

# The Freedom Train: Citizenship and Postwar Political Culture 1946-1949

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The Freedom Train, a touring exhibit of 133 historical documents and memorabilia including the Mayflower Compact, the Bill of Rights, Washington's copy of the Constitution, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, the United Nations Charter and the Iwo Jima flag, set off from Philadelphia in September 1947 during the 160th anniversary of the signing of the Constitution, traveled through New England and the South, headed for the West Coast in the spring of 1948, then arrived in Washington, D.C., during the January 1949 inauguration of President Harry S. Truman. During the 413-day tour it had visited 322 cities and three-and-a-half million people had walked through the exhibit, an average of 9,000 people per day. The American Heritage Foundation, which planned and directed the exhibit, estimated that fifty million Americans—one in every three—took part in Freedom Train program activities, a response one foundation representative proclaimed "staggering."<sup>1</sup>

Crowds were large and lines were long at the exhibition sites (Fig. 1, 2), where one could take the "Freedom Pledge," sign the "Freedom Scroll," and purchase official and unofficial souvenirs while waiting to enter the train. The "Spirit of 1776" locomotive pulled seven white cars with red, white and blue stripes running the length, and a golden eagle with wings spread or three-foot high gold letters spelling FREEDOM TRAIN appeared on alternating cars.<sup>2</sup> The greenish-blue interior of the three exhibit cars twisted in an accordion fashion so one could step out of the center aisle to observe the documents in their recessed cases (Fig. 3). The first exhibit car housed early American history documents, the second contained memorabilia and exhibits about famous American men (Lin-

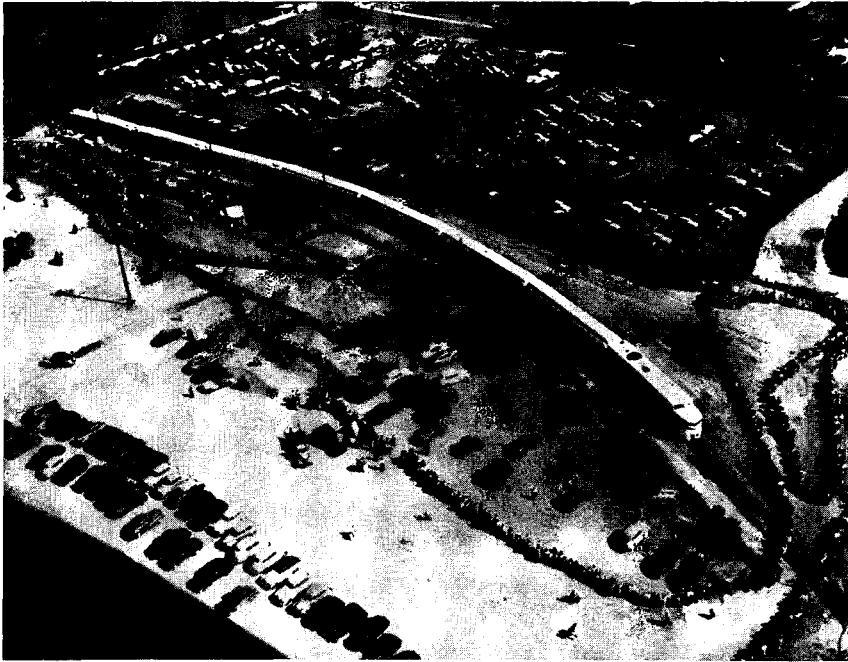


**Figure 1.** The “Spirit of 1776” locomotive and seven cars pull into Los Angeles on February 23, 1948. *Los Angeles Times* photo courtesy of Department of Special Collections, University Research Library, UCLA.

coln, Washington, Hamilton, Jefferson and others), and the third car contained twentieth-century and war-related materials.<sup>3</sup>

The organizers of the Freedom Train exhibit wanted to rekindle an awareness of citizens’ duties and responsibilities. They designed an ideal vision of America’s past that would supersede contemporary partisan conflict and racial, class and ethnic antagonisms. As Freedom Train sponsor and United States Attorney General Tom C. Clark intoned, “It’s an American program which seeks to re-establish the common ground of *all* Americans.” Foundation secretary Louis Novins added, “[A]ll Americans—no matter what [their] political persuasion—meet on the common ground of their American Heritage,” and without it, “differences become subversive, personal opinions become futile, and controversy becomes anarchy.”<sup>4</sup>

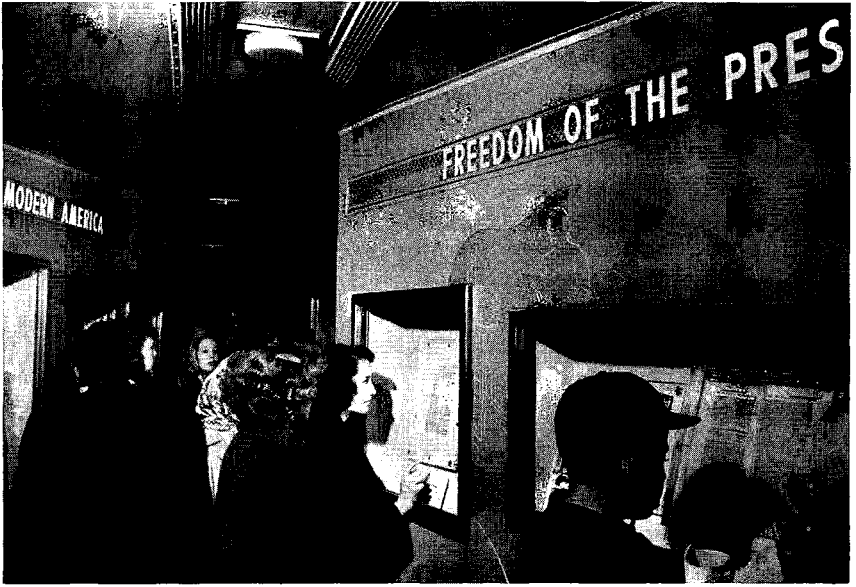
The Freedom Train was one of the first attempts to articulate a national identity and define citizenship after the New Deal and World War II. The declining rhetoric of capital-labor conflict during the war, and the integration of government and large-scale economic interests since the New Deal prodded economic and political elites into rearticulating the bases of their cultural and ideological authority. Although far from being a homogeneous group, project organizers shared certain common attributes and attitudes. In response to international events and domestic uncertainty, particularly the wave of strikes in 1945-46, they wanted to construct an American ideology to justify and celebrate



**Figure 2.** This aerial photograph of the train in Cleveland, which shows the long lines visitors encountered in many cities, appeared in the October 1949 issue of *National Geographic Magazine*. Photo courtesy of The Beltman Archives.

cooperative and corporate systems for public policy and capital-labor relations. They were businessmen with a pro-statist, capital-labor cooperative perspective, government officials, prominent citizens, and labor leaders, all of whom shared certain notions of the American past as well as hopes for a consensual future.<sup>5</sup>

At first glance the Freedom Train program contained consensual exaltations of abundance and free enterprise capitalism in the postwar period. This consensual vision, forged through an elite process, constructed a particular representation of the American past in the Freedom Train documents and the citizenship program. Economic abundance, opportunity, and the family were fundamental tenets for the Freedom Train program, although anticommunist critiques and suppressed conflict permeated the project as easily as the emphasis on a common American heritage. The patriotism planners selected documents and created a program from their ideal vision of American history that emphasized the abundance and opportunity of capitalism while it celebrated basic individual freedoms and the democratic process.



**Figure 3. Inside the Freedom Train. The crooked walls “broke the monotony of a straight-wall exhibit and speeded traffic.” B. Anthony Stewart, *National Geographic Magazine*. Photo courtesy National Geographic Society.**

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The Freedom Train program tried to merge and reconcile these positive abstractions with broader social tensions and concerns as the essence of Americanism and the defining element of freedom. This mediated vision required adjusting the political process and partisanship, and the promoters tried to carefully prescribe the “proper” kinds of political participation. The program’s interpretation of postwar politics, rooted in a pluralistic consensus, provided meaning and context to reconversion, economic uncertainty, and other tensions of the time. It still forms the *a priori* basis for many studies of the postwar years.<sup>6</sup> But the Freedom Train program reveals more than corporate hegemony; it was an expression of the conflicting forces and languages within the political culture that were attempting to define citizenship and Americanism. While it contained all the stock language and symbols of consensus, the planning, presentation, and articulation of an American ideology mirrored societal conflicts. Discussion was often tempered or regulated, even though postwar society churned with dissention, debate and conflict about the meaning of the war and America’s role in the postwar world. Republican and Democratic politicians found unity in opposing foreign and domestic enemies, but partisan and ideological differences over the role of government, individual economic and political rights, and claims to Americanism continued. Social tension over race relations, the role of women, price and rent controls, inflation, and international commitments provoked deep

public concern. The process of putting together the Freedom Train and the citizenship program revealed conflicts among the organizers that reflected these divisions. The program itself engendered conflict about the meaning and methods of celebrating American ideology, for the emphasis on economic abundance threatened to gloss over real conflict and degenerate into a base celebration of materialistic consumption. But race relations, differing across regions and communities, challenged the program's nationalistic rhetoric of freedoms. This apparently straight-forward program, often portrayed as an example of both benign and evil Cold War consensus ideology, is thus a valuable avenue into understanding how elites reconciled postwar conflicts.

The Freedom Train program, reflecting its creators' interests and identities, was meant to enhance civics education and national pride through celebrating the virtues of America. The civic virtue curriculum, which appeared in Foundation publications, in community-based citizen rededication programs, and in the presence of the Freedom Train exhibit itself, presented the American system of government as providing individual rights and freedoms and requiring minimal duties from its citizens. Embedded in some of the program's language and symbols, however, was the idea that democratic consumption was a crucial measure of the American system of government. While the program encouraged voting and community participation, consumption was also presented as a tangible element of citizenship, an expression of individualism, and a key element of political participation. The consumption theme did not dominate civic education, but was present and persistent enough that the celebrated democratic values and freedoms were often circumscribed to the amorphous national issues of abundance, growth and anticommunism.<sup>7</sup>

The Freedom Train planners' message was moderately pro-business, acknowledging a labor and state role as diminished partners. The program celebrated the most benign aspects of postwar pluralism, and the Foundation—when forced—took a liberal position on race when presenting the train, although they had not done so in its planning or content. The planners offered a well-meaning if unfocused push for political participation, but questions of audience and reception lay outside the Foundation's public relations mechanisms. Communities celebrating Rededication Weeks, and excluded groups, particularly African Americans, exploited the program's diverse and flexible messages and purposes to their own ends. The interaction between the planners, the train program, and community responses reflect the expectations and limitations of liberalism, citizenship and freedom in the late 1940s.

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The Freedom Train began in Washington D.C., in April 1946 when William Coblenz, the Justice Department's assistant director of public information and a veteran of two world wars and eighteen years at the *Boston Post*, wandered across Ninth Street on his lunch hour and saw an exhibit of Nazi war documents at the National Archives. The exhibit gave him the idea of combining American

historical documents and contrasting Nazi documents in an exhibit that would combat what he recalled as “the whole problem of subversion.” Nazi abuses were related by inference to the Soviet Union and, Coblenz believed, to “the most fantastic splurge of lunatic fringe literature” of “hate” and “bigotry” served up by “the conscious instruments of the Kremlin,” which he read every day at work.<sup>8</sup> Coblenz proposed a “Civil Liberties Exhibit” of documents on one railroad car, but he eventually changed the name to the “Bill of Rights Exhibit” because “Communist front organizations” abused the notion of civil liberties and the Bill of Rights was the heart and “essence” of all citizens’ rights. Attorney General Tom C. Clark announced in September that the exhibit would be privately financed, non-profit and non-partisan. Fiscal considerations and apprehension about the appearance of a government or partisan propaganda campaign disallowed direct governmental control of the project, so Clark sought administrative and financial resources in the private sector. He persuaded New York attorney Edwin Weisl, and Paramount Pictures president Barney Balaban to begin planning the project. Weisl and his Paramount friends and clients quickly took control from the National Archives.<sup>9</sup> The National Archives staff liaison to the project organizers, Elizabeth Hamer, noted after an August meeting with Coblenz, that “Hollywood, chiefly, is putting up the capital for the exhibit.”<sup>10</sup> By December, individuals in the private sector had assumed from the government the power and ability to shape the tone and character of the project.

While Paramount Pictures, the Justice Department and the National Archives made administrative arrangements, advertising executives planned their own patriotism program. Thomas D’Arcy Brophy, president of the advertising agency Kenyon and Eckhardt, suggested at the November 15 meeting of the Advertising Council’s Board of Directors, “. . . a campaign to sell America to Americans,” using “a method that we in this democracy have developed to a high point of perfection—the method of open salesmanship.” The planners persuaded Brophy and the Advertising Council to join the project and named Brophy president of the exhibition in February 1947. A legacy of the War Advertising Council, the Advertising Council used all of its public service information skills to promote the patriotic project.<sup>11</sup>

Weisl quickly mobilized his entertainment connections to create a program of which the Freedom Train was only one aspect. Balaban assigned his assistant and former Massachusetts assistant attorney general Louis Novins to work with Coblenz and Brophy and coordinate the program. Novins realized that the citizenship program was part of a larger project needed for public education. The train itself was not enough. He suggested that “. . . the actual exhibition of the documents merely constitutes the springboard for the national and local campaigns.” A broader campaign to get “the message” out included extensive use of newspapers, publications, radio and motion pictures. The goal was no longer the intimate experience William Coblenz planned, nor would success be “measured by the number of individuals who visit the train,” but rather by “the intensity of the coverage of the media.”<sup>12</sup> The Freedom Train became one part of a three-

pronged patriotism program. In addition to the exhibit of documents, each community the train visited would hold a week of rededication to American values. Each day of Rededication Week would be designated to attract the participation of various community groups. The third phase, an Advertising Council national advertising campaign on radio, in comic books, and in motion pictures would spread the program's message.<sup>13</sup>

The non-profit, non-partisan American Heritage Foundation was incorporated to oversee the program in February 1947 and unveiled at a May 22 White House ceremony where Attorney General Clark presented the Foundation leadership to the media. The Justice Department originated and "sponsored" the exhibition, but following the creation of the Foundation, they had no control or input. The Foundation coordinated document procurement with the National Archives, security with the Marine Corps, and scheduling with railroad companies, but raised their own funds.<sup>14</sup> Many of the nation's top corporate and private sector leaders contributed their names to the Foundation's Board of Trustees. The Board included Chester Bernard from the Rockefeller Foundation, Republican lawyer John Foster Dulles, Studebaker president and Marshall Plan administrator Paul Hoffman, Motion Picture Association of America president Eric Johnston, theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, and General Electric Company chairman Charles E. Wilson. Winthrop W. Aldrich, Chase National Bank President and later ambassador to Great Britain, served as chairman of the Foundation. With impeccable Republican credentials, Aldrich's leadership countered criticism that the project had partisan overtones.<sup>15</sup>

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The American Heritage Foundation's Freedom Train and citizenship programs amplified areas of presumed consensus in postwar society. Soundly anticommunist and antisubversive, they emphasized the perception of an ideal common heritage for all American citizens. A democracy of goods centered in the family similarly reaffirmed the Foundation's consensual ideology. Its vision of consensus emerged from months of negotiating, wrangling and open conflict.

International communism and domestic events forged the Foundation's ethos, confirming and highlighting the differences between communist/collective and capitalist/individual. As Attorney General Clark intoned in December 1946, "fascism, communism, or the various degrees of socialism" around the world challenged "the American brand of democracy." To Louis Novins the program symbolized the conflict between two great ideologies: "Once again we witness the clash of conflicting ideologies on a global scale—a cold war of ideas fought with ominous significance to hundreds of millions of people throughout the world."<sup>16</sup> The Freedom Train itself lacked harsh anticommunist materials and rhetoric, but the Foundation acknowledged the issue's role in the program. Thomas D'Arcy Brophy assured his colleagues that the Foundation and the program were not "trying to promote a war-like spirit [but] the obvious conflict of the two great ideologies is assuming serious proportions."<sup>17</sup> Rotarians and

Legionnaires at local rededication ceremonies denounced the Soviets and railed against subversives: “The enemies of our freedom today are hiding in the night,” “Today the United States faces an aggressive ideological force whose aim is to subjugate and rule the world,” and “It’s not the Red Army that makes communism dangerous. It’s the way in which the Red idea has been made incarnate in men and women in every country.”<sup>18</sup>

The Foundation altered the Freedom Train itself to address international and domestic communism and foreign policy. At a January 1947 meeting in New York City, the Foundation’s Executive Committee altered the project by dropping the Nazi section.<sup>19</sup> The Committee abandoned the focus on fascism versus American freedoms to better enunciate a distinct American ideology. Broadening the thematic focus made it thematically and logistically possible to include the Soviet Union and communism as threats to freedom, and the Foundation publication *Our American Heritage* soon mentioned the exportation of American freedoms to assist anticommunist groups.<sup>20</sup> The Truman administration was then creating international relief and security programs, but the planners tempered praise for the redemptive power of American virtue overseas. Excessive interventionism and preparedness may have been too disquieting immediately following World War II, for although internationalism was part of domestic evangelical patriotism, in this project it served more as a symbol of America’s past and current military success, not the country’s future.

The Freedom Train organizers constructed a national ideology to emphasize the common heritage of all Americans. Racial, ethnic or religious group distinctions rarely existed in the documents selected and the images projected. Stressing the common heritage of all Americans, Attorney General Clark suggested that Americans needed some type of reaffirmation:

Indoctrination in democracy is the essential catalytic agent needed to blend our various groups into one American family. Without it, we could not sustain the continuity of our way of life. In its largest sense, preaching Americanism is an affirmative declaration of our faith in ourselves.<sup>21</sup>

It is neither striking nor unique that the national program did not celebrate differences. Clark’s consensual family implied not only unified social and cultural compliance, but political unity as well. Participation in the political process was the essential act of the good citizen, yet deference to mainstream partisan politics and consensual ideology was equally important.

Foundation president Brophy argued that “proper” voting information was the primary objective of the program, with other goals more abstract and ambitious, including “appreciation for America,” “awareness,” “the meaning of the American Way of Life,” and “our American Heritage.” Advertising disseminated these abstractions because, as Brophy boldly stated, “[A]ll of us know that advertising can sell ideas to the millions just as well as it can sell merchandise and



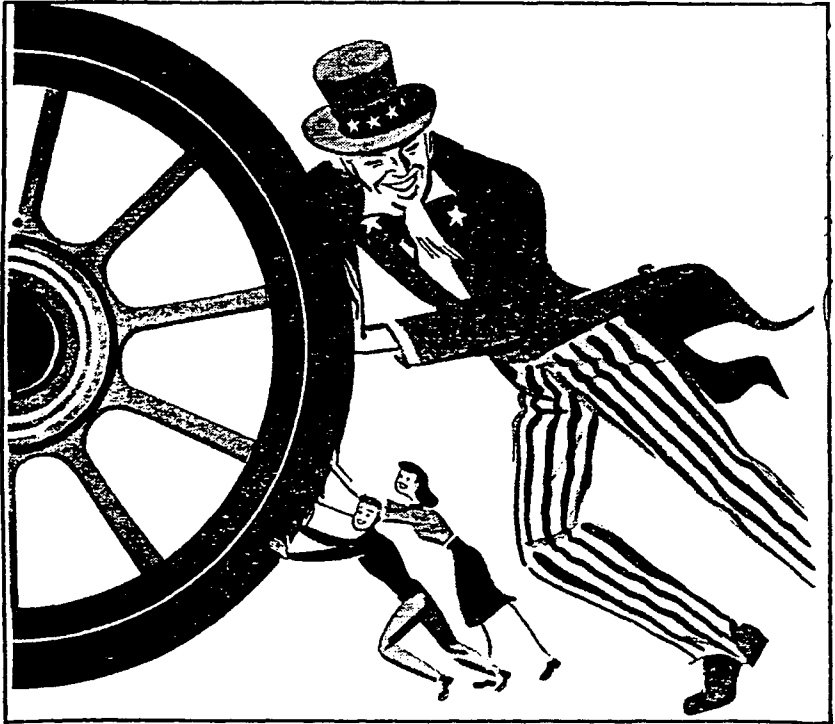
services.”<sup>22</sup> The Freedom Train provided the context and means to market these abstract phrases.

The Foundation selected some of the most historically rich artifacts from the American past and shaped their presentation to confirm project goals. Compiling and presenting the nation’s material culture, which allowed millions of Americans to see the Constitution or the Emancipation Proclamation, was surely a valuable public service. Historian Eric F. Goldman in 1948 called the documents a “semi-official definition of American liberty,” but taken as a whole their presentation in the campaign materials avoided areas of conflict and historical inequality. Although religious and political freedom and the Second World War comprised more than seventy percent of the exhibit, which Brophy defended by arguing that they were “universally accepted,” the Foundation made no attempt to discuss the Civil War, minority rights, economic rights, or social legislation in the twentieth century.<sup>23</sup> The documents stood alone and open to interpretation, proffered as icons contributing to an ethos of nationalism and justification for status quo domestic political, social and economic relationships.

The Advertising Council created a variety of published materials expressing the Foundation’s unified themes. Among the movies, radio programs and cartoons were two “official” books: *Our American Heritage: Documents of Freedom* and *Good Citizen*.<sup>24</sup> *Our American Heritage*, compiled by the editors of *Life*, related the American past via the Freedom Train documents to a contemporary society in white middle-class themes, images and language. The editors reproduced thirty-two key Freedom Train documents with related contemporary photographs and accompanying text. The book illustrated the inevitable perseverance of American values and the American Way of Life despite the challenge of international communism, internal subversion, or curtailed individualism. Individualism and personal freedoms within appropriate gender and racial boundaries were presented as critical areas of agreement and national unity. For example, the Mayflower Compact appeared opposite a photograph of a town meeting—the idyllic symbol of democratic participation—where a group of white citizens listen intently to a speaker in a cramped church basement. The four women out of twenty-odd persons in the picture are discreetly seated in the fourth and final row of chairs.<sup>25</sup> Issues of free speech and religion appeared with similar documents and thematic photographs satisfying the Foundation’s notions of community, gender, race, and class.

*Good Citizen*, with prescribed duties for good Americans, expressed business and advertising leaders’ values and attitudes toward social and economic relationships (Fig. 4). With only a few exceptions in *Good Citizen* and in advertisements, a white male professional, businessman or civil servant in a suit was the ideal citizen to emulate; the materials did not depict working class, ethnic or racial diversity. The visual dominance of white males and white-collar types appeared because of basic assumptions advertisers and businessmen made about society at large. The language was colloquial and quaint, appealing to middle America, while the visual symbols of the ideal citizen were urban, sophisticated,

# What you can do about it



## *The Nine Promises of a* **GOOD CITIZEN**

Ask yourself,

“Am I truly a citizen—or just a fortunate tenant of this great nation?”

