall	Yale University	Private, 4-year	New Haven	CT	n/a
Volunteer Services	Albertus Magnus	Private, 4-year	New Haven	CT	1973
No formal title	Connecticut College	Private, 4-year	New London	CT	n/a
Outmates	University of Connecticut	Public, 4-year	Storrs	CT	1970
GU. Social Action	Georgetown University	Private, 4-year	Washington	DC	1965
Social Action Council	American University	Private, 4-year	Washington	DC	1969
Student Volunteer Action Council	George Washington University	Private, 4-year	Washington	DC	1972
Office of Volunteer Programs	University of Delaware	Public, 4-year	Newark	DE	1970
SAMSON	University of Florida	Private, 4-year	Gainesville	FL	1968
Operation Student Concern	Miami-Dade Junior College	Public, 2-year	Miami	FL	1972
Service Community Services	St. Petersburg Junior College	Public, 2-year	St. Petersburg	FL	1968
Off-Campus Term Program	University of South Florida	Public, 4-year	Tampa	FL	1969
Tutorial Program	University of Tampa	Private, 4-year	Tampa	FL	1967
Real World Project	Rollins College	Private, 4-year	Winter Park	FL	1972
Communiversity	University of Georgia	Public, 4-year	Athens	GA	n/a
Community Service Program	Georgia Tech	Public, 4-year	Atlanta	GA	1968
No formal title	Clark College	Private, 4-year	Atlanta	GA	1966
Volunteer Program	Oglethorpe University	Private, 4-year	Atlanta	GA	1969
Free Health Clinic	Medical College of Georgia	Public, medical	Augusta	GA	1968
Student-Aide	West Georgia College	Public, 4-year	Carrollton	GA	n/a
SNEA	Andrew College	Private, 2-year	Cuthbert	GA	1968
PEER Program	Dalton Junior College	Public, 2-year	Dalton	GA	1970
No formal title	Brenau College	Private, 4-year	Gainesville	GA	n/a
Special Services Project	Mercer University	Private, 4-year	Macon	GA	n/a
Alpha Phi Omega	Savannah State College	Public, 2-year	Savannah	GA	1965
Volunteer Tutorial Program	Abraham Baldwin Agriculture College	Public, 2-year	Tifton	GA	1971
n/a	University of Hawaii	Public, 4-year	Honolulu	HI	n/a
ISU Volunteers Responsible Social Involvement	Iowa State University	Public, 4-year	Ames	IA	1969
Student Volunteer Service	Mount Mercy College	Private, 4-year	Cedar Rapids	IA	1972
Community Service Club	Mount St. Clare College	Private, 2-year	Clinton	IA	n/a
Revitalization Corps	Drake University	Private, 4-year	Des Moines	IA	1969
Reach Another Person	Clarke College	Private, 4-year	Dubuque	IA	1940
Student Volunteer Program	Waldorf College	Private, 4-year	Forest City	IA	1969
Student Volunteer Program	Marshalltown	Public, 2-year	Marshalltown	IA	1971

	Community College				
Responsible Social Involvement	Iowa Wesleyan College	Private, 4-year	Mount Pleasant	IA	1968
Religious Life Council	Cornell College	Private, 4-year	Mount Vernon	IA	1966
No formal title	Northwestern College	Private, 4-year	Orange City	IA	n/a
Campus Ministries	Central College	Private, 4-year	Pella	IA	n/a
Volunteer Services	Briar Cliff College	Private, 4-year	Sioux City	IA	1969
Religious Life Volunteer Program	Wartburg College	Private, 4-year	Waverly	IA	1970
Volunteer Program	The College of Idaho	Private, 4-year	Caldwell	ID	1972
Nightline	University of Idaho	Public, 4-year	Moscow	ID	1970
Operation Satisfaction	Northwest Nazarene College	Private, 4-year	Nampa	ID	n/a
Alpha Phi Omega	Parks College	Private, 4-year	Cahokia	IL	1950
Youth Alternatives of Champaign	Parland College	Public, 2-year	Champaign	IL	1950
Office of Service Opportunity	University of Chicago	Private, 4-year	Chicago	IL	1969
Social Action	University of Illinois, Chicago	Public, 4-year	Chicago	IL	1968
Social Service Commission	North Park College	Private, 4-year	Chicago	IL	1966
Volunteer Bureau	De Paul University	Private, 4-year	Chicago	IL	1970
Peer Tutoring	Prairie State College	Public, 2-year	Chicago Heights	IL	1971
Christian Service	Trinity College	Private, 4-year	Deerfield	IL	1901
SV Volunteer Program	Sauk Valley College	Public, 2-year	Dixon	IL	1970
Community Involvement Project	Southern Illinois University	Public, 4-year	Edwardsville	IL	1970
Off-Campus Ministries	Judson College	Private, 4-year	Elgin	IL	1969
Volunteer Social Work Program	Principia College	Private, 4-year	Elsah	IL	1951
Community Action Committee	Knox College	Private, 4-year	Galesburg	IL	1968
No formal title	Joliet Junior College	Public, 2-year	Joliet	IL	1971
Community Action Program	Lewis College	Private, 4-year	Romeoville	IL	1969
WIU Volunteers	Western Illinois University	Public, 4-year	Macomb	IL	1960
RIC Tutor Project	Black Hawk College	Public, 2-year	Moline	IL	1965
Volunteer and Community Services Board	Triton College	Public, 2-year	River Grove	IL	1970
Community Service Organization	Rockford College	Private, 4-year	Rockford	IL	1967
ARK	Hebrew Theological College	Private, 4-year	Skokie	IL	1970
WCC Action Club	Waubonsee Community College	Public, 2-year	Sugar Grove	IL	1971
Christian Service Activities	Wheaton College	Private, 4-year	Wheaton	IL	1930
Volunteer Students Bureau	Indiana University	Public, 4-year	Bloomington	IN	1969
Student Services Tutoring Program	Purdue University, Fort Wayne Campus	Public, 4-year	Fort Wayne	IN	1971
Community Voluntary Action Service	Goshen College	Private, 4-year	Goshen	IN	1969

