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DePauw Women during World War I: Female Citizenship and Higher
Education in Early 20th Century America

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On November 20, 1915, a cheering crowd of DePauw University women huddled together to watch the Tigers take on the Wabash Little Giants in the annual Old Gold football game. The women belted out songs of encouragement and jumped up and down even as Wabash walloped DePauw 34-0. Despite the whopping loss for the DPU men, the football team took great pride in the fact that they still had their girls present doing what they did best, supporting the boys. Because after all, where would the men have been without “My Girl’s a Hullabaloo” ringing out from the co-ed bleachers across the football field? And what would the boys have done without the “cheery greetings from that little friend at the dorm?”¹

The United States’ entrance into the war in the spring of 1917 was a turning point for the females at DePauw. The perception of women as dainty cheerleaders existing primarily to support the men had been the norm on DePauw University’s campus in the early years of World War I. But soon, opportunities in school organizations, community groups, and public forums emerged as a large portion of the men hastily enlisted in the army. With DePauw’s rapid militarization came an unsettling of gender norms and a disruption of social ideologies that resulted in conflicting messages towards college students, particularly females. DePauw’s President Grose bombarded women with announcements to stay in school and go about their daily activities, while government officials and military recruiters proclaimed that everyone should exhibit nationalism by supporting the military to the fullest extent possible. Several editions of Greencastle newspapers proclaimed the message, “Do Your Part!” But as college females, DePauw women’s “part” in the war effort at first seemed obscure, ill-defined at best.

Perhaps this ambiguity surrounding the roles of college women during World War I is a reason why their story remains largely untold. Instinctively, when constructing a story about universities during wartime, factors such as male student enlistment, the Student Army Training Corps, and the Reserve Officers' Training Corps would appear to be most important in explaining the impact that the war had on college campuses; yet, when viewing the larger picture of society, the changing gender roles on college campuses illuminate the larger trends towards female citizenship, and the procurement of higher education as an essential element of American life. By closely examining a specific case study of gender transformation on the small Midwestern campus of DePauw University during World War I, and placing it in the larger context of women's citizenship in the early 20th century, we discover how the war propelled change in, and transformed American ideas concerning women's roles in society.

Structuring the story of women at DePauw during World War I and gauging their experiences from 1914-1918 meant finding out what students were saying during these years, the tone they were saying it in, and why they were saying it. The best source to assess the campus climate in its entirety is the DePauw student-run newspaper, *The DePauw Daily*. *The DePauw Daily* represented the day-to-day opinions of students, as well as school organizations, clubs, and leagues that formed during these years. Additionally, the newspaper reported on special events and wartime drives that students pursued, such as compiling Christmas boxes for soldiers and attending military costume balls. This source serves as a helpful guide in assessing the range of activities occurring during this time, but also in examining the interactions between DePauw and the local community; for example, the Women's Franchise League of DePauw combined with the

Civic League of Greencastle to develop a greater forum for which to express their thoughts and concerns about issues regarding females. In addition to school and local newspapers, yearbooks and scrapbooks are very effective sources for determining specifics about clubs, groups, and events that took place between 1914-1918. Observing the impact the war had on the DePauw community, as well as the greater Greencastle community, provides a microcosm of gender shifts in American society.

In answering questions about gender shifts at DePauw University during World War I, it is necessary to examine the events in chronological order so that subtle changes in attitude will not be overlooked. For that reason, this paper is organized into separate sections spanning from 1914-1919 including: Pre-U.S. entry into World War I, which provides insight into the unequal dynamic of females to males in the years leading up to American entrance into war; the Cusp of War, which analyzes how the school prepared for total war, and the initial steps the students took towards preparing for it; America Enters the War, an observation of the initial reactions to the U.S. entrance into war; War on the Home Front, a deep analysis of the American war years, and the gender transformations that were taking place; and finally, Transitioning to Post-war, which describes the after effects of the war, and how the campus, and the nation adjusted to the different American society.. Understanding the DePauw World War I experience in chronological fashion, one can evaluate more clearly the similarities and differences in how women were perceived throughout the war years, and also make sense of the female students' legacies and the post war trends that defined America for the next century.

Women at DePauw University were propelled into positions of power on campus with the outbreak of World War I and America's eventual entrance into the conflict. As

male enlistment numbers rose, female students were forced to fill vacant jobs in organizations and clubs, as well as in the workforce. Working as educated people, the women at DePauw adjusted to the conflicting messages of the university and the government and developed their own understanding of what it meant to be a woman in World War I. Facing down widespread stereotypes, women pursued unparalleled positions of power during the war, thus, female students, knowingly or not, contributed to the changing landscape of early 20th century gender ideology.

Pre-U.S. Entrance into World War I: 1914-1916

The roles of women on DePauw University's campus in the years leading up to the United States' entry into war consisted of supporting the boys and keeping their opinions to themselves. Home Economics and education courses helped mold the young Midwestern ladies into future wives and mothers, while the male students prepared for career tracks in business and journalism.² The curriculum of the early war years reflected the gender segregation between men and women, and so did the school activities. The newly renovated system of student government, for example, included representatives from each class, none of who were females. Although no rules were in place disallowing women to take part in student government, it was customary that the girls take a backseat to the decision making on campus. As the council gained more notoriety on campus, it was granted more responsibilities, overseeing several of the most important student organizations, including the school newspaper, *The DePauw Daily*, and the school yearbook, *The Mirage*.³ With men dominating the majority of the school's activities, women were left with few options for getting involved in campus life. But out of

women's lack of opportunities within the university, female students began to unite with each other and with women around the Greencastle community to express their opinions concerning societal issues that affected them.

These issues that both the local and university women discussed with each other throughout the 19th and into the 20th century were mostly centered around the question of female voting rights. The drive for women's suffrage began in the Hoosier state around 1881 when organizations throughout the state started to materialize.⁴ In the spring of that year, a proposed women's suffrage amendment to the Indiana constitution, which allowed women to vote in presidential elections, was approved in the Indiana General Assembly.⁵ Legislation concerning prohibition passed in this same session, and for the remaining 1882 political campaign, the issues of suffrage and prohibition were associated with each other in the political world.⁶ The public, the most adamant being the liquor interests, concluded that if women gained the right to vote, they would most certainly vote in favor of prohibition laws.⁷ Frances Willard, the founder of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, believed that male alcohol abuse affected women because wives often had to bear the effects of their husbands' violent outbursts after they had too much to drink.⁸ Because of alcohol's particular dangers to women's wellbeing, Willard advised that females protect themselves and others by voting in favor of prohibition laws, stating, "women could best promote moral standards in American society through political means."⁹ As a result, the outspoken opposition to temperance believed that if women would gain the right to vote, they would vote against liquor; thus, the suffrage amendment of 1881 did not pass the mandatory second General Assembly in 1883 due to the fear that "a woman's vote would mean a temperance vote."¹⁰ Faced with the

challenging task of convincing their fellow inhabitants that females deserved full citizenship, women did not give up, and continued to produce revised amendments consistently from 1891-1913.¹¹