On the opposite page is a summary of the working tools of good citizenship. Pledge yourself here and now to these nine points—that you, your children and your children’s children may continue to enjoy the American Heritage of “life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.”

Figure 4. The Advertising Council's citizenship manual *Good Citizen* defined nine basic duties of American Citizenship. American Heritage Foundation, *Good Citizen* (New York, 1948), 70-71.



I will vote at all elections. I will inform myself on candidates and issues and will use my greatest influence to see that honest and capable officials are elected. I will accept public office when I can serve my community or my country thereby.

*(Pages 8 to 19)*



I will serve on a jury when asked.

*(Pages 20 to 27)*



I will respect and obey the laws. I will assist public officials in preventing crime and the courts in giving evidence.

*(Pages 28 to 30)*



I will pay my taxes understandingly (if not cheerfully).

*(Pages 32 to 37)*



I will work for peace but will dutifully accept my responsibilities in time of war and will respect the Flag.

*(Pages 38 and 39)*



In thought, expression and action; at home, at school and in all my contacts, I will avoid any group prejudice based on class, race or religion.

*(Pages 42 to 45)*



I will support our system of free public education by doing everything I can to improve the schools in my own community.

*(Pages 46 to 51)*



I will try to make my community a better place in which to live.

*(Pages 52 to 55)*



I will practice and teach the principles of good citizenship right in my own home.

*(Pages 56 to 60)*

FREEDOM  IS EVERYBODY'S JOB

white collar employees.<sup>26</sup> The businessmen, advertisers and planners envisioned an ideal community of citizens, and when they had to construct visual representations for the public relations material, they—just as regular advertisers did—portrayed themselves: cynical and confident, urban and casual with their new postwar affluence.

The Freedom Train was not loaded with consumer goods; there was no Nixon to lecture doubters on the virtues of American appliances. The project's expressed intent was the celebration of American freedoms, but these were malleable ideas in the postwar years. Depending on who spoke, freedoms kept the government and unions out of business, they protected or suppressed civil and economic rights, they allowed consumers choice among commodities. In the case of the Freedom Train, important figures planning the project believed freedoms were closely linked to a distinct American economic system. They sought a unity that was rooted in free enterprise capitalism and the perception of economic abundance for business and consumers; by implication, the ability to purchase consumer goods was a tangible measure of abundance and inexorably tied to democratic principles. As Foundation president Brophy noted, "Political freedom permits free enterprise to operate, free enterprise gives politics its economic strength for survival."<sup>27</sup>

Increased awareness and democratic participation were Freedom Train program goals, but consumption was an implied alternative that illuminated the Foundation and the Advertising Council's definition of citizenship in America. "We propose," Louis Novins said, "to take abstract principles, and through the media of our program, make them into vital factors for our everyday existence." Material goods and self-fulfillment through consumption measured freedom: Americans experienced "the highest standard of living in the history of mankind, the most leisure time, the greatest per capita wealth, [and] the opportunity for the fullest development of the human personality."<sup>28</sup> The United States, according to the Advertising Council's citizenship manual *Good Citizen*, possessed seventy-two percent of the world's automobiles, sixty-one percent of the world's telephones, and ninety-two percent of the world's bathtubs.<sup>29</sup> The Freedom Train program, Barney Balaban said several months later, meant "accentuation of the essential unity of the American system." "Our American economic family. . .," with capital and labor united, had conquered the Atlantic, the Alleghenies, the continent:

It built theaters, automobiles, washing machines, electric refrigerators, television sets and thousands of other things, with a lavish abundance never before experienced by man . . . . What is this mystic formula which makes for abundance here. . . ? Call it free enterprise, the profit system, the American way of life, or whatever else you chose, it's still the American Miracle.<sup>30</sup>

The family remained the center of consumption, the fortress against the outside world, and the fundamental tenet of Cold War consensus. “Our country, when you come right down to it, is just a lot of families,” chimed *Good Citizen*.<sup>31</sup> The Advertising Council-produced advertising mats and news features used the family as a representational icon of “containment” against external threats. Family was the specific domain of women and linked to political participation,

Just as democracy starts in the home as an obligation, it ends there as a reward. To the degree that all other duties of citizenship have been fulfilled, your home will be your castle, secure from the threat of confiscation, and those in it safe from detention camps and firing squads.<sup>32</sup>

*Good Citizen* presented the home and family as a threatened institution and prescribed remedies to maintain unity. Advertising Council news features for women celebrated democracy in fashion, liberty to attend PTA meetings, and the right to donate time and funds to charity: freedom for American women was as precious as “grandmother’s old diamond ring.” Most of the features patronized women, referring to them as “sister” and “girl,” and rarely argued that jobs gained during the war were a favorable advance.<sup>33</sup> The text of the advertising mats urged women to participate in civic and government activities, but the visual images suggested that women’s main concern was childrearing.<sup>34</sup> The portrayed Rockwellian dream world of the home and family included the mat “Solid Citizen?...not quite!,” in which Dad relaxes in his chair and looks over his shoulder at Mom, who gently tousles Dad’s hair. Dad holds his pipe in one hand and the evening paper in the other. At his feet, the children kneel and gaze at Mom and Dad. The text reveals that while “Bill” may appear to be the solid citizen, he is not taking an active part outside of narrowly drawn family issues.<sup>35</sup>

At its core, the Freedom Train was about politics—not partisanship, but the duty of citizens. Activism and participation, as expressed by the Foundation, however, were limited to the traditional two party system. The Freedom Train program denounced mass political action or other means of political expression that might prove dangerous to American consensus: “Only organized political effort by public-spirited citizen has a chance to effect reform. It does no good ‘to stand alone and holler.’”<sup>36</sup> The message laid before citizens in the campaign’s reliance on consensual images of common heritage, home and family, and democratic participation often masked a self-conscious search for proper social, economic and cultural relationships that espoused pluralism but were decidedly white and middle class. The Freedom Train program rhetorically feigned an inclusiveness rooted in large abstractions while trying to traverse class, race, gender and regional differences. It was not, and could not be, completely successful.

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The Foundation eliminated diverse alternative views generated during the production of the Freedom Train program's vision of political and economic freedoms. Contestation over American ideals, definitions, values, and the authority to shape and use them was more vigorous in the public presentation. When the constructed public celebration was launched into the public arena it became the subject of intended and unintended interpretation, reinterpretation, criticism and manipulation. The planners created their vision of freedom, but, as always, the program's abstractions were contested terrain. Although the degree of public acceptance of the program's ideology on a personal level is indeterminate, voices of discontent questioned the Freedom Train program's unified vision of America. Partisan differences, which in the "non-partisan" Freedom Train program were always present, denoted real political and ideological conflict. The Freedom Train, as an ideal marketing tool, also created conflict about the meaning and presentation of American history after the Foundation assumed control. The Foundation's ideal of a unified nation leaned heavily on national myths, symbols, and language that overlooked regional and community diversity. Nowhere was the frailty of national unity challenged more than in the Jim Crow South.

From its inception, the Freedom Train program was supposed to be non-partisan. Although Michigan Republican Clair Hoffman criticized the plan as a tool of the Democratic party, that was anything but the case. The demands of the large-scale program required the expertise and fundraising abilities of the entire business community. Congress of Industrial Organizations leader Philip Murray and American Federation of Labor leader William Green were vice presidents of the Foundation, balancing the presence of businessmen like Winthrop W. Aldrich and Thomas D'Arcy Brophy. The threat of "big business" propaganda warranted this strategic move.<sup>37</sup> Any belief in real labor input was completely misplaced; neither Green nor Murray played a notable role. Despite Clark's call for a non-partisan program, distinctly Republican and conservative Democratic treatment of the role of government was apparent.

Partisan unity on foreign policy persisted, but divisions remained regarding domestic politics. This was particularly evident when control of the program passed from the Justice Department to the Foundation in early 1947.<sup>38</sup> The Foundation tried to stave off critics who saw the program as New Deal propaganda. Indeed, it worked to mute voices favoring New Deal programs. Y. Frank Freeman, a colleague of Barney Balaban at Paramount Pictures, warned Balaban early in the campaign, "I think a great number of people in this country are sick and tired of many of the New Deal ideologies."<sup>39</sup>

Partisan and ideological confrontations appeared first in document selection for the Freedom Train. The National Archives' staff originally compiled documents and produced a wide-ranging and intriguing collection. The staff recommended documents covering women's suffrage, collective bargaining, Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 8802, and the National Labor Relations Act. The Foundation was unhappy with the list because it "detracts from our

objectives.” In April 1947 the Foundation rejected the Archives’ list and gained control of document selection with the creation of the Documents Approval Committee.<sup>40</sup> This Committee strove to remove most hints of partisanship and ambiguity in the documents’ message. It rejected both the Taft-Hartley and Wagner Acts in the spirit of equality and non-controversy.<sup>41</sup>

The Foundation tried to bury New Deal contributions in the citizenship manual *Good Citizen*. The first draft of *Good Citizen* included the names of labor leaders William Green and Philip Murray so working-class citizens would not think the manual was “subtle capitalistic propaganda.” It also eliminated Roosevelt’s “Four Freedoms” speech so as not to “antagonize the Roosevelt haters of the country.” Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms speech, which emphasized communal bonds under the guarantorship of the liberal state, might have caused conservatives discomfort.<sup>42</sup> The *Good Citizen* authors fashioned a product unoffensive to business and opposed to any real or implied threats to the core of their American ideology, namely free enterprise capitalism. They rejected a Justice Department request to add collective bargaining as a basic right of citizenship and instead included a strong endorsement of property rights, a free market, and capitalism free from federal or state interference.<sup>43</sup> The political implications of questioning New Deal domestic policies, the Democratic party, and Harry S. Truman were lost on no one.

Alongside partisan political conflict was conflict regarding the role of the Freedom Train. Was the Freedom Train supposed to be educational, allowing millions of Americans who could not travel to Washington, D.C., to view historical documents and learn American history? Or was it supposed to suggest a circus atmosphere of euphoric nationalist celebration? The Freedom Train obviously did both. The Foundation’s struggle with dual purposes had important implications for public perceptions of the exhibit. Enlightened democratic citizens also lived in a country where everything was for sale; where one entrepreneur hoped to sell commemorative handkerchiefs: “Every time you blow your nose, why not blow into the Bill of Rights or the Constitution?”<sup>44</sup>

Originally, William Coblenz had enjoyed the intimate experience of walking through the National Archives and observing documents at his leisure. Creating Coblenz’s experience million-fold for a mass audience required using the Advertising Council’s media campaign abilities, which differed from a private viewing. The infusion of media professionals and the creation of the American Heritage Foundation as the official Freedom Train organization guaranteed private sector control. When the Foundation was incorporated, William Coblenz informed his boss, the attorney general, “Our power from now on is that of approval or veto.”<sup>45</sup> Leadership changes, expansion of the project objectives, and the growing emphasis on public relations did not alter the focus on American values and freedoms; only the character and style of the project changed.