Student Volunteer Corps	Purdue University, Cal Campus	Public, 4-year	Hammond	IN	1971
LINK-MANASA	Hanover College	Private, 4-year	Hanover	IN	n/a
Collegiate Challenge	Huntington College	Private, 4-year	Huntington	IN	1967
ACTION	Marian College	Private, 4-year	Indianapolis	IN	1967
Community Service	Indiana Central College	Private, 4-year	Indianapolis	IN	1967
Student Services	Indiana University	Public, 4-year	Jeffersonville	IN	1971
Student Volunteer Corps	Purdue University, Lafayette Campus	Public, 4-year	Lafayette	IN	1964
Student Voluntary Services	Ball State University	Public, 4-year	Muncie	IN	1966
Community Faith in Action	Manchester College	Private, 4-year	North Manchester	IN	1964
Office of Volunteer Service	University of Notre Dame	Private, 4-year	Notre Dame	IN	1972
No formal title	Earlham College	Private, 4-year	Richmond	IN	n/a
Cooperative Action for Community Development	St. Meinrad College	Private, 4-year, and seminary	St. Meinrad	IN	n/a
Center for Voluntary Services	Indiana State University	Public, 4-year	Terre Haute	IN	1969
Student Volunteer Services	Vincennes University	Public, 4-year	Vincennes	IN	n/a
Student Voluntary Program	Northwood Institute	Private, 4-year	West Baden	IN	1972
Volunteer Services	Benedictine College	Private, 4-year	Atchison	KS	1951
Student Volunteer Program	Colby Community College	Public, 2-year	Colby	KS	1968
Project: I Care	Garden City Community Junior College	Public, 2-year	Garden City	KS	1969
Big Brother/Big Sister	Hesston College	Private, 2-year	Hesston	KS	1970
GALS Club	Allen County Community Junior College	Public, 2-year	Iola	KS	1951
Student Services	Donnelly College	Private, 4-year	Kansas City	KS	1960
Volunteer Clearing House	University of Kansas	Public, 4-year	Lawrence	KS	1967
Student Community Action Network	Bethel College	Private, 4-year	N. Newton	KS	1969
Volunteer Services	Ottawa University	Private, 4-year	Ottawa	KS	1970
Lab Experience in Education	Marymount College	Private, 4-year	Salina	KS	1969
No formal title	Kansas Wesleyan	Private, 4-year	Salina	KS	n/a
COR Elite	Sacred Heart College	Private, 4-year	Wichita	KS	1971
Campus Volunteer Center	Berea College	Private, 4-year	Berea	KY	1972
No formal title	Campbellsville College	Private, 4-year	Campbellsville	KY	1971
Volunteer Programs	University of Kentucky	Public, 4-year	Lexington	KY	n/a
Field Education	Southern Baptist Theological Seminary	Private seminary	Louisville	KY	1960
Field Experience in Social Service	Brescia College	Private, 4-year	Owensboro	KY	1971
Volunteer Tutorial Program	St. Catharine College	Private, 4-year	St. Catharine	KY	1968
Apostolic Program	St. Mary Catholic Seminary	Private, 4-year	St. Mary	KY	1968

S.C.C. Volunteers	Southeastern Christian College	Private, 4-year	Winchester	KY	1970
Community Action Program	Loyola University	Private, 4-year	New Orleans	LA	1966
No formal title	Southern University	Public, 4-year	New Orleans	LA	n/a
Field Studies	Hampshire College	Private, 4-year	Amherst	MA	1970
Volunteer Programming	North Shore Community College	Public, 2-year	Beverly	MA	1971
Community Action Committee	University of Massachusetts, Boston	Public, 4-year	Boston	MA	1968
Community Involvement	Graham Junior College	Private, 2-year	Boston	MA	1970
Drug Abuse Program	Massachusetts College of Pharmacy	Private, 4-year	Boston	MA	1967
Field Studies	Suffolk University	Private, 4-year	Boston	MA	1947
Student Action Performance Committee	N.E. Conservatory of Music	Private, 4-year	Boston	MA	1970
Student Volunteer Services	Boston University	Private, 4-year	Boston	MA	1969
Student Volunteers	Fisher Junior College	Private, 2-year	Boston	MA	1957
Students of Community Service	Garland Junior College	Private, 2-year	Boston	MA	n/a
Volunteer Service	Simmons College	Private, 4-year	Boston	MA	1956
Community Services Program	Massasoit Community College	Public, 2-year	Brockton	MA	1970
Phillips Brooks House	Harvard University	Private, 4-year	Cambridge	MA	1920
PULSE	Boston College	Private, 4-year	Chestnut Hill	MA	1968
Volunteer and Social Action Organization	Stonehill College	Private, 4-year	Easton	MA	1966
Volunteer Program	Dean Junior College	Private, 2-year	Franklin	MA	1970
Student Activities	Greenfield Community College	Public, 2-year	Greenfield	MA	1969
Red Cross Volunteers	Bay Path Junior College	Private, 2-year	Longmeadow	MA	1963
No formal title	Southeastern Massachusetts University	Public, 4-year	North Dartmouth	MA	n/a
Service Organizations of Smith	Smith College	Private, 4-year	Northampton	MA	1968
No formal title	Wheaton College	Private, 4-year	Norton	MA	1961
No formal title	Anna Maria College	Private, 4-year	Paxton	MA	1970
Waltham Group	Brandeis University	Private, 4-year	Waltham	MA	1966
Volunteer Service Corps	Massachusetts Bay Community College	Public, 2-year	Watertown	MA	1968
Community Relations Committee	Clark University	Private, 4-year	Worcester	MA	n/a
Orientation to Education	Worcester State College	Public, 4-year	Worcester	MA	1971
Community Service Training Program	St. Mary's Seminary College	Private seminary	Baltimore	MD	1965
Office of Volunteer Service	Loyola College	Private, 4-year	Baltimore	MD	1965
Social Science Club	University of Baltimore	Public, 4-year	Baltimore	MD	n/a
Hot Line	Harford Junior College	Public, 2-year	Bel Air	MD	1970
Social Work Department	Bowie State College	Public, 4-year	Bowie	MD	1968

Lighthouse	Catonsville Community College	Public, 2-year	Catonsville	MD	1971
People Active in Community Effort (PACE)	University of Maryland	Public, 4-year	College Park	MD	1967
Community Volunteers	Dundalk Community College	Public, 2-year	Dundalk	MD	1972
Group Action Proem	Mount Saint Mary's College	Private, 4-year	Emmitsburg	MD	1969
Student Volunteer Services	Hagerstown Junior College	Public, 2-year	Hagerstown	MD	1970
Voluntary Program	University of Maryland, Eastern Shore	Public, 4-year	Princess Anne	MD	1969
Tutoring Program	Salisbury State College	Public, 4-year	Salisbury	MD	1966
Christian Urban Service Corps	Columbia Union College	Private, 4-year	Takoma Park	MD	1967
No formal title	Goucher College	Private, 4-year	Towson	MD	1901
HINGE	Western Maryland College	Public, 4-year	Westminster	MD	1966
Volunteer Bureau	St. Francis College	Private, 4-year	Biddeford	ME	1972
Voluntary Service Programs	Bowdoin College	Private, 4-year	Brunswick	ME	1970
Student Volunteer Program	University of Maine, Farmington	Public, 4-year	Farmington	ME	1972
Campus Association	Bates College	Private, 4-year	Lewiston	ME	1968
No formal title	St. Josephs College	Private, 4-year	North Windham	ME	1970
Maine Student Action Corps	University of Maine, Orono	Public, 4-year	Orono	ME	1965
Clinical Practice Program	University of Maine School of Law	Public, law	Portland	ME	1970
Adrian College Tutorial Experience Services	Adrian College	Private, 4-year	Adrian	MI	1965
No formal title	Siena Heights College	Private, 4-year	Adrian	MI	1971
GVSC Student Volunteers	Grand Valley State College	Public, 4-year	Allendale	MI	1968
Project Community	University of Michigan	Public, 4-year	Ann Arbor	MI	1961
Spiritual Life Program	Concordia Lutheran	Private, 4-year	Ann Arbor	MI	1962
Christian Apostolate	Sacred Heart Seminary	Private seminary	Detroit	MI	1963
Christian Service	Detroit Bible College	Private, 4-year	Detroit	MI	1945
Student Volunteer Services	University of Detroit	Private, 4-year	Detroit	MI	1968
MSU Volunteers	Michigan State University	Public, 4-year	East Lansing	MI	1968
Community Service	General Motors Institute	Private, 4-year	Flint	MI	1960
Community Action Volunteers of Aquinas	Aquinas College	Private, 4-year	Grand Rapids	MI	1969
KIDS Program	Calvin College	Private, 4-year	Grand Rapids	MI	1964
Higher Horizons	Hope College	Private, 4-year	Holland	MI	1966
Tri Campus Big Brother/Big Sister	Michigan Technological University	Public, 4-year	Houghton	MI	1968

Volunteer Bureau	Kalamazoo College	Private, 4-year	Kalamazoo	MI	1963
Volunteer Teacher Assistant Program	Lansing Community College	Public, 2-year	Lansing	MI	1968
Social Action Committee	Madonna College	Private, 4-year	Livonia	MI	1966
Volunteer Council	Central Michigan College	Public, 4-year	Mt. Pleasant	MI	1970
George Group	St. Mary's College	Private, 4-year	Orchard Lake	MI	1967
Community Service Program	Oakland University	Public, 4-year	Rochester	MI	1971
Reach a Little Friend	Lake Superior State College	Public, 4-year	Sault Ste. Marie	MI	1972
Student Action Community	Spring Arbor College	Private, 4-year	Spring Arbor	MI	1965
Student Volunteers	Northwestern Michigan College	Public, 2-year	Traverse City	MI	1970
Campus Service Corps	Eastern Michigan	Public, 4-year	Ypsilanti	MI	n/a
No formal title	Bemidji State College	Public, 4-year	Bemidji	MN	1968
UMD Students' College	University of Minnesota, Duluth	Public, 4-year	Duluth	MN	n/a
Project Motivation II	Hibbing State Junior College	Public, 2-year	Hibbing	MN	1970
No formal title	Augsburg College	Private, 4-year	Minneapolis	MN	n/a
Student Community Service Program	Minneapolis College of Art	Private, 4-year	Minneapolis	MN	1968
Volunteer Referral Bureau	University of Minnesota	Public, 4-year	Minneapolis	MN	1964
Project Empathy	Moorhead State College	Public, 4-year	Moorhead	MN	1972
Student Volunteer Program	Concordia College	Private, 4-year	Moorhead	MN	1972
Social Service Board	Carleton College	Private, 4-year	Northfield	MN	n/a
Community Involvement Program	Macalester College	Private, 4-year	St. Paul	MN	1969
No formal title	Concordia College	Private, 4-year	St. Paul	MN	n/a
Project Give a Damn	Hamline University	Private, 4-year	St. Paul	MN	n/a
No formal title	Gustavus Adolphus College	Private, 4-year	St. Peter	MN	n/a
Student Volunteers	St. Mary's College	Private, 4-year	Winona	MN	1969
Tri-County Poverty Assistance Program	College of St. Teresa	Private, 4-year	Winona	MN	1971
No formal title	Worthington State Junior College	Public, 2-year	Worthington	MN	1970
No formal title	Southern Baptist College	Public, 4-year	Bolivar	MO	1968
Center for Student Volunteer Action	University of Missouri, Columbia	Public, 4-year	Columbia	MO	1971
Community Services Projects	Stevens College	Private, 4-year	Columbia	MO	1922
No formal title	St. Paul's College	Private, 4-year	Concordia	MO	1960
Campus Volunteer Program	Rockhurst College	Private, 4-year	Kansas City	MO	n/a
United Ministries in Higher Education	University of Missouri, Rolla	Public, 4-year	Rolla	MO	1963
Apostolic Works Program	Cardinal Glennon College	Private, 4-year	St. Louis	MO	1968

No formal title	St. Louis University	Private, 4-year	St. Louis	MO	n/a
Social Action Concern	Maryville College	Private, 4-year	St. Louis	MO	1956
Student Volunteer Services	Webster College	Private, 4-year	Webster Groves	MO	n/a
Student Volunteers	Mississippi State College for Women	Public, 4-year	Columbus	MS	1971
Freshman Social Service Club	Jackson State College	Public, 4-year	Jackson	MS	1970
Office of Volunteer Services	Mississippi State University	Public, 4-year	State College	MS	1970
Field Experience Program	Northern Montana College	Public, 4-year	Havre	MT	1967
No formal title	Queens College	Private, 4-year	Charlotte	NC	1953
Office of Volunteer Programs	Western Carolina University	Public, 4-year	Cullowhee	NC	1972
No formal title	North Carolina Central University	Public, 4-year	Durham	NC	n/a
Interdisciplinary Studies	Bennett College	Private, 4-year	Greensboro	NC	1971
Volunteer Program	Louisburg College	Private, 2-year	Louisburg	NC	n/a
Tutorial Program	Pfeiffer College	Private, 4-year	Misenheimer	NC	1968
No formal title	St. Mary's Junior College	Public, 2-year	Raleigh	NC	1969
Outreach Program	Peace College	Private, 4-year	Raleigh	NC	1970
Social Action Board	North Carolina State University	Public, 4-year	Raleigh	NC	n/a
SCOPE	Atlantic Christian College	Public, 4-year	Wilson	NC	n/a
Student Service Council	Salem College	Public, 4-year	Winston-Salem	NC	1969
Urban Services Referral Bureau	Urban Affairs Institute	Public, 4-year	Winston-Salem	NC	n/a
Action Program	Mary College	Private, 4-year	Bismarck	ND	1972
University Year for Action	North Dakota State University	Public, 4-year	Fargo	ND	1970
Collegiate Volunteer Services	University of North Dakota	Public, 4-year	Grand Forks	ND	1971
Hot Line	North Dakota State School of Science	Public, 2-year	Wahoeton	ND	1971
Volunteers in Service to Schools	Platte College	Public, 2-year	Columbus	NE	1970
Student Education Association	Midland Lutheran College	Private, 2-year	Fremont	NE	1968
Student Volunteer Services Program	University of Nebraska	Private, 4-year	Lincoln	NE	1970
IMPACT	Concordia Teachers College	Private, 4-year	Seward	NE	1970
Volunteer Programs	Mount St. Mary College	Private, 4-year	Hooksett	NH	1961
InterAct	Colby Junior College	Public, 2-year	New London	NH	1962
Student Involvement Program	Caldwell College	Private, 4-year	Caldwell	NJ	1970
Christian Field Ministries	Northeastern Collegiate Bible Institute	Private, 4-year	Essex Fells	NJ	1951
VISTA-ACTION Program	Glassboro State University	Public, 4-year	Glassboro	NJ	1969
Inner-City Business Project	St. Peter's College	Private, 4-year	Jersey City	NJ	1969

