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Pigskins, Parsons, and a Crimson Whirlwind
SpheX Club Lecture--Julius Sigler--January 30, 1997

Recent speakers have provided much for members to think about. I was particularly struck by Dave Petty's thoughtful presentation "Are We Getting Better?" I believe strongly in the idea of progress, that progress is possible and that it is possible, even preferable, to be optimistic about life. Many of us, however, often wax nostalgic about the "good old days," a time in the halcyon past when life moved at a slower pace, when we knew our neighbors, when there was less crime and life was generally better. I have particularly felt that way in recent years about sports, which have been an important part of my life all my life. While I still enjoy the atmosphere surrounding college sports, I am not so enthusiastic as I was, even a few years ago. The disappearance of anything resembling sportsmanship as I view it, along with the "winning is everything" attitude which dominates our very lives concerns me. I see the taunting and posturing even in the little leagues, where doting parents approvingly label the behavior as "cute." I see the use of football helmets as weapons, the increasing numbers of concussions and shudder to think of the long-term physical costs of playing the game. There is the money--for coaches and players--both under the table and legal. Students at Virginia Tech, Virginia, and even William and Mary are well aware of the expensive cars driven by football players. And there is the attitude that athletes are above the law.

This past weekend the nation celebrated "Super Bowl Sunday," a modern celebration of what Robert Bellah once labeled American civil religion. God was invoked, the national anthem was sung, flags were unfurled, fireworks were set off, homage was paid to the appropriate saints, including Vince Lombardi, and prayers were said. Across the land, groups gathered before their televisions to celebrate this secular Thanksgiving; to watch, to cheer, perhaps even to take communion in the form of beer and nachos.

As I was casting about for a topic for this talk, I went to Jones Memorial Library to look at newspapers from 1897--one hundred years ago--just to see what was happening then. I found fleeting reference to an incident which I had not known about--an incident which meshed with some other things I did know--and the tiniest germ of an idea emerged. Whether that germ has developed into a full-blown infection will be determined in next few minutes. A century-old newspaper provided a glimpse of the University of Virginia and the public perception of college football--which was the only kind of football which existed a century ago.

During the last 30 years of the 19th century, football evolved from an informal diversion on the part of "preppies" from the northeast into a serious business involving students, administrations, college alumni, and multitudes of interested spectators. In the beginning of intercollegiate sports, students organized all athletic clubs, including football teams. Students scheduled the games, managed the finances (such as they were), and determined the rules. The team manager or captain decided who would play, how they would play and determined the training regimen. I have a letter from a student manager at Emory and Henry to his counterpart at Virginia Tech, which illustrates what I'm saying. By the 1890s thousands of spectators attended Thanksgiving Day football games across the nation--4000 for a UVA-UNC clash in Richmond and as many as 40,000 in New York City. Games were reported on the front pages and clearly, a lot of money was made. Although the myth of college football is that it was played for the sake of the game itself, merely for the fun of it, winning quickly became the only thing of importance. Winning was more important than any ideas of morality, amateurism, or even sportsmanship.

The spread of football at the college level paralleled the rapid growth of higher education during these three decades. Reputations of academic institutions are mercurial at best, often built on handfuls of moonlight as it were. At this time in American history, perhaps only Harvard could take its reputation for granted and not all of its alumni agreed that it was any special place. College administrations and supporters began to equate size and public attention with greatness. Thus they strove to increase enrollments, expand endowments, and develop new programs. Men such as Johns Hopkins, Leland Stanford, Jr., and John D. Rockefeller provided the wealth to create new private universities. Stanford University officials were not amused when the student body voted almost unanimously to change its team names to the "Robber Barons," when they abandoned the "Indian." More established colleges, particularly in the Northeast, were enthusiastically supported by industrial and commercial leaders. By the end of the century, federal land grants and more generous appropriations of state legislatures inaugurated the era of the large state universities.