As suffrage and prohibition issues continued to draw state and national attention into the 20th century, women's clubs and organizations sprouted up as a means for females to express their concerns in the company of others with similar apprehensions.¹² According to an Indiana historical database, "By 1900, almost five percent of all women nationwide were affiliated with a women's club."¹³ In 1911, two suffragist groups combined to form the Women's Franchise League of Indiana, which produced several chapters throughout the state, including one in Greencastle.¹⁴

The W.F.L.'s popularity spread to college campuses including DePauw. In 1912, DePauw's Equal Suffrage Association evolved into the DePauw branch of the Women's Franchise League of Indiana.¹⁵ In broadening this institution, local Greencastle females who felt strongly about the issue of suffrage were able to join with University women in a coalition to further equality for women. Serving under the purpose of educating "women of the state in civic consciousness secur[ing] for them the ballot,"¹⁶ the Women's Franchise League of DePauw formed out of a need to discuss these important civic issues, and gave women a platform to express their opinions about the changes that were taking place in society.¹⁷ The league continued to evolve and grow, securing the ties between University and community. In 1914, the league brought Ms. Bryant White of Indianapolis to the Greencastle courthouse to speak about Indiana's dire need for a new constitution and an added suffrage amendment.¹⁸ Whether it be funding and promoting Progressive speakers to come to campus, or holding local luncheons for those interested

in the debated topics, women's groups such as the W.F.L. provided a political outlet for women who struggled to find a voice on campus. Additionally, these groups attracted the male-run student publications' attention, promoting more publicity for females throughout the university.

The main medium for obtaining information locally, nationally, and worldwide in the war years was through newspapers. DePauw's newspaper, *The DePauw Daily*, was composed of entirely male students.¹⁹ This total hegemony of male student editors was influential to university life because the paper shaped attitudes towards the campus that students would eventually form and express in their daily activities. Although occasional mentions of women's activities found their way onto the front page of *The DePauw Daily*, the tone in which the announcements were relayed during the early war years was primarily sexist and demeaning. For example, in preparation for the traditional Old Gold football game, a headline appeared in 1914 saying, "Take Heart, Damsel! Football Bleachers Safe Says Hubert."²⁰ This article referring to women as damsels and describing how they did not have to worry about getting injured while they cheered their boys on, further cemented their primary position as the lesser, more vulnerable sex. It also reinforced the notion of males as protectors, which would shape ideology of gender during wartime. Another clipping from a January, 1914 issue with the title, "Naughty, Naughty! 'On Must Wear 'On Hats and Coats,'" described the new protocol that the Dean of students required for women, which disallowed any females to be outside without an "outer-wrap or bear-headed, or in low shoes during the remainder of January and all of February."²¹ These attitudes towards women as delicate, and even childlike were mass-produced in the school newspaper in the early war years, and consequently perpetuated

the discriminatory views about female students in relation to male students at DePauw. The majority of female mentions in the paper from 1914-1916 were phrased in this way, or cited as a supplement to what was happening in the male students' lives.

In the early years of World War I, men dominated not only organizations like the school newspaper, but also the school yearbook, *The Mirage*. *The Mirage* presented the picture of what DePauw was like to students for generations to come. The bias against women in 1914-1916 is apparent. For example, the 1914-1915 edition of *The Mirage*, dedicates only one single section to women, entitled "Co-Eds at DePauw."²² As an introduction to this section, a male editor of *The Mirage* wrote:

"To you, girls, faithful wearers of the Old Gold, do we give the credit for the honor which is indeed yours. Imagine the campus without the cheery greetings from that little friend at the dorm. Imagine the class room without the pretty girl to your right who always proves herself a friend indeed at that most fearful of all times, the exam. Imagine a victory over Wabash without 'My Girl's a Hullabaloo' ringing out from the co-ed bleachers across the field. So here's to the co-eds at DePauw, and may the co-eds of tomorrow be as fair, as gay, and as charming as are the co-eds of today."²³

From this introduction, it can be inferred that male students on DePauw's campus viewed female students in relation to men. Although the mentions of the individual women's groups in the yearbooks included a few lines about their activities that occurred that year, they were often brief and generalized, while the football team was attributed an entire section equaling that of the women's section.²⁴ It is apparent through the discriminating attitude that men exhibited towards women's groups and female students in general, the male students in charge of the popular student organizations were more concerned about how females influenced males' personal lives on a daily basis, rather than how women were affecting the campus as a whole. This dynamic between men and women would be the norm in the years leading up to the United States' entrance into the war.

Despite males' belittling tones towards females and the activities they pursued, the women on DePauw's campus nonetheless worked to develop an organization that would help the girls stay united. In the spring of 1915, Katherine Alvord, the dean of women, erected the Women's Self Government Association.²⁵ This new social club emerged out of the need to "bring the women of all the living units on the campus into closer contact," and to "control all phases of social life not specifically regulated by the faculty or the administration."²⁶ Alvord was highly revered in the eyes of her peers and students, remembered as "encourag[ing] DePauw coeds to be independent-minded, widen their vocational opportunities, and strive to attain self-fulfillment."²⁷ Although this group retained some strict regulations such as no dancing or card-playing at social events, and requiring permission from parents to attend off-campus events, Dean Alvord did a great job of empowering the women by uniting them under common principles concerning respect and pride for the female sex. Alvord worked to eventually allow women the right to entertain male visitors any night of the week, basing her rules on an, "Any night but not every night," agreement between her and the girls.²⁸ Despite retaining several strict social constraints on women at the time, leaders like Katherine Alvord and groups like the W.S.G.A. promoted a greater self-awareness and confidence among the female DePauw community. Even though these groups were required to abide by the social constraints towards women at the time, the fact that groups of females were getting together in the name of common interests meant that they were gaining more self-awareness and securing the female united front.

The opportunities for women were also expanding in more non-traditional areas. Intercollegiate sports at DePauw during this time were controlled by an organization of

alumni, and restricted women's competition.²⁹ It was out of these restrictions, that the Women's Athletic Association was formed in 1915.³⁰ The W.A.A. allowed women to join together in pursuits of increasing their physical fitness and enjoying healthy competition through various intramural activities.³¹ Groups like these worked to strengthen women's physicality and competitive drive, which in turn strengthened their ability to understand themselves and how they related to others in their campus community. Sports were traditionally a male-dominated activity, but with the birth of the Women's Athletic Association, women had more of a say in their right to partake in the same physical activities, even if they were still intramural.

