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## *A Close Call for Football*

"Harvard and Columbia and a Reconsideration of the 1905-06 Football Crisis" by Ronald A. Smith, in *Journal of Sport History* (Winter 1981), North American Society for Sport History, 101 White Building, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa. 16802.

Scandal is nothing new to U.S. college football. At the turn of the century, students, who then ran the sport, paid players' tuitions out of game receipts and winked at excessive violence on the field. Smith, a professor of physical education at Pennsylvania State University, tells how football nearly died of its excesses, then was saved.

The 1905 season was the climax. A Wesleyan football player jumped on the back of a downed Columbia runner and sparked a melee that required police intervention. In October, President Theodore Roosevelt (Harvard, '80), convinced that the sport built character, summoned representatives of the "Big Three"—Harvard, Yale, and Princeton—to the White House for some admonitory jawboning. But trouble continued. Roosevelt was outraged when a Yale tackler smashed a Harvard



*A hand to the opponent's face was just "part of the game" in college football's early years. The artist, Frederic Remington (1861-1909), known for his paintings of the Wild West, played for Yale in his college days.*

punt receiver in the face—a case of injury added to insult as Yale (again) shut out the Crimson. A Union College player was killed in a pile-up during a game with New York University. Columbia decided to ban football; other colleges—among them NYU, Northwestern, California, and Stanford—did the same. Would the rest follow suit? As the nation's most prestigious college, Harvard held the decisive vote.

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In early November 1905, Harvard football coach Bill Reid—whose \$7,000 salary exceeded by 40 percent that of any professor on the faculty—got word that the trustees had secretly decided to abolish the sport. Reid and four allies hatched a plan to save their game—by openly condemning its brutality and recommending that it be “radically changed.” Harvard’s president, Charles W. Eliot, was skeptical.

But Reid persisted, trying to persuade other college coaches to agree to Harvard-proposed rules changes. He predicted that without reforms, Harvard would abolish the sport and that other colleges would inevitably follow. It would mean, Reid warned, that football would be replaced: “This will mean English rugby.” It was too terrible a prospect. Reid won, and football, under new rules, survived.

*Bring Back  
the Melting Pot*

“Ethnicity—North, South, West” by  
Nathan Glazer, in *Commentary* (May  
1982), 165 East 56th St., New York, N.Y.  
10022.

Since the mid-1960s, new waves of immigrants—Latin Americans, Asians, and Africans—have come to America. In language, religion, or culture, they differ measurably from the European immigrants who preceded them. And they have been treated differently: through laws to help them keep their old languages and through government boosts to an increasing number of ethnic groups deemed “deprived.” Such special handling is a “sure recipe for conflict.” So argues Glazer, a Harvard sociologist.

European immigrants came to this country in massive numbers during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The influx halted during the 1920s, then resumed, much reduced, during the '50s and '60s. For those immigrants—Irish, Germans, Italians, Jews, Poles, Ukrainians—the open, competitive system worked: They, or their sons and daughters, eventually obtained a fair measure of economic or political success. But this system did not seem to work so well after World War II for Hispanics or Southern blacks who migrated north. For example, European immigrants had used politics to advance themselves, but despite the Voting Rights Act of 1965, blacks in Northern cities continued to vote in very low numbers. In response, Washington backed ever more extensive efforts to assure equality by conferring special benefits on blacks, Hispanics, and other “deprived” ethnic groups.

But as America’s ethnic groups multiply, says Glazer, it becomes more difficult to decide who really deserves special treatment. The 1.5 million Asians who immigrated to the United States during the '70s (up from 362,000 during the '60s) included Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Koreans, Asian Indians, Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians, and Pacific Islanders. Many Asian Indians were educated professionals; many Koreans, able small businessmen; many Vietnamese, adept students. Do they deserve equal, or any, government assistance? Do they deserve it in the same measure as urban blacks or Hispanics? “A com-