engagement to their political engagement is underway. They note an increasing prominence of "participatory politics" among youth of all demographic backgrounds. By finding ways to explain the links between expressive cultural practices and politics, this chapter launches one of the book's central projects: the achievement of a revised approach to the concept of political participation generally, and not merely for youth.

Jennifer S. Light

PUTTING OUR CONVERSATION IN CONTEXT

YOUTH, OLD MEDIA, AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION, 1800–1971

In this book, twenty-first-century media supply the context for an account of evolving civic relationships. To understand the link between the shifting technological landscape and evolving political identities, there is no better place to begin than with a consideration of youth experience. The impact of new technologies is often strongest for the youngest generation. Young people also are open to flexible conceptions of participation because they do not yet have settled habits and, in many cases, may be deliberately excluded from traditional pathways to politics—such as voting—because of their age.

Many accounts of new media and politics highlight youth practices, suggesting that individuals and groups previously excluded from formal political structures are able to express their voices and exert influence as never before.[1] This chapter tempers that view. I sketch a history of youth political participation in the United States since 1800, focusing on the activities of populations under age twenty-one in a period when all were by definition nonvoting citizens—between 1800 and 1971, when the voting age in federal elections was lowered from twenty-one to eighteen.[2] The evidence presented here documents how the history of youth, media, and political participation is remarkably rich terrain. Young people have long found ways to share political ideas among themselves and with adults, and media have played a role in these activities for two centuries.

My purpose is broader than merely telling readers "It's not all new," however. In keeping with this book's ambition to use the youth experience as a heuristic device for thinking about relationships between technology and politics more broadly, this chapter considers the history of youth political participation in the context of the history of alternative media. In particular, it spotlights how new media used—but not controlled—by youth have typically provided only temporary access to the public sphere for political and cultural expression before adult gatekeepers foreclosed these opportunities. Taking the long view helps us to see how the contemporary youth practices attracting so much attention are contingent. History thus

offers not only a context but also a usable past, expanding the kinds of theoretical frameworks that can be brought to bear on normative analyses of the relationship between technology and politics in the digital age.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: THE AGE OF SCATTERED ACTIVISM

The nineteenth century witnessed numerous examples of youth participation in political activities. From privileged students at elite universities to working-class immigrants, young people across the nation engaged in this work. These diverse actors shared an approach to political action that largely took place outside of organized pressure groups or associations.

Schools were a rich space for social action. Scholars have identified numerous examples of ad hoc protests by college students about local campus issues from dining options to teaching staff.[3] Occasionally the students expressed opinions about broader political issues; for example, antislavery and antidraft activities could be found on campuses around the Civil War.[4] The late nineteenth century also marked the beginnings of widespread interest in student government at colleges and high schools. Youth congresses were established at many institutions, patterned after the American political system, to give children practical training.[5]

Only a small fraction of America's young people received sustained education in the ninetheenth century, however. Parents depended on their children's earnings to make ends meet. As a result, the labor arena became another important site for young people's action. Like their adult counterparts, child workers, including newsboys, bootblacks, messengers, miners and factory machine operators, demanded better working conditions and better pay.[6]

The forces that propelled children into jobs as newsboys and factory workers similarly facilitated their entry into civil service activities, especially in police departments and fire companies. These were "pseudo-civil service" jobs; in many cities at this time police and fire services were in the private sector or were in some cases unpaid volunteer work.[7] Before the Civil War, for example, many volunteer fire companies depended on the participation of boys as young as ten.[8] Police and detective agencies regularly hired boys and girls to trail suspects or to catch an unsuspecting criminal "in the act."[9] Elsewhere, children played these pseudo-civil service roles even more informally—for example, helping police and judges to enforce laws and solve crimes, or working as poll watchers for elections in

which they could not vote.[10] In 1895, children affiliated with the Hebrew Institute on New York City's east side mobilized to establish a juvenile street cleaning brigade—at first independent of the city, but later backed by the city's public street cleaning department and inspiring similar organizations in other municipalities. The children called on the mayor to urge him to regulate pushcarts more stringently to improve the cleanliness of city streets.[11]

Outside of schools and work, children found other opportunities to voice their ideas. Young men's voluntary associations in many cities and towns, some affiliated with religious organizations, brought together teenagers and young men—most from the middle classes—to discuss the day's political issues.[12] Street "gangs," generally populated by a working-class or immigrant membership that included not only teenagers but also kids as young as eight, were important sources of informal political organization for young men and boys.[13] They routinely participated in political activities—for example, anti-abolitionist riots in New York City in the 1830s, or in subsequent decades assisting local officials with everyday tasks. And in July 1863, when workers in New York City protested a new draft law with three days of civil disturbances that destroyed public buildings and homes, "of the 261 rioters arrested for whom information on age exists, 27 percent were between the ages of seven and twenty years old."[14]

With the full suite of citizenship rights extended only to white males, the girls and nonwhites who would not grow up to be equal citizens nonetheless made their mark in the political arena. As early as the 1830s, for example, northern African American youth participated in abolitionist activities, from raising money to sponsoring rallies and lecturers.[15] Literary societies for young African American men offered opportunities to organize around suffrage.[16] Teenage girls were prominent union organizers, sometimes even leading strikes.[17] Later in the century the settlement movement, which organized services for immigrants in US cities, hired mostly female college students and graduates to their staffs. These settlement residents "helped to change what citizens in many cities expected of government."[18] Suffragettes also drew many from the younger generation.[19]

HOW DID MEDIA FIGURE IN THIS HISTORY?