Different women's groups at this time were finding common ground with each other, and began to join up for certain events that would involve the entire campus. The Women's Athletic Association partnered with the W.S.G.A. to put on the May Day event, which was first instituted in 1910.³² May Day was devoted to activities planned and produced completely by women.³³ The day included a lantern parade, early morning breakfast sponsored by the Y.W.C.A., field day activities and sports tournaments for women, and then ending with a student-produced play.³⁴ May Day served as a chance for female students to celebrate themselves and also presented a unique opportunity for the school to observe the various benefits that the each women's group carried. As the war years progressed, female-produced events gained popularity and exemplified women's increasing influence over DePauw's campus.

Although not entirely apparent, the school term of 1915-1916 reflected women's steady gains towards greater equality on DePauw's campus. New and respected organizations such as the W.S.G.A. forced men to take note of women's capabilities as

leaders in a campus setting. *The DePauw Daily* was still made up of mostly men, but with the addition of one female reporter, the massive gap between male student life and female student life was narrowing. Even though DePauw women still only had one section of the yearbook dedicated to them, and it was entitled “Why Men Come to DePauw,” it appeared that progress was still being made. Women’s group’s steady gains in terms of influence on DePauw’s campus reflected the larger trends that were happening with women’s groups throughout Indiana and the United States. Suffragists in Indiana “organized societies, wrote articles, traveled on lecture tours, sponsored meetings, and mailed postcards” throughout their quest for full female citizenship.³⁵ These retroactive women were slowly but surely gaining more recognition in local and university papers, which in turn inspired female DePauw students to organize themselves and pursue their various interests on campus.

The Cusp of War: Fall 1916-Spring 1917

The school term of 1916-1917 saw a changing dynamic between male students and female students on DePauw’s campus. The question of whether or not the United States would enter World War I emerged as an extremely pressing issue, creating a thick political tension in national politics, as well as on college campuses. Whether or not students supported America’s decision to get involved in Europe, the spirit of nationalism was building throughout the campus, until it eventually exploded after the German submarine bombing of the *Lusitania*. Although the school term was close to ending in April of 1917 when President Woodrow Wilson made the announcement to the country that the United States would be entering the war, students responded quickly and

diligently by forming clubs, organizing philanthropic events, and in some cases, immediately enlisting in the army. The rapid campus war mobilization resulted in confusion and misunderstanding of student roles in the war, particularly for females.

In the months leading up to the United States' entry into World War I, women continued to build upon the examples set by the state and national suffragist groups, and pursued their interests through their own various organizations. Their influence was also spreading to traditionally male clubs, such as the school newspaper. Although there was still a lack of female representation on the editorial staff of *The DePauw Daily*, two women served on the reportorial board.³⁶ These two women would hold an important role as the war posed a bigger threat to the campus climate. With the help of the W.S.G.A., a group of women composed the second Co-ed issue of *The DePauw Daily* entitled "Co-ed Extra" in honor of Old Gold Day.³⁷ This special Saturday issue written by an entirely female editorial board reported on the events of the weekend through the eyes of women, which presented a unique twist on a male-dominated event surrounding a large football game. The articles included in this special issue boasted titles such as "Vocational Conference set for November 15-16: lectures to show need of Profession for College Girls," which were aimed directly at female students, but also, the edition also included sports articles, such as the one entitled, "DePauw and Butler Meet in Annual Clash Today," which discussed predictions about the annual Old Gold game.³⁸

Allowing the girls of DePauw to report on such an important school event showed how the women were progressing and gaining more respect in male-dominated fields, such as journalism. Also, the fact that the women of W.S.G.A. were granted the opportunity to construct this issue highlighted their abilities to organize as women and produce a

widely-read school publication. Underneath the mention of this Co-ed issue of *The DePauw Daily*, the author of the 1917 issue of *The Mirage* wrote about the W.S.G.A., commenting, “this organization is certainly proving its worth.”³⁹ The compliment to the work of this women’s organization is small, but in the larger scheme of male attitudes towards women in prior issues of *The Mirage*, this mention was a vote of confidence to not only the W.S.G.A., but to all the various women’s clubs. At the end of 1916, as the nation grew closer to entering the Great War, these organizations would serve as important vehicles for female voices to be heard.

Woodrow Wilson won his presidential reelection in 1916 on the slogan “He kept us out of war,” and despite the President’s call for “neutral thought” throughout the conflict in Europe, Americans could not help contemplating how the war over seas would affect them.⁴⁰ In his book, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society*, David Kennedy references George Orwell, saying, “If the war didn’t happen to kill you, it was bound to start you thinking.”⁴¹ This frame of mind defined American perspectives on World War I leading up to their involvement. The war in Europe seemed so far away from American soil, and thus, when President Woodrow Wilson announced America’s entrance into the conflict in the spring of 1917, the public sentiment was nationally divided.⁴² Kennedy describes the U.S. as having been in a position characterized by “deep social fissures,” meaning the nation was caught between progressive reformers ideals, economic stresses, problems with immigration, as well as issues with labor unrest.⁴³ Because of these glaring issues on the American home front, the public was hesitant about backing the president in his pursuit of war. To wage war successfully, President Wilson informed the American public that the nation would need to contribute

on every level, meaning not just material resources, but also physical manpower.⁴⁴ The president attempted to focus on the positives of requiring military service, emphasizing the points that military training would present “a melting pot which [would]...break down distinctions of race and class and mold [the people] into a new nation and bring forth the new Americans.”⁴⁵ Despite the economic and social problems that characterized the nation leading up to the entrance into the war, this opportunity for Americans to come together under a common cause was one that was unprecedented. Militarization of the country would not just break down distinctions of race and class, but as the instance at DePauw University would show, gender inequalities would also start to erode.

By the spring of 1917, DePauw students began to understand that the glaring separation between them and the war in Europe was not so large after all. When the announcement finally arrived that the United States would enter the war, the campus of DePauw and the town of Greencastle reacted with swift patriotism by organizing a rally.⁴⁶ Hundreds of both DePauw students and Greencastle inhabitants swarmed the town square, making the event the first mass patriotic gathering that Greencastle had ever seen.⁴⁷ At the rally, Dr. Gobin, professor of theology and former president of DePauw, spoke to the crowd about how to approach the news of American involvement in the war. He said, “Every man owes a certain individual duty to the country and it devolves upon him to support the president.”⁴⁸ This initial speech by Dr. Gobin served as a patriotic flame that ignited the Greencastle community’s spirit; however, the speech did not mention women’s roles whatsoever in preparing for war. In addition to enforcing the concept of man’s duty to his country, Dr. Gobin also stated, “Every man who leaves here

and goes to the front, and sacrifices his life for his country, will be remembered at DePauw.”⁴⁹ With encouragement from country and school leaders, the DePauw community prepared for national militarization.

The initial announcement of war sparked a fever in the hearts of faculty and students alike. This enormous nationalistic surge engulfed the young people of the nation and inspired them to act honorably in the name of their country. Military recruiters took advantage of the heightened patriotic climate and encouraged all young college students to jump on the Army bandwagon and enlist immediately.⁵⁰ A sense of national duty combined with a potential opportunity of adventure and experience, as well as the desire to earn national heroic honor, convinced many men to heed the military’s suggestions, and by April 14th, according to the school newspaper, “DePauw [had] furnished more men for the United States Army than any college in Indiana since the beginning of the war.”⁵¹ It was apparent that as more men enlisted, the rapid loss of male students would hurt DePauw greatly. After the immediate rush to support President Wilson and his decision, the DePauw faculty spread a more realistic message to the campus. George Grose, the DePauw president, delivered a speech on April 18th encouraging students to stay in school as long as possible, and reminding them that enlisting in the war would not be “a six month vacation.”⁵² Additionally he advised students to be wary of enlisting “for the sake of newspaper notice,” instead of for the good of the country.⁵³ The DePauw Bulletin from April 1917 also included several messages from various officials throughout the nation regarding the importance of university education in the wake of World War I. As necessary as it was to have an adequate number of men and women enlisting, the university and the country also emphasized the importance of looking to the

post-war future and securing a large number of educated members of society in the aftermath of the war. A memorandum from Dr. P. P. Claxton, the United States Commissioner of Education, was included in this DePauw bulletin stating:

“If the war should last long the country will need all the trained men and women it can get—many more than it has now. When the war is over there will be made upon us such demands for men and women of knowledge and for a much higher average of intelligence for citizenship than has been necessary until now.”⁵⁴

As young college students in the rural town of Greencastle, it is likely that the idea of getting out of the farming community and into a world of adventure was highly appealing; however, school and governmental officials did their best to enforce the need for students to stay in school and continue their education until it was absolutely necessary for them to enlist.

DePauw women also jumped at the chance to be a part of the war preparation movement. Daily drilling exercises for women, led by the instructor of physical education, Miss Sophia Steese, emerged on campus as a result of a large petition that the female students assembled.⁵⁵ These exercises utilized wooden guns for “drills and instruction in the manual of arms...similar to the training which [was] being given to the men.”⁵⁶ The work was “purely elective” and would serve as an additional activity to the women’s physical education program.⁵⁷ By participating in the drilling program, female students felt as though they could identify more with men’s roles in combat, thus empowering them and satisfying their desires to directly contribute to America’s nationalism in the wake of their war involvement. But as weeks passed from the initiation of the women’s drilling program, many authorities on DePauw’s campus began to question whether women were spending their time as wisely as possible. An article

from *The DePauw Daily* from April 19th, 1917 entitled “Why Girls Should Drill”

criticized the university for allowing women to partake in the activity, stating:

“Consensus of opinion is that drills for women are not the best investment possible. Keep in physical condition they must—but gymnasium work is more effective and better adapted to this than drills. Economize they must. Think for themselves they must. Drills do not further this spirit.”⁵⁸

Drilling, which was an activity directly related to warfare, was not seen by school officials as a necessary activity for women. Although female students found joy in feeling as though they were playing an important part in training, the school authorities believed the girls could expend their energy in other areas of war preparation. Most officials on campus believed that women and men’s wartime preparations should be different, and they encouraged females to pursue less masculine forms of activity.⁵⁹

This was a confusing period of adjustment for everyone in America, including college students, and even more so, female college students. There emerged two different opinions about women’s wartime activities: the first being that women should take a passive backseat and simply wait to be told what to do, the other that they should begin preparing to assume the roles that men would inevitably have to leave behind as they went off to serve their country. The first opinion is evident in Natalie Cecilia Coffin’s memory box, which included a clipping of an article entitled “Co-eds in War.”⁶⁰ This article included advice from the dean of women at Northwestern University about what women should do in the first months following America’s entrance into war. She advises: “First, guard your speech. Second, indulge in no extravagances. Third, keep physically fit. Fourth, go diligently about the day’s work.”⁶¹ “Guarding speech” referred to the nationalistic sentiment that had swept the nation in the months following the U.S. entrance into war. As female students, college women were required to be conscious of

what they spoke out about, meaning if they possessed negative opinions towards American involvement in European affairs, then they should keep those thoughts to themselves. This was a time where women needed to tap into their nurturing tendencies and show support for the boys preparing for battle. When the dean mentioned “indulging in no extravagances,” she was referring to abandoning lavish or materialistic tendencies, and putting that money and time towards the war effort. In this instance of global war, it was necessary that women and men alike considered the war in every decision they made. Keeping physically fit was a vital aspect for women in taking part in the war preparedness movement. By engaging in drilling efforts, and a greater number of physical education opportunities, women felt as though they were included in the school-wide preparedness movement if cases arose in which they would be required to enlist. Lastly, when the dean mentioned “going diligently about the day’s work,” she was referring to the female students’ requirements to stay in school. The dean wanted to encourage the women to engage in whatever daily activity was most applicable to them so as to make up for the lack of men in the most efficient manner. But the efficiency she was describing presented a confusing paradox for women.

By emphasizing the importance of women getting involved in the war, but not straying too far from their traditional roles, the Northwestern dean was sending slightly conflicting messages, and contributed to the overall confusion that women were feeling during this time. Nowhere in her advice did the Northwestern dean advise women to take overtly active roles in preparing for World War I on the home front. Instead, she suggested that females, both housewives and students alike, remain composed and go about their normal activity; in other words, she instructed them to stay out of the men’s

way. Representing the opposing viewpoint that women should prepare to take over men's roles was an editorial included in a *DePauw Daily* article from *The Indiana Student* which advised female students to utilize their education and "prepare to assume men's places in industries, on farms, and in local governments."⁶² This opinion reflected the eventual shift in the workforce in which female students were placed in an unprecedented position.

As a greater number of males left for the European war front, females were required to assume men's roles in both the workforce and in school. An explicit example of this phenomenon was the need for teachers in the early years of the war. In May of 1917, before most men had even left Greencastle, there was a large demand for female teachers as opposed to male teachers.⁶³ *The DePauw Daily* reported, "Two DePauw men whose qualifications were perfect were rejected by a certain school superintendent in the state because they were subject to draft into military service."⁶⁴ Situations such as that of the lack in teachers reflected the redefinition of manhood that was taking place in World War I. Almost abruptly, men's significance was not viewed in terms of the job they possessed, but rather, certain military capabilities and willingness to support the war cause. Additionally, school superintendents needed to hire stable employees in this especially unstable time, and during these months, the most secure options for teachers were women.⁶⁵ The two DePauw men did not get hired necessarily due to their lack of qualifications, but because the nation had understood that at this particular time, males served best on the front, or preparing to be on the front.

