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Integrating Immigrants: Morality and Loyalty in U.S. Naturalization Practice

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Abstract

The issues of how to integrate immigrants and ensure the integrity of citizenship have become passionate topics of public discourse and policy debate in recent years in a number of immigrant receiving countries. Behind these debates are often unarticulated questions about how to ensure loyalty to the state and to particular conceptions of national identity among prospective citizens.

These issues have been explicitly debated in the United States since the enactment of the first naturalization law in 1790, which require that immigrants who wish to become citizens demonstrate their good moral character and attachment to the country. This article explores the ways that these morality and loyalty requirements have historically been applied and institutionalized in U.S. naturalization practice, particularly through government sponsored immigrant education programs. It does so first through a discussion of the interpretation of these laws, and then through a case study of the original 1914 Bureau of Naturalization initiative that resulted in the incorporation of these laws into naturalization testing and citizenship education for immigrants. It concludes with a discussion of the implications of this history for current debates in both the United States and elsewhere on immigrant integration

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Integrating Immigrants: Morality and Loyalty in U.S. Naturalization Practice

Morality and loyalty have historically played a central role in determining who can become a citizen of the United States. Most familiar are the immigration restrictions enacted at the turn of the last century excluding people characterized as “idiots,” convicts, or polygamists, the racial exclusions and nationality quotas that were based in part on the assumed moral qualities of different national groups, and the exclusion of suspected political subversives. But concern with the caliber and characteristics of the populace has been expressed even more unequivocally in U.S. naturalization practice, specifically in laws requiring immigrants who wish to become citizens to demonstrate their good moral character and attachment to the principles of the Constitution. Unlike the qualitative restrictions on immigration, which largely emerged in the nativist late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries and have almost all been abandoned, these naturalization requirements have been a part of U.S. law since Congress first began regulating naturalization at the turn of the nineteenth century and remain the principle non-residency requirements for becoming a U.S. citizen. What do these requirements for good moral character and attachment mean in the context of defining who can become an American today? Are they simply benign, if slightly anachronistic holdovers from an earlier period, or do they have some more substantive role in defining American citizenship or national identity?

Historically, the good moral character and attachment requirements, along with the ability to demonstrate knowledge of U.S. history and government, have found expression as the basis of the naturalization exam that all prospective U.S. citizens must pass. When the U.S.

government first developed educational materials to help immigrants prepare for that exam in the early twentieth century, the bureaucrats at the Bureau of Naturalization chose, for a variety of reasons that will be discussed below, to privilege morality and loyalty (attachment) over the requirement that immigrants demonstrate their knowledge of U.S. history and government. In doing so, they designed an educational program that focused more on inculcating standards of proper American behavior than on civics and history (Gordon 2004). Through the naturalization exam, and the accompanying immigrant education program, an understanding of American citizenship was constructed in which private morality stands as evidence for loyalty to the country. Inspired by naturalization law, this understanding became further institutionalized as the immigrant education program evolved throughout the twentieth century. Moreover, this link between morality, loyalty, and good citizenship continues to inform a wide variety of debates about citizenship in the United States broadly construed, including the ability of homosexuals to effectively serve in the military, the criminalization of undocumented immigrants, and the current U.S. Office of Citizenship effort to revise the citizenship test for immigrants so that it will ensure their “civic learning, patriotism, and attachment” to the country (Aguilar 2005).

Manufacturing loyalty

The United States is certainly not alone in its concern with the qualities of its citizens and potential citizens. In fact, part of what makes the U.S. experience particularly interesting is that questions of how to integrate immigrants and ensure the integrity of citizenship have become passionate topics of public discourse and policy debate in a number of immigrant receiving countries (with loyalty to the state and to particular conceptions of national identity often at the

core of the debates). As a result, it is of broad scholarly interest to take a close look at the origins of this particular aspect of U.S. naturalization practice.

There are a variety of scholarly approaches to understanding how states try to enforce or encourage allegiance among their citizens. One way is to view politics materialistically, focusing on state control of material resources or the ability to coerce loyalty through the threat of punishment. Another type of approach is based on an “ideational” understanding of political power, embodied in scholarship that seeks to understand how ideas, symbols, and ideologies are employed to generate legitimacy or hegemony for a regime by constituting ethnic, class, religious, or national identities (Wedeen 1999). Examples of ideational approaches are civic nationalist understandings of group cohesion based on allegiance to liberal and democratic constitutional principles (Habermas 1996) and Gramscian inspired understandings of hegemony that seek to explain how ideas get established as common sense by being portrayed as merely descriptive of what already exists (Hall 1988, 44 - 46), among many others. What these diverse approaches have in common, however, is an emphasis on the ability of ideas or stories to both generate political identities and sustain political regimes.