Print journalism was the primary medium in this period, and young people proved to be eager journalists and publishers. Some were regular contributors to adult media. These included the midcentury "factory girl" publications published by child and young adult workers, which, in addition

to offering poems and stories, attested to the tough working conditions in factories and mills. They also included more mainstream adult newspapers such as the *Jewish Daily Forward*, which hired teenager Pauline Newman for occasional reporting on labor issues over several years.[20] Young men's voluntary associations, which brought together teenagers with young men in their twenties, regularly published literary and political magazines.[21] Although colleges and high schools during this period did supply some opportunities for young writers, most student publications were literary in focus, and did not prioritize coverage or analysis of political matters.[22]

Still other entrepreneurial youth set out to create their own publishing houses. At first, most scavenged materials to build letterpresses, but with the release at midcentury of the novelty toy press—a printing press that was cheap and easy to use—came a boom in adolescent media. To find audiences and boost circulation, young people banded together in amateur press associations, which sprang up in cities from Milwaukee to New York. In Chicago, for example, forty-two juvenile newspapers were circulating in 1876.[23] State and regional associations of amateur publishers—and eventually a national body—were created by these teens as networks to widen the exchange of their work.[24] These papers joined literary content (indeed there were regular literary contests) with editorials on the period's political questions, including abolition, equal pay for equal work, and female education and suffrage. Meetings of the National Amateur Press Association themselves became forums for political controversy around issues of membership; girls would be denied full status in the organization, but after some debate African American boys were accepted on equal grounds with whites.[25] The girls eventually established a Ladies' Amateur Press Association, and Paula Petrik (1989, 1992) has suggested that suffrage debates a generation later directly benefited from this work.[26] A change in postal laws in the 1870s, however, which raised rates for amateur publishers, led to a drop-off in circulation as many young people found the cost of sending out their periodicals to be prohibitively high.[27]

1900–1930: THE AGE OF ADULT SUPERVISION

The first three decades of the twentieth century marked an important shift in expert and popular thinking about childhood and adolescence, with implications for young people's political participation. Based in large part on accepted practices among the middle and upper classes, and in turn on the

work of psychologist and child study movement leader G. Stanley Hall, a rising tide of public opinion came to conceive of youth—at least for white Americans—as a "separate sphere."[28] The implication for families of all stations on the economic ladder was that young people should ideally have a "sheltered childhood," removed from the world of work and instead defined by prolonged schooling and dependency. Adults established a multiplicity of new organizations—for example, the Boy Scouts and Campfire Girls—to supervise boys and girls as they moved through this life stage.[29] (Concern about boys was especially intense, as is detailed in MacLeod 1983 and Kett 1977.)[30] Simultaneously, they agitated on a range of children's issues, from labor to education, to help make the sheltered childhood a reality for greater numbers of kids.[31]

In this context of new values, adults imagined children's political participation to be limited to experiences in supervised training for citizenship tomorrow, ideally confined to separate spaces for young people. Schools were first among them. Classroom politics in student governments expanded their reach, with special emphasis on the School Cities and School Republics that modeled themselves after the American republic at state and local levels.[32] (School-based branches of the Model League of Nations, precursor to the Model United Nations, appeared in the mid-1920s.)

After school and during vacation periods, many of the Progressive-era institutions that organized children's activities—from playgrounds to settlement houses to clubs and summer camps—offered a similar political education with junior republics, boy cities, and other mock governments. The myriad "junior citizens" in this period generally limited their activities to children's spaces, although there were important exceptions. In 1914, for example, Milwaukee's Boy Scouts and Newsboys' Republic participated in a public health campaign focused on eliminating the conditions that brought disease-carrying insects to their neighborhoods; they and other children became "junior inspectors."[33] And Junior Chautauqua "Junior Town" service projects in the 1920s focused on community improvement—for example, securing new public playgrounds or public swimming pools.[34]

A few local governments took the lead to find ways for children to play a greater role in civic activities. Public agencies in several cities (as well as private bodies including the Anti-Cigarette League, theaters, and local protective associations) hired youth for temporary paid work on specific cases.[35] More often, however, the children's civic participation was tied to voluntary programs. Junior Police (for example, in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and Portland, Oregon) and Junior Juvenile Courts (for example, in Cleveland and Saint

Louis), where both boys and girls assisted their adult counterparts, were popular in this period as approaches to recruiting youth gangs into activities under adult supervision.[36] Most had no actual legal authority, but the court of the Milwaukee Newsboys' Republic, administered by the city's Street Trades Division, had powers to enforce the law regulating who could sell newspapers, where, when, and how—and included a court of child judges that adjudicated offenses, hearing 7,500 cases between 1912 and 1923. In the 1910s and 1920s, William George, whose George Junior Republic (established in 1895) had created a space for children to practice politics on the model of the larger American republic, now promoted Junior Municipalities, in which—following a municipal election using the same voting machines as adults—the junior mayor, junior councilors, junior public works officials, and the like assisted their adult counterparts on local community matters.[37] Ithaca, New York, had the first such junior municipality (established in 1913).

The outbreak of World War I saw the new norms discouraging child labor relaxed, bringing many teenagers into the labor force, and this included new opportunities for participation in government work. Local governments recruited kids to jobs formerly done by adults—for example, junior lifeguards became a fixture on Chicago's beaches.[38] The federal government also set out to harness "boy power" and "girl power"—for example, by creating the Boys' Working Reserve and Girls' Working Reserve, a program administered by the states for youth workers to expand agricultural yields and produce articles for the war effort.[39] Other young people supplied voluntary patriotic service to the nation. The US School Garden Army turned children's attention to victory gardening at school and at home. School children in West Dryden, New York, prepared the agricultural census there.[40] And Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts sold war bonds, collected scrap materials, and cultivated gardens to produce food.[41]

The majority of young people's political activities in this period thus operated under adult supervision. Nonetheless, a small percentage of youth found ways to advocate on their own behalf. David Nasaw (1986) and Susan Campbell Bartoletti (2003) describe continued strike actions from child laborers, as well as a New York City rent strike led by a teenaged girl. Raymond Wolters (1975) chronicles how the "new Negros" who flooded historically black colleges in search of higher education protested white control of their curricula, in particular its vocational orientation—prompting the resignation of several college presidents.[42] And the Chicago Boys Brotherhood Republic (established in 1914) put the junior republic idea to new ends, creating government commissions to investigate issues of relevance

to all boys, not merely club members.[43] In the organization's first five years, the junior citizens got the city of Chicago to abandon the practice of fingerprinting all children on arrest. They organized a jobs day and secured employment for several hundred boys in what became an annual event. They sent two citizens on tour to start up self-governing clubs in other cities. They convinced Chicago's Saddle and Cycle Club to open its private beach to public bathing. And they met with New York Governor Charles Whitman and successfully lobbied him to parole a fourteen-year-old boy who had been sentenced to death. In fact, police, judges, the county warden, and other authorities routinely turned over children in custody to these junior citizens' care; the Boys Brotherhood Republic provided temporary dormitory housing, job placement services, clothes, and other necessities.[44]

HOW DID MEDIA FIGURE IN THIS HISTORY?

Print journalism remained an important medium in adult political society and for young people as well. With the National Amateur Press Association now dominated by adults, the primary forums for juvenile political journalists came in schools, settlements, boys clubs, YMCAs, and other adult-sponsored activities. It was during this period that university and high school newspapers began to publish more political speech. In the 1920s, for example, Duke University's *Chronicle* critically editorialized on the lingering ways in which religious mores shaped student life on campus. Paula Fass has described how, at the same time that the editors were "condemning the idiocies of religious fundamentalism and moral uplifters, and vigorously condemning all attempts to censor student opinion or strictly supervise campus affairs by the Methodist board of governors," Duke students "were actively protesting the proposed ban on teaching evolution in North Carolina schools pending in the state legislature."[45] The news media at junior republics, which covered sports, humor, and culture, were especially attentive to the youth politics in their juvenile societies, with occasional commentaries on "real-world" affairs. Even the Milwaukee Newsboys' Republic—comprised of boys selling adult newspapers—published its own newsmagazine, a mix of humor, fiction, sports, and political reportage.[46] A few adult-produced media for children offered forums for young readers to express themselves; in *St. Nicholas*, for example, they discussed their reactions to World War I before and after the United States entered the conflict.[47]

In an era of increasing adult supervision of youth activities, many young people were drawn to wireless radio for the potential freedom it supplied. With the introduction of small wireless sets and kits, boys in particular

made eager use of the medium to carve out a space of their own at home. As the technology offered them opportunities to build fraternities of friends and strangers with whom to share jokes and stories over the air, they shared political ideas as well. From relaying political news to holding wireless club meetings "in the air" to international communications towards the fantasy of world peace, political expression became an important part of the everyday worlds of these radio amateurs. The loss of radio spectrum use following the Titanic disaster in the early 1910s prompted their major political action: writing letters to the mass media and testifying before Congress to call for amateurs, rather than government or businesses, to control the spectrum.[48] These efforts were to no avail.

1930S–1950S: THE AGE OF YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

Many scholars describe the 1930s as the era of the "first youth movement." During the 1920s, the growth of the "sheltered childhood" model that pushed young people into extended schooling created a peer-oriented youth culture that would rebel against adults.[49] As the limited opportunities to exercise political power that had characterized earlier decades continued—in student government projects, for example, or in the chapters of adult party organizations, such as Young Democrats and Young Republicans, that were organized in this period—a range of new organizations envisioned greater possibilities for youth political expression.[50] Reacting to the paternalism of the prevailing child-rearing ideology, and drawing strength from youth movements in other nations, young men and women in the United States joined a suite of novel organizations to advocate for issues of concern to youth.[51]

In 1932, for example, the National Student League sent a delegation to support a group of striking miners in Harlan County, Kentucky. The following year the group adopted a version of the Oxford Pledge, refusing to support American entry into military conflict. In 1936 the American Youth Congress, an umbrella organization of several hundred youth groups (most college, some high school, some nonstudent), issued its *Declaration of the Rights of American Youth* and subsequently rallied Congress to pass the American Youth Act, an aid package for youth that was more comprehensive than the suite of existing New Deal programs. And the Southern Negro Youth Congress (established in 1937 as an offshoot of the National Negro Congress) took a more militant approach than the NAACP in its advocacy on African American issues, organizing workers into unions, agitating for

workers, registering voters, and protesting segregation, police brutality, and lynching. The organization also supported the Caravan Puppeteers, a political puppet show on voting rights.

World War II put a stop to many of these activities. As young men and women participated in the war effort, younger boys and girls retreated into patriotic activities. Like the junior police and courts of an earlier era, Junior Red Cross and Junior Civil Defense programs provided opportunities for adult-supervised public service. (Indeed, many junior police programs retooled to mobilize kids for work as junior air raid wardens and junior air raid messengers.)[52] There were exceptions, of course. The New York City branch of the Boys Brotherhood Republic (established in 1932), which organized its members to cultivate a victory garden, also initiated a review of New York City public schools—highly critical of educational policies and practices—that landed one of its teenage members on Mayor Fiorello La Guardia's juvenile delinquency task force.[53] Elsewhere, student strikes in the 1940s sought to remove African American students from mixed schools. Harvard's Liberal Union, an undergraduate political organization, demonstrated against US involvement in the war.[54] And the Southern Negro Youth Congress (SNYC) testified before the Fair Employment Practices Committee against employment discrimination. In the Zoot Suit riots of the 1940s, in which many white servicemen tangled with the young Mexican Americans wearing these garments, fashion choices became symbols of patriotic behavior—or the lack thereof.[55]

Youth political participation in the 1950s had one foot in the conservatism of wartime and another in the counterculture of the 1960s.[56] A recognition of the contradictions of American democracy based on the international political situation had motivated some youth groups' political activities in the 1930s, and this international framework continued to shape young peoples' interests.[57] Much of this work continued, however, with young people acting through junior chapters of adult organizations. In a few cases, youth did not even know the extent of their alliance with adult organizations. For example, Philip Altbach (1973) notes that the US Central Intelligence Agency covertly funded many of the activities of the National Student Association in this period.[58]

Two issues of special concern were civil liberties and civil rights. McCarthyism prompted responses from students and nonstudents alike. For example, the National Student Association, the YMCA, and the Labor Youth League all took up the issue of civil liberties, including academic freedom.[59] Activism on civil rights expanded following *Brown v. Board of Education* in

1954, with young people leading sit-ins, voter registration drives, educational campaigns, and fundraising efforts. College chapters of the NAACP, for example, rallied to remove racist textbooks at Queen's College and to create new scholarships for African American students at Oberlin College. Students affiliated with the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) held a sit-in to protest discrimination in athletic activities. Regional Indian Youth Councils began conversations about tribal sovereignty.[60] Impressed by these activities, some adult-run organizations expanded their youth work.

Although formal organizations dominated the landscape of youth political participation in this period—and left comparatively more records for historians to mine—young peoples' political expression can be found in more ad hoc activities as well. At Brooklyn's P.S. 109, a committee of boys visited city hall to insist the city pave the street in front of the school.[61] Toledo youth—most students of O. Garfield Jones at the University of the City of Toledo—led the way in convincing the city to restructure its organization from a mayoral government to a city-manager plan. Youth movements in other cities, including Kansas City, broke machine politics.[62] One high school newspaper editor challenged the Dayton Board of Education for removing a school principal, and led a group of students to see the governor. (Their efforts did not lead to the principal's reinstatement, but most members of the Board of Education were defeated at a subsequent election.[63]) And babysitters in several communities formed temporary unions to demand better working conditions; their challenge to prevailing norms appears to have influenced government recommendations on babysitting a few years later.[64]

Despite the fact that so much of youth participation in this period operated under adult oversight, the communist affiliations of some young people's associations—as well as their increasingly militant orientation—prompted public fears about the future of democracy. Adults took steps to redirect children's political energies in more conservative directions or bring their voices into the political process in a more controlled way. Among the organizations devoted to achieving these ends were new junior republics. The American Legion's Boys State and Girls State (and later Boys Nation and Girls Nation) brought together competitively selected high school students from across each state to run mock governments in week-long camps. Promoting the value of American democracy in opposition to then popular European alternatives was the goal of these programs. In African American and racially changing neighborhoods including Pittsburgh's Hill district and San Francisco's Hunter's Point, kids ran mock governments such as Hill City Youth Municipality and San Francisco Junior City, organizing service projects to improve their real cities. Insuring law and order in the local community was their primary function, with child police and courts attending to crime and delinquency prevention and adjudicating the problems that arose.[65] And New Deal programs organized by the National Youth Administration (NYA) responded to fears of young people's political activism gone awry; in addition to offering junior-republic-like self-government training in work camps, they put young people to work as junior civil servants building public facilities across the nation, based on the notion that a kid who had built his or her community would be less likely to destroy it.[66] NYA programs retooled for war production in 1939 under the Federal Security Administration, keeping this democratic training central to the programming.[67] Later, local Youth Councils—which predated World War II but gained traction after the conflict—offered opportunities for young people to advise their local governments, and statewide Youth Councils soon followed suit.[68] Federal officials similarly cultivated youth participation; in 1950, for the first time, young people were invited to the regular White House Conference on Children and Youth.

HOW DID MEDIA FIGURE IN THIS HISTORY?

Print journalism continued to serve as the primary medium for youth expression at midcentury—used in schools, junior republics, and youth groups such as the American Youth Congress, which were striving to maintain regional and national member networks.[69] As before, many of these child-produced newspapers, magazines, and newsletters supplied their political content alongside arts, sports, and other news. The *Junior Citizen* (also called the *Junior Inspectors Club Journal*), which served the nearly two-hundred-thousand-strong "Junior Inspectors Club" organized by New York City's Department of Sanitation to recruit kids into voluntary civil service work, not only rallied its members to keep streets clean and participate in elections of the Children's Congress—the group's governing body—but also showcased their poetry and short stories. In a few cases adult-produced media supplied platforms for children's voices. For example, Pittsburgh's *New Courier* offered a weekly column to the child comptroller of the Hill City Youth Municipality on its neighborhood page; it became a forum for enlisting community participation in Hill City's neighborhood improvement work.[70]

These child- and adult-produced periodicals were joined by radio, chiefly in its new form as a broadcast rather than communications medium. College radio stations, run through the gas pipes and steam tunnels for exclusively

on-campus broadcasting, carried public affairs and political opinion programming alongside music and sports, paving the way for alternatives to commercial programming such as National Public Radio.[71] At junior republics and other youth groups organized as mock governments, radio building became a popular activity, and kids found opportunities to participate in broadcasts on public and commercial radio on a regular basis—mostly to share information on their work with the broader community of adults and kids.[72] In New York City, for example, the Junior Inspectors Club broadcast five programs each week on municipal channel WNYC, combining arts and music programming with political information.[73] San Francisco's Junior City hosted a weekly program called *Mayor of the Air*. And the Junior Officers unit in Kansas City, organized in elementary schools for the purpose of neighborhood improvement, created a mock government modeled on Kansas City and participated in a fifteen-minute weekly radio broadcast from city hall to report on their activities to the broader community.[74] Yet, in sharp contrast to the era of earlier point-to-point radio communications, these broadcast opportunities largely took place under the guidance of adults.