Because of enlistments, the Bureau of Education recommended hiring more women teachers so as to avoid the problems of men being called into the service;

however, they ran into some problems.⁶⁶ Women, for the most part, were not college educated in the mathematics field, which made it difficult for the schools to hire them to fill those positions.⁶⁷ This left many schools in a paradoxical dilemma of needing to hire women even though the females were not as qualified as the men. As a result, this situation placed an enormous amount of pressure on women to utilize everything possible from their education. Never before had women been considered for jobs over more qualified men, but America's entrance into the war would force a dynamic change on the home front, ultimately opening the door for women to step into more leadership roles not only in the workforce, but on college campuses as well. As men prepared to step into their roles as "protectors," university women were required to utilize the education that was made available to them. Particularly for the women who remained on campus after the men left, maintaining their education so they would be able to serve as the most effective citizens possible in the post war world was an essential part of a militarized America.

The First Wartime School Term: Fall 1917-Spring 1918

When students returned to DePauw for the 1917-1918 school term, the campus climate had transformed from a generally equal gender demographic, to one heavily weighted towards females. On October 12, 1917, *The DePauw Daily* reported a loss of 67 males, making the ratio of females to males 426 to 253.⁶⁸ Although in previous years, the number of females slightly outweighed the males, this dramatic shift had repercussions for the campus dynamic. With a large number of the male students enlisted in the army, the university converted to a wartime institution. *The Mirage* staff reflected

on that year's compilation of memories and events as "The first wartime yearbook."⁶⁹ That year, *The DePauw Daily* elected Berthe Tucker as the second female in school history to serve on the editorial board, and additionally, four out of seven women on the reportorial board.⁷⁰ Women's representation on the paper meant that women would procure more rights on campus, and have more of a say in the published material. The installation of more women on the paper accurately reflected the gap in the male to female ratio. The changing demographic was a huge element for the paper in this particular year because it was perhaps the most important period of reporting since the founding of *The DePauw Daily* in 1852. The campus was buzzing with wartime activities, new groups and organizations were forming, several speakers were coming to the small campus to talk about the war, and different course options were constantly being added to the curriculum. The opportunities for females to serve on the editorial board during this significant time in DePauw history presented a strong platform for voicing opinions about what was happening at DePauw. By obtaining the opportunity to control what students on the campus read, women had more of an opportunity to change what the campus thought.

Beyond the major leadership roles that women took on during the war, such as serving on the executive board of *The DePauw Daily* or the W.S.G.A., females infiltrated many different parts of campus life through wartime philanthropic groups. Serving as members of the Red Cross was a major way women got involved around campus, while also supporting the war. Those who did not wish to become officially certified by the Red Cross could simply aid organizations like the Young Women's Christian Association in making surgical bandages and dressings for soldiers overseas.⁷¹ Although partaking in

philanthropic events was not the most direct way to get involved in the war, staying on campus and aiding women's groups was the option that most DePauw officials preferred. The "Coeds in War" article written by the dean of women at Northwestern stated that women should participate mostly in war work that was easily available to them.⁷² For the majority of female college students, that meant staying on campus, remaining active in their studies, and helping out with the war cause through volunteer groups and partaking in organizations such as the W.S.G.A. But some women went beyond just knitting and sewing for the war, and actually became certified members of the Red Cross in case, at some point, females would be called out of Greencastle and overseas to serve as military nurses on the war front.

The Red Cross was a rapidly expanding group that was performing great wartime aid throughout the country during World War I, and Putnam County was not different.⁷³ According to Redcross.org, "The number of local chapters jumped from 107 in 1914 to 3,864 in 1918."⁷⁴ The organization had lofty goals for DePauw, such as having the "entire student body and fifty percent of the residents of Putnam County" as members by December 25th.⁷⁵ In her memory box, Natalie Coffin included her document of certification from the Red Cross, which she received in September of 1917 for "elementary hygiene and home care of the sick."⁷⁶ A report from the dean of women after the 1917 school term described women's desires to participate in the Red Cross organization, stating, "the young women became interested in the formation of Red Cross classes so that they might be ready to do their part in the present national crisis or for more intelligent service in any time of need."⁷⁷ Additionally, Dean Alvord mentioned that DePauw added three new classes in first aid, and four in

hygiene and home nursing.⁷⁸ The Red Cross Organization was a very easily accessible way for females to feel as though they were performing a big part in war preparation; however, the messages that the organization was sending to encourage women to join were paradoxical.

Despite the popularity of the organization during the war, an inconsistency is evident in women students who gained admission to serve in the Red Cross. Although the point was to become trained as a potential nurse, most female students who became certified received training in domestic skills, just as Coffin's certificate noted. Adina Luba Gerver in her essay, "'What Can a Woman Do?': Gender, Youth, and Citizenship at Women's Colleges during World War I," describes women's roles in the Red Cross during World War I as "surrogate mothers to the boys fighting in Europe."⁷⁹ By this she meant that although the organization offered opportunities to get involved in the war effort, it often consisted of rolling bandages, or learning how to make beds.⁸⁰

Some women recognized this inconsistent phenomenon of Red Cross domestic training and spoke out against it. Mary Coffin included in her memory box an article written by a woman named Mary Bostwick. The article pointed out this contradiction exhibited by the Red Cross. In the article, Bostwick humorously describes her experience in her quest to receive certification from the program.⁸¹ Her frustration with the organization is evident when she begins her article by mocking the institution, calling the uniforms "Red Cross costumes," and the headpieces "romantic looking headdresses."⁸² She then relays her story of taking her examination, and criticizes the institution for its lack of testing actual skills necessary for nursing. Bostwick reflects on her methods of preparing for the test, including memorizing scientific facts and how to

use physician's tools.⁸³ She was surprised when she saw the list of questions on the exam, and she relays them, as well as her answers: "What are the things to be considered when selecting a site for a country home?" Natalie answered, "I am not considering it at all."⁸⁴ Another question stated, "Name eight sources of contamination of milk," in which she responded, "I was about to write down eight flies, when I suddenly thought I had not better try to be funny and write 'flies' in one place, and left the other seven to the imagination of those who might come after."⁸⁵ Beyond the ridiculous questions, Bostwick goes on to describe the second part of the test, which consisted of having to make a bed. Appalled by the blatant domesticity, she responded, "How was I supposed to know that the open end of the pillow should always be away from the door?"⁸⁶ After dragging her audience through her failure in the bed-making task, an exasperated Bostwick finishes her article by stating, "Oh well, one can still learn to drive an ambulance, but one will positively not knit socks!"⁸⁷ Finishing her piece by referencing knitting socks was an attempt to reach the traditional women war workers in hopes that she could open their eyes to the triviality of their work.

Bostwick's article clearly mocked the process of selection as well as the institution of the Red Cross for female college students. Because the test framed every question in a domestic mindset, Mary Bostwick was completely put off and did not understand how the examination could possibly be interpreted as an evaluation in proficiency of aiding sick people. Bostwick presented the simple and obvious question of "This could have nothing to do with the gentle art of Red Crossing, could it?"⁸⁸ The Red Cross Organization that had been advertised to the college women was one that would "help them do their part in the present national crisis," but the real activities that were

taking place were simply domestic and separate from military preparedness.⁸⁹ The confusing roles female students were put in during the war are clearly exhibited in the paradox of “Red Crossing.” The government encouraged university women to go out and help the cause by joining the Red Cross in the case that the women may have to travel and help the wounded directly, but really by participating in institutions such as this, students were inadvertently reinforcing stereotypical gender norms of the pre-war world. In one sense, female DePauw students can be seen as taking on more important roles in the University, but in reality, the constant pushback into traditional positions as submissive and obedient mother figures hindered the women from pursuing greater goals.

The concept of women unable to detach themselves from their motherhood persona is one that Gerver examines in her essay, “What Can a Woman Do.” Gerver references Penny Summerfield’s idea of the “wartime gender contract,” explaining that “men fought for the protection of women who, in return, maintained hearth and home as ‘the cornerstone’ of the nation.”⁹⁰ Women like Mary Bostwick strongly believed that the wartime activities that women were participating in would allow females to transcend their traditional positions as housewives or acquiescent schoolgirls, but in reality, they were operating under this “wartime gender contract,” that would not allow them to break from the motherly stereotype that had developed many years before them. Along with feelings of strong patriotism and nationalism that male soldiers felt serving in World War I, came the need to protect their “mother” country and the females that were left behind. In return, the females at home would operate under this ideology in their quests to help fill the men’s shoes while they were away. For many women they felt they owed the male soldiers because of their bravery and efforts to protect the vulnerable females left at

home. Although women on college campuses during this time were not mothers, this ideology was ingrained in society, and therefore impossible to shed. The war years proved that women could handle more responsibility in society, but they also showed America's reluctance to allow females to obtain too much influence.

The dilemma of shaking the motherhood stereotype also presented a problem in women's quests for suffrage. This phenomenon is one that Kristin Hoganson explores in her 1998 analysis of gender dynamics in the Spanish-American War.⁹¹ Hoganson describes the anti-suffrage belief that "it was not just patriotism or the self-sacrifice of military men that made them such good citizens, but rather their physical power."⁹² Despite occurring 19 years earlier, the gendered understanding of women's participation in war did not evolve that much. Women were still suffocated under the ideal that men were bigger, more powerful, and thus smarter, and better at making decisions. DePauw University women could replace men in every organization on campus, but the female picture that America had constructed of women was as a nurturing mother figure, not an aggressive political activist. The quest towards suffrage was a war of attrition, one that would consistently wear down the embedded gender ideals that had been the norm for decades prior. For women, specifically college women, to be successful in their pursuit of gender equality, they would need to pursue more leadership positions in their communities, enforcing the idea that females possessed the capabilities as did men. Although not apparent at first glance, women at DePauw constantly pushed the gender boundaries as they participated in the wartime movement.

Some students pursued the notion of doing more than simply preparing Christmas boxes to send to soldiers in training.⁹³ The campus body urged the university to add

more practical courses to the DePauw curriculum so as to prepare the students in case of necessary training camp entrance or participation in other wartime activities outside of the campus. DePauw responded by adding new courses for second semester. These included a typewriting course as well as a stenography course.⁹⁴ These courses were added to the curriculum as a result of both student requests and the demand of the government for more experienced stenographers and typists.⁹⁵ It was becoming apparent that women needed to become more educated in war work-related subjects in the case that females would become required to enter the greater workforce at the request of the government. Because of the demand, an emergence of more physical education courses characterized the female curriculum in 1917.⁹⁶ In the annual report from the Dean of women for 1917-1918 school term, Dean Alvord stated, "In connection with the physical condition of the young women, it is desirable to extend the work of the Department of Physical Education so that supervised exercise during the Freshman and Sophomore years may be taken every other day instead of only twice a week."⁹⁷ The increased attention to physical fitness operated as a sign from the administration that women needed to be in good shape in the case that they might have to enter the physically demanding war environment. Even if they were required to enlist in the war as nurses, women would have to be able to handle the fast-paced nature of combat. The administration was recognizing that female involvement in wartime preparation was no longer something to sweep under the rug, and in fact, women needed to start preparing on similar levels as the male students.

In addition to the expansion of the female physical education program, more people were starting to speak up about women taking a more active role in related war

production. In January 1918, a female member of the U.S. Employees' Commission, an organization that regulated military jobs on the home front, argued that women possessed the capabilities to take over some of the previously male-dominated occupations, such as "making and inspecting government uniforms," manufacturing rope and twine, and handling the production of small arms.⁹⁸ She emphasized preparation for females that had the opportunities to enter this field, stating, "The hazards among the women who are replacing the men in war work will be greater than ever before, and it is most important that women be prepared to do their part."⁹⁹ By the middle of second semester, a 12 percent decrease in student enrollment was recorded, making the demographic 195 men to 426 females enrolled at DePauw.¹⁰⁰ The numbers were proving that more men were constantly enlisting in the service, thus leaving vacancies in school positions, but also in the workforce. Whether the state was ready to recognize it or not, women were required to take up men's positions, and needed to be educated and prepared in how to do so.

Massive changes infiltrated DePauw's campus during the school term of 1917-1918, but as it drew to a close, plans were being put in place that would transform the dynamic even more. As the school honored the growing number of 448 former DePauw students serving in various branches of the military, plans were being set in place to establish an "army unit and military department under the direction of a commissioned officer of the U.S. army, detailed by the war department."¹⁰¹ This formation would help transition DePauw from a primarily academic institution to a military school that would produce soldiers when summoned by the United States government. The school term of 1917-1918 at DePauw was characterized by quick adjustments and rapidly changing environments. As it drew to a close, DePauw honored the military men who were killed

through ceremonies and special mentions at services, such as during the 1918 commencement ceremony. At the close of the 1918 school term, the university prepared to shed its academic foundation, and make the total transformation to military control.