Colleges quickly concluded that football contributed to their drive for larger student bodies and more liberal benefactions. Competition for students was intense. In 1878 the president of Princeton wrote an alumnus in Kentucky: "You will confer a great favor on us if you will get . . . the college noticed in the Louisville papers . . . We must persevere in our efforts to get students from your region . . . Mr. Brand Ballard has won us [a] great reputation as captain of the football team which has beaten both Harvard and Yale."

Football seemed an even more potent weapon in the battle for students among the land-grant institutions and colleges of the South and West. In 1892, John D. Rockefeller endowed the University of Chicago, and William Rainey Harper, a Yale graduate, became its first president. Harper immediately began to build a faculty by raiding the faculties of the nation's most prestigious universities and he hired Amos Alonzo Stagg, a famous Yale player, as football coach, making him the first coach with faculty status in the country. In response to Stagg's inquiry about Harper's aims for intercollegiate athletics, Harper replied: "I am most heartily in favor of them. I want you to develop teams which we can send around the country and knock out all the [other] colleges. We will give them [the players] a palace car and a vacation too." Stagg later revealed that during halftime of a game in which Chicago trailed Wisconsin 12-0, Harper spoke to the team. "Boys, Mr. Rockefeller has just announced a gift of \$3,000,000 to the University. He believed that the University is to be great. The way you played in the first half leads me to wonder whether we really have the spirit of greatness in ambition. I wish you would make up your minds to win this game and show that we have it." Chicago won 22-12.

Football developed intense alumni loyalty, even among persons who were not alumni. For this purpose, it was deemed much better than fond memories of alma mater. "You do not remember whether Thorpwright was valedictorian or not," wrote a young college alumnus in 1890, "but you can never forget that glorious run of his in the football game." Alumni organized alumni chapters and sponsored football-related events. Colleges worked to convert this alumni enthusiasm into financial support. In turn the alumni demanded a price, one that the colleges seemed quite willing to pay. They demanded winning teams and a participation in management of the school's football program. By the turn of the century, alumni were recruiting athletes, raising money for sports, and assisting in the administration of college athletics.

College football attracted persons who wanted or needed to be identified with a particular

college or university. Following a Yale defeat in 1889, the New York *Herald* reported, "Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt [who had never attended a college] and his son William went back to the big house on Fifth Avenue and sadly removed the Yale flag that had floated so bravely all day." Newspapers provided their readers with detailed lists and descriptions of the fashionable set who attended the games. The New York *Herald*, referring to those present at the Yale-Princeton game of 1892, reported that "Mrs. William C. Whitney had a conspicuous box, trimmed profusely in Yale colors and beautifully decorated with a bevy of young girls."

Football also was thought to create school spirit. In fact, football promoted a college-wide community of cheerleaders rather than scholars. College presidents welcomed the change, for football assisted in making the peer group the principal force for orderly student behavior rather than the college authorities themselves. By 1903, Yale, probably the most successful team commercially in the nation, generated \$106,000 from football, a figure that represented one-eighth of Yale's gross income or the equivalent of the combined budgets of the medical, divinity, and law schools at Yale.

The game was rough. John W. Heisman, the great Georgia Tech coach, played at Brown and Pennsylvania from 1887 through 1891. He wrote: "Players of my time had to be real iron men, because we played two games each week--Wednesdays and Saturdays.

"Once a game started, a player could not leave unless he actually was hurt, or, at least, pleaded injury. If the captain wanted to substitute, he would say, 'Get your arm hurt, or something.' Once my captain whispered to me, 'Get your neck broke, Heisman.'

"We wore jerseys and shorts of great variety. We had no helmets or pads of any kind; in fact, one who wore home-made pads was regarded as a sissy. Hair was the only head protection we knew, and in preparation for football we would let it grow from the first of June. . .