The Attorney General’s office grew weary of what Clark’s assistants called “ballyhoo.” They had no stomach for the Foundation’s slick public relations campaign. Their apprehension was apparent during inaugural celebrations in

September 1947. All four networks carried national radio hookups between 9:30 and 10:00 p.m. Scheduled events included singing, music, speeches, and a tour of the train with radio announcer Bob Trout. Coblenz confided in Clark, "This is not the kind of program I would have approved...I don't care how they patch together Jimmie (Schnozzola) Durante and the rest of Hollywood with the Bill of Rights, it's extraneous, in bad taste, and awkward." Worse, the networks intended to broadcast a recorded speech by President Truman under the pretenses of a live presentation. Coblenz concluded, "It is a snide trick characteristic of Hollywood and the low-moral level of high pressure advertising."<sup>46</sup>

The National Archives' representatives were also tired of the American Heritage Foundation's glib attitude toward the entire project. The Foundation rejected their documents list, and "Hell on Wheels" (as the staffers took to calling the project) drained agency resources.<sup>47</sup> At a January 1947 meeting with Louis Novins, archivist Elizabeth Hamer warned against including any documents "simply because they have something to do with American history." She realized, however, that Novins represented "the money, and therefore carried the most weight," so anything seemed possible.<sup>48</sup> A fire and failed fire safety system inside one exhibit car during the tour did little to encourage archivists' faith in the Foundation. The Foundation and the Archives managed to keep the fire secret.<sup>49</sup>

The Freedom Train itself portrayed a mixed message of entertainment and education. The Foundation licensed merchandisers to sell Freedom Train memorabilia including books, postcards and facsimiles of Freedom Train documents, and they battled unlicensed peddlers who followed the train. The train was a traveling museum with inherent educational value. Unfortunately, while they tried to make the tour experience both educational and intimate, they forced viewers through the train as quickly as possible. The mass experience of touring the train was a religious patriotism enhancement for millions of citizens. *A New York Times* reporter captured the romantic and spiritual aura exhibition planners wanted:

Inside, one has the feeling he is in church. The only light is the soft, fluorescent glow reflected from the lighted documents. Parents shush their children and little school boys take off their caps without being told. People speak in low-guarded tones used by tourists in ancient cathedrals. . . . The amplifying system sends out a flow of patriotic airs and folk tunes.<sup>50</sup>

While many may have experienced this heightened sense of spirituality, reality was much more mundane:

With polite and firm prodding the Marines hurried through as many as 1200 persons an hour, giving each an average of three seconds to look at each exhibit. As they shuffled through the beige-and-green cars, they listened to regional and patriotic



music played over a public address system and to a 'move faster' exhortation by a suave Marine voice which came through the speaker each time a record changed.<sup>51</sup>

The general tenor of the project was this mix of education and entertainment, a program serious at times and lighthearted at others.

\* \* \*

Community-level responses to the train illuminate local and individual interpretations of the Foundation's ideology. Anecdotes and personal accounts of intimate and community-level responses represent the link between national ideology—in this instance consensus—and community-level consciousness that might be more tolerant, even if it is often unfocused. When the Freedom Train was over-publicized and crowds were too large, engendering much local criticism, the Foundation switched their emphasis from the train itself to Rededication Weeks.<sup>52</sup> Rededication Week activities were popular and enjoyed wide participation in most cities. Successful campaigns were a source of local pride in a job well done, in the expression of patriotism, and in the racial, ethnic and religious tolerance and pluralism the local programs often celebrated. Many local newspapers noted the diverse composition of the crowds. Religion, or Inter-Faith Day committees and programs generally contained Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and occasionally African-American participants. The local newspaper in Miami followed the train tour of "James Gibbons, 13 Negro," who lingered in front of the Emancipation Proclamation and moved on as "James Gibbons, American."<sup>53</sup> The press noted diversity, but the greater good meant that everyone left the exhibit "an American" (Fig. 5). Unlike the national program, many local celebrations paid some heed to the pluralistic nature of their community.

Nine American Heritage Foundation advancemen planned and organized local Rededication Week programs. The advancemen dispersed in the train's path to appoint local mayors as honorary chairmen of rededication ceremonies, and organize reception ceremonies and the various committees such as retail, promotion, and religious. The Advertising Council provided Rededication committees with guides for local activities.<sup>54</sup> Rededication Weeks generally followed several basic themes: Women's Day, Veteran's Day, Labor and Industry Day, and All Religion Day.

Kansas City, Missouri, celebrated "Agriculture, Industry, and Labor Day" at the Kansas City Stockyard, where work ceased for a few moments in the afternoon while workers received copies of the Freedom Pledge and recited it en masse.<sup>55</sup> Miami, Florida, Rededication activities included the usual All Religion Day and Youth Day, but the local committee also created "Four Freedoms Day." Local women's organizations celebrated the Four Freedoms, which were described as the "recipe" for democracy. Freedom from fear meant, according to two Girl Scouts, using "Your vote [a]s your weapon against fear of oppression. . . ." The American Legion auxiliaries' display in the Municipal



**Figure 5. In Kansas City, Missouri, fourteen children with American flags and racial and ethnic designations represented, according to the original caption, “one of the national strains which now are part of America.” *Kansas City Times*, June 7, 1948. Photo copyright *Kansas City Star*.**

auditorium emphasized Freedom from Want, and portrayed “American stores brimming with food. . . .”<sup>56</sup> Los Angeles went all out for Rededication Week, with 7,000 Boy Scouts receiving 10,000 merit badges, voter registration drives, state flag parades by commercial airline stewardesses, and the “bombing” of city schools with Freedom Leaflets containing “a quiz to provide fun and information for the entire family.”<sup>57</sup>

Elaborate Rededication activities were not limited to large cities with big budgets. In a cordoned off section of Terre Haute, Indiana, an evening patriotism rally included square dancing and “patriotic costumes portraying famous historical characters.” Local retail clerk representatives, the United Mine Workers, and the Congress of Industrial Organizations planned the Labor and Management Day. Whistles released local workers into factory yards to hear patriotic speeches and recite the Freedom Pledge. In a local dining hall, adorned with replica Freedom Train centerpieces, the Daughters of the American Revolution sang the national anthem and God Bless America for the Women’s Day Luncheon. Local dignitary Mrs. E.C. Rumpler urged women to vote, for the right causes: “The people who came to America to make us over can go back where they came from

as far as I am concerned.” Americans, she argued, must resist foreign concepts: “There is nothing so dangerous as the invasion of ideas.” The Women’s Day activities were not complete until Rumpler’s speech “was followed by a style show of the latest furs from the Steiges Fur Shop. . . .”<sup>58</sup> Local businesses became good citizens by linking democratic values, expressed in Advertising Council-produced advertisements they placed in local newspapers, with the virtues of the abundance they provided on a community level.<sup>59</sup>

Celebration activities were usually in the hands of local elites, but individual citizens also interpreted postwar Americanism ideology. Seeing the Freedom Train meant spending countless hours standing in line, usually amid thousands of school children. The crowds could be too much: one New England boy recounted, “Everybody was murdering us. Me and my buddies were too small and some fat ladies in back of us pushed us out of line.” Some could not stand the wait: “I’d like to see it, but I’m not going to die to do it.”<sup>60</sup> The “first” person on the train held special significance in many communities: African American Winston Luck from Chicago left his job at 4:00 a.m. because “I wanted to see the documents that stand for freedom.” Likewise, a thirteen-year-old Californian got up at 2:00 a.m., and a sixteen-year-old Oklahoma girl braved a January blizzard and walked sixty miles.<sup>61</sup> The appearance of anecdotal stories of early risers and long distance travelers around most exhibition sites reinforced the notion that the train exhibit served a valuable purpose.

What the train actually meant to those who saw its documents is less clear. Local and personal interpretations of the program certainly did not slavishly adhere to the planners’ intentions. Individuals and groups crafted their national vision from smaller-scale consciousness. They were often supportive, but some citizens took oppositional and critical stands. Inside the train, the Marine guards said the World War II exhibits were the most popular, but many documents left people with “tears in their eyes.”<sup>62</sup> R.W. Stempfel confessed, “You get a deep emotional feeling as you go through the cars. I can’t explain it, but it’s wonderful.” “They are really our moral background,” another recounted, “The whole thing should make everyone more conscious of freedom and what it means.” “I wanted to see the women’s suffrage bill and the United Nations Charter,” Miriam K. Lemen said.<sup>63</sup> One woman summed up the views of many who saw the documents when she exited, checked her watch and said; “My, we did that awfully fast. We weren’t in there more than 15 minutes.”<sup>64</sup> But an equally strong, if not more prevalent, attitude may have been expressed by Tom Poor of Olathe, Kansas, when he mused, “. . . if we had a few more million folks willing and anxious to stand in line the country would be a whole lot better off.”<sup>65</sup> The millions of exhibition viewers individually interpreted the meaning of the Freedom Train and its documents. Although some were critical of the long lines and short time in the train, few people were willing to denounce the exhibition’s expressed objectives.

At the community level, the broad aims of the Foundation and the patriotism planners could produce conflict and reinterpretation. Voices of protest, both

nationally and locally, were trying to challenge and reconfigure the program's collection of American values in ways the organizers never intended. In New York City, Philadelphia and Los Angeles friends and supporters of conscientious objectors still serving prison terms picketed the Freedom Train exhibitions. Protesters met hostile and violent opposition at the hands of police and Freedom Train visitors, and in Los Angeles, several train visitors assaulted the protesters. Federal Bureau of Investigation director J. Edgar Hoover kept the Attorney General informed of these protest activities.<sup>66</sup>

The Freedom Train was an ample vehicle on which to attach any number of issues. The *Sunday Oregonian*, like many other newspapers, purchased Foundation advertising materials and printed a Freedom Train commemorative section, but two full pages blasted the hypocrisy of race relations and the failures of the federal government on civil rights issues. Titled "No Premium Fares on Freedom Train—But Actually Some Citizens Still Ride Second Class," the special section provided in-depth coverage of discrimination in travel accommodations, housing, education, and the failure to pass anti-lynching legislation.<sup>67</sup> The national African-American press expressed similar displeasure with the ironies of race relations in the Americanism campaign. *Pittsburgh Courier* columnist Stetson Kennedy wanted to use the Freedom Train to stress anti-lynching, the Fair Employment Practices Committee, the Civil Rights Committee report, and support for Henry Wallace's bid for the presidency. Fred Weaver of the *People's Voice* warned that African Americans were excluded from the entire program and would be segregated in the South, and Paul Robeson using a similar warning proclaimed, "I want freedom itself not a Freedom Train." Once again, FBI director Hoover informed Tom Clark of the activities of the "Negro Communist newspapers."<sup>68</sup>

Critics by no means dominated commentary, but they did offer alternative definitions that were insightful and well-received. African-American Reverend Theodore R. Gibson "received the longest and loudest applause" at the Civil Rights and Religious Freedom Day activities in Miami when he denounced the "ill-kept alleys" of America and demanded, "We must make our country the democracy we say it is." The Professional Club of Miami's biting criticism of the Freedom Train program may not have persuaded many, but it revealed a lack of awareness in many quarters. The program, they argued, meant "uncritical and unquestioning acceptance of America as it is. . . . It repudiates the once popular concept of progress and regards America as a finished product, perfect and complete."<sup>69</sup> While careful planning and organizing produced a static and unthreatening patriotic product, among individuals, communities and groups excluded from the planning process, the program's goal and, indeed, the meaning of America was much less clear.

The Freedom Train project's emphasis on national issues and national history was grounded in and reflected an older sense of community. The national citizenship campaign required a national focus that stressed broad and abstract political ideals (chiefly, but not exclusively, abundance and freedom), and images

of community and small-town democracy as the basic tenets of good citizenship. The program focused on the big themes of democratic values and abundance, and the Foundation-produced advertisements businessmen purchased in local newspapers conveyed these themes to communities. As a part of the abstract ideals and small-town democracy equation, however, local democracy was emphasized amid community cultures and standards. Communities added their own symbols and values to the national project, whether it was music, speeches, or the pluralistic composition of their city. Thus, the program struggled to link intimate and personal loyalties to national notions of citizenship.<sup>70</sup> While the train and the national media campaign suggested national consensus, local community participation programs possessed regional and ethnic diversity and varied definitions of American ideology.

The program's national focus overlooked regional and community conflict, particularly in the South, and faced its greatest challenge when confronted with the issue of race. The Foundation program drew African Americans within the boundaries of their consensual scheme. When the Freedom Train project was unveiled in May 1947, Walter White of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) pledged black support for the project, but warned, "I am not nearly so much worried about foreign ideologies as I am about some of the native totalitarianism here in the United States of America." The less restrained *Chicago Defender* editorialized, "We wonder too, how many of the real documents . . . [that illuminate] the traditional white supremacy way of life will appear on the train."<sup>71</sup> In the name of racial and ethnic harmony, the Foundation tried to avoid the subject.

African Americans had limited input in the project from the start. Membership on the Board of Trustees usually was extended at the Foundation's discretion and it rejected the Attorney General's recommendation of membership for Walter White. In fact, the Foundation did not want any black board members. Walter White, Lester Granger of the Urban League, and labor leader A. Philip Randolph were included on a typed list of possible trustees, but their names were scratched out at an early meeting.<sup>72</sup> In April 1947, J. Edward Shugrue, national director of the Foundation, again brought the issue of black representation on the Board to the attention of Novins and Brophy. Shugrue recommended White "in accord with the imperative public relations need of inviting a leading American Negro to sit with the Board."<sup>73</sup> The one African-American document included on the Freedom Train was the Emancipation Proclamation. On the Freedom Train, however, and in Advertising Council published materials, the document was not connected to the issues of race and equality, but reinforced the "great man" image of Abraham Lincoln.<sup>74</sup>

African Americans were urged to support the Freedom Train, but the Foundation on the national level did not stress racial, cultural, ethnic or religious diversity. Despite some criticism, the Foundation in large part succeeded in gaining black participation. There is no official count, but photographs, newspaper accounts, and area director reports suggest that blacks participated in large

numbers, albeit with varied degrees of enthusiasm. African Americans revered the basic freedoms of the program but interpreted them differently than most whites.

The Foundation denied blacks' influence in the program, so they had to exercise their power through public channels (Fig. 6). "Negro Americans will be sensitively aware," claimed the *Pittsburgh Courier's* Stanley Roberts, "that the documents displayed on this moving shrine are not always followed to the letter," but they were "sacred" ideals for which to strive. Langston Hughes penned a poem, which appeared in the *New Republic*, that eloquently characterized black attitudes toward the Freedom Train:

Down South in Dixie only train I see's  
Got a Jim Crow car set aside for me.  
I hope there ain't no Jim Crow on the Freedom Train,  
No back door entrance to the Freedom Train,  
No signs FOR COLORED on the Freedom Train,  
No WHITE FOLKS ONLY on the Freedom Train.

I'm gonna check up on this Freedom Train.

Who's the engineer on the Freedom Train?  
Can a coal black man drive the Freedom Train?  
Or am I still a porter on the Freedom Train?  
Is there ballot boxes on the Freedom Train?  
Do colored folks vote on the Freedom Train?  
When it stops in Mississippi will it be made plain  
Everybody's got a right to board the Freedom Train?

Somebody tell me about this Freedom Train!<sup>75</sup>

Ambiguity toward the Freedom Train seems a natural response from the one group separated from many of the benefits exalted in the program. Hughes' words seemed to pick up on the black community's conflicting regard for the program. As Hughes intoned, a healthy skepticism on the part of African Americans greeted the Freedom Train program that preached unity and economic abundance.<sup>76</sup>

The American Heritage Foundation was initially uncertain about how to handle segregated viewing in the South. It stated the official policy regarding segregated viewing in July 1947 "that no segregation of any individuals or groups of any kind on the basis of race or religion be allowed at any exhibit of the Freedom Train held anywhere." The Foundation would drop from the itinerary any community allowing segregated viewing.<sup>77</sup> Foundation advance man Eric Friedheim, reporting from the South, warned his superiors that the "Old Guard fears the American Heritage Foundation is inciting a Black revolt."<sup>78</sup> That Henry

# The Negro's Part in THE FREEDOM TRAIN

But for the Negro's unselfish and valorous fight during the Revolution there might never have been a Freedom Train.

A few of the facts. George Washington had an estimated forty Negroes in each of his battalions. A third of General Schuyler's Army was Negro. An account of October 3, 1777 said, "No regiment is to be seen in which there are not Negroes in abundance, and among them are able-bodied, strong and brave fellows." Washington was always hard pressed for men. The Negroes might have meant the difference between defeat and victory.

The Battle of Rhode Island, August 29, 1778, was won by Negro ex-slaves. Lafayette called it "the best fought action of the war." At the Battle of Lake George a document of period says, "Our blacks behaved better than the whites."

Peter Salem, a Negro, saved the day at Bunker Hill by killing Pitcairn, the British commander, at the moment when British victory seemed certain. Prince, a Negro slave, captured single-handed General Prescott of the British Army, thereby gaining a handsome reward for his master, Colonel Barton.

Negroes served as pilots on American ships, one of whom, Caesar, was highly commended by the Virginia legislature.

Finally, but for a Negro girl, Phoebe Frances, there might have been no Washington to lead the American army. In 1776, when the British hired Thomas Hickey, a traitor, to kill Washington, Hickey gave Phoebe a dish of poisoned peas to serve him. She warned him not to eat it. He threw the peas into the yard, the chickens picked them up and fell dead. Hickey was hanged. Phoebe was waitress in the tavern of her father, Sam Frances, wealthy Negro, who gave money and food to aid the fight for freedom.



RHODE ISLAND



BUNKER HILL



THE CAESAR



PHOEBE FRANCES



LAKE GEORGE



Figure 6. J. A. Rogers' column "Your History" in the *Pittsburgh Courier* used the Freedom Train to fill in a void in the Foundation's program and educate African Americans. November 1, 1947. Reprinted by permission of *The New Pittsburgh Courier*.

A. Wallace confronted similar troubles during his 1948 Southern campaign tour suggests the violent response unsegregated viewing audiences provoked in southern whites.

What constituted segregation became an obvious point of contention. When the mayor of Memphis announced in November 1947 that local law dictated segregation and that the viewing day would be divided in half, six hours for each racial group, the Foundation, in a move bold for the times, canceled the exhibit.<sup>79</sup> Segregated viewing, however, did occur at some locations in Virginia, South Carolina and Georgia while the Foundation debated continued enforcement of its resolution (Fig. 7).<sup>80</sup> The vacillation and confusion the issues raised were seen in Birmingham in December 1947, when news reached the Foundation that the city would keep the races segregated until they entered the train. Birmingham officials assumed they had an agreement with the Foundation, and Brophy initially accepted City Commission president Cooper Green's plan. But the Foundation determined that two lines merging at the train entrance constituted segregation, and they officially withdrew the train from Birmingham. While Brophy had originally accepted segregated viewing in a draft memo, in which Aldrich concurred, when he directed Novins to accept Green's conditions, Novins forcefully responded that any agreement would severely undermine the integrity of the entire project.<sup>81</sup>

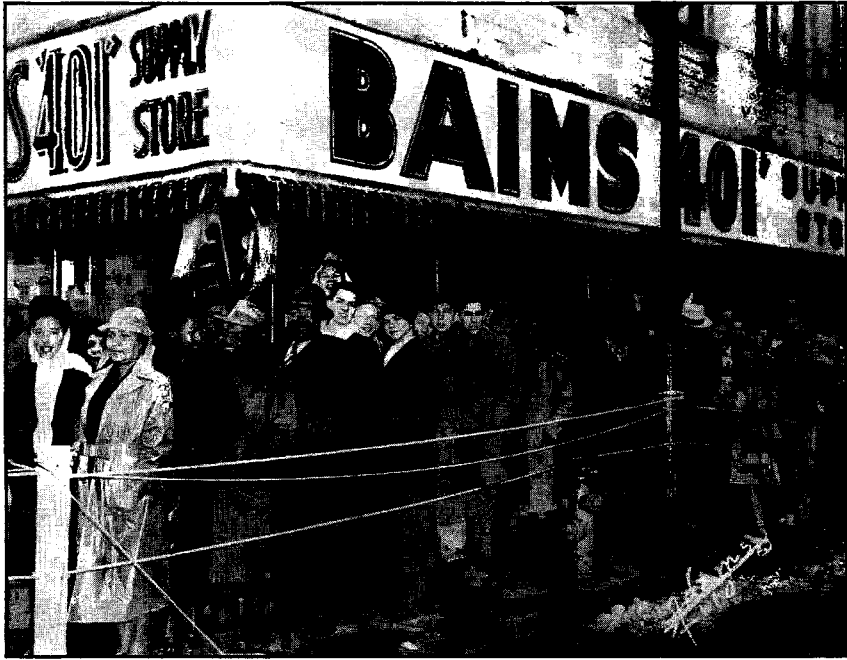
Why did the Foundation respond in Birmingham when segregated lines were used in other cities? In a draft press release, Novins stated that the main point of



JIM CROW AT FREEDOM TRAIN:--PICTURE SHOWS THE CROWD WHICH CAME TO SEE THE FREEDOM TRAIN AT SAVANNAH, GA., ONLY TO MEET WITH USUAL DIXIE SEGREGATION. NOTE THAT COLORED ARE LINED UP BY POLICE ON ONE SIDE, WHITE ON THE OTHER. MANY QUIT THE EXHIBIT OF THE FREEDOM DOCUMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES, DISGUSTED WITH SUCH A POLICY IN VIEW OF THE GREAT DEMOCRATIC TRADITION WHICH THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION--SPONSORED TOUR IS TO COMMEMORATE.

**Figure 7. Photograph of segregated lines entering the Freedom Train in Savannah, Georgia, with accompanying *Chicago Defender* comments. January 3, 1948. Courtesy *Chicago Defender*.**





**Figure 8. Mixed race line of Freedom Train visitors in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, waiting in line two hours before the exhibition opened. Photo courtesy National Archives.**

contention was Birmingham's insistence on two lines converging at the entrance with equal numbers of alternating racial groups allowed on board. Previously lines merged before the train door with no set limit for each group. More importantly, the issue of segregated viewing was attracting adverse attention in the national press, and Walter White and other national and local black leaders had pressured the Foundation to take a stand in Birmingham.<sup>82</sup> In rejecting this one manifestation of the Jim Crow system, the Foundation had responded to pressures from black leaders and the threat of adverse publicity. When it finally became clear that the Foundation would not tolerate segregated viewing, the African-American press was quick with support. The *Chicago Defender* praised "the great documents on the Freedom Train which guide our country to glory," and celebrated viewing arrangements, "side by side, in the democratic spirit symbolic of the Freedom Train," (Fig. 8).<sup>83</sup> The Foundation-defined ideology drew blacks within its boundaries, but many of the ideals were white America's. Although international threats overrode concern for domestic race relations, the Foundation did not ignore the conflict. Race relations seriously challenged the Freedom Train program's consensual vision of postwar America, but at a time when Congress stalled anti-lynching and other civil rights legislation, it is

unrealistic to expect that the Foundation would have made ground-breaking advances in race relations and civil rights. Yet it responded positively in this limited instance.<sup>84</sup>

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Too many people assume Cold War consensus dominated the postwar years, particularly when they discern anticommunist and nationalist exhibits like the Freedom Train. The obviously homogeneous, corporate vision of American ideals lends credence to these assumptions. The planning and implementation of the program, however, demonstrates the conflicts and contradictions for those who tried to define America in the late 1940s.

