THE FLOWER OF SOUTHERN MANHOOD: RACE AND MASCULINITY IN SOUTHERN HIGHER EDUCATION, 1820-1900

By

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To my father and in memory of my mother
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH .............................................................................. 281
This study examines the gender ideals of black, white, and Native American college students in the South from 1820 to 1900. Higher education was an increasingly common experience in the nineteenth century and offers a unique opportunity to observe how men thought about masculinity and manhood. Immersed in a youth culture away from home, young students had to wrestle with the meaning of adulthood and manliness. Through examining student writings at the University of North Carolina, the University of Virginia, Washington College, and the Virginia Military Institute, this work traces the rise of a more restrained, evangelical masculinity in the white elite by the 1840s that began to supplant the older, more bellicose masculinity in which insults frequently precipitated violent retribution. Restrained masculinity developed from the increasing reach of the market, urbanization, and evangelical religion. During the Civil War, even restrained manhood became more violent, shaped by the pro-war rhetoric of professors and campus chaplains by spring 1861. This study traces the continuation of violent honor after the Civil War and the extensive role white college students played in saving white southern men from the emasculation of military defeat. White college
students were integral to the propagation of Lost Cause mythology and the postwar white supremacy campaign of violence and intimidation designed to recreate the antebellum southern patriarchy.

This work analyzes Native American and African American masculinity in southern higher education after the Civil War. Students’ ideals of manhood illuminate Indian and African American resistance to the regulations and ideologies of accommodationist and assimilationist vocational schools like Hampton Institute and Tuskegee Institute. This study identifies four kinds of Native American student masculinity based on reactions to Anglo-American cultural indoctrination, ranging from massive resistance to acculturation. Black vocational students believed manhood meant freedom from the type of forced manual labor they were expected to perform in exchange for their education. Middle-class African Americans at liberal arts colleges tended to champion a vision of masculinity built on equal citizenship and sought to demonstrate physical and intellectual equality with whites. This section draws from student organization records, student newspapers, and school disciplinary reports.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

As a result of the wide-ranging transformations engendered by the Industrial Revolution, the rhythms of life became more unsettled for many Americans after 1820, and college offered the best chance for many young southerners to make sense of these changes. As the capstone of the adolescent experience for an increasing number of southerners, college became the locus of some of the most poignant reflections on the meaning of manhood and masculinity. Students' interactions with their classmates, parents, professors, and their studies represent a seminal and underappreciated moment of gender contestation and southern cultural creation.

This study examines the emotional and intellectual process by which male students at southern institutions of higher education from 1820 to 1900 attempted to reconcile dominant discourses on masculinity with their own distinct thoughts and emotions concerning how to be a man—what Stephen Berry referred to as the “inner experience of masculinity.”

Though early histories of gender were almost entirely top-down, taking prominent figures and publications and extrapolating gender norms for an entire society, recent historians have revealed a more complex picture of conflicting gender norms created largely by divisions in class, race, religion, and region. Gender, as Joan Scott defined it, is a codification of social relationships justified by perceived

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sex differences to denote power relationships.² Beginning in the antebellum slave South, the top of the social hierarchy consisted of white male planters. They had created and perpetuated a patriarchal system that identified whiteness, maleness, and wealth as the requisite qualities for elite status. In order to act the part of an elite white man, one had to be fiercely protective of one’s reputation and project an appearance of honor and mastery. In large part, this was the origin of violent, honor-based, elite southern masculinity.³

Despite what most historians of gender have described as the hegemonic nature of elite-constructed gender roles, other types of oppositional masculinities existed even at largely elite nineteenth-century institutions like universities and academies.⁴ Though historians have acknowledged that other conceptions of manhood existed in the South, fewer have focused on young men of lower- and middle-class status or of color coming to terms with masculinity in the nineteenth-century South.⁵ Because of the increasing reach of higher education throughout the mid-1800s and the creation of mass youth

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⁴ Amy Greenberg and Timothy Williams have recently posited that national and southern masculinities, respectively, were not hegemonic. See Amy Greenberg, Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Timothy J. Williams, “Intellectual Manhood: Becoming Men of the New Republic,” (Ph.D. Diss, University of North Carolina, 2010), 4, fn. 7.

culture, higher education offers the best opportunity to study the wide variety of masculinities that existed in the southern cultural milieu.

Students elucidated their views of masculinity not only in times of crisis like a campus brawl or a war, but also in their quotidian activities, such as attending classes or student society meetings, playing sports, completing their academic assignments, conversing with their classmates, or courting young women. This work utilizes student diaries and letters, records and publications of student societies, and autobiographies detailing student life. Also, faculty and administrative sources such as disciplinary hearings or meetings of the faculty or trustees are invaluable in reconstructing the lives of African American and Native American students in higher education, for whom there are precious few existing written records. The main purpose of non-student sources will be to shed light on student culture and the broader student discourse of masculinity. This is not a policy-laden or institutional history of southern higher education, though I will provide a broader overview of the history of the seven institutions examined in this project later in this Introduction. As much as possible this dissertation revolves around the thoughts, actions, and interactions of the students themselves from their own perspectives.

The geographic focus of the study will be on the Piedmont area of the South, including the University of North Carolina, the University of Virginia, Virginia Military Institute, Washington and Lee University, Hampton Institute, Tuskegee Institute, and Atlanta University. This selection of schools includes several of the most prominent white and black institutions of higher education in the nineteenth-century South, as well

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6 For an explanation and examples of inequality in source production (and destruction), see Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon, 1995).
as the schools with the most extensive archival evidence of student life. Hampton was not only a center for African American education but also offered the only major source of higher education for Native Americans in the South in the nineteenth century.

The temporal bounds of this study are from 1820 to 1900. Since organized African American and Native American educational efforts did not begin in the South until the 1860s at the earliest, the beginning date of the study is necessarily influenced by white educational patterns. The 1820s were a time of notable change and expansion for white colleges in the South. Coinciding with the rise of the middle class in the South, the number of academies and colleges increased substantially. There was a noticeable change to student life as well—the development of a vibrant youth culture—as college literary societies began to spring up rapidly. The idea of a less explicitly academic student group, the fraternity, gradually made its way south too after the founding of the first student-directed fraternity in New York in 1825. Although the college had always been a place for learning, contesting, and demonstrating

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7 For statistics on the expansion of southern higher education, see page 19 of this dissertation. Stuart Blumin is reluctant to provide a date for the origins of the middle class; however, he does indicate that the Jacksonian Era is a crucial time of economic and cultural change for nonmanual workers. See Stuart M. Blumin, The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 67-68, 76.

Michelle Gillespie is even more cautious in refusing to assign the title of “middle class” to the Georgia artisans she examines, yet she does find substantial evidence for at least a temporary identity created by artisans above common laborers and below planters during the early and mid-nineteenth century. For her refusal to grant middle-class status and consciousness to these artisans, see Michelle Gillespie, Free Labor in an Unfree World: White Artisans in Slaveholding Georgia, 1789-1860 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2000), 136-137.

In more recent scholarship, Jonathan Wells and Jennifer Green have both presented convincing arguments for the growth of a southern middle class after 1800. See Jonathan Daniel Wells, The Origins of the Southern Middle Class, 1800-1861 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Jennifer R. Green, Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class in the Old South (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 16 and esp. chap. 8; Jonathan Daniel Wells and Jennifer Green, eds., The Southern Middle Class in the Long Nineteenth Century (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011).

masculinity, it assumed a place of even greater importance in the 1820s due to the beginning of mass student culture.

The year 1900 provides a logical endpoint for this study because it is an approximate boundary for several fundamental changes in education, race, ethnicity, and gender. Coinciding with the surge in American imperialism and increasing medical concerns about the dangers of an urban, relatively sedentary lifestyle, discourse on masculinity shifted toward a much more rugged, muscular manhood epitomized by weakling-turned-Rough Rider Theodore Roosevelt. Though I intend to focus on individual experiences with masculinity, this shift in discourse was certainly substantial and widely influential in how men interacted and understood themselves in college settings. Also by 1900, women’s education was in a state of decline, according to Margaret Nash. The same social-scientific ideas that fueled American expansion and imperialism simultaneously decreased societal support for quality women’s education, thereby changing men’s gendered understandings of the educational experience as well. The turn of the century also marks the widespread imposition of Jim Crow Laws across the South. Although higher education had already been segregated, the success of white supremacy campaigns left no doubt that black education would have to proceed on a different arc than white education. Whiteness would become an even

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stronger marker of masculinity for many college students.\textsuperscript{11} Lastly, 1900 signifies the highpoint of the Native American boarding school movement in the United States; by that point, David Wallace Adams argues, Hampton Institute’s Native American program was floundering as emphasis on vocational education subsumed earlier efforts at general education for assimilation. Yet by that point, schooling had already become a fundamental characteristic of Indian identity.\textsuperscript{12}

The U.S. South at the dawn of the twentieth century was a radically different place than it had been a hundred years earlier. With the enormous changes that swept through the region during the nineteenth century—Indian removal, westward expansion, the transportation revolution, the emergence of mass-market capitalism, early industrialization and urbanization, the Civil War, emancipation, and Reconstruction, to name but a few—many southerners understandably felt confused, anxious, or even sometimes optimistic about the increasing unfamiliarity of life’s rhythms. One of the results of these multi-faceted changes was a general trend toward bourgeois gender norms that became most visible in the middle and upper classes in the South.\textsuperscript{13}

Accordingly, many southerners with means no longer had sufficient guidance for how to lead a fulfilling life as a man or woman. Though their parents, family elders, and religious advisers no doubt continued to proffer advice that shaped their worldviews and their designs for life, many generations of nineteenth-century southerners found that

\textsuperscript{11} For whiteness as an element of power and exclusion in student fraternal masculinity by 1900, see Syrett, \textit{The Company He Keeps}, 5.


\textsuperscript{13} For the role of antebellum universities in expanding bourgeois gender roles to the southern gentry, see Williams, "Intellectual Manhood," iii. As Williams notes, accommodating these changes in an honor-based aristocracy often proved very difficult.
their world was not their parents’. Instead they found that they had to forge their own paths forward into the unknown.\textsuperscript{14}

Perhaps the primary method by which a portion of young men and women in the nineteenth-century South navigated the wilderness of an ever-more complicated and confusing life was through the experience of higher education—specifically in their interactions with professors and other students. The number of institutions of higher education soared in the nineteenth-century South. Not only were more wealthy white males attending these institutions, but greater numbers of middle- and even lower-class white men found both a purpose for and means of obtaining advanced schooling.\textsuperscript{15} Also, white women predominantly from the middle and upper classes increasingly sought postsecondary education at the rapidly multiplying number of women’s colleges and academies.\textsuperscript{16} The most revolutionary and unexpected cultural development in education was that southern African Americans and Native Americans by 1900 had the opportunity to earn a postsecondary education.\textsuperscript{17} This shift is remarkable since the


\textsuperscript{15} Genovese, \textit{The Southern Front}, 92. For an example of a study of class-based college attendance conducted with post-Civil War questionnaires to Confederate veterans, see Fred Arthur Bailey, \textit{Class and Tennessee’s Confederate Generation} (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 153. Jennifer Green also demonstrates that southern states before the Civil War offered full scholarships to a handful of indigent young men each year to attend the state military academy. See Green, \textit{Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class}, 8-10.


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dawn of the nineteenth century saw most southern blacks in chains and further shackled by forced illiteracy while Native Americans were in immediate peril of geographical and cultural displacement.

Even though it remained largely an elite experience accessible and desirable to relatively small numbers of people, higher education evolved and expanded substantially in the nineteenth-century South, becoming a critical site for young men to engage intellectually and emotionally with the meaning of masculinity. Only twenty-four white southern colleges existed in 1820. By 1850, the number had risen to ninety-eight, and by 1900, 120. In that time period, the number of colleges per person almost doubled. In 1820, less than half of a percent of white southerners went to college, but by 1890, the number had risen to around two percent (and was as high as four percent in Louisiana).\(^{18}\) Black higher education did not exist in the South until the 1860s, but by 1900, there were 6,419 African American college and normal school students, with an additional 914 graduating that year. The total of 7,333 represents around one-tenth of a percent of the black population in the South.\(^{19}\) In all, 1,388 Native Americans matriculated at Hampton University from its inception in 1877 until it closed in 1922 after decades of declining attendance.\(^{20}\) Though these percentages appear small, they


represent a dramatic increase in the number of southerners matriculating compared to prior generations.

Because maturing adolescents were more likely than ever before to spend a great deal of their formative years away at college, it seems natural to look to their educational and social interactions at these institutions to determine how they made sense of their world and lived a meaningful life. At colleges and academies, these southern men engaged, adopted, and contested dominant gender prescriptions. As Jennifer Green has demonstrated for southern antebellum military schools, no monolithic form of masculinity dominated student culture; instead the experience of student masculinity was varied and contested.

More varieties of masculinity existed than just violent, honor-based elite white manhood. For example, despite the assertions of early scholars of masculinity, men of the lower class, and men of color still possessed an idea of what it meant to be a man. Most forms of masculinity involved the idea of “otherness” to reify superior status. Upper-class whites based their masculinity on their whiteness and elite socioeconomic status, while middle- and lower-class whites could still claim to be masculine because they were white. For whites as well as African Americans and Native Americans, many


22 Green, *Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class in the Old South*, 98.

23 This statement that non-elites possessed ideas of manhood probably seems obvious, yet it was not always recognized by historians. For a noticeable example of scholars’ denial of masculinity to non-elites, see the introduction to J.A. Mangan and James Walvin, eds., *Manliness and Morality: Middle-Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1987).
based their masculinity on their educational attainment or displays of bravery (particularly in fighting in a war or challenging fellow students who insulted or dishonored them to a duel or fight). Likewise, men of all races could ground their masculinity in the fact that they were neither women nor children. In short, there were multiple archetypal iterations of masculinity (in addition to individuals' idiosyncratic understandings), and historians have done a disservice to focus their efforts predominantly on elite masculinities that dominate the public discourse.

This dissertation engages with a variety of historiographies. Although women's educational and cultural experiences in the nineteenth-century South will necessarily be part of the narrative I hope to tell (particularly as a means of juxtaposing the experiences of masculinity and femininity in schools), my primary aspiration is to examine the role of higher education in formulating and reformulating masculine norms in the South. Heeding the words of Joan Scott that "information about women is necessarily information about men, that one implies the study of the other," it is clear that any complete investigation of any aspect of gender requires a comprehensive examination of the cultural practices and expectations of men and women together.

While I do not intend to neglect this duty, manhood was a comparatively late entry compared to womanhood into the field of gender scholarship and still suffers from less academic attention.

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24 Lisa Swartout's article on Jewish masculinity as evinced through dueling societies in German universities shows the ability of cultural traits to sometimes trump ethnic and religious divisions in masculinity. See Lisa Swartout, "Segregation or Integration? Honour and Manliness in Jewish Duelling Fraternities." in *Towards Normality? Acculturation and Modern German Jewry*, eds. Rainer Liedtke and David Rechter (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003).

25 Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," 1056.
Just as historians have only more recently commenced studying manhood compared to womanhood, scholarship on southern gender and education remains newer and less pervasive than for the North. For better or worse, many of the earliest and most definitive works on both gender and education have centered on the northern middle class.\textsuperscript{27} Despite the initial flurry of scholarship on the Northeast, there has been a gradual accumulation of titles on gender in the South.\textsuperscript{28} Scholarship on southern education has also proliferated in recent years after being largely overlooked until the 1980s. Among the works published in the last two decades on southern education, the

\textsuperscript{26} Rather than listing dozens of historians who have called for more studies of masculinity, according to LeeAnn Whites in the panel “Negotiating Reconstruction and Manhood in the American South” at the November 2010 Southern Historical Association conference in Charlotte, there had been but a handful of panels on masculinity in the previous several hundred panels at major conferences for American historians.


\textsuperscript{28} Because there are so many influential books dealing with gender in the nineteenth-century South, it is difficult to isolate only a few. However, perhaps the most important books on gender in the South (which examine more than the middle class) that appeared in the last two decades are Laura Edwards, \textit{Gendered Strife and Confusion: The Political Culture of Reconstruction} (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997); Stephanie McCurry, \textit{Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, & the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Low Country} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, \textit{Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920} (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999). Of those that have focused on masculinity especially in the South, the most notable titles are Peter Carmichael’s \textit{The Last Generation}; Stephen Kantrowitz, \textit{Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy} (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Stephen Berry, \textit{All that Makes a Man}. Amy Greenberg’s recent work, \textit{Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire} tends to emphasize commonalities about manhood between North and South and across all classes. While there is certainly merit to this idea, there is a danger of overlooking how region, religion, class, and race led to contrasting ideals of manhood with her approach.
focus has gradually shifted from political and pedagogical policy to student experiences, 
ultimately culminating in the examination of student experiences on the bases of sex, 
gender, race, and class.  
Christie Farnham and Jennifer Green have explicitly 
discussed higher education’s impact as a place of cultural conflict and as a creator and 
re-fashioner of gender roles, and hopefully an array of scholarship will follow Timothy 
Williams’ dissertation, “Intellectual Manhood: Becoming Men of the Republic at a 
Southern University, 1795-1861,” which analyzes masculinity through many interesting 
lenses, most notably literary societies at the University of North Carolina in the 
antebellum period. Williams’ careful attention to student youth culture dovetails off of 
Nicholas Syrett’s *The Company He Keeps: A History of White College Fraternities*, 
which is not explicitly southern in focus, but analyzes the development of fraternities in 
the wake of the collapse of the literary society movement.

Part of the reason for the late shift southward in the literature on gender is that 
the manifestation of the subject in the South appears more complex than in the North. 
The emergence of the mass market and onset of modern capitalism, events closely tied 
to the emergence of Victorian gender roles, were slower and less all-encompassing in 
the South.  

Furthermore, the antebellum existence of slavery and the postwar

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enactment of white supremacy contributed to the creation of class and gender norms that were uniquely southern.\footnote{My assertion of southern distinctiveness should not be taken to imply that northern class and gender identities were not also shaped by race; however, the size and scope of slavery and white supremacy in the nineteenth-century South render the region exceptional. For the enactment of white supremacy, see C. Vann Woodward, \textit{The Strange Career of Jim Crow}, Third Revised Edition (1974; reprint, New York, Oxford University Press, 2002).}

Central to the scholarship on southern mores is the idea of honor. The study of honor, pioneered by Bertram Wyatt-Brown in his 1982 \textit{Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South}, has vastly complicated the resulting literature as southern historians have argued over which class, race, sex, age, and religion could exhibit notions of honor. Though some historians like Lorri Glover have provocatively argued to simplify things by stating that honor is really one element of an elite form of masculinity (which many middle- and lower-class men in turn emulated or modified), Wