

Friends “worked to ‘improve’ blacks by instructing them on how to appeal to what they [Friends] believed were ‘white’ stylistic and cultural sensibilities” (p. 97).

Even though Friends exhibited condescending attitudes towards African Americans, they often did so unintentionally. Friends did believe in equality, but they frequently failed to address race and class divisions amidst shortsighted attempts to cre-

ate artificial equality. Austin’s book poses a set of provocative questions that examine the relationship between doctrinal purity and social change.

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The Rise of Gridiron University
Higher Education’s Uneasy Alliance with Big-Time Football
 By Brian M. Ingrassia

(Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2012. Pp. xiii, 332. Illustration, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95.)

On November 21, 1925, before more than 85,000 spectators crammed inside Ohio State University’s stadium in Columbus, “Red” Grange, lionized by fans and immortalized by Grantland Rice, played his final collegiate football game, leading the Illini to a 14-9 victory. Five minutes after the contest ended, the most famous student-athlete in America told a group of reporters that he planned to drop out of the University of Illinois and play professional football. The next day, he signed a contract with the Chicago Bears that earned him approximately \$100,000 for a nineteen-game barnstorming tour.

The fact that Grange cashed in on his fame with the speed of an Olympic sprinter gave many journalists and university administrators pause. One Illinois editor wrote that Grange’s

decision to chase money rather than a degree “must be distinctly harmful to any institution in that it confirms critics who contend colleges have gone daft on interscholastic athletic contests and that education had been lost in the shuffle.” Others agreed. Football had come to epitomize the decline of American educational values.

About the same time, Howard Savage, a staff member for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, issued a preliminary statement on the study his team was compiling on intercollegiate sports. When the full report came out in 1929, it discussed the road to the current sorry state of affairs, which included paying athletes, overlooking academic abuses, and misplacing priorities. Savage found more than

enough blame to go around, but he singled out college presidents and administrators who invested capital and meaning in football teams, hired coaches, approved building stadiums, and profited from ticket sales.

In *The Rise of Gridiron University*, Brian M. Ingrassia investigates the early relationship between football and colleges, asking many of the same questions posed in Savage's *American College Athletics* report. The results make for a fascinating book that combines the best of cultural, educational, and sport history. On the surface, big-time football and educational excellence have nothing to do with each other, nor should they. One is purely physical and commercial, the other primarily intellectual and noncommercial. But, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, university presidents turned to football to enlarge and improve their universities. Ingrassia argues that university administrators during the Progressive Era increasingly created institutions that severed ties with religion and reached for intellectual excellence while conducting original and pathbreaking research. These "ivy towers," however, proved too distant, even arcane, for most Americans, whose support and money the administrators courted. "To smooth

out the rough inaccessible contours of the newly created ivy towers," Ingrassia writes, "reformers offered regulated games as the savior of the university." Sport, in other words, bridged the gap between the academy and the public. According to reformers, "If supervised correctly...sport could train men's bodies, minds, and morals; provide useful lessons to the assembled crowd; advertise academic institutions to the nonacademic public; and even pay for physical education programs or campus facilities" (p. 205). University leaders felt confident that they could control the process. By World War I, and certainly the 1920s, however, their control had slipped, and athletic programs assumed greater importance and independence. As Woodrow Wilson feared in 1909, in the circus of higher education, the question of who would perform in the main tent remained open.

In making his argument, Ingrassia has made effective use of university archives and other primary and secondary sources. The results are mostly convincing and always insightful.

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