A citizenship program coming on the heels of World War II and at a time of both uncertainty and confidence initially seems fairly innocuous. As control shifted from the National Archives and the Justice Department to businessmen and advertisers, the government gave free reign to the Freedom Train organizers who possessed the ability, the expertise and the will to command a dominant voice. Although the Freedom Train program was not a “big business” conspiracy to shape citizens’ attitudes, businessmen, advertisers, government officials and concerned citizens presented their narrow vision based on ideological common denominators of individualism, abundance and anticommunism.

The American Heritage Foundation and the Advertising Council shared a public policy and business orientation that accepted the federal government’s role as a stabilizing agent, accepted labor unions as legitimate participants, if not partners, and supported foreign aid programs. Although there was a general and unified resistance to the expansion of “New Deal-style” programs, the implications of the Freedom Train program reinforced the trend toward consumption through specific but limited governmental activities. Barney Balaban discerned the linkage between the past, contemporary policy debate, and the planners’ national vision in the Freedom Train and its documents:

One of the constructive accomplishments of the Freedom Train program has been this accentuation of the essential unity of the American system. The leaders of the masses of organized labor and the president of a great corporation both owe their existence to the same principles enunciated in the documents on the Freedom Train.<sup>85</sup>

The Freedom Train sponsors also believed political and civic participation within “proper” boundaries was on the decline and political parties no longer provided the proper voting motivations. Much as before the war, they saw improper voting—voting along class, racial or regional lines—as a threat to democracy. American Heritage Foundation president Thomas D’Arcy Brophy spelled out the challenge,

If the American people were as fully aware as they should be of the advantages we have in this country, [and were] given ready access to the facts, uncolored by prejudice or propaganda, [they] will act wisely, vote wisely, and wisely work together for the common good.<sup>86</sup>

While encouraging political and civic participation within “proper” boundaries, the patriotism planners discouraged debate and diversity. The program professed confidence in the democratic process, but the unenlightened citizen could be ineffective at best, and dangerous at worst.

The Freedom Train, therefore, suggests an alteration of twentieth-century political culture. The planners’ call for new citizenship corresponded to larger changes in the nature of government and society. Although ideology remained only one of the layers of national and partisan identification, the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the crises of the Depression and World War II redefined the relationship between the individual and the national government. The changes were a step toward structuring a political consciousness in which the national government played many new roles, one being protector of the citizen consumer. Recent political and economic history has examined the dynamics between the economy, government policy and political ideology. The Freedom Train program invites an exploration of the connections between political economy and individual consciousness.<sup>87</sup> The diffuse, yet pro-capitalism interpretation of the New Deal soothed Freedom Train organizers’ anathematic reaction toward some of the “New Deal ideology” notions of social, political and economic equality. The organizers carefully circumscribed American freedoms to insure wide and bipartisan acceptance and support and subtly articulated a more conservative economic, social and political ideology. General public acceptance suggests their effort was fairly successful. Freedom, however, remained contested terrain. Langston Hughes duly warned those who delineated limited visions of American freedoms: opportunity and consumption meant little without social justice and equality.

The Freedom Train program existed in the midst of the postwar “consensual” political culture of apparent abundance and consumption. Project planners suggested that participation within the respectable bounds of partisan politics—or more important, in the consumer economy—offered new means of activism for the democratic citizen. Consuming goods did not replace voting as the paramount act of citizenship, nor was it a substitute for democracy and equality, but, if “freedom of choice” and “opportunity” in the marketplace were the new measures of national supremacy and individual expression in the postwar years, the conflation of them with patriotic citizenship was conceivable. This ideal expression of citizenship in effect became participation that restricted political discourse and ignored economic inequities. Manifestations of these limits would emerge two decades later with the upheaval of the 1960s and 1970s. Even at the time, however, domestic partisan political differences, conflict concerning the

articulation and interpretation of Freedom Train ideology, and conflict in race relations qualified the planners' consensual ideology, providing a far richer backdrop to evaluate the United States in the late 1940s. American freedoms were, and remain, malleable ideas to support or resist change.

## Notes

The author would like to thank the Harry S. Truman Library Institute for its financial assistance in this project, and Beth Bailey, Casey Blake, David Farber, Donald McCoy and Michael McGerr for their assistance.

1. Thomas D'Arcy Brophy, "The First Two Years: A Progress Report to the Board of Trustees of the American Heritage Foundation," 12-14, July 11, 1949, and Robert Denton to Louis Novins, October 16, 1947, Record Group 200, American Heritage Foundation Papers (AHF Papers), Box 212, National Archives, Suitland, Maryland (NA).
2. Louis Novins to J. Edward Shugrue, March 29, 1948, and Thomas D'Arcy Brophy to Shugrue, March 29, 1948, AHF Papers, Box 212, NA; "Freedom Train Tours America," *National Geographic Magazine* 96 (October 1949), 529-42. See James Gregory Bradsher, "Taking America's Heritage to the People: The Freedom Train Story," *Prologue* 17 (Winter 1985), 228-245. Interested scholars can compare Bradsher's description with that recently offered by Michael Kammen in *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York, 1991), 573-81.
3. American Heritage Foundation, "A Trip Through the Freedom Train," 1-13, AHF Papers, Radio and TV file, NA; blueprints for the Freedom Train in, Record Group 64, Freedom Train Records (FT Records), National Archives, Washington, D.C. (NA), Box 4.
4. Clark, Department of Justice Press Release, December 11, 1946, 8, AHF Papers, Release file, NA, emphasis in text; Novins "Address by: Louis Novins, Vice President and Secretary, American Heritage Foundation, White House Conference, May 22, 1947," 1, AHF Papers, Box 7, NA.
5. The constructed nature of Americanism has received excellent treatment in Gary Gerstle's *Working-Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914-1960* (New York, 1989), in which he describes a process of Americanization that ends with his allusions to "cultural pluralism" during World War II. Robert Griffith, Mark Leff and John Morton Blum have described the outlook of business and government elites who gained anew the will and authority to shape symbols and language, in Mark H. Leff, "The Politics of Sacrifice on the American Home Front in World War II," *Journal of American History* 77 (March 1991), 1296-1318; Robert Griffith, "The Selling of America: The Advertising Council and American Politics, 1942-1960," *Business History Review* 57 (Autumn 1983), 388-412; Griffith, "Forging America's Postwar Order: Domestic Politics and Political Economy in the Age of Truman," in Michael J. Lacey, ed., *The Truman Presidency* (New York, 1989), 57-88; John Morton Blum, *V Was for Victory: Politics and American Culture during World War II* (New York, 1976). The most valuable and recent attempts to address the integration of the multitude of forces are found in Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle, eds. *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980* (Princeton, 1989). Gerstle's work should be compared with Roy Rosenzweig's discussion of patriotic rituals in Worcester, *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920* (New York, 1983) and Mary P. Ryan, *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825-1888* (Baltimore, 1990). Corporatism as a concept of historical analysis rests on several key works including, Ellis W. Hawley, "Herbert Hoover, the Commerce Secretariat, and the Vision of an 'Associative State,' 1921-1928," *Journal of American History* 61 (June 1974), 116-40; Hawley, "The Discovery and Study of a 'Corporate Liberalism,'" *Business History Review* 52 (Autumn 1978), 309-20; Robert Griffith, "Dwight D. Eisenhower and the Corporate Commonwealth," *American Historical Review* 87 (February 1982), 87-122; for a discussion of more liberal business ideology, Robert M. Collins, *The Business Response to Keynes, 1929-1964* (New York, 1981).
6. Survey studies of the postwar period, despite relative merits and strengths, usually hinge on the idea of Cold War consensus. See, Lacey, ed., *The Truman Presidency*; Eric Goldman, *The Crucial Decade: America, 1945-1955* (New York, 1956); William R. Manchester, *The Glory and the Dream: A Narrative History of America, 1932-1972* (Boston, 1974); James B. Gilbert, *Another Chance: Postwar America, 1945-1968* (Philadelphia, 1981); Geoffrey Perrett, *A Dream of Greatness: The American People, 1945-1963* (New York, 1979); William L. O'Neill, *American High: The Years of Confidence, 1945-1960* (New York, 1986). Some recent and sophisticated discussions of the

immediate postwar culture can be found in William S. Graebner, *The Age of Doubt: American Thought and Culture in the 1940s* (Boston, 1991); Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York, 1988); Lary May, ed., *Recasting America: Culture and Politics in the Age of Cold War* (Chicago, 1989); Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (New York, 1985); John Patrick Diggins, *The Proud Decades: America in War and Peace, 1941-1960* (New York, 1989).

7. Daniel T. Rodgers calls this "fuzzy and indistinct" notion of freedom a result of the blanket application of "freedom" to every conceivable issue in the early postwar years, in *Contested Truths: Keywords in American Politics since Independence* (New York, 1987). My concept of political culture is taken from Gary Gerstle, *Working-Class Americanism*, Jean Baker, *Affairs of Party: The Political Culture of Northern Democrats in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Ithaca, 1983), and Michael McGerr's *The Decline of Popular Politics: The American North, 1865-1928* (New York, 1986); Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Los Angeles, 1985); Warren I. Susman, *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1984); Jean-Christophe Agnew, "Coming Up for Air: Consumer Culture in Historical Perspective," and Kathy Peiss, "Comments," Papers presented to the Eighty-Second Annual Meeting of the Organization of American Historians, St. Louis, Missouri, April 8, 1989. Recent works that have focused on historical pageants similar to the Freedom Train and their relation to political culture and power are John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, 1991); Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*; David Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill, 1990); Karal Ann Marling and John Wetenhall, *Iwo Jima: Monuments, Memories, and the American Hero* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1991); Susan G. Davis, *Parades and Power: Street Theater in Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia* (Berkeley, 1986); Robert Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago, 1984). Several postwar nationalist celebrations are mentioned in, Richard M. Fried, *Nightmare in Red: The McCarthy Era in Perspective* (New York, 1990) and "Stalin Stopped at Mosinee: Anti-Communist Pageants in the Cold War Era," Paper presented to the 1988 Annual Meeting of the Organization of American Historians, Reno, Nevada, March 26, 1988, 1.

8. William A. Coblenz, "The Freedom Train and the Story of Its Origins: Civil Liberties on Wheels," *Manuscript 10* (Winter 1957), 31-2. Bradsher, "Taking America's Heritage." Richard Freedland portrayed the Freedom Train as only a partisan scheme, in *Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism: Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics, and Internal Security, 1946-1948* (New York, 1972).

9. *Ibid.*; William Coblenz to Timothy A. McNerny, September 9, 1946, Papers of Tom Clark (Clark Papers), Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, Missouri (HSTL), Freedom Train file; Clark to Matt [Connally], April 16, 1946, Papers of Harry S. Truman (Truman Papers), Official file, Box 1006, file 320c-323, HSTL; Coblenz to McNerny, September 9, 1946, Clark Papers, Freedom Train file, HSTL; Louis Novins to Thomas D'Arcy Brophy, July 19, 1948, AHF Papers, General file, NA. For a brief biography of Clark, see, *Political Profiles: The Truman Years* (New York, 1977).

10. Administrative Services to A [Solon J. Buck], August 15, 1946, FT Records, Box 2, NA; Solon Buck to Tom Clark, October 30, 1946, FT Records, Box 2, NA; EP [Elizabeth Hamer] to [Solon Buck], September 17, 1946, FT Records, Box 2, NA; EP [Hamer], September 24, 1946, (endorsement sheet), FT Records, Box 2, NA.

11. Thomas D'Arcy Brophy, "Our American Heritage Campaign," Presented to the Public Advisory Committee, The Advertising Council, Inc., January 8, 1947, Truman Papers, Files of Charles W. Jackson, File 9, HSTL; Louis Novins to Thomas D'Arcy Brophy, July 19, 1948, AHF Papers, Box 212, NA. For a discussion of early public service advertising see, Leff, "The Politics of Sacrifice on the American Home Front in World War II," 1296-1318; Griffith, "The Selling of America: The Advertising Council and American Politics, 1942-1960," 388-412; Griffith, "Forging America's Postwar Order: Domestic Politics and Political Economy in the Age of Truman," 57-88. For a brief biography of Brophy see, *Dictionary of American Biography: Supplement Eight, 1966-1970* (New York, 1988).

12. [Louis Novins], "Prospectus for a Public Tour of a Train Containing Original Nazi Documents Pertaining to American Government as Contrasted to Original Nazi Documents," November 1946, AHF Papers, Program file, NA.

13. "Address by: Louis Novins, Vice President and Secretary, American Heritage Foundation," White House Conference, May 22, 1947, 4-6, AHF Papers, Box 7, NA.

14. The Foundation closed in the early 1950s after conducting some voter awareness campaigns with the Advertising Council. The American Heritage Foundation is not related to the conservative organization, the Heritage Foundation.

15. Thomas D'Arcy Brophy, "The First Two Years: A Progress Report to the Board of Trustees of the American Heritage Foundation," July 11, 1949, 3-4, AHF Papers, Box 13, NA; Bradsher, "Taking America's Heritage," 231-33; See also, Arthur M. Johnson, *Winthrop W. Aldrich: Lawyer, Banker, Diplomat* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1968).

16. Louis Novins, Text of Speech given in Los Angeles, California, February 23, 1948, AHF Papers, LA West Coast file, NA. The nature of postwar anti-communism is sketched in Richard M. Fried's *Nightmare in Red*.
17. Thomas D'Arcy Brophy to George Ludlum, August 20, 1947, AHF Papers, Confidential file, NA; Barney Balaban to Reverend W. Harold Weigle, October 9, 1947, AHF Papers, US Economic Program file, NA.
18. Ricard Riviera, Rededication speech, *Providence (Rhode Island) Journal* October 18, 1947, Governor Charles Milby Dale, Rededication speech, *Concord (New Hampshire) Daily Monitor*, October 14, 1947; Dr. Stanley High, Rededication speech, *Stanford (Connecticut) Advocate*, September 30, 1947, FT Records, clipping file, unboxed. Anticommunist rhetoric at local celebrations can be found in most other newspaper accounts such as, Baton Rouge, Louisiana *Morning Advocate*, January 15, 1948, FT Records, unnumbered, NA; *Kansas City (Missouri) Times*, June 2, 1948, 1.
19. A [Solon Buck], 8 January 1947, (endorsement sheet), FT Records, Box 2, NA; [Louis Novins], "Status of Attorney General's Project, December 30, 1946," 1-3, AHF Papers, General file, NA; Bradsher, "Taking America's Heritage to the People," 231; Barney Balaban to Eric Johnston, February 28, 1947, AHF Papers, Box 215, NA.
20. *Our American Heritage*, 26-31.
21. Tom C. Clark, Department of Justice Press Release, December 11, 1946, 5-6, AHF Papers, Releases file, NA.
22. "Address by: Thomas D'Arcy Brophy, President, American Heritage Foundation, White House Press Conference, May 22, 1947," 1-4, AHF Papers, Box 7, NA; *New York Times*, May 23, 1947, 5; Bradsher, "Taking America's Heritage," 233.
23. Eric F. Goldman, review of *Our American Heritage*, by Frank Monaghan, in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 35 (June 1948), 107; *New York Times*, June 30, 1947, 18.
24. Compiled by the editors of *Life* for the American Heritage Foundation, *Our American Heritage: Documents of Freedom* (New York, 1947), 1-34; American Heritage Foundation, *Good Citizen* (New York, 1948), 26, more than two million copies were distributed. Thomas D'Arcy Brophy, "The First Two Years," 14 foldout page, AHF Papers, Box 13, NA.
25. *Our American Heritage*, 6-7.
26. Draft copy of *Good Citizen*, by Advertising Council coordinator W. B. Potter, and Leo Burnett, "Explanation of Changes in 'Good Citizen'," n.d., 9, AHF Papers, Good Citizen file, NA; Burnett made a conscious effort to make the book appeal to minimal levels of intelligence and reading skills. Roland Marchand makes similar claims regarding consumer goods advertisements during the same period, "Visions of Classlessness, Quests for Dominion: American Popular Culture, 1945-1960," in Richard Bremner and Gary Reichard eds., *Reshaping America: Society and Institutions, 1945-1960*, (Columbus, 1982): 163-170.
27. Thomas D'Arcy Brophy to Don Belding, June 2, 1947, AHF Papers, General file, NA. For a discussion of the role of abundance in the postwar period, see David Potter, *People of Plenty* and more recently John Patrick Diggins, *The Proud Decades*. My argument contrasts with Michael Kammen's that the program "promoted patriotism but not products," Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*, 581.
28. "Address by: Louis Novins, Vice President and Secretary, American Heritage Foundation, White House Conference, May 22, 1947," 1-6, AHF Papers, Box 7, NA.
29. *Good Citizen*, 6, 53; Robert Ginnane to Louis Novins, 5 August 1947, and Leo Burnett, "Explanation of Changes in 'Good Citizen'," n.d., AHF Papers, Good Citizen file, NA.
30. "Address by Barney Balaban, President of Paramount Pictures Inc., and Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees of the American Heritage Foundation; Labor and Industry Luncheon, New York City, New York, December 30, 1948," 1, 4-5, AHF Papers, Box 214, NA.
31. *Good Citizen*, 57. For an excellent treatment of these issues see, May, *Homeward Bound*: (New York, 1988).
32. *Good Citizen*, 57.
33. American Heritage Foundation, "Community Rededication Program Manual," 18-19, FT Records, Box 13, NA; Advertising Council produced ads can be found in almost any newspaper in the path of the Freedom Train. See Oklahoma City *Daily Oklahoman*, January 25, 1948, *Flint (Michigan) Journal*, August 18, 1948, *Iowa City (Iowa) Press Citizen*, June 15, 1948, *San Jose (California) Mercury News*, March 14, 1948, FT Records, Box 3, NA; See also, Thomas D'Arcy Brophy, "The First Two Years," 16, AHF Papers, Box 13, NA; Bradsher, "Taking America's Heritage," 233, 241-43.
34. "Advertising Portfolio," mats 8-13, 28, 30, 34a-E, AHF Papers, Box 200, NA.
35. *Ibid.*, 14, 18, 22.
36. *Good Citizen*, 17, entire quote emphasized in text. Several pages of *Good Citizen* portray party politics as the only acceptable and respectable means of participation.
37. In fact, many businessmen who participated in the Foundation fit Howell Harris' definition of the sophisticated or less conservative of the business community who saw cooperation with organized labor as a reality of the postwar world, see *The Right to Manage: Industrial Relations*

*Policies of American Business in the 1940's* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1982.) Griffith, "Forging America's Postwar Order: Domestic Politics and Political Economy in the Age of Truman," in *Truman Presidency*, 57-88; Clair Hoffman, *New York Times*, June 19, 1947, 44; June 21, 1947, 16; June 26, 1947, 22.

38. William Coblentz to Tom Clark, May 26, 1947, Clark Papers, Freedom Train file, HSTL.

39. Y. Frank Freedom to Barney Balaban, December 9, 1946, AHF Papers, Box 212, NA.

40. EP [Elizabeth Hamer] to Bess Glenn, August 27, 1946, and BG [Glenn] to EP [Hamer], December 20, 1946; Hamer to Steve Stevens, July 21, 1947; EP [Hamer], January 8, 1947 (endorsement sheet), FT Records, Box 2, NA; Foundation opposition, [Novins], "Status of Attorney General's Project, December 30, 1946," AHF Papers, General file, NA.

41. Louis Wirth to Louis Novins, December 4, 1947; Charles E. Wilson to Novins, December 16, 1947, in AHF Papers, Box 218, NA; Walter White to Winthrop W. Aldrich, July 18, 1947, AHF Papers, Documents file, NA; Novins to John Foster Dulles, September 22, 1947, and Aldrich to Novins, September 8, 1947, and Novins to George Dizzard, March 24, 1948, all in AHF Papers, Documents file, NA.

42. Leo Burnett to Thomas D'Arcy Brophy, July 30, 1947, AHF Papers, Box 213, NA. The image of Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms" seems an essential part of the growing trend toward using consumption and abundance as an ideology, see Robert Westbrook, "Fighting for the Family: Private Interests and Political Obligation in World War II." Presented to the Annual Meeting of the Organization of American Historians, St. Louis, Missouri, April 7, 1989; see also John Morton Blum, *V Was for Victory*.

43. *Good Citizen*, 5, 53; Robert Ginnane to Louis Novins, August 5, 1947; and Leo Burnett, "Explanation of Changes in 'Good Citizen'," n.d., AHF Papers, Good Citizen file, NA.

44. *Pathfinder* September 24, 1947, 21. The Foundation rejected the proposal to license commemorative handkerchiefs, but did license many more tasteful items.

45. William Coblentz to Tom Clark, May 26, 1947, Clark Papers, Freedom Train File, HSTL.

46. William Coblentz to Tom Clark, August 27, 1947, Clark Papers A.G., Freedom Train file (2), HSTL; Ballyhoo in Coblentz to Clark, June 19, 1947, Clark Papers A.G., Freedom Train file (1), HSTL.

47. EB [Elizabeth Bukowsky] to Elizabeth Hamer, November 18, 1947, FT Records, Box 2, NA.

48. EP [Elizabeth Hamer] to A [Solon Buck], January 29, 1947, 2-4, FT Records, Box 2, NA.

49. The fire caused minor damage and occurred during a scheduled layover so no dates had to be canceled, but one United States Marine Corps guard was hospitalized for smoke inhalation. The American Heritage Foundation has records of the fire and all National Archives records are classified "confidential," Chief, Cleaning and Rehabilitation Branch [Arthur Kimberly] to Acting Director, Administrative Services Division, March 4, 1948; Walter O'Brien, R.F. Scott, and Delmar Robb to J. Edward Shugrue, March 4, 1948; Alvin W. Kremer to Luther Evans, March 16, 1948, 3; EP [Elizabeth Hamer] to AA [Wayne C. Grover], March 5, 1948, and photographs taken of the interior of the train by Marine commander Lieutenant Colonel R.F. Scott, U.S.M.C., FT Records, Box 2, NA.

50. Gilbert Bailey, "Why They Throng to the Freedom Train," *New York Times Magazine* January 25, 1948, 52.

51. Mark Murphy and Mary Ellen Murphy, "Freedom Train," *Holiday* 1 (January 1948), 116.

52. Thomas D'Arcy Brophy to Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Mermery, December 16, 1947, AHF Papers, Box 212, NA; Brophy to Louis Novins, August 11, 1947, AHF Papers, Confidential file, NA; Novins to W.K. Hollander, January 12, 1948, AHF Papers, Confidential file, NA.

53. They similarly followed "May Jewell Gong, 14 Chinese," and Cuban refugee George Vilda, *Miami Herald*, December 21, 1947, 1, 4; The *Los Angeles Times* went to great lengths to recount the representative character of the viewing audience, February 25, 1948, 2.

54. Louis Novins to W.K. Hollander, January 12, 1948, AHF Papers, Confidential file, NA; The American Heritage Foundation Papers contain three boxes of advancement reports from the field on Rededication Week activities, Boxes 198, 199, 212, NA; American Heritage Foundation, "Freedom Train Committee Manual," n.d., 1-10, AHF Papers, Box 198, NA; American Heritage Foundation, "Community Rededication Program Manual," 1947, 6-7, FT Records, Box 3, NA.

55. *Kansas City (Missouri) Times*, June 5, 1948, 1.

56. *Miami Herald*, December 14, 1947, 1, 6; sec. 5, 1.

57. *Los Angeles Times*, February 13, 1948, sec. 2, 3; February 16, 1948, 8; February 17, 1948, 1; February 19, 1948, 2.

58. *Terre Haute (Indiana) Star*, July 14, 1948, 3; July 19, 1948, 1, 2; July 21, 1948, 1, 3; July 22, 1948, 1, 3.

59. The Advertising Council-produced advertisements were presented in *Retailer's Manual: How Your Store Can Give Full Support to Your Community's Celebration of Rededication Week and the Long Awaited Visit of the Freedom Train*, AHF Papers, Box 217, NA, and in "Freedom is Everybody's Job!" AHF Papers, Box 198, NA. Any newspaper from cities that the Freedom Train visited contain these advertisements, particularly on the day of the train's arrival.

60. *Worcester (Massachusetts) Telegram*, October 9, 1947, FT Records, NA; *Indianapolis Star*, July 29, 1948, 1.
61. *Chicago Defender*, December 20, 1947, 3; *Los Angeles Times*, February 24, 1948, 1.
62. *Chicago Tribune*, July 8, 1948, 10; *Los Angeles Times*, February 24, 1948, 1.
63. *Indianapolis Star*, July 30, 1948, 1, 5.
64. *Worcester (Massachusetts) Telegram*, October 10, 1947, FT Records, NA.
65. *Kansas City (Missouri) Times*, June 7, 1948, 1, 10.
66. The *Los Angeles Times* referred to the protesters as "a Communist front organization," but reports from a Foundation representative confirmed that they were protesting the imprisonment of conscientious objectors, *Los Angeles Times*, February 26, 1948, 1; Barry Mahools comments in, *Alexandria (Virginia) Gazette*, January 12, 1949, FT Records, Box 5, NA; *Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 18, 1947, 10; *New York Times*, September 18, 1947, 23, September 26, 1947, 25. The FBI reports include, J. Edgar Hoover to Tom Clark, September 25, 1947, September 26, 1947, Clark Papers, Freedom Train File 2, HSTL.
67. *Sunday Oregonian Magazine*, March 28, 1948, 1, 5.
68. Stetson Kennedy, "After Freedom Train . . . The Usual Cannibalism?" *Pittsburgh Courier*, December 20, 1947, 4; Fred Weaver, "Skepticism Greets 'Freedom Train,'" *The People's Voice*, September 27, 1947, FT Records, Box 5, NA; Paul Robeson, *The People's Voice*, September 27, 1947, FT Records, Box 5, NA; see the *Chicago Defender*, editorial, "The Call of Freedom," November 8, 1947, 14; J. Edgar Hoover to Tom Clark, September 25, 1947, Clark Papers, Freedom Train file 2, HSTL; Hoover to Clark, October 2, 1947, Clark Papers, Freedom Train file 3, HSTL. The right-wing publication *National Progress*, affiliated with the National Blue Star Mothers of America, denounced the New Deal-inspired plot and noted the "CIO" and "Jewish influences" in the program, October 1, 1947, AHF Papers, Box 218, NA.
69. *Miami Herald*, December 16, 1947, sec. 2, 1; December 21, 1947, 20; *The Herald* had to remind its readers that the Professional Club was "a Communist-front organization."
70. Some political historians have begun to bridge the gap between broad national political themes and local and personal notions of politics, Paula Baker, *The Moral Frameworks of Public Life: Gender, Politics, and the State in Rural New York, 1870-1930* (New York, 1991). Michael McGerr discusses nineteenth and early twentieth century partisan political celebrations in a similar vein, *Decline of Popular Politics*, 20-40. David Glassberg and John Bodnar similarly characterize local historical celebrations, Glassberg, *American Historical Pageants*; Bodnar, *Remaking America*. Most newspaper account of visits by the Freedom Train give great emphasis to the Train and documents. Many make complete use of pre-written materials the Advertising Council produced.
71. "Proceedings at: The American Heritage Foundation Luncheon, Washington, D.C. Statler Hotel, South American Room, 2:00 PM, May 22, 1947," 19-21, AHF Papers, Releases file, NA; *Chicago Defender*, September 20, 1947, editorial page.
72. William Coblenz to Thomas D'Arcy Brophy, March 8, 1947, AHF Papers, Board of Trustees file, NA; "Suggested Names for Consideration by the Attorney General for Membership on the Board of Trustees of the American Heritage Foundation, 24," n.d., AHF Papers, Board of Trustees file, NA, for list with names marked out.
73. J. Edward Shugnie to Louis Novins, April 25, 1947, AHF Papers, Board of Trustees file, NA.
74. P [Elizabeth Hamer] to A [Solon J. Buck], January 29, 1947, 2-4, FT Records, Box 2, NA; *Our American Heritage*, 26-27; Lincoln mural see in, "Freedom Train Tours America," *National Geographic Magazine* 96 (October 1949), 535.
75. Langston Hughes, "Freedom Train," *New Republic*, September 15, 1947, 27; *Time* magazine published part of Hughes' poem, referring to Hughes as a "Red-winged Negro poet," *Time*, September 22, 1947, 23; *Pittsburgh Courier*, December 6, 1947, 21. See Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York, 1944).
76. One recent attempt to address pre-1954 activism is Robert Korstad and Nelson Lichtenstein, "Opportunities Lost and Found: Labor, Radicals, and the Early Civil Rights Movement," *Journal of American History* 75 (December 1989), 786-811. See also, Manning Marable, *Race, Reform and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction in Black America, 1945-1982* (Jackson, 1984); Harvard Sitkoff, *The Struggle for Black Equality, 1954-1980* (New York, 1981); Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-1963* (New York, 1988) briefly notes some pre-1954 activism; and Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*.
77. "Memorandum on Memphis Incident," November 18, 1947, AHF Papers, Segregation file, NA; Louis Novins to J. C. Fitzgerald, October 1, 1947, AHF Papers, Segregation file, NA; Thomas D'Arcy Brophy to Charles Luckman, July 12, 1947, AHF Papers, Board of Trustee file, NA; Novins to Walter White, October 22, 1947, AHF Papers, Box 219, NA.
78. Eric Friedheim, "Report Ending, November 22, 1947," AHF Papers, Area Directors file, NA.
79. *New York Times*, November 18, 1947, 31; "Memorandum on Memphis Incident," November 18, 1947, and Louis Novins to Mrs. Robert Patterson, December 3, 1947, AHF Papers, Segregation file, NA.



80. For reports of segregated viewing in South Carolina, and Georgia, see *Chicago Defender*, January 3, 1948, 2; Robert C. Hooper to Thomas D'Arcy Brophy, December 13, 1947, and Hooper to Brophy, December 15, 1947, AHF Papers, Segregation file, NA; *New York Times*, December 25, 1947, 1, 8; The *Chicago Defender* claims that African Americans were "handled" differently in Virginia, but it is unclear whether segregated viewing occurred, December 20, 1947, 1.

81. The Board of Trustees stated that they had successfully solved the segregation problem in, "Minutes: Meeting of the Plans Board: The American Heritage Foundation," December 3, 1947, 3, AHF Papers, Board of Trustees file, NA; Thomas D'Arcy Brophy to William Green, December 16, 1947, AHF Papers, Birmingham file, NA; Cooper Green to Brophy, December 19, 1947, AHF Papers, Birmingham file, NA; Brophy to Cooper Green, December 23, 1947, and Brophy's draft memo of December 18, 1947 that was not sent, but accepted segregated viewing, AHF Papers, Birmingham file, NA; *Birmingham (Alabama) World*, December 16, 1947, 1; *Pittsburgh Courier*, December 6, 1947, 20.

82. Walter White to Louis Novins, 16 December 1947, *Birmingham (Alabama) World*, December 20, 1947, and, Emory O. Jackson to Novins, December 19, 1947, in AHF Papers, Birmingham file, NA; *Birmingham (Alabama) World*, December 23, 1947, 1, December 26, 1947, 1, 8, and Jackson's summary on December 30, 1947, 1, 4, 6.

83. *Chicago Defender*, November 29, 1947, 12, January 17, 1948, 1, January 24, 1948, 19.

84. The strong Republican influence on the program may have been beneficial when it came to race relations. The Republicans lacked a comparable Dixiecrat wing. For a discussion of Truman, the Eightieth Congress, and civil rights legislation, see Robert L. Zangrando, *The NAACP Crusade Against Lynching, 1909-1950* (Philadelphia, 1980), 175-209 and Donald R. McCoy and Richard Reuten, *Quest and Response: Minority Rights and the Truman Administration* (Lawrence, 1978).

85. "Address by Barney Balaban, President of Paramount Pictures Inc., and Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees of the American Heritage Foundation, The American Heritage Foundation's Labor and Industry Luncheon, Cardinal Restaurant, New York City, New York, December 30, 1948," AHF Papers, Box 214, NA. Alan Brinkley has offered a valuable interpretation of the changing role of the state that makes this argument concerning postwar political economy, "The New Deal and the Idea of the State," in Fraser and Gerstle, eds, *Rise and Fall of the New Deal*, 85-121. The Foundation's positions in many ways conforms to the public policy outlook of liberal business, most notably expressed by the Committee for Economic Development. For a discussion of the CED see, Griffith, "Forging America's Postwar Order;" Karl Schriffgiesser, *Business Comes of Age: The Story of the CED and Its Impact upon the Economic Policies of the United States, 1942-1960* (New York, 1960); and Collins, *Business Responds to Keynes*.

86. "Address by Thomas D'Arcy Brophy, President, American Heritage Foundation, White House Conference, May 22, 1947," 2, AHF Papers, Box 7, NA.

87. The most intriguing recent argument in this area is Gary Gerstle's *Working-Class Americanism*, particularly 278-336; Fraser and Gerstle, eds. *The Rise and Fall of the New Deal Order, 1930-1980*; Michael A. Bernstein, *The Great Depression: Delayed Recovery and Economic Change in America, 1929-1939* (New York, 1987).