The summer of 1918 produced large decisions concerning the future of DePauw. As the war raged on in Europe, the American home front was militarizing itself to an even greater degree, and thus the decision was made to convert DePauw into a military school through the Student Army Training Corps program. In the DePauw Bulletin from August 1918, President Grose described the situation surrounding the induction of this program:

“The demand for officers within the next year is certain to be very great. Men receiving their training from the S.A. T.C. will naturally be in position to stand a good chance in the competition for commissions. This opportunity for fitting one’s self for the service of our Country and at the same time for civil life after the war is unequalled and should be eagerly and enthusiastically taken advantage of by many young men.”¹⁰²

The S.A.T.C. presented a unique opportunity for male students to stay at their universities, while still preparing for war. Although this was beneficial to college men partaking in the training, it was challenging for the rest of the campus population to adjust to the changes. Before the 1918 school term began, the S.A.T.C. inducted 500 men and transformed the campus into “a military reservation rather than anything pertaining to a college environment,” according to a student reflection in the 1918 issue of *The Mirage*.¹⁰³ As per order of the U.S. military commissioned officer that was present on campus during this time, structures such as the locker rooms, theatre, and basements of academic buildings were reconstructed to serve wartime training needs for the S.A.T.C.¹⁰⁴ This system allowed the military to use college buildings for training, and also allowed the university to stay open and continue running.¹⁰⁵ War preparedness was

no longer an element of the DePauw community during World War I; it was now becoming the sole purpose of the institution. The pupils at DePauw were coming to be seen as soldiers first, and students second. This evolving dynamic characterized much of the 1918 school term, presenting difficult questions concerning female roles, and also, the purposes of higher education during wartime.

DePauw as a Militarized Campus, Fall 1918

With the formation of the Student Army Training Corps and adjusting to soldiers returning back to school, the 1918-1919 school term represented the reinterpretation of the frameworks that had been set up during the war, and learning how to integrate the past with the present. One of the most important tasks was figuring out how to make sense of the changing gender dynamic that had taken place so rapidly, and how to incorporate those men who had been to war or in training camps back into scholastic life at DePauw. For women, that meant, for the most part, learning how to cede the leadership roles that they had enjoyed without completely abandoning the progress they had made over the course of the year, and learning to cope with men coming back to school and reclaiming those various positions. For men, it meant coming to terms with the women on their campus not serving as the “little friends” and “fair, gay, charming Co-eds” females were viewed as in 1914. There was undoubtedly a shift in how each sex viewed the other, but the magnitude of the differing gender perspectives’ effect on concrete change at DePauw is debatable.

The transformation of DePauw’s campus into a military camp had many effects on how women viewed their own roles on campus. They continued to participate in

volunteer activities, as well as report on the war news as it unfolded. The militarization of the campus also resulted in women being taken more seriously as part of the war preparedness movement. For example, *The DePauw Daily* reported that girls would be required to register with the local military listing in the case that they would be called up for war.¹⁰⁶ The article stated, “the object of the registration is to gather definite data as to the service that the women can render if called upon by the federal government during the war.”¹⁰⁷ The fact that women were being called to register with the military was a huge step in recognizing females in a more equal light. Although it was unlikely that women would ever have to be transported to the war front, the announcement that military leaders may require female service in the future proved that women were being taken more seriously as an integral part of the war. Even though women were required to register with the military, the idea of staying in school until absolutely necessary was constantly encouraged. In a 1918 issue of *The DePauw Daily*, a speech from the president of Earlham College was included explaining “the great danger...in allowing the extraordinary calls to divert our attention from the ordinary affairs of life.”¹⁰⁸ Despite the exciting opportunities presented to DePauw women in the forms of potential enlistment, educational leaders served to constantly remind females that their most important role was that of a female college student, and they should remain loyal to that position until further announcements.

As the women underwent changes in the new militarized campus, so did the men. The experience of the S.A.T.C. at DePauw was not strenuous or overly laborious whatsoever according to the men who experienced it; one man referred to his time in the S.A.T.C. as “a merry round of reveille, toast, coffee, oatmeal, policing, calisthenics, drill,

classes, horse-meat, boiled potatoes, prunes, beans, rice, more classes, drill, shoe-shining, retreat, more horse meat, more study, and then taps. Ditto, ditto, ditto, ad infinitum.”¹⁰⁹

Although the routines were rather tedious, the time the men spent together nevertheless made them closer, even creating a “Fraternity of Khaki,” as one student recalled in the 1919 issue of *The Mirage*.¹¹⁰ Although their days were spent primarily with other male members of the S.A.T.C., the men were still very aware of the females on campus, and appreciated the women’s presence. This gratitude was especially apparent in a statement from a student reflecting on the Influenza Epidemic, which required women to be sent home in the fall of 1918. He said, “The degenerating period came upon us when the girls departed for the “Flu” vacation. Then our manners slipped from us, along with our neck ties, and the seats of our trousers.”¹¹¹ The influenza epidemic caused classes to cease almost before they even began, and “discontinued all college work for one month.”¹¹² When the students returned in November, the Armistice was signed two weeks later, resulting in a drastic attitude shift in the S.A.T.C. and campus in general.¹¹³ The moods that typified DePauw’s campus during the time that America was involved in the war were constantly shifting, and as a result, the manner in which women and their education were perceived was also shifting. As the students returned to campus, they had to prepare to endure yet another transition, this time into the post-war world.

Demilitarization and Transitioning to the Post-War World

DePauw had been waiting many months to hear President Grose say that the school “was through with the Army way of talking and the Army way of eating.”¹¹⁴ In the first chapel after the winter recess in 1919, President Grose made that announcement.

The armistice had been signed, and the process of demobilization had begun.¹¹⁵ This left the campus in a very strange limbo of post war adjustment. Although the S.A.T.C. was often referred to as the “Saturday Afternoon Tea Club,” the men had felt they were important to the success of the country, and had been looking forward to moving up in the army ranks, and possibly going into actual combat.¹¹⁶

A decline in morale was undeniable as men returned to the monotony of school. But the women were also faced with hard times as they watched their leadership positions revert back to supporting positions on organizations such as *The DePauw Daily*. The entire editorial staff was once again completely male dominated with no women serving on the board, but females still made up half of the reportorial team.¹¹⁷ In addition to these figures, women still comprised half of the student body officers, including Margret Shoptaugh who served as Vice President.¹¹⁸ Although women did not enjoy as many overt leadership roles as they once did during the most active year of the war, they still managed to remain a part of the organizations, undoubtedly providing advice and exhibiting their expertise on the positions they once held. Men had to come to terms with the fact that women had filled their positions while they were gone, and as a result, the male students had to rely on their female counterparts for help adjusting to the new landscape of the campus.