Rogers Smith’s (2003) work on the construction of political identities suggests a third way that is potentially more helpful in understanding how states implement citizen-constructing policies. Building on the ideational emphasis on ideas, culture, and persuasion, Smith argues that even leaders who primarily rely on the exertion of economic, political, or violent force to consolidate power need stories of peoplehood to inspire sacrifice and a sense of common destiny. His major concern, however, lies not with describing these stories, but with the nuts and bolts of politics: understanding how leaders cultivate and, more importantly, exploit stories of

peoplehood to create a sense of political community and constitute members' political identities, which, in turn, will enhance the leaders' own political capital. Smith's explanation, and his major contribution to purely ideational explanations of political allegiance, centers on his account of the role of political institutions.

In Smith's understanding, attachment-generating stories will have long-term purchase and generate political capital only to the extent they: 1) draw on existing conceptions of peoplehood; and 2) are institutionalized through laws and policies that, in turn, help to construct identities in more concrete ways.¹ Unlike the top-down or elite-centric understandings commonly seen in ideational explanations, Smith contends that symbols, ideas, and ideologies with political efficacy must be drawn from existing and broadly held conceptions of peoplehood. Similarly, Smith suggests that when these existing conceptions have long-term purchase, it is usually because they have been institutionalized in laws and policies. For example, existing white-only understandings of American peoplehood were institutionalized during the post World War II years through unequal application of government funded housing loans. These practices encouraged the development of all-white suburbs which, in turn, reinforced pre-existing racist ideas about belonging for many white Americans.

The Bureau of Naturalization citizenship education program is a good example of the sort of institutionalized story Smith is talking about: as part of an active government effort to create and disseminate stories of peoplehood, the textbooks and educational programs produced under the program aimed at teaching immigrants what they needed to know, think, and feel in order to become good, loyal, American citizens. Analysis of the legal, theoretical, and organizational origins of the program suggests that both its ideational and institutional foundations were

important factors influencing administrators' abilities to establish a program with long-term impact in terms of defining American national identity. As Smith suggests, the "stories" or ideals of Americanism promoted in the program materials were buttressed by their institutionalization in citizenship law and policy, and vice versa.

In what follows, I discuss the ways that the good moral character and attachment requirements have historically been applied and institutionalized in U.S. naturalization practice, particularly through the Bureau of Naturalization citizenship education program. I do this first through a discussion of the interpretation of these laws by naturalization courts, and then through a case study of the original 1914 Bureau of Naturalization initiative that resulted in the incorporation of these laws into naturalization testing and citizenship education for immigrants. I conclude with a discussion of the implications of this history for current debates on immigration and naturalization policy.

Legislating morality and allegiance

At its origin, the U.S. Bureau of Naturalization's assumption of administrative responsibility for naturalization of immigrants in 1906 was steeped in questions of morality. Charges of widespread naturalization irregularities in advance of a St. Louis election led to public debate about the growing instances of fraud carried out by those ineligible to naturalize and corrupt officials who sold access to citizenship in exchange for votes or money (Smith 1997). Congress acted to rectify the situation, passing a naturalization act that created the Immigration and Naturalization Bureau and granted it authority to promote uniform naturalization practices. While the courts were (and continue to be) formally responsible for

granting citizenship, the Bureau of Naturalization was charged with enforcing the law, administering the processing of naturalization petitions, examining petitioners and submitting its recommendations to the naturalization courts, and providing federal oversight of the decisions of the naturalization courts.

The administrative practice of evaluating and processing candidates for naturalization was informed first and foremost by a substantial and growing body of citizenship law that provided categories and qualities of people eligible or ineligible for citizenship. Table I outlines major citizenship legislation in effect when the bureau took administrative responsibility for naturalization in 1906 and began its citizenship program in 1914.

Table 1

Exclusion	Year
All but free white persons of good moral character	1790
Immigrants holding titles and statuses of Nobility	1795
African Americans, Indians not taxed	1802
All but free white persons, persons of African descent, and aliens of African nativity	1870
Chinese and Mongolians	1882
Those unable to swear and provide witness affidavits declaring that they are not anarchists	1903
Those who don't know English	1907

In addition, during the early years of the program, further exclusions were added through the 1917 ban on immigration from the "Asiatic barred zone" and the subsequent 1924 Immigration Act, which not only severely limited immigration but effectively barred Japanese by excluding people ineligible for citizenship from immigration.

While outright exclusion from naturalization defined "citizen" in a very concrete way, the ways the citizen was defined through the administrative practices of the Bureau of Naturalization were more subtle and more important in terms of constructing identities for those who were allowed to become citizens. These practices, particularly the practice of interviewing and examining petitioners for naturalization, were instrumental in both refining the legal boundaries of inclusion and exclusion and in inspiring the broader understandings of citizenship that were materialized in the citizenship education program.