1960S: THE AGE OF ACTIVISM BY AND FOR YOUTH

The 1960s witnessed a surge of interest in political activism from the nation's youth. For these young people, the desire for autonomy and sense of a substantial "generation gap" shaped the approaches to political action they took. Participants in demonstrations, marches, sit-ins, and teach-ins on many of the issues that had galvanized predecessors now sought increasing independence in activities by and for youth alone.[75]

Civil rights, a longtime youth preoccupation, rallied an even broader coalition. White middle-class students as part of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), African Americans as members of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee or more militant Black Power organizations, Mexican Americans with the Mexican American Youth Organization, and Native Americans in the National Indian Youth Council—these and other organizations took leadership roles on an issue that was increasingly broadly defined.[76] The young women within these groups who grew frustrated at their second-class status agitated for organizational changes and formed feminist groups on campus and beyond.

Colleges and high schools were key sites for youth political participation, hosting both branch chapters of national organizations such as the SDS

or W.E.B. Du Bois Clubs as well as local organizations such as black student unions.[77] Many campus women's centers were also established in this period in response to student demand. Beyond educational institutions, residential communities including co-ops and communes offered alternative (even utopian) visions of a new political order for the nation. Although leftist activities absorbed most young people's political energies in the period, there was a small conservative movement as well.[78] The Young Americans for Freedom, established in 1960, aimed to move the Republican party rightward.[79] And Junior Klans briefly expanded the membership of the Ku Klux Klan.[80]

As in the 1930s, public anxieties about unsupervised youth political activities prompted new efforts by adults to reassert control or, at the very least, to build bridges between young people and political authorities in their communities around matters of local concern. Youth councils and junior police programs—now refocused on improving "human relations" and on encouraging kids to consider, "What I can do for my community rather than to it"—played an important role in this work.[81] For example, West Chicago's Youth Council enlisted teenagers to voice their opinions about the most desirable recreational activities there.[82] The Junior Police Cadet Corps in Washington, DC, which put teenagers to work after school and on weekends, was especially eager to attract participation from racial minorities towards the future diversification of the force.[83] With adults increasingly anxious about the activities not only of older teenagers but also of their younger brothers and sisters, similar programs expanded to target the hearts and minds of elementary school-aged children as well.[84]

Youth and adults came together around the issue of lowering the voting age from twenty-one to eighteen.[85] Responding to critics of the Vietnam War who observed that eighteen-year-olds were being drafted into service for military conflicts overseas when they had no official voice in politics at home, they assembled a Youth Franchise Coalition to fight the issue.[86] Success arrived in 1971 when the Twenty-Sixth Amendment to the US Constitution opened the franchise to eighteen-year-olds. Young people had demonstrated that they, too, could be influential political actors. Adults were hopeful that extending voting rights might suppress the increasingly militant participatory style that youth activists in this period had assumed.[87]

HOW DID MEDIA FIGURE IN THIS HISTORY?

Scholarship on the 1960s is more explicit than analyses of earlier periods in its efforts to link youth media production with larger political themes.

Like the toy press before it, offset printing in the 1960s helped to create a new generation of young journalists and publishers. With access to mimeograph machines, they issued newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, and flyers. Many of these periodicals blended cultural commentary with news and editorials on topics including war, police harassment of youth, and racial issues not part of the mainstream media. Complementing the push to establish branch chapters of youth political groups around the country, access to teletype machines linked grassroots journalists and publishers in nationwide networks of alternative media (for example, the Underground Press Syndicate and Liberation News Service). James Macmillan (2011), who has explored how the mimeograph facilitated activities of the SDS and has proposed that grassroots newspaper-wielding-organizations were actually more influential than the SDS itself, has described all of these young people as "participant-observers," contrasting their interest in the issues they covered with the more detached voices of the establishment press.[88] Taken together, these young people's work succeeded in reorienting mainstream media toward the issues of concern to youth.

As amateur journalists and publishers used mimeograph and teletype machines to supply an alternative to the mainstream press, other technical enthusiasts were turning to video and community access television (CATV, a form of cable communications) towards complementary ends. The Sony Portapak, which debuted in the late 1960s, enabled a loose assemblage of individuals and institutions to envision an alternative to corporate-controlled television, which—unlike radio—had not supplied an opportunity for youth voices closer to its debut.[89] Although organizations including the Youth International Party (or Yippies, established in 1968) used guerilla theater tactics to attract coverage from mainstream television, other young people were interested in making television themselves.[90] Young people began training in video production to communicate their messages on civil rights, women's liberation, and other matters. Like the radio amateurs before them, they soon became concerned with media policy. At first, many youth sought an alternative network of "people's television," envisioning distribution of their artistic and political video programs on fledgling cable systems. Although the directions media policy took did not realize the vision of a universe of noncommercial channels, there is ample evidence that many adults in the mainstream supported their campaign for reasons substantially similar to the rationale for a lower voting age: As with political expression via the vote, adults saw video and cable as more controlled routes to political expression than disorderly conduct in the streets.[91]

CONCLUSION

This essay has sought to contextualize contemporary claims about youth, new media, and political participation. It reveals how American youth have long inhabited roles as political actors and media producers, driven in part, before 1890, by the view among adults that youth was less differentiated from adulthood than it is today—and later by young people's response to adult efforts to "put them in their place." An overview of the rich history of young people's political participation and media's role within it highlights several themes that span time and technology. These themes include ongoing tensions between kids and adults around young people's autonomy,[92] as well as the central roles played by students as colleges and high schools provided a critical mass of young people, a context for organization, and access to sometimes costly technologies. They also include the use of new media for cultural as well as political expression, and consistency in the issues of concern: race relations, free speech, military engagement, and civil rights. Finally, they include a legacy of mixed effects—from successes such as the Twenty-Sixth Amendment to failures such as the American Youth Act.