Community Action	Drew University	Private, 4-year	Madison	NJ	1962
Student Volunteer Programs	Farleigh Dickinson University	Private, 4-year	Madison	NJ	1971
Adelante y Arriba	Atlantic Community College	Public, 2-year	Mays Landing	NJ	1970
Rutgers Community Action	Rutgers University	Public, 4-year	New Brunswick	NJ	1966
Student Family Health Care Center	College of Medicine and Dentistry	Public, medical	Newark	NJ	1968
Tutoring Program	Don Bosco College	Private, 4-year	Newton	NJ	1968
Volunteer Club	Bergen Community College	Public, 2-year	Paramus	NJ	1972
Student Volunteers Council	Princeton University	Private, 4-year	Princeton	NJ	1901
Rutherford Student Volunteer Program	Fairleigh Dickinson University	Private, 4-year	Rutherford	NJ	1971
Rider College Volunteers	Rider College	Private, 4-year	Trenton	NJ	1971
Student Committee for Advancement Through Education	Newark State College	Public, 4-year	Union	NJ	n/a
Supervised Community Service	Tombrock College	Private, 2-year	West Paterson	NJ	1968
Student-Counselors Program	University of Albuquerque	Private, 4-year	Albuquerque	NM	1970
Community Involvement	College of St. Rose	Private, 4-year	Albany	NY	1971
Community Service Program	State University of New York at Albany	Public, 4-year	Albany	NY	1970
Student Activity Volunteer Program	State University of New York at Albany	Public, 4-year	Albany	NY	1966
Student Volunteers for Community Action	Alfred University	Private, 4-year	Alfred	NY	1972
Tutoring Project	Bard College	Private, 4-year	Annandale-on-Hudson	NY	n/a
Social Action Committee	Wells College	Private, 4-year	Aurora	NY	1969
Community Volunteer Services	Queensboro Community College	Public, 2-year	Bayside	NY	1971
Service Club	Briarcliff College	Private, 4-year	Briarcliff Manor	NY	1969
No formal title	State University of New York at Brockport	Public, 4-year	Brockport	NY	n/a
Community Action Council	Fordham University	Private, 4-year	Bronx	NY	1950
Community Service and Field Work Programs	Bronx Community College	Public, 2-year	Bronx	NY	1969
Social Action Commission	Manhattan College	Private, 4-year	Bronx	NY	1960
Student Volunteer Resources	Brooklyn College	Public, 4-year	Brooklyn	NY	1970
Help Center	State University of New York at Buffalo	Public, 4-year	Buffalo	NY	1970
Tutoring Project	Erie Community College	Public, 2-year	Buffalo	NY	1969
Voluntary Action Center	Community College of Finger Lakes	Public, 2-year	Canadaigua	NY	1972
Community Development Corps	St. Lawrence University	Private, 4-year	Canton	NY	1965
Internship in Community Service	Cazenovia College	Private, 4-year	Cazenovia	NY	1969

Project Giving	Siena College	Private, 4-year	Loudonville	NY	1967
No formal title	Corning Community College	Public, 2-year	Corning	NY	n/a
Field Experience Program	Elmira College	Private, 4-year	Elmira	NY	1968
Volunteer Services	Adelphi University	Private, 4-year	Garden City	NY	1969
Project Reach	State University of New York at Geneseo	Public, 4-year	Geneseo	NY	1968
Volunteer Bureau	Colgate University	Private, 4-year	Hamilton	NY	1969
Student Activity Council	Harriman College	Private, 4-year	Harriman	NY	1966
HELP	Hofstra University	Private, 4-year	Hempstead	NY	1968
CIVITAS	Cornell University	Private, 4-year	Ithaca	NY	1961
VISIT	St. John's University	Private, 4-year	Jamaica	NY	1969
No formal title	Fulton Montgomery Community College	Public, 2-year	Johnson	NY	n/a
Keuka Tutors	Keuka College	Private, 4-year	Keuka Park	NY	1967
Correctional Institutions	Barnard College	Private, 4-year	New York	NY	1970
No formal title	Yeshiva University	Private, 4-year	New York	NY	1966
Student Volunteer Council	Hartwick College	Private, 4-year	Oneonta	NY	1934
Community Service Headquarters	State University of New York at Oswego	Public, 4-year	Oswego	NY	1970
Office of Community Relations	State University College	Public, 4-year	Plattsburgh	NY	1971
Community Service Agency	State University of New York at Potsdam	Public, 4-year	Potsdam	NY	1969
Field Service Program	Dutchess Community College	Public, 2-year	Poughkeepsie	NY	1969
Volunteer Service Program	Marist College	Private, 4-year	Poughkeepsie	NY	1972
Community Affairs	Nazareth College	Private, 4-year	Rochester	NY	n/a
Community Service Projects	St. John Fisher College	Private, 4-year	Rochester	NY	1958
Field Education	St. Bernard's Seminary	Seminary	Rochester	NY	1967
Social Action Corps	Molloy College	Private, 4-year	Rockville	NY	1966
Volunteer Tutoring Program	Niagara County Community College	Public, 2-year	Sanborn	NY	1968
Social Services Committee	Skidmore College	Private, 4-year	Saratoga Springs	NY	1969
Student Government Association	Schenectady Community College	Public, 2-year	Schenectady	NY	1969
ACTION Line	State University of New York at Stony Brook	Public, 4-year	Stony Brook	NY	1970
Campus Volunteer Center	Syracuse University	Public, 4-year	Syracuse	NY	1971
Community Internship Program	Syracuse University	Public, 4-year	Syracuse	NY	1970
Project Inner City	Le Moyne College	Private, 4-year	Syracuse	NY	1969
Social and Community Service	Maria Regina College	Private, 2-year	Syracuse	NY	1972
Volunteer Bureau	Russell Sage College	Private, 4-year	Troy	NY	1968
No formal title	Mohawk Valley Community College	Public, 2-year	Utica	NY	1969
Tutoring Program	Westchester Community College	Public, 2-year	Valhalla	NY	1971