The naturalization process begins with submission of the naturalization petition (from 1795 until 1952 that was preceded by the submission of a declaration of intention at least three years prior), an investigation, and then the naturalization interview, which includes an examination. The examination and investigation originally covered two main topics – good moral character and attachment to the principles of the Constitution (in the sense of loyalty or an emotional attachment to basic principles). These two categories and, since 1940, knowledge and understanding of the Constitution and government of the United States, subsume other qualifications for naturalization, such as absence of a criminal record, loyalty, and rejection of certain political ideologies. Each requirement is rooted in naturalization law and in a long history of administrative interpretations of the law based on congressional mandate, decisions of naturalization courts, and administrative practice.

The requirement that candidates for naturalization demonstrate "good moral character" has been part of naturalization law since 1790, when Congress first mandated specific requirements for naturalization. While the government maintains that the requirement does "not necessarily require the highest degree of moral excellence," the fact that it is measured according

to the standards of the "average citizens" of the community in which the petitioner resides has made the requirement a matter of the subjective judgment of the naturalization officer and the courts as to the adherence of the applicant's lifestyle to a particular set of moral values. As a result, many conflicting decisions have been produced over the years. Nevertheless, denials of naturalization on the basis of lack of good moral character have generally fallen into several general categories: failure of husbands to support their wives and/or children (Interpretations 316.1(f)(5); sexual relations, including "fornication with cohabitation" (until 1962), adultery (until 1947) (*Estrin v. United States*, US 1947), incest, prostitution, homosexuality (until 1990) (Interpretations 316.1(f)(7), *In re Hopp*), or "sexual acts that contribute to the delinquency of a minor," involve numerous partners and illegitimate children "such as to characterize the petitioner as a profligate person with no regard for any standard of sexual morality" (Interpretations 316.1(f)(6).); and criminal behavior, including giving false testimony, such as false testimony with the intention of deceiving the government to facilitate naturalization (Interpretations, (316.1(g)(2)(vii)).

The second major concern of the naturalization interview is the question of attachment. According to the 1795 Naturalization Act, petitioners for naturalization must demonstrate that they are "attached to the principles of the constitution of the United States, and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the same." Attachment, according to published naturalization law interpretations, "is a stronger term than 'well disposed' and implies a depth of conviction which would lead to active support of the Constitution" (*In re Shanin*).

Generally, exclusions on the basis of lack of attachment have been applied ideologically, barring people who are "hostile to the basic form of government of the United States, or who

disbelieve in the principles of the Constitution (Interpretations 316.1.(h)(3); Allan v US). Nevertheless, attachment is also an elastic test and its definition has changed over the years (Schneiderman v US). For example, the Nationality Act of 1940 included membership in a Communist front organization as evidence of lack of attachment. Accordingly, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) spent considerable energy during the 1940s and 1950s researching obscure organizations and compiling lists of groups that membership in which would bar a petitioner from naturalization. While an appellate court in 1944 ruled that,

patriotism is not a condition of naturalization; that attachment is not addressed to the heart, demands no affection for or even approval for a democratic system of government, but merely acceptance of the fundamental political habits and attitudes which here prevail, and a willingness to obey the laws which may result from them, (Interpretations 316.1(h)(3)(ii); US v Rossier).

the government has generally interpreted attachment as indeed being primarily a matter of the heart. In 1914, when the Bureau of Naturalization was developing its educational program, this was the primary focus.

The final substantive requirement for naturalization is a demonstration of knowledge and understanding of the principles of the Constitution. As far back as 1908, the Bureau of Naturalization argued that petitioners not informed about the Constitution should not be naturalized, and the courts generally accepted this view, interpreting "understanding" as a prerequisite for attachment to the Constitution. However, as there was no uniform standard for the naturalization exam, examiners tended to ask questions from the most general to the most obscure, often including questions intended to confuse applicants, depending on their subjective

judgments of the candidates' suitability for citizenship. Examiners would ask questions such as "How many gallons of water does the Amazon River discharge per hour?"; "How high is the Bunker Hill monument?"; "How many stars are there on a quarter?"; Or, "If the law isn't signed, may it be a good law?" (McCormack 1936).

On the other hand, knowledge and understanding were traditionally treated as insignificant when compared to good moral character for determining admissibility. For example, during the 1897 court hearing on the naturalization petition of Ricardo Rodriguez, a native of Mexico, the judge dismissed Rodriguez's inability to explain the principles of the constitution, attributing it to his illiteracy. Instead, the judge relied on testimony by a white acquaintance of Rodriguez, who explained that Rodriguez was hard working, honest, law-abiding, peaceable, and that: "I know the man. I know that he is a good man, and know... whatever the principles of the Constitution might be, that he would uphold them if he knew what they were" (Ngai 1999).²