Major controversies arose as men came back from the war looking for jobs. In December, 52 men had signified their intention of leaving DePauw if they were not able to find work.¹¹⁹ The enrollment steadily declined as the university was unable to fulfill the men’s requests.¹²⁰ One of the main concerns was the refusal of DePauw officials to allow men to return to their old positions as waiters in the female dormitory of Rector

Hall.¹²¹ During the war, female students had taken over the jobs, and as a result, the women did not believe it fair to relinquish their positions just because the men had returned. The dining hall conflict serves as a telling example of the relationships between males and females in the immediate post-war world. Women had gained a sense of independence from their male counterparts, and struggled to abandon those feelings.

But in the face of the struggle between men and women to readjust to campus life at DePauw, women found a sense of empowerment in new organizations that were sprouting up. The authors of *DePauw: a Pictorial History*, Clifton Phillips and John Baughman, describe the formation of an all-female journalism society called Delta Kappa Phi that evolved out of female restriction into the male students' journalism honor society.¹²² The purpose of this group was defined in the 1919 issue of *The Mirage* as:

“to stimulate and give dignity to literary and journalistic work on campus, to bring together women who intend to enter writing as a profession, and to give the members a practical working knowledge of the field and to acquaint them with the manuscript market.”¹²³

Delta Kappa Phi reflected an important change that was happening on DePauw's campus in the post war world. Women did not possess the same leadership roles as in the wartime campus community; however, scholarly organizations for women such as Delta Kappa Phi meant that females were being recognized for their hard work and intellectual prowess in a male dominated field such as journalism. Furthermore, this academic honor society did more than just recognize women's accomplishments; it functioned as a means to help women obtain a journalism career in their post-college lives. Preparing female students to pursue occupations other than nursing or teaching was an idea that had been developing over the course of World War I on DePauw's campus, and in the larger workforce around the country. The women who were left to pick up the slack when the

male students either enlisted or joined the S.A.T.C. earned the right to be taken seriously in the workforce. Organizations such as Delta Kappa Phi also encouraged more women to get involved in the journalism career by joining organizations on campus like *The Mirage* and *The DePauw Daily*.

It was apparent in the post-war campus climate that women, despite being demoted from their wartime positions in several instances, had broken the stereotype of the pretty cheerleader or the dainty co-ed. The male population at DePauw was beginning to take female students and their actions more seriously, and in turn, women began to take themselves more seriously. After almost 70 years after Indiana suffragists first began pursuing full female citizenship, Congress passed the nineteenth amendment to the Constitution in June of 1918, and on August 10, 1920, it finally became national law.¹²⁴ Although the similarities between college women and the pursuit of national rights may not be glaringly obvious, or particularly direct, the subtle attitude shifts that constantly occurred over the span of the WWI years did contribute to the eventual victories in women's rights.

The gradual and sometimes indirect changes that were taking place on this specific campus in the years 1914-1918 provide insight into the greater developments that were happening throughout the United States as the country adjusted to the post war world. The jolly coed cheering on the boys at the football game in 1914 transforming into the sophisticated intellectual getting inducted into Delta Kappa Phi honor society in 1918, reflected a greater trend towards gender equality that boasted significant meaning not only for DePauw, but also for America as a whole. The progression towards female rights was slow and frustrating, but

World War I provided opportunities for women to prove they had the ability to compete with men on academic, physical, and professional levels. Doors opened for women in World War I to an extent that they never had before. The excuse that females were not equipped to perform the same duties as men was not valid in the post war society. The reinterpretations of female citizenship and the purpose of higher education that occurred at DePauw during these years helped make significant political progress on a national scale.

This study of DePauw University aims to prove that college women's roles were, in fact, reinterpreted during the World War I years, and that those reinterpretations made an impact on how Americans would come to understand citizenship in the 20th century and beyond. It cannot be overlooked, however, that contrasting views exist about how great an impact females' wartime actions actually had on the post-war world. In "What Can a Woman Do," Gerver mentions several historians who have concluded that women in wars have not had as much of an effect as initially believed.¹²⁵ Two of these historians whom Gerver references are Gail Brayborn and Penny Summerfield, who present their opinion in their book, *Out of the Cage: Women's Experiences in Two World Wars*, that "[t]he belief that men and women naturally occupy separate spheres within which they pursue quite different tasks was not shaken during either war."¹²⁶ Brayborn and Summerfield are correct in arguing that males and females are inherently allocated to specific groups, and in that they do not infiltrate each other's groups in obvious ways during wartime; however, much truth can be gained by examining the subtleties in perception changes that occurred during this time. As this study has aimed to show, looking for

evidence of large shifts in gender spheres may simply reinforce ideas of patriarchal gender relations, but analyzing the small ways in which attitudes have been modified, such as this instance at DePauw, provides insight into how the ideas of female citizenship and higher education have evolved and how they are understood in today's world.

DePauw's campus during World War I reflected these attitude shifts as women took over men's positions of power when they left for war. Even on this small campus in Greencastle, Indiana, slight changes were made continuously over a period of four years that would contribute to the nation's movement towards equality for women. Men were accredited with most of the glory in World War I, and have been since, but taking a closer look into the politics on the home front, it is clear that women had a monumental impact on the general ideology of citizenship, and what it meant to be a college educated American. The experiences at universities during wartime enforced the imperative of males and females to receive a college education. As more American men were being called up for the draft, an increased amount of responsibility was placed on college students to remain in school and receive an education. When college men began to enlist, those responsibilities landed on the college women. The days of seeing college as a chance to experiment and find oneself were gone, and were soon replaced by a governmental urge for students to fulfill their duties as American citizens. DePauw women proved that they could answer this call and meet national expectations.

The impacts that DePauw women during World War I had on the nation will probably never be recognized to the extent that they should be; their wartime

actions will never be fully attributed to the national changes they helped provoke. But despite these oversights, the females at DePauw during World War I are accredited for their accomplishments in the legacies they left behind. Every time a female basketball player is recognized in the National Collegiate Athletic Association, every time a girl serves as Editor-in-Chief of a college newspaper, and every time a woman casts a ballot, the women who were present at DePauw from 1914-1918 have helped, in seemingly unrecognizable ways, to make it happen. This case study has exhibited the importance of looking below the surface and identifying small trends that help explain bigger phenomena. The particular experience of females at DePauw during World War I reflects how the reinterpretation of both women's roles and the roles of higher education influenced Americans' understanding of citizenship in the 20th century and beyond.

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- ²⁷ Clifton Jackson Phillips, *DePauw: a Pictorial History*, (Greencastle: DePauw U.P., 1987), 135.
- ²⁸ Phillips, *DePauw: a Pictorial History*, 135.
- ²⁹ Ibid., 61.
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- ³² Manhart, *DePauw through the years*, 267.
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