No formal title	U.S. Military Academy	Public, 4-year	West Point	NY	1970
Work-Experience Volunteer Program	Elizabeth Seton College	Private, 2-year	Yonkers	NY	1969
Center for Concern	University of Akron	Public, 4-year	Akron	OH	1972
No formal title	Ohio University	Public, 4-year	Athens	OH	n/a
No formal title	Baldwin-Wallace College	Private, 4-year	Berea	OH	1969
Human Awareness Program	Malone College	Private, 4-year	Canton	OH	1972
Field Education Program	Mount St. Mary's Seminary	Seminary	Cincinnati	OH	1969
Student Community Involvement Program (SCIP)	University of Cincinnati	Public, 4-year	Cincinnati	OH	1967
Student Volunteer Services	Xavier University	Private, 4-year	Cincinnati	OH	1960
Campus Volunteer Board	Case Western Reserve University	Private, 4-year	Cleveland	OH	1965
Student Community Action Program	John Carroll University	Private, 4-year	Cleveland	OH	1967
CIS-CES	Capital University	Private, 4-year	Columbus	OH	1963
Community Volunteer Service	Defiance College	Private, 4-year	Defiance	OH	1965
Student Y	Ohio Wesleyan University	Private, 4-year	Delaware	OH	1900
New Directions	Kent State University	Public, 4-year	Kent	OH	1968
No formal title	Marietta College	Private, 4-year	Marietta	OH	n/a
YWCA/YMCA	Oberlin College	Private, 4-year	Oberlin	OH	1960
Volunteer Involvement Program	College of Steubenville	Private, 4-year	Steubenville	OH	1972
Apostolic Program	Borromeo Seminary	Seminary	Wickliffe	OH	1963
Urban Studies Internship Program	Youngstown State University	Public, 4-year	Youngstown	OH	1971
No formal title	Muskingum Area Technical Institute	Public, 4-year	Zanesville	OH	1969
No formal title	Oklahoma City University	Private, 4-year	Oklahoma City	OK	n/a
Student Community Action	Oklahoma Baptist University	Private, 4-year	Shawnee	OK	1969
Clearing House	University of Oklahoma	Public, 4-year	Stillwater	OK	1969
Project GIT	Southern Oregon College	Public, 4-year	Ashland	OR	1972
Student Tutorial	Southwestern Oregon Community College	Public, 2-year	Coos Bay	OR	1966
ESCAPE	University of Oregon	Public, 4-year	Eugene	OR	1969
No formal title	Oregon Technical Institute	Public, 4-year	Klamath Falls	OR	n/a
Help Center-Peoples Place	Oregon College of Education	Public, 4-year	Monmouth	OR	1971
Chi Rho	Concordia College	Private, 4-year	Portland	OR	1968
No formal title	Portland Community College	Public, 2-year	Portland	OR	1971
No formal title	Lewis and Clark College	Private, 4-year	Portland	OR	1968

Student Tutors Acton	Portland State University	Public, 4-year	Portland	OR	1964
Apostolic Activities	Mt. Angel Seminary	Seminary	St. Benedict	OR	1969
No formal title	Cedar Crest College	Private, 4-year	Allentown	PA	n/a
No formal title	Lebanon Valley College	Private, 4-year	Annville	PA	1950
Impact	Geneva College	Private, 4-year	Beaver Falls	PA	1971
Volunteer Community Services	Lehigh University	Private, 4-year	Bethlehem	PA	1968
Action	Allentown College	Private, 4-year	Center Valley	PA	1965
Social Service Association	Wilson College	Private, 4-year	Chambersburg	PA	n/a
Christian Action Movement	Mount Aloysius Junior College	Private, 2-year	Cresson	PA	1955
No formal title	College Misericordia	Private, 4-year	Dallas	PA	n/a
Enrichment Program	Mercyhurst College	Private, 4-year	Erie	PA	1968
Student Volunteer Program	Villa Maria College	Private, 4-year	Erie	PA	1960
No formal title	Seton Hill College	Private, 4-year	Greensburg	PA	1969
No formal title	Gwynedd-Mercy College	Private, 4-year	Gwynedd Valley	PA	1960
Operation Up-lift	Indiana University of Pennsylvania	Public, 4-year	Indiana	PA	1970
Concern and Action Volunteer Services	Bucknell University	Private, 4-year	Lewisburg	PA	n/a
No formal title	Lincoln University	Private, 4-year	Lincoln	PA	1968
Allegheny Community Exchange	Allegheny College	Private, 4-year	Meadville	PA	1968
Reflections	Delaware County Community College	Public, 2-year	Media	PA	1971
Community Action Programs	St. Joseph's College	Private, 4-year	Philadelphia	PA	1970
Drug Abuse College	Philadelphia College of Pharmacy	Private, medical	Philadelphia	PA	1968
Field Education	St. Charles Borromeo Seminary	Seminary	Philadelphia	PA	1963
Involvement Program	Messiah College	Private, 4-year	Philadelphia	PA	1968
No formal title	University of Pennsylvania	Private, 4-year	Philadelphia	PA	1970
No formal title	Chestnut Hill College	Private, 4-year	Philadelphia	PA	1931
YMCA	University of Pittsburgh	Public, 4-year	Pittsburgh	PA	1965
No formal title	Albright College	Private, 4-year	Reading	PA	1968
Veterans Association	Lehigh County Community College	Public, 2-year	Schnecksville	PA	1969
Students Active for Volunteer Experience (SAVE)	Susquehanna University	Private, 4-year	Selingrove	PA	1968
Special Student Program	Slippery Rock State College	Public, 4-year	Slippery Rock	PA	1969
Community Services Committee	Swarthmore College	Private, 4-year	Swarthmore	PA	1970
Social Action Programs	Villanova University	Private, 4-year	Villanova	PA	1969
Tutorial Society	Washington and Jefferson College	Private, 4-year	Washington	PA	1966
Community Service Corps	West Chester State College	Public, 4-year	West Chester	PA	1971