Citizenship Education: attachment and morality in practice

When administrators at the Bureau of Naturalization began considering creating an educational program to prepare immigrants for their citizenship exam, the morality, attachment, and knowledge requirements were at the forefront of their discussions. In early December 1914, Judge Clarence N. Goodwin of the superior court of Cook County Chicago wrote to Assistant Secretary of Labor Louis F. Post, asking for government help and support for citizenship education for naturalization candidates. Post forwarded the letter to Richard K. Campbell, director of the Bureau of Naturalization, who replied that the goal was worthy but not within the

scope of Naturalization's mission. Nevertheless, within a week Campbell and his deputy, Raymond Crist, had taken up the cause. Campbell initially remained hesitant, emphasizing "the possible risk of an exaggeration of the importance of mental training" versus the "more vital point, to wit, the moral qualifications of those who seek citizenship," but Crist enthusiastically argued for Bureau of Naturalization activity. Emphasizing three main benefits of a program – reducing denials of naturalization, ensuring fairness to applicants, and generating recognition for the Bureau of Naturalization's work within the Department of Labor and from its secretary, (US 1914) -- Crist managed to gain Campbell's assent (NARA, RG85, 27671/25, box 7).

The program that Crist and Campbell constructed can be best understood within the framework of three important influences: the established body of citizenship law and naturalization practice outlined above, the Americanization movement of the early twentieth century, and the institutional settings of the Bureau of Naturalization and its non-governmental partners. All three of these frameworks were important in establishing the program as a vehicle for the definition and transmission of expansive but exacting notions of citizenship to immigrants. The social setting and the goals of the Americanization movement – Smith's pre-existing "story" of becoming American -- resulted in a program emphasis on cultural assimilation and loyalty. This same cultural environment resulted in the selection, originally as a matter of custom and later as a legal practice, of a certain subset of citizenship law as the basis of the naturalization investigation and exam. This exam, in turn, was used first to justify the existence of, and then to shape the content of the citizenship education program. That content, and the ideals of citizenship it represented, were further constructed and modified by changes in naturalization law and the institutional partnerships formed over time between the Bureau of

Naturalization and a series of non-governmental organizations. Together, all of these elements -- the Americanization movement, citizenship law, the naturalization exam, and institutional partnerships -- created the conditions for the emergence and continued development of a federal government citizenship education program that has contributed to the social practice of becoming a citizen and, as such, to the manufacturing of ideas of "the good citizen."

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Crist and Campbell began designing their program at the height of the "Americanization Movement," a nation-wide drive to rapidly assimilate new immigrants through programs of citizenship education and instruction in the "American way of life." Crist and Campbell were particularly sensitive to the existing goals and practices of the movement because of their desire to assert leadership for their office in an already crowded field. Arguing that the Bureau of Naturalization, the federal authority charged with granting citizenship, was uniquely positioned to instruct immigrants on the ideals and principles of American citizenship, Crist and Campbell drew on the ideas of the centrist progressives that had come to dominate the Americanization Movement by 1914. In doing so, Campbell and Crist were able to adroitly link these popular ideas with the naturalization laws requiring morality and attachment, thus cementing their agency's authority.

The Americanization movement was part of the progressive impulse of the early century and, like the various strains of progressivism, grew out of a general sense of disorder and overwhelming change that enveloped the country at the turn of the century. On one hand, the United States was emerging as a world power, and on the other hand it was seemingly threatened from within by economic turmoil and decades of immigration that resulted in a foreign born

population of approximately fifteen percent of the population by 1919, and much higher percentages in the major immigrant receptor cities. The growing social and economic problems of the developing urban-industrial society created strong material motivations for excluding immigrants. In addition, the rise in the late nineteenth century of racial ideologies based on social Darwinism, in which social, cultural, and psychological characteristics were subsumed under the nexus of race, added further impetus. The result of this zeal for exclusion was a growing and increasingly restrictive body of legislation that created early distinctions of belonging and citizenship.³

In spite of these growing exclusionary trends, as economic distress eased after 1903 and American confidence rose with imperial expansion into the Caribbean and the Philippines, many became more sanguine about their ability to shape the population on nationalist terms. The United States, like many European states, began to reinforce patriotism and unite it with nationalism through "sentiments and symbols of 'imagined community'" (Hobsbawm 1992, Anderson 1991). Educators, legislators, and cultural activists worked to "channel the challenge posed by the variously unassimilated people of the nation and its overseas territories" by creating national narratives that would serve as "a rallying point for a self-conscious and exportable Americanism" (Wald 1995). These efforts included attempts to "discover" various hallmarks of an authentic and uniquely American culture, from American literature to American food (Wald 1995, Gabaccia 1998).

In terms of the country's foreign-born population, from 1910 until the passage of the 1917 Immigration Act that created the "Asiatic barred zone," rhetoric and practice shifted from immigration restriction to naturalization and intensive efforts at assimilation of immigrants

deemed eligible to naturalize (Higham 1963). This change in approach was accompanied by a new activism on questions of immigration and citizenship that developed into what has come to be known as the Americanization Movement.

Early Americanization activists were predominantly private individuals and members of organizations, most of whom approached immigrants with a combination of humanitarian concern for the poor conditions under which they lived and a paternalistic conviction that eventual adoption of an "American" life-style would greatly benefit the immigrants (as well as preserve "the American way of life"). Many of these early activists were associated with the left wing branch of the progressive movement and had a pluralist conception of American society that minimized the role of the nation, advocated democratic participation, and opposed cultural homogeneity under Anglo-Saxon dominance. But their views were far from dominant during the progressive years or in the Americanization movement, particularly after 1917 when it and the country as a whole took a turn to the right and increased nationalism.

Instead, the leadership of the Americanization movement and the goals of most of its activists reflected the values of the centrist progressivism that dominated the period. Centrist progressives advocated immigration restrictions, but also were confident in their ability to foster a cultural homogeneity that was based on beliefs in Anglo-Saxon racial superiority. Other positions associated with centrist progressivism included opposition to African American enfranchisement and support for segregation, a commitment to separate spheres and roles for men and women in both the home and the public sphere, and support of imperialism. Activists generally cloaked their arguments in the language of science, standardization, and efficiency, and

saw their positions and their roles as experts, as key to creating a well-ordered society (Smith 1997).

The centrist progressives' faith in the work of bureaucratic expertise was fundamental to the Americanization movement focus on cultural assimilation. This faith made them the intellectual inheritors of what Foucault labels the early modern police state, sharing with both the *polizeistaat* and the modern welfare state the extension of the surveillance and control previously exercised by the head of household over his family to the state's surveillance of the population through a regime of governmentality (Foucault 1991). Inherent in this position, was a belief in the "profound connectedness between the principles of political action and those of personal conduct" (Gordon 1991) that contrasted with the left progressive conviction that defined good citizenship as democratic participation.

As the Americanization movement began to gain popularity, and as concern with the cultural differences associated with the immigrants increased, the movement moved right (or center), and these "administrative" progressives became increasingly involved in assimilation activities (Smith 1997). Organizations such as the business-oriented National Americanization Committee (N.A.C.), the American Legion, the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution, and various private, profit oriented "Americanization" schools initiated their own Americanization programs and became involved in the public debate about the best way to assimilate immigrants. Movement activities included classes, lectures, ceremonies, "American days," and distribution of foreign language literature on United States history and government to immigrants. As movement activities intensified, local and state governments and departments of

education began to get involved as well, passing hundreds of Americanization laws to regulate the assimilation of immigrants (Higham 1955, McClymer 1978, Carlson 1975).

While the federal government was active in encouraging such projects, government agencies didn't become independent actors until the World War I period. By the time they did so, Americanization had become a national obsession and had begun to evolve beyond its focus on cultural assimilation. As the country mobilized for war, fears of "alien disloyalty" and an "enemy within," and the rise of radical trade unionism associated with foreign-born workers had become dominant in nationalist discourse. Federal government involvement both reacted to and influenced this direction. New federal bodies and programs were created during the war, such as the Creel Commission for wartime propaganda and campaigns to monitor and suppress the foreign language (particularly German) press and media, which redefined Americanization as a matter of loyalty. This obsession with loyalty was articulated by Woodrow Wilson in a 1916 speech, in which he explained that "Loyalty means nothing unless it has at its heart the absolute power of self sacrifice. That is the sort of loyalty which ought to be inculcated into these newcomers..." (US 1916).

It was into this framework of an established body of legislative action and a strong, increasingly conservative movement with clearly established practices and characteristics that the Bureau of Naturalization entered when it began considering its own "Americanization" program in 1914. Centrist progressive advocacy of cultural assimilation and confidence in leadership by experts, as well as the World War I era evolution of the movement into a tool for discerning and fostering immigrant loyalty, are important legacies of the progressive era for Crist's and Campbell's work. In particular, these two impulses became connected in program

materials in the understanding that public displays of "the American way of life" were evidence for the attachment to the Constitution and good moral character that were legally required for naturalization. This logic contributed to the Bureau of Naturalization's ability to institutionalize a program that most likely would have otherwise faded away in the aftermath of World War I, as did the Americanization movement itself, and to the continued influence of the centrist progressive ideas of bureaucratic expertise, loyalty, and cultural assimilation, on subsequent U.S. government efforts to educate immigrants for citizenship.

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Despite its legal claim to responsibility for granting citizenship, the early years of the federal Bureau of Naturalization's citizenship education program involved tremendous efforts to assert authority for its program in an already overcrowded Americanization field. Immediately upon receiving Campbell's approval to begin developing a citizenship education program, Crist began to search for a niche for Bureau of Naturalization activity. In doing so, he and Campbell combined the conceptions of citizenship education dominant in the Americanization movement (loyalty and assimilation) with existing naturalization law, thus creating and institutionalizing a unique conception of citizenship.

In a series of memos from late 1914 and the first half of 1915, Campbell and Crist began this process by outlining an understanding of the goals of citizenship education and the legal requirements for citizenship. Ostensibly the goal of federal government citizenship training was to teach applicants the information they would need to know in order to pass an examination administered by a judge in a naturalization court -- that is, facts, provisions of the Constitution, and institutions of American government. However, from the beginning the two men considered

the method inadequate and the very assumption behind it, that a citizenship exam could be used to test a candidate's attachment to the principles of the constitution, to be faulty. As one memo states:

The storing of the memory with information in regard to the Constitution and American institutions is resorted to, and a display of a fair amount of knowledge on these points is accepted, most illogically, as proof of attachment (US 1914).

These Bureau of Naturalization administrators recognized that exams which question candidates on facts cannot capture a concept such as attachment, "which relates to an interior condition" (US 1914). The fundamental inadequacy of the very principle of testing on facts was, in their view, exacerbated by the limitations of time and resources under which the courts worked, which necessitated that even factual testing would be superficial. In summarizing attempts at citizenship education to date, one memo states that:

These efforts, it seems to the Bureau, constitute a groping in the dark for an object that may or may not be reached, but which it is essential should be reached if the spirit and purpose, as well as the provisions of the naturalization law, are to be accomplished and complied with (US 1915b).

This focus on the spirit of naturalization law, or rather the spirit of citizenship, was central to the government approach. The solution that Campbell and Crist found was to focus on the moral qualities of candidates in screening for citizenship and on the moral qualities expected of American citizens in the immigrant education materials they produced. In their view, learning about government is important only as far as it enables new citizens to understand the difference between America's republican form of government and "most, if not all, of the foreign

governments," and the only important principle that needs to be understood is that American government is based upon the consent of the people (US 1915a). The other details of government are not essential to good citizenship, according to Campbell. "On the other hand, the possession of a moral and law-abiding character is indispensable to good citizenship, and perhaps in an increasing degree with the extension of the citizen's knowledge" (US 1914). The 1917 Annual Report affirmed this goal, stating that, "Genuine citizenship is primarily a state of inward feeling and only secondarily one of knowledge" (US 1917).⁴ Campbell and Crist thus concluded that naturalization authorities can only judge an applicant's loyalty by observing his daily life, and that the display of moral behavior was a better indication of allegiance to the country's constitutional values than the ability to regurgitate facts about U.S. history and government (US 1915b).

Essentially, Campbell and Crist were advancing a theoretical argument that effectively undermined the theretofore assumed correlation between knowledge of, and attachment to, the Constitution by showing the inadequacy of the former as an instantiation of the latter. Owing to their inherent mistrust of the intellect and their faithfulness to the legal requirements for U.S. naturalization, Campbell and Crist replaced knowledge with character as evidence for good citizenship, making the promotion of good moral character a central part of their citizenship education initiative. This was expressed first and foremost in the content of the program materials.

The materials Crist and Campbell compiled consisted of English language and history lessons for immigrants. Instead of offering information about the United States' political system or civic participation, however, the lessons promoted particular images of the social and moral

behavior expected of American citizens, instructing immigrants in the proper ways for Americans to dress, eat, decorate their homes, worship, and behave at work and in the family. For example, textbook narratives centering around the activities of the average American family include entire lessons on going to church (US 1924) and on the value of hard work and independence: "For a man to be a good American he must be straight, and he must also be strong. Each man must work for himself, and unless he so works no outside help can avail him" (1922a). Discussions of personal hygiene and instructions on care of the home and community dominate the textbooks and, as one 1921 textbook demonstrates, are frequently described as essential for good citizenship: "You can not be a self-respecting citizen if you wear soiled, untidy clothing, nor will your health be good" (US 1921). Similarly, separate sections of the textbooks directed towards immigrant women delineate the proper conditions for raising American children, admonishing the women that "Tenements with dark rooms are not fit for children" (US 1921) and that "Pure air and sunlight aid the housewife in keeping homes sanitary" (US 1918) and that "Furniture should be simple and plainly carved. There should be no upholstered furniture nor heavy draperies to catch the dust" (US 1918; US 1921).

The program emphasis on assimilation was accompanied by a de-emphasis of politics. For example, one text spends nearly ten pages reviewing the immigration and assimilation histories of immigrants from Ireland, Germany, and Scandinavia, who found it:

difficult to get used to the ways and customs of our Government, especially in the crowded cities, but as time went by they and their children took on the ways of the Americans they met. Now their descendants are thoroughly American and make up a large part of what we call the American people (US 1926).

Germans in particular, are depicted as the ideal immigrant group because they were "too busy making their farms pay to enter into politics, preferring to accept customs already established" (US 1926, 141). Thus the text holds forth political non-participation and the display of cultural assimilation as an ideal for immigrant integration. This focus on assimilation to a particular, Anglo-Saxon ideal of "American" was common in the Americanization movement. What was unique about the government approach was the way that assimilation was presented as a moral requirement for good citizenship, admonishing immigrants that "You can not become thorough Americans if you think of yourselves in groups. America does not consist in groups" (US 1918).

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The "stories" these textbooks tell of what makes a good American were institutionalized, and gained influence beyond the initial period of Americanization movement, through the bureaucratic alliances that Crist and Campbell formed in order to promote their program. Upon receiving Campbell's support for creating a Bureau of Naturalization program, Crist began surveying the bureau's chief naturalization examiners to get a sense of the Americanization activities in their districts and their views as to the potential value of a bureau program. The examiners, who represented the government at judicial naturalization hearings, would become important to the Bureau of Naturalization's efforts to promote its program through their access to naturalization judges and court officers.⁵ Crist also contacted ethnic groups and suggested that they run classes under the Bureau of Naturalization's guidance. Having received positive encouragement from the examiners, the Bureau of Naturalization expanded its survey. During the summer of 1915, Crist traveled throughout the Midwest and West, observing naturalization and Americanization activities, meeting with chief examiners and public school superintendents,

and drumming up support for the Bureau of Naturalization's involvement in citizenship education. Given the weak position of the Bureau of Naturalization's program, Crist began seeking institutional alliances soon after completing his survey. He reached an agreement with the public schools under which the bureau supplied the names of local petitioners and declarants to the public schools, issued invitations to attend the classes, and supplied a textbook, while the public schools ran and conducted evening classes for the foreign born. This relationship, which the bureau began to promote in 1916, was institutionalized (and guaranteed a budget through naturalization fees collected) by the Act of May 9, 1918, which amended the 1906 naturalization law.

In addition to public school channels, Crist enlisted the help of Americanization experts and academics to produce educational materials for the program and sought out private organizations to aid in developing materials and promoting the public school classes that used its textbooks. Both of these initiatives grew out of the centrist progressive orientation of the program's architects. Accordingly, Crist primarily sought out and formed alliances with nativist, "patriotic" organizations and business interests such as the United States Chamber of Commerce (NARA RG 85), the American Federation of Labor (McClymer 1978), the Boy Scouts (US 1923), and patriotic women's organizations (US 1921a).

The Bureau of Naturalization's relations with some of these organizations were extremely close: private organizations worked with the bureau in writing and distributing educational material for immigrants and often funded the classes that used the government educational materials, while the bureau supplied lists of names to the groups, which would then approach immigrants on behalf of the government. The bureau's 1919 annual report describes the

relationships as partnerships, describing "the naturalness of cooperation on the part of various bodies and individuals, all seeking the same object and each contributing its particular gift to the making of intelligent citizens" (US 1919). This sense of partnership was important. The organizations the bureau worked with tended to reflect the more conservative, assimilationist orientation of the later Americanization movement, and this orientation was important in determining both the content of the materials produced during those years and the interpretations of good moral character and attachment that informed it.

The relative success of the program (unlike competitor programs, it survived beyond the period of the Americanization movement due to its institutionalization in the 1918 act) had the effect of establishing a precedent for intimate public-private cooperation in the creation of citizenship education materials and programs for immigrants. In subsequent periods, such as during World War II and the early Cold War, when the government tried to revive and revise its progressive era program, administrators returned to Crist's and Campbell's formula and to the emphasis on loyalty and morality that was central to it. The result has been an extremely long-lived program that has continued to exist under a diversity of bureaucratic authorities and historical periods. More importantly, in each case the program has enjoyed broad institutional support from both inside and outside of government and an almost unquestioned commitment on the part of its organizers to Crist's and Campbell's idea that citizenship education should be about encouraging particular definitions of personal conduct as evidence of political attachment to the country.

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When Raymond Crist and Richard Campbell set out to create a Bureau of Naturalization citizenship education program for immigrants in 1914 few would have predicted that their program would be so enduring. Their efforts to promote the idea that candidates for citizenship must demonstrate good moral character and loyalty as a condition for citizenship, and their reliance on naturalization law in reaching their conclusions, affirms Rogers Smith's focus on the importance of both ideals and the institutions that build and perpetuate them in generating "story-based" group loyalty. Campbell and Crist drew on the ideas of the centrist progressive inspired Americanization movement (a pre-existing story of American peoplehood based on loyalty and assimilation) and embellished and institutionalized it through additional legislation, bureaucratic alliances, and a decision to emphasize the good moral character and attachment clauses of U.S. naturalization law.