"We didn't have many sweaters in those days, but we all wore snug-fitting canvas jackets over our jerseys. . . the tackling in that day wasn't clean-cut and around the legs as it is today. All too often it was wild, haphazard clutching with the hands, and when runners wore loose garments they were often stopped by a defensive player grabbing a handful of loose clothing. Some players wore pants, or jackets, of black horsehair. When you made a fumble grab, you lost your fingernails. . . arguments followed most every decision the referee made. The whole team took part, so that half the time the officials scarcely knew who was captain. More than that, every player was privileged to argue as much as he pleased with any and every player of the opposition. The player who was a good linguist always was a priceless asset. . . players of one side were permitted to grab hold of their runners anywhere they could and push, pull or yank them along in any direction that would make the ball advance. Sometimes two enemy tacklers would be clinging to the runner's legs, and trying to hold him back, while several team-mates of the runner had hold of his arms, head, hair, or wherever they could attach themselves, and were pulling him in the other direction. I still wonder how some of the ball carriers escaped dismemberment."

On October 30, 1897, the University of Virginia defeated the University of Georgia 17-4.¹ The Richmond *Dispatch* reported that "Everything went smoothly, and there was a surprising absence of slugging and accidents until near the game's end." Shortly before the game ended, Von Gammon, a tackle for the Bulldogs, tripped as he tried to make a tackle. The young man was knocked out, never regained consciousness, and died a short time later. The newspaper wrote that "His accident was due to chance, and is not chargeable to any dirty work." The Atlanta

Constitution editorially noted the absence of foul play; saying simply that the visitors were too big, too heavy, and too experienced.

Within a week, the entire state of Georgia was in an uproar. The University of Georgia voted to abandon football and decided to construct a huge bicycle track on their playing field so that students could compete with the nation's best cyclists. The city of Atlanta passed an ordinance prohibiting football and urged the Georgia General Assembly to do the same. Within days, the lower house voted almost unanimously to do so, setting a penalty of a \$1000 fine and a year in the penitentiary, or both. The Georgia Senate eventually followed suit, but the Governor vetoed the action.

A few days after the fatal accident, the *Richmond Dispatch* printed the following poem on its editorial page.

Break, break, break
On thy cold, gray stones, O sea!
But, ah as a breaker, you never can take
The record away from me.
For I, on a college foot-ball team,
For seasons three have "fit."
And during that reign of brawn supreme,
I have broken as follows, to wit:
One collarbone, two shoulder-blades
Two arms, one leg, one nose
The hearts of a dozen modern maids,
Eight fingers and seven toes.

Dr. Noah K. Davis, a member of the UVA faculty, joined with the King's Daughters of Richmond, in writing and circulating a letter bemoaning the negative influence of the sport upon scholastic achievement. Mr. Davis called for the Virginia team to disband, but that appeal fell upon deaf ears. The annual Thanksgiving Day game with UNC was approaching and it would culminate a successful season for the Wahoos. UNC briefly considered cancelling the game, but decided to play it and to prohibit students from travelling to Richmond to see it.

In the pages of the *Dispatch*, one female letter-writer labeled the game as mercilessly "brutal," and went on to suggest that the boys could work out their need for physical activity by plowing and planting. A reply from a Richmond College player argued that football was no more dangerous than many other sports. He wrote that women always oppose those things in which they cannot participate! Yet another argued that football was dangerous, but so is life itself. He provided statistics compiled by Walter Camp, who was hardly a disinterested source, which claimed that since 1894 fatalities in other sports far exceeded those in football: swimming, 1350; boating, 986; hunting, 654; bicycling, 264; horseback riding, 333; ice boating, 22; baseball, 6; tennis, 4; golf, 2; and football, 11.

The *New York Times*, in a November 10th editorial, joined the fray, arguing that violence was not the problem, but that the real evil was the amount of time and money involved. "Studies are being neglected, and mounting gate receipts are commercializing what should be merely a

college sport. There is something not quite nice in the notion of young gentlemen exhibiting themselves in contests for money."

In the Virginia General Assembly, Senator W K. Barksdale from Halifax, with the backing of the King's Daughters and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, introduced a bill to ban football in the Commonwealth. The Barksdale Bill cleared Committee by a 5-4 vote.

Two days later, the bill was defeated by the full Senate. Under a headline proclaiming "CAN PLAY FOOTBALL," the Richmond *Dispatch* reported a lively debate in front of crowded galleries. Senator Barksdale argued that he was not seeding cheap publicity. Football was a demoralizing influence upon national life. He said that he would rather serve with the rebel army of General Maximo Gomez in Cuba than play on a college football team. Chances of survival were much, much better. The only thing to be said for football was that it taught a man "to kick like a mule and butt like a billygoat!"

Senator George W. Morris of Charlottesville then attacked the Barksdale Bill, first pointing out that Senator Barksdale had only attended one football game in his entire life and Professor Davis had never seen a game. He characterized the professor as "a man of books, one who slept all day and read all night," arguing that if other faculty did not protest, then it was obvious to all that football did not jeopardize the interests of the University. Morris argued that legislators from areas where the game was played and understood supported the game. He went on to say that even Senator Barksdale realized that boys will be boys. Ban football and they would convert their energies into more destructive behaviors. Finally Morris argued his trump card--that the Barksdale bill was paternalistic and diametrically opposed to the conservative argument "That country is best governed which is governed the least."

Mother, may I go out to swim?

Don't ask me, my son,

Senator Barksdale undertakes

The family now to run."

Senator Foster of Norfolk described his disgust at the brutality of the sport, adding that it "pained" him to see young ladies in the galleries favoring such outrages. Senator Flanagan of Powhatan County described the bill was "paternalism run mad!" A Middlesex County spokesman said he wouldn't ride a bicycle or play football for \$1,000 but he would most certainly vote against legislation which prevented others from so doing.

Senator Barksdale rose to defend his bill. He had recently seen a football game in which he thought a player had been killed. "I said there is a dead man, and my bill will be law certain!" To the laughter in the gallery, Barksdale added that although that individual recovered, no prize fight could exceed football in brutality! The opposition claimed that football promoted sobriety, but the senator had come to Richmond on a train bearing University of Virginia fans bound for the Thanksgiving Day game and had observed just a bit of drinking. As for the contention that football makes fine men, he observed that the land which gave birth to Washington, Lee, Jackson, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe did not require the services of coaches to rear its sons! He concluded with thanks to the Almighty that the King's Daughters and the WCTU *were* on his side. But shortly thereafter his bill was defeated, 21-12.

This was but the first battle in a 20-year series of skirmishes in the Commonwealth regarding football. John Singleton Mosby demanded its abolition. The sport killed 18 students in

1905. It was in real danger of being abolished and perhaps would have been, had not President Theodore Roosevelt forced sweeping changes in the rules, which gradually made the game more wide open and eliminated some of the more bone-crushing formations such as the flying wedge. According to Virginius Dabney, the early part of the century was marked by the arrival at the University of Virginia of "professional athletes in disguise" who had "registered from every section of the country." When President Alderman took over in 1904, he appointed an investigative committee, headed by Professor Echols, which eventually recommended sweeping reforms that put a stop to athletic professionalism at the University. In 1909, Archer Christian, a popular student, was fatally injured in a game against Georgetown. Again there were calls to abolish the games, but, as before, rules changes made the game less dangerous. In 1915, Virginia beat Yale 15-0, the first time that a southern university had ever accomplished that particular feat. As a side note, in the fall of 1919 [one of many lackluster years for Virginia football] the Cavaliers hosted an obscure team from Danville, Kentucky. Several hours before the game, a young man named McMillan showed up at LaRowe's pool room, introduced himself as the visitor's quarterback, and offered to bet even money to all comers that he personally would score more points than the Virginia team. He was "Bo" McMillan and, having scored three touchdowns in leading the Centre College "Praying Colonels" to a 49-7 victory over the home team, he left Charlottesville with substantially more cash in his pockets than he brought with him. Now a brief word about the Parsons and the Crimson Whirlwind.

In the spring of 1903, at the invitation of Rev. Frank Bullare, Henry McWane and several other church and business leaders, Josephus Hopwood came to Lynchburg to look at a bankrupt hotel and its grounds as a possible site for a college. Hopwood convinced his hosts to purchase the Westover Hotel for that purpose and in the fall of the same year, Virginia Christian College first opened its doors. Hopwood was an educational visionary and a strong Christian leader. His views of education were clear to all those who came to this new college. He believed in education for young men and women which prepared them to be leaders in society, to raise Christian families, and to be able to reflect on the meaning of life. He did not like football. He wrote in 1903, "College endowments may increase, but while students use half their study time smoking, swearing, football playing and general sporting, the other part being coached, or cramming themselves to meet an examination of which they live in fear, they have no time for real study. . ." The *Argonaut* of 1907 explained "we do not have the fierce gridiron combats, but special attention is shown to baseball and tennis." What we would recognize as athletic competition began in the spring of 1904, when Dr. Hopwood gave permission for students to remove some trees and construct a baseball diamond, which was located in front of the current Hopwood Hall. By 1907, the College had a published intercollegiate baseball schedule and basketball for men and women soon followed. These teams, known as the Fighting Parsons, were entirely student run clubs with no outside coaches.

Given the national disrepute which the excesses of collegiate football had earned, Hopwood's attitude is understandable. In 1917, however, College President J.T.T. Hundley began an effort to broaden the base of support for the College. He convinced the Board of Trustees to change the name to Lynchburg College and he allowed students to organize a football team. In 1917, the College had no field suitable for football practice or play; football players walked to the fair grounds, where the present city stadium complex is located, for practice each

day. In 1919, a football practice field was completed on the site of the present Shellenberger Field. The first football team was, as were baseball and basketball teams, an entirely student-run affair; the student manager really managed, making schedules and travel arrangements.

For 15 autumns teams clad in crimson and gray took the field on Saturday afternoons to test their mettle against Hampden-Sidney College, Roanoke College, Ramdolph-Macon College and larger schools such as Wake Forest University and the College of William and Mary.

According to the Lynchburg *News* of October 21, 1917, "Virginia Christian College's first football team, playing its first real game yesterday, dropped a bomb into the ranks of Virginia "prep" schools when it outplayed in every department and defeated the scrappy Randolph-Macon Academy aggregation on the fair grounds. . . The Parsons in the second and third quarters pushed across touchdowns for a victory which was altogether surprising to the local fans present. . The VCC eleven played the entire game with no substitution and no penalty."

The two wins and three losses of the first season was typical.. Over fifteen seasons, the Hornets compiled a record of 41 wins, 62 defeats, and 9 ties. Despite some lackluster seasons, football grew steadily in popularity from year to year. Pep rallies, complete with huge bonfires and speeches, were held on the nights before home games. Home games were played at the fair grounds until 1926, when a new Municipal Athletic Park was completed at 12th and Court Streets. Existing photographs of games played at this stadium often show large expanses of empty bleachers, indicating that relatively few townspeople attended the games.

The 1919 team, the first to be called "Hornets," streaked to an undefeated 5-0-1 record, beating William and Mary, Roanoke, and Elon. In 1921, the Hornets gained a "moral" victory over a much larger team from Trinity College (on the verge of becoming Duke University) with a 14-13 loss. In 1922, LC beat Wake Forest University in what some regard as its greatest win 20-7. The fleet halfback "Chick" Witt ' returned a kickoff 90 yards for a score, and Emerson Woodside gained 80 yards rushing in this huge upset. Both the student newspaper and the *News* often referred to the teams as the "Crimson Whirlwind," although I can find no official adoption of that team nickname. A 1928 headline proclaimed "Crimson Whirlwind Downs Randolph-Macon 6-0." That touchdown was scored by outstanding tackle Raine Sydnor, who blocked a punt and recovered it for a touchdown. Far more colorful were the individual nicknames typical of the era. "Bull" Rardin, "Cocky" Cromwell, "Tooey" Saunders, "Red" Allen, "Boogie" Myers, "Stud" Willis, "Caesar" Clark, "Hoss" Taylor, "Kid" Nee, "Jayhew" Mayhew, "Deacon" Cox, "Tubby" Harmon and "Tubby" Shank, "Mingo" Parker, "Bambino" West, "Sarge" Kitchin, "Hump" Campbell, "Fats" Newcomer, "Dodi" Ross, "Sis" Perry, "Bumps" Rose, "Flash" Carpenter, and "Ches-eye" Gibson are but a few of the appellations given members of the Hornet teams by their teammates. While the origins of some of these bogus names are obvious, others merely leave one to wonder. .

Many of these players were outstanding athletes, excelling in more than one sport. Several were good enough to have played on any team in the state and were recognized with All-State honors. Glen "Bull" Rardin anchored the line and also starred in basketball and track. Harold Bell was an All-State end, as well as a star performer in track and basketball. Harrison McMains starred in football, basketball, tennis, and Frank Sutzenfield [one of three Sutzenfield brothers at LC] was captain of the football, baseball, and basketball teams. William Lee "Bumps" Rose starred in football, basketball and baseball. George Parker, J.T.T. Hundley, Jr., and G. B.

"Bennie" Arnold were also outstanding football players who starred in other sports. Cloudy Clem Sydnor was one of the fastest and best halfbacks in the state.

The Lynchburg *News*, the *Critograph*, and the *Argonauts* tell tales of glory won on the gridiron by these men and their teammates. A traditional Thanksgiving day game was played, usually against Roanoke College. In 1920, trailing 7-6 late in the game, LC kicked off, but was assessed a 15-yard penalty. Captain Alfred "Boogie" Myers then kicked the ball more than 70 yards. It was mishandled, deflected into the end zone, where a Roanoke player was forced to fall on it for a safety. LC won 8-7. Eight years later, Roanoke returned the favor. The *News* reported that "Stealing some of Lynchburg College's thunder that has been buried behind the clouds of time since the days of "Chick" Witt, the said thunder being the Statue of Liberty play, the Maroons of Roanoke College marched to a one touchdown victory."

Throughout its fifteen years of existence, the adjective most often applied to LC football was "scrappy." Reports in the local newspapers seem to confirm that while Hornet teams were often outmanned, they were rarely outhustled. Ralph Shank recalls that "we had fifteen good players, and about thirty in all." For him, "football was a fun affair." But toward the end of the football era, those covering the games for the Lynchburg *News* seem to note a shift in attitude. Quotes from 1931 newspapers imply some dissatisfaction: "Hornets Show Only Flash of Power in Drab Grid Game," "Hampden-Sidney Hand Hornets Another Beating in Weird Tilt," "Hampden-Sidney Tigers brushed aside LC 18-0 yesterday at the Stadium while a handful of spectators watched the uninteresting contest."

During the 1931 season, the paper reported that several players violated training rules.... "when the team has to depend on so few candidates and then have some of them break faith....it is obvious that a hard road faces the fellows that are willing to carry on." A 19 - 0 loss to Rollins College in Winter Park on December 3, 1931, was the last hurrah for the "Crimson Whirlwind." Apparently that team did not return to Lynchburg for many days after the game.

At the height of the Great Depression, trying desperately to keep the college afloat, President Hundley, who had started the sport, decided to discontinue it. Reporting to the Board of Trustees in June of 1932, he wrote: "We have found that the subsidization of athletes, particularly football men, has become so prevalent that it was impossible for us to turn out teams comparable with other schools adopting such policies. In addition, the operation of football at Lynchburg College has cost us large sums of money which we could not afford . . . I personally hated to see football stricken from our activities but we were faced with three alternatives; either to abolish football, to play the men who came to us in the normal course of events and have them slaughtered and the teams overwhelmed or else to go out and buy up players. It would seem that there was only one step under the circumstances which we could take and that has been taken." Ralph Shank later reflected that "When we played football, it was a sport. Today, it's a profession. I think the College made the right decision." Two years after LC abandoned the sport, the popular University of Virginia football coach, Fred Dawson, said that "I am convinced that at Virginia where there are no athletic scholarships or other equivalents that bring in football players, the football coach is under a great handicap; so great, in fact, that I am content to step aside and see what someone else can do with the situation." Virginia struggled with the same three alternatives which faced the College and, I might add, struggled with them for many years.

In fact, recruitment of football players violated the amateur code to which, in principle, all

colleges adhered. Nonetheless, according to the Carnegie study of 1929, almost every major football power had intensive, highly organized recruiting systems. The colleges sent out thousands of letters to prospective athletes, invited some of them to campus for visits, and promised the better ones a subsidy. Unlike today, coaches did not travel about the country visiting high school athletes; rather, they relied mostly upon the college's reputation and alumni to spread the message. Schools met the financial requirements of their athletes in subtle ways, mostly under the table. Some players received "academic" scholarships; others benefitted from various jobs offered by the athletic departments. Colleges in the Southeastern and Southwestern conferences were among the first to avoid such hypocrisy simply by granting "athletic scholarships." The Carnegie Commission report concluded: "Apparently the ethical bearing of intercollegiate football contests and their scholastic aspects are of secondary importance to the winning of victories and financial success."

The debate over amateurism continued to rage. Some argued for voluntary compliance to amateur principles. When first formed, the NCAA relied entirely upon moral persuasion to discipline its membership. In fact, the financial aspects of big time college football almost made it impossible for schools to comply with amateurism, even had they desired to do so. Universities owed considerable sums for athletic plants, and football revenue supported other varsity sports. Winning teams kept the alumni happy and college administrations equated happy alumni with larger contributions. Winning teams assured generous appropriations from the state legislatures. Winning teams attracted new students. And, local merchants benefitted immensely from the "big game" weekends. As Blair Cherry, football coach of the University of Texas, bluntly wrote: "In the final analysis the public, not the colleges, runs college football."

Others demanded the complete abolition of college football, believing, as did Josephus Hopwood, that it represented a serious misplacement of values. Robert Maynard Hutchins, who became president of the University of Chicago in 1929, led this school of critics. He did not believe that the purpose of higher education was to build character nor did he believe the pragmatic idea that truths were proximate and to be found through the interaction of speculation and experience. Instead Hutchins believed in a world of ultimate truths. Thus, the sole function of the university should be the development of the intellect for the perception of these higher truths. In rejecting the idea of football as "character-building," Hutchins argued that corruption was inevitable and unavoidable in "big-time" football. In 1939 he persuaded the trustees of the University of Chicago to abolish the sport. This dramatic and highly publicized move had little impact on the other colleges. Only those schools suffering disastrous financial losses from football, followed Chicago's example.

Any of you who follow college sports know all too well what has happened since the thirties. Colleges who could not or would not pay the price either followed Chicago's lead and abolished the sport, or else followed the movement in the early fifties to de-emphasize it by refusing athletic scholarships. NCAA Division 3 college athletics may be the last vestige of a world of intercollegiate sports that never really was. Although recruiting is crucial to success, even at that level, although winning is important, and although some colleges continue to shade the rules regarding support of student athletes, Division 3 sports are essentially amateur. But they are not the sports the public pays to see, nor are their athletes much emulated by our young people.

Has the game changed? Certainly. Is it more violent? Maybe. Modern players are better protected, but they are undoubtedly larger, perhaps faster, and their protection serves to allow more violent collisions. Is money more of a factor than it was? Only to the extent that so much more money is available. Are players less amateur and more professional? It's doubtful. So I return to the attitude with which I began this discussion. What, precisely, causes my present dis-ease with sports? I, who once knew every lineup in major league baseball, who struggled to root for pathetic teams such as the University of Florida, the Redskins, the Cavaliers, now find only occasional diversions in big-time sports. So, I conclude this ramble by asking this distinguished group: Are sports, as characterized fairly or unfairly by big-time college football, worse today than yesterday? Is football more violent? Is sportsmanship less evident? Should we simply pay college athletes and avoid the hypocrisy and cheating? How does one fulfill the role of "student-athlete" when the sport itself requires full-time commitment? Those who argue for public support of sports and sports facilities often claim that sports builds character. Do sports build character in our young people? If so, what kinds of character do they build?

1. In addition to the newspapers cited, see also the excellent article by John H. Moore, in *Virginia Cavalcade*, Winter 1962-63, pg. 28-33.