Cross and Crown	King's College	Private, 4-year	Wilkes-Barre	PA	1947
No formal title	Luzerne County Community College	Public, 2-year	Wilkes-Barre	PA	1968
Reach Out	Wilkes College	Private, 4-year	Wilkes-Barre	PA	1970
SEA Tutoring Project	York College of Pennsylvania	Private, 4-year	York	PA	1967
Social Science Internship	Roger Williams College	Private, 4-year	Bristol	RI	1969
Little Brother/Little Sister	University of Rhode Island	Public, 4-year	Kingston	RI	n/a
Community Service Committee	Rhode Island College	Public, 4-year	Providence	RI	1968
Youth Guidance and Ecology Action Committee	Bryant College	Private, 4-year	Smithfield	RI	1963
Community Service Program	College of Charleston	Public, 4-year	Charleston	SC	1968
No formal title	The Citadel	Public, 4-year	Charleston	SC	1971
Student Voluntary Service	Clemson University	Public, 4-year	Clemson	SC	1969
Student Service Program	Presbyterian College	Private, 4-year	Clinton	SC	1966
Council on Community Action	Columbia College	Private, 4-year	Columbia	SC	1970
No formal title	Midlands Technical	Public, 2-year	Columbia	SC	1970
Volunteer Services	University of South Carolina	Public, 4-year	Columbia	SC	1969
No formal title	Lander College	Public, 4-year	Greenwood	SC	n/a
Volunteer Program	Piedmont Technical	Public, 2-year	Greenwood	SC	1970
Field Service Program	Coker College	Private, 4-year	Hartsville	SC	1972
Governor's Student Regional Volunteer	Friendship College	Private, 4-year	Rock Hill	SC	1972
Civic Affairs Committee	Wofford College	Private, 4-year	Spartanburg	SC	1970
No formal title	Spartanburg Junior College	Public, 2-year	Spartanburg	SC	n/a
PURE	Freeman Junior College	Public, 2-year	Freeman	SD	1970
Student Volunteer Services	Augustana College	Public, 4-year	Sioux Falls	SD	1969
Operation Outreach	University of South Dakota	Public, 4-year	Vermillion	SD	1970
Social Service	Mount Mary College	Private, 4-year	Yankton	SD	1970
Student Volunteer Office	University of Tennessee at Chattanooga	Public, 4-year	Chattanooga	TN	1972
No formal title	Austin Peay University	Public, 4-year	Clarksville	TN	1967
Student Teacher Aide Program	Freed Hardeman College	Private, 4-year	Henderson	TN	1967
Christian Service Council	Covenant College	Private, 4-year	Lookout Mountain	TN	1964
Laurence F. Kinney Program	Southwestern at Memphis	Private, 4-year	Memphis	TN	1961
Community Inter-Action Program	Middle Tennessee State University	Public, 4-year	Murfreesboro	TN	1970
Boys Club of Sewanee	University of the South	Private, 4-year	Sewanee	TN	1963
Community Service Involvement	University of Texas, Arlington	Public, 4-year	Arlington	TX	n/a
Self Help	Henderson County	Public, 2-year	Athens	TX	n/a

	Junior College				
AWARE	St. Edward's University	Private, 4-year	Austin	TX	1966
Collegiate Education Service Corps	Texas Christian University	Private, 4-year	Fort Worth	TX	n/a
Service Corps	Tarrant County Junior College	Public, 2-year	Fort Worth	TX	1972
Tutoring Projects	Rice University	Private, 4-year	Houston	TX	1969
No formal title	East Texas Baptist College	Private, 4-year	Marshall	TX	1969
Students for Prairie View	Prairie View A&M College	Public, 4-year	Prairie View	TX	1965
Field Education Program	Oblate College of the Southwest	Graduate, theology	San Antonio	TX	1970
No formal title	Texas Lutheran College	Private, 4-year	Seguin	TX	1965
Tutorial Education Program	Austin College	Private, 4-year	Sherman	TX	n/a
Operation Springboard	Paul Quinn College	Private, 4-year	Waco	TX	1970
VOICE	Utah State University	Public, 4-year	Logan	UT	1971
Student-Community Service	Brigham Young University	Private, 4-year	Provo	UT	1971
Field Work	Westminster College	Private, 4-year	Salt Lake City	UT	1970
Office of Volunteer Community Service	University of Virginia	Public, 4-year	Charlottesville	VA	1969
Programs for Experiential Learning	Stratford College	Private, 4-year	Danville	VA	1968
Sounding Board	Emory and Henry College	Private, 4-year	Emory	VA	1970
Voluntary Action Center	Ferrum College	Private, 4-year	Ferrum	VA	1971
No formal title	Thomas Nelson Community College	Public, 2-year	Hampton	VA	1972
University Federation	Washington and Lee University	Private, 4-year	Lexington	VA	1970
Volunteer Action Center	Old Dominion University	Public, 4-year	Norfolk	VA	1972
Community Services	Richard Bland College	Public, 4-year	Petersburg	VA	1961
The Children's House	Virginia State College	Public, 4-year	Petersburg	VA	1969
FCSFA	Tidewater Community College	Public, 2-year	Portsmouth	VA	1971
No formal title	University of Richmond	Private, 4-year	Richmond	VA	n/a
Students Committed to Service	Virginia Commonwealth University	Public, 4-year	Richmond	VA	1971
Voluntary Action Center of Staunton, Inc.	Mary Baldwin College	Private, 4-year	Staunton	VA	1970
Circle K	College of William and Mary	Public, 4-year	Williamsburg	VA	1967
No formal title	Shenandoah College and Conservatory	Private, 4-year	Winchester	VA	n/a
No formal title	Bennington College	Private, 4-year	Bennington	VT	1932
Office of Volunteer Programs	University of Vermont	Public, 4-year	Burlington	VT	1969