Campbell's and Crist's conclusions about the nature of citizenship have broad implications for the academic study of state efforts to generate political allegiance. In particular, they call into question the feasibility of the normative project that Rogers Smith promotes as part of his theory. In Smith's understanding, the institutionalization of stories of peoplehood in "identity-constructing laws and policies" gives them their strength; a strength that can potentially nurture attachment-inducing political identities based on non-ascriptive ideas such as shared history or ideology (Smith 2003). However, as the debates among the Bureau of Naturalization administrators suggest, there is an essential problematic in projects that attempt to engender support for a regime by generating national identification based on ideology or history: how can leaders differentiate between affirming acceptance of political principles and actual loyalty to the

state? This is a central challenge that governments and organizations attempting to create national programs of immigrant political integration must confront.

In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks, the United States government created a new Office of Citizenship under the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service and the Department of Homeland Security. Since that time, the office has been working to both revise the naturalization test and to create educational programs for immigrants. Just as in the early twentieth century, administrators have relied on panels of experts and representatives from private organizations in their efforts. And just as in Crist's and Campbell's time, government officials are seeking to promote the idea that citizenship education should encourage immigrant attachment to the United States and immigrant adoption of "American values" (CBS 2006).

But administrators have come up against dilemmas similar to the one that Crist and Campbell faced. Office of Citizenship administrators hope to replace current naturalization testing and citizenship education, in which candidates memorize the answers to a list of 100 questions, with a process that is "more meaningful" (Monsen 2005), echoing Crist's and Campbell's recognition that a standardized test of facts of history and civics is a poor reflection of an immigrant's attachment or loyalty. Unlike their progressive era counterparts, today's administrators are not promoting demonstrations of morality and assimilation to a particular American way of life as a way to attest for immigrant loyalty (although the good moral character clause remains a part of U.S. law). In fact, they are careful to emphasize that their calls for assimilation to American values refers to civic, not cultural values (Aguirre 2003). But progress in implementing changes to the program has been slow: the office has dismissed one panel of experts, transferred administrative authority for the program, and put off introduction of a new

test from the original goal of year-end 2004 to the current estimate of January 2008. These difficulties may stem from the inherent contradictions of their project. If administrators had chosen to build their program based on the left-progressive ideal of democratic participation as evidence of good citizenship, rather than on conceptions inherited from Crist and Campbell that focus on what immigrants believe or feel, their task would have been simpler. As it is, the current goal of creating a program that instills meaning, values, and patriotism as the basis for “Americanization” of immigrants – all within the framework of a uniform, standard, and fair naturalization test that both immigrant groups and the various private organizations working with government can accept – appears to be a project that is doomed to failure. It is not too late for current administrators in the U.S. and elsewhere trying to construct programs of immigrant integration and citizenship education to adopt programs that encourage and instruct in democratic participation, rather than those that instill particular definitions of good citizenship, as their goal.

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Notes

1. On the development of all-white suburbs, see Nelson 1996.
2. A 1936 revision of naturalization procedures attempted to standardize the questions on the naturalization exam, but it wasn't until the passage of 1940 Nationality Act that petitioners were required to be questioned in order to determine their understanding of the principles of the Constitution. From that time forward, understanding and attachment became two separate issues and petitioners found to demonstrate attachment without understanding or understanding without attachment could feasibly be denied naturalization (Interpretations 312.1, Educational requirements). The September 23, 1950 Internal Security Act amended the 1940 Act by adding more detail, mandating that immigrants demonstrate "knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of the history, and of the principles and form of government, of the United States" as well as an ability to speak, write and read words "in ordinary usage" in English. See INA: ACT 312, Sec. 312. [8 U.S.C. 1423].
3. Including the Chinese Exclusion Act (1882) and laws excluding convicts, "lunatics," "idiots," persons likely to become a public charge, felons, persons convicted of other crimes and misdemeanors, polygamists, persons suffering from "loathsome and contagious diseases," anarchists, "imbeciles," "feeble-minded persons," persons with "physical or mental defects," persons afflicted with tuberculosis, children unaccompanied by their parents, and "persons who admitted the commission of a crime involving moral turpitude" and women coming to the United States for immoral purposes or those who brought them (so-called white slavery) (Immigration Acts of 1891, 1903, 1907).
4. This emphasis was reaffirmed under subsequent bureaucratic incarnations of the Bureau of Naturalization's citizenship education program. For example, a 1936 program evaluation under the newly formed Immigration and Naturalization Service established the following guidelines for both naturalization examiners and educational material: "a belief in orderly government, recognition of the rights of others, love of home, family, and country, and interest in the better preparation of one's self for a more useful life in the community.... Two of the outstanding qualifications are without question good moral character and attachment to the principles of the Constitution of the United States. The new instructions lay particular stress upon these factors" (MacCormack 1936).
5. The examiners both promoted the Bureau of Naturalization's program and often lobbied congressional representatives on behalf of the bureau (McClymer 1978). A 1926 Act expanded this influence when it initiated the designated examiner system, which assigned a naturalization examiner to each court to interview applicants, observe proceedings, and ensure the implementation of policy (Smith M 1998).