To be sure, ample work remains to flesh out further nuances of this history.[93] The evidence presented here opens a conversation about the potentially usable past, not only for scholars who study the present to understand more precisely what is "new" about new media, but also for activists to potentially draw lessons from their predecessors' past patterns of failure and success. Time and again, it seems, when the cost has fallen, young people have turned to new media as tools for political expression among themselves and to the broader community of adults. Yet, in keeping with the history of alternative media more generally—since adults, too, have been enthusiastic users—the youth who used media technologies but did not control the media systems found traditional gatekeeping authorities from government agencies to private corporations, all adults, eager to assert control over and restrict those technologies' future use. Youth political expression was thus a casualty of the larger story of alternative media in the United States, wherein new technologies have disrupted media regimes only temporarily.[94]

The recognition that the early histories of several alternative media as disruptive technologies were not sustained in the longer term makes clear that the political possibilities associated with contemporary technologies are by no means guaranteed. These past patterns foreground important choices to be made about media policy and the design of media systems as we seek to insure that political participation in the digital age follows a different path.

matism advances the idea that beliefs—and therefore truth claims—are best understood as rules for action. As such, truth claims can be tested by evaluating the actions that flow from them.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Particularly within the context of past social scientific studies of youth, media, and politics, which focus on youth as targets for political socialization via mass media, the status of young people as political actors and media producers appears to be new.
2. Information on youth political participation prior to the nineteenth century is limited. A few glimpses can be found in DeConde 1971 and Kett 1977. Brewer (2005) discusses traditions of teenage civil servants in several colonies during the period before American independence. On the history of debates about voting age, see Cultice 1992; there was some variation in voting age at the state level prior to 1971.
3. DeConde 1971 and Michael Miller 1981.
4. Altbach 1997. Notably, during the Civil War two-thirds of "federal soldiers" were under twenty-two years of age, and five hundred thousand were under seventeen, according to Cultice 1992. See also Kett 1977.
5. Wickes 1893. This of course raises questions as to whether or not student government constitutes political action. During this period many adults and kids decided that it did, insofar as the children had some ability to shape the environment in their schools.
6. Nasaw 1986 and Bartoletti 2003.
7. Kett 1977.
8. Sheldon 1882; Costello 1887.
9. "Stole Rich Ore from Anaconda," *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 30, 1895, p. 3; "Boy Detectives," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 20, 1886, p. 7; "Byrnes' Boy Detectives," *Boston Daily Globe*, February 16, 1890, p. 19; "Juvenile Detectives," *Boston Daily Globe*, August 2, 1891, p. 23; "Criminal: The Boy-Detective," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 17, 1878.
10. Kett 1977, Welling 1942; Wolcott 2005.
11. "For the East Side's Health: A Committee of Boys Urges That More Care Should Be Taken in the Regulation of Pushcart Trade," *New York Times*, September 7, 1895, p. 16.
12. Wallach 1997; Koschnik 2000.
13. Kett 1977, Howell and Moore 2010. Howell and Moore detail the differences between historical and contemporary gangs in terms of demographics, structure, and goals.
14. Clement 1997, p. 16. See also Bruce 1989, pp. 280–81.
15. Horton 1992–93. There is some evidence about political resistance from slave youth as well. See King 1998.
16. Wallach 1997.
17. Bartoletti 2003.
18. Diner 1997, p. 24.
19. "Suffragists Meet at Milwaukee Saturday," *Portland Evening Telegram*, August 13, 1912, p. 10.
20. Bartoletti 2003.
21. Wallach 1997.

22. Fass 1977; Campbell 1963; McClure 1883.
23. Harrison 1883.
24. Ahlhauser 1919.
25. Harrison 1883, p. 66. On the initial controversy, see "A Bold Sedition," *National Amateur*, June 1880, p. 2, describing proposals to create a separate Southern Amateur Journalists' League.
26. Petrik 1989, 1992.
27. Harrison 1883, p. 60, suggests that actual enforcement of the law was at local postmasters' discretion.
28. Indeed it was Hall who is credited with popularizing the concept of "adolescence."
29. MacLeod 1998; Zelizer 1994.
30. MacLeod 1983.
31. Hawes 1991.
32. Light 2012.
33. "One City Actually Fly-Less Last Summer." *St. Louis Post—Dispatch*, February 15, 1914, p. B3.
34. Light 2012; "Chautauqua Plans Work for Youths," *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 10, 1922, p. F4.
35. A few even set up their own detective firms. See "Shadow Big Men in Jury Scandal," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 26, 1909, p. 2; "Boy Detective Aids the City," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 17, 1908, p. 7; "Boy Detective Works as Girl," *Los Angeles Times*, July 28, 1909, p. II9; Joe Miller, "Government of the Gallery," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, February 25, 1906, p. 35; "Boys Trail 2 Suspects," *Detroit Free Press*, September 1, 1908, p. 1; "Cigaret War is Revived with Boy Detectives Used," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 7, 1904, p. 14; "Debate Using Boy Detectives," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 17, 1903, p. 4; "Chicago Has Boy Sleuths," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, May 5, 1901, p. A12B; "Boy Detectives Work for City," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 21, 1901, p. 54; "Arrest Due to Boy Detectives," *New-York Tribune*, March 18, 1900, p. B1.
36. "A Junior Juvenile Court." *Christian Science Monitor*, November 28, 1914; Greenberg 2008.
37. Light 2012.
38. Serb 2000. Lifeguards over eighteen years of age were paid.
39. See *Boy Power*, the official publication of the US Boys Working Reserve, published from 1917.
40. "School Children as Census Takers," *Ithaca Daily News*, February 3, 1916.
41. Ashley 1919.
42. Wolters 1975.
43. This club, which modeled its political system on the city of Chicago, quickly grew to more than one thousand members (but only three staff), becoming the largest independent boys club in the United States.
44. Boys Brotherhood Republic, *Life of the Boys Brotherhood Republic*. Chicago: BBR, 1938; Light 2012; Page 1919.
45. Fass 1977, p. 138.
46. Light 2012.
47. McKenzie 2007.
48. Douglas 1986. New regulations on access to the radio spectrum assigned the US military and commercial broadcasters greater powers, limiting amateurs' access to the airwaves.
49. Fass 1977.