Student Council	Champlain College	Private, 4-year	Burlington	VT	n/a
Office of Volunteer Programs	Johnson State College	Public, 4-year	Johnson	VT	1972
Extramural Studies	Goddard College	Private, 4-year	Plainfield	VT	1938
Student Council-Community Service	Green Mountain College	Private, 4-year	Poultney	VT	1964
Volunteer Fire and Rescue Squads	St. Michael's College	Private, 4-year	Winooski	VT	1970
Volunteer Referral Service	Green River Community College	Public, 2-year	Auburn	WA	1972
Community Involvement Practice Program	Olympic College	Public, 2-year	Bremerton	WA	1971
Campus Volunteer Bureau	Eastern Washington State College	Public, 4-year	Cheney	WA	1970
No formal title	Central Washington State College	Public, 4-year	Ellensburg	WA	1971
Associated Women Students	Everett Community College	Public, 2-year	Everett	WA	n/a
Community Involvement	Lower Columbia College	Public, 2-year	Longview	WA	1970
College In-Residence Volunteer Program	Lakeland Village	Medical facility	Medical Lake	WA	1971
No formal title	Highline Community College	Public, 2-year	Midway	WA	1970
Student Community Involvement Program	Skagit Valley College	Public, 2-year	Mt. Vernon	WA	n/a
Community Service	Evergreen State College	Public, 4-year	Olympia	WA	1971
ASWSU Volunteer Agency	Washington State University	Public, 4-year	Pullman	WA	1972
Community Involvement Program	Shoreline Community College	Public, 2-year	Seattle	WA	1972
Community Involvement Center	University of Puget Sound	Private, 4-year	Tacoma	WA	1972
United Student Service Action Committee	Pacific Lutheran University	Private, 4-year	Tacoma	WA	1967
Volunteer Services	Fort Steilacoom Community College	Public, 2-year	Tacoma	WA	1971
Special Problems	Walla Walla Community College	Public, 2-year	Walla Walla	WA	1969
Community Service	Wenatchee Valley College	Public, 2-year	Wenatchee	WA	1966
Student Association	Northland College	Private, 4-year	Ashland	WI	1969
Marketing Survey	Moraine Park Technical Institute	Public, 2-year	Fond Du Lac	WI	1971
Volunteer Programs	University of Wisconsin, Green Bay	Public, 4-year	Green Bay	WI	1969
Community Services	Kenosha Technical Institute	Public, 2-year	Kenosha	WI	1970
Volunteer Services	Wisconsin State University	Public, 4-year	La Crosse	WI	1968
Volunteer Services	University of Wisconsin, Madison	Public, 4-year	Madison	WI	n/a
Field Education Program	St. Francis School of	Seminary	Milwaukee	WI	1969

	Pastoral Ministry				
Student Volunteer Services	University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh	Public, 4-year	Oshkosh	WI	1969
No formal title	Lakeland College	Private, 4-year	Sheboygan	WI	1964
Student Community Projects	University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point	Public, 4-year	Stevens Point	WI	1971
Field Experience Program	Holy Redeemer College	Private, 4-year	Waterford	WI	1966
Volunteer Service Program	Carroll College	Private, 4-year	Waukesha	WI	n/a
Volunteer Services Opportunities	University of Wisconsin, Waukesha	Public, 4-year	Waukesha	WI	n/a
Social Action Committee	St. Norbert College	Private, 4-year	West De Pere	WI	n/a
Student Service Program	West Virginia Wesleyan College	Private, 4-year	Buckhannon	WV	1950
No formal title	Davis and Elkins College	Private, 4-year	Elkins	WV	n/a
Volunteers in Community Service	Marshall University	Public, 4-year	Huntington	WV	1968
Student Action for Appalachian Progress	West Virginia University	Public, 4-year	Morgantown	WV	1967
Community Congress	Salem College	Private, 4-year	Salem	WV	1953
No formal title	Shepherd College	Private, 4-year	Shepherdstown	WV	1972
Students for Intercultural Understanding	Wheeling College	Private, 4-year	Wheeling	WV	1961
CARES	Northwest Community College	Public, 2-year	Powell	WY	1969

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| ALCNA | ACTION Records. National Archives. College Park, MD. |
| BHLA | Harold Row papers. Brethren Historical Library and Archives. Elgin, IL. |
| JNEP | Lay Apostolate general files. Jesuit New England Province Archives |
| JFKPL | Shriver Papers. John F. Kennedy Presidential Library. Boston, MA. |
| JOPA
University. | Alaska Missions records. Jesuit Oregon Province Archives. Gonzaga University.
Spokane, WA. |
| MCCA
Archives. | Mennonite Voluntary Service records. Mennonite Central Committee
Mennonite Central Committee. Akron, PA. |
| RCA | Regis Lay Apostolate Special Collections. Regis College. Weston, MA. |
| SHUA | Fr. George Mader papers. Seton Hall University Archives. Orange, NJ. |
| UUIR | Unitarian–Universalist Service Committee records. Unitarian–Universalist Institutional Records. Harvard Divinity School. Cambridge, MA. |

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