50. McKown 1944.
51. Cohen 1997; Gellman 2012; Miller 1981.
52. Youth courts were largely on the decline in this period, although there were a few exceptions. Butts and Willison (2002) mention a Hi-Y bicycle court in Mansfield, Ohio, where youth resolved traffic issues themselves.
53. Welling 1942, 1982.
54. Van Dyke 2003.
55. Alvarez, 2009.
56. Altbach 1997; de Schweinitz 2009.
57. Mary Dudziak 2000.
58. Philip Altbach 1973, vol. 5.
59. Van Dyke 2003; Altbach 1997; de Schweinitz 2009. The YMCA's role here is indicative of the enduring importance of religious institutions in supporting youth political and service work. See Kett 1977 and Urb 1917.
60. Shreve 2011.
61. Welling 1942, p. 114.
62. Neblett 1937. See also *National Municipal Review* 1940 (29): 122.
63. Britt Haas 2011.
64. Formanek-Brunell 1998.
65. Light 2012. The programs for African Americans were especially notable because adults concerned with the nation's "youth problem" during the depression were the first to broadly recognize the plight of African Americans alongside whites. On shifting definitions of youth problems see Reiman 1992; Hawes 1991, and de Schweinitz 2009.
66. This was not the first federal program to employ youth as junior civil servants. Earlier, the National Student Federation of America, in collaboration with the US Department of Commerce, established the National Institute on Public Affairs, which enabled young people to work within the National Youth Administration (See Barnard 1933, p. 16). The NYA camps served youth up to age twenty-four.
67. "First Negro Mayor at Quoddy," *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 1, 1942, p. 4.
68. On youth councils in Ohio, for example, see Bower 2004.
69. Van Dyke 2003; Light 2012.
70. See the regular column "News of Hill City" in this newspaper.
71. Bloch 1980; Slotten 2009.
72. Light 2012. There were a few exceptions. For example, Cleveland's Boystowns, a network of six junior governments (each modeled on Cleveland), created a shortwave radio network for cross-club communications.
73. "Special Lincoln Day Broadcast on WNYC," *New York Age*, February 13, 1937, p. 9.
74. Parker 1946, 1950.
75. Altbach 1997.
76. Shreve 2011; de Schweinitz 2009; Van Dyke 2003; Carson 1995; Munoz 1997.
77. De Schweinitz 2009; Williamson 1999; "The History of Black Student Activism," *Journal of African American History* 88, no. 2 (Spring 2003).
78. Altbach 1997.
79. Andrew 1997.
80. Turner 1982.
81. "What I can do for my community rather than to it?" was the motto of the East Ghent Civic League's Youth Council. See "E. Ghent Youths Move into Places on Council," *New Journal and Guide*, November 16, 1963, p. B30.

82. Jaklich 1967.
83. Jesse W. Lewis Jr., "New Cadet Corps Is Aimed at Police-City Relations," *Washington Post and Times-Herald*, October 9, 1966, p. B; Jesse W. Lewis Jr., "Police Cadet Corps Eyed in High Schools," *Washington Post and Times-Herald*, October 5, 1966, p. B1; "PAL' Lists Formation," *Philadelphia Tribune*, July 13, 1968, p. 9.
84. "Junior Police Partners Program Launched," *Philadelphia Tribune*, October 1, 1968, p. 12; "Form 'Junior Police' at Ryerson School," *Chicago Tribune*, October 29, 1967, p. 4W.
85. Some youth chapters of adult-sponsored groups such as the NAACP joined in as well.
86. Cultice, *Youth's Battle for the Ballot* observes examples when individuals under twenty-one had previously been permitted to vote. He also notes the long campaign, mostly by adults, to lower the voting age. According to this account, efforts by youth themselves to advocate on this issue gathered steam in the mid-to-late 1960s.
87. On militancy as a style of youth political participation, see Lipset 1971.
88. Macmillan 2011. There were tensions among them, however. For example, echoing their experience of political organizations more generally, young women who tried to use existing underground periodicals to spread feminist messages found them unresponsive, and as a result founded their own publications. See Randolph T. Holhut, "A Brief History of American Alternative Journalism in the Twentieth Century." Online, no date.
89. Boyle 1997.
90. The Yippies saw coverage of their subversive activities as advertisements for radicalism that would rally other youth to adopt their political views. See Bodroghkozy 2001.
91. Light 2003.
92. In a few cases this even led to FBI investigations of youth activities: for example, the SNYCC Labor Youth League and W. E. B. DuBois Clubs.
93. Reading these sources with questions about the present in mind points to how many more stories remain to be told. This state of affairs is the result of an unfortunate, albeit understandable, divide between studies in American political and social history and studies in the history of technology and media. Histories of youth political participation from scholars of American political and social history tend to overlook questions of media production, distribution, and reception—even as youth-produced media are essential primary source materials in their accounts. (Indeed, there are entire archival collections and digital repositories devoted to such ephemeral material; e.g., the Proquest pamphlet literature database.) Histories of youth media production from scholars of media and technology history, which generally each focus on a single device at its debut, neglect how the uses of such devices fit larger patterns of youth activism. Bringing together the methods and evidence from these two strands of historical writing will facilitate deeper understanding of cross-technology and cross-period themes, and help to pinpoint more precisely what, beyond the specific technologies of our present moment, is distinctly new about new media and youth political participation today.
94. Ahlhauser 1919; Bloch 1980; Boyle 1997; Macmillan 2011. Nonetheless, for the young people who engaged in these activities even temporarily, there were substantial longer-term effects. As with the ample evidence attesting that many participants in junior republics and junior policing programs went on to political and civil service

careers, large numbers of young people who gained exposure to media production through experiments with new media went on to professional media work. This included media careers in the realm of art and literature, as well as in politics.

CHAPTER TWO

1. For a history of the development of this meme, as well as a collection of images, see http://knowyourmeme.com/memes/casually-pepper-spray-everything-cop.
2. Hartley (2010) argues that citizen disillusionment with broadcast media coverage of the political sphere due to perceived influence of political elites in controlling the narrative has led to a shift towards DIY/DWO (do-it-yourself/do-it-with-others) models of citizenship in which citizens are relying more frequently on communications to shape narratives than on elite guided action. Jones (2013) suggests that within such a context, satire becomes a more desirable form of "truth creation" as it allows citizens to construct critical narratives and encourage circulation of information. Jones argues that this is a particularly important form of expression in a context where "serious" political talk is viewed with skepticism and is therefore less likely to be attended to and circulated.

CHAPTER THREE

1. King Jr. 1958; Robinson 1987.
2. Lott 1992; Rose 1994; and D with Jah 1997.
3. This theme is explored in the documentary *Uprising: Hip Hop and the L.A. Riots*, 2012.
4. These diametrically opposed, even Manichean, assessments of hip hop are helpfully reviewed and incisively critiqued in Rose 2008.
5. For more nuanced discussions of the meaning of urban riots, see Gooding-Williams 1993.
6. For brief overviews of this debate, see Dawson 2001, 74–82, and Jeffries 2011, 10–15.
7. See Boyd 2003.
8. For further reflections on the limits of the civil rights paradigm of political dissent, see Beltrán, this volume.
9. For a discussion of some of the ways adults have historically sought to supervise and shape youth's political development and civic engagement, see Light, this volume.
10. See Jargowsky 1997, 12–17.
11. See Shelby 2007.
12. Forman 2002 and Perry 2004.
13. See Watkins 2009 and Cohen and Kahne 2012.
14. Allen elaborates this point in her chapter in this volume. Also see Young 2000.
15. Mansbridge 1994 and Fraser 1997, chapter 3.
16. Spence 2011, pp. 8–11.
17. Warner 2002.
18. Boyd 2010 and Varnelis 2008.
19. Ogbar 2007, chapter 5.
20. For discussion of this issue, see Dean 2003.
21. In this volume, Wendy Chun explores the concerns connected to the monetizable status of culture products that circulate digitally.

22. The difference between a motive and an intention can be distinguished in terms of two questions: What is the agent trying to achieve (intention), and why is he or she trying to achieve this objective (motive)?
23. Kelley 1994 and Hanchard 2006.
24. See Scott 1990, chapter 7. Impure hip hop dissent within repressive regimes does often take the form of infrapolitics, as dissidents can be jailed, raped, maimed, or killed for open dissent.
25. West 1993, chapter 1.
26. http://www.contactmusic.com/news/reverend-jackson-blasts-nas-for-controversial-album-title_1046952.
27. http://www.datpiff.com/Nas-The-Nigger-Tape-mixtape.15983.html.
28. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mfz7wVxzuoE; and http://www.myspace.com/nas/music/songs/be-a-nigger-too-9659882.
29. See, for example, Weiss 2008; Hintz 2008; and Caramanica 2008.
30. Reed 2000, pp. 167–70.
31. Reed 2000, p. 170. For a similar point of view, see Bynoe 2004.
32. Baraka 1999.
33. Hirschman 1970.
34. See, for example, Schochet 1971.
35. See Morgan 2009.
36. Hill 1979.
37. These are not the only reasons why marginalized black youth might find intrinsic value in impure symbolic dissent. This type of dissent can also be a way of affirming one's moral worth in the face of injustice, a way of preserving one's self-respect. I develop this point in "Liberalism, Self-Respect, and Troubling Cultural Patterns in Ghettos," in *The Cultural Matrix: Understanding Black Youth*, ed. Orlando Patterson and Ethan Fosse (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, forthcoming).
38. Lawson (2005) argues that political rap artists, in light of continuing injustices against blacks, view the social contract in America as voided.
39. See Shelby 2007.
40. In her insightful discussion of the ethics of symbolic communication, Danielle Allen emphasizes sincerity as a condition for just "culture jamming." See Allen, "Political Equality and Communicative Action" (unpublished manuscript) .
41. For a helpful analysis of the role of personas in hip hop and the challenge this poses for extracting the meaning of rap messages, see Thompson 2005.
42. For helpful comments on previous drafts of this chapter, I thank the participants at the Youth, New Media, and Citizenship workshops at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, and especially Danielle Allen and Jennifer Light. I also thank Harry Brighouse, Christopher Lebron, Neil Roberts, Jessie Scanlon, Brandon Terry, Erik Olin Wright, and two anonymous reviewers for their helpful suggestions. I benefited from feedback from audiences at Morgan State University, Amherst College, the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and the National Institutes of Health.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. The DREAM Act stands for the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act. Introduced in 2001, the act would extend a six-year conditional legal status to undocumented youth who meet several criteria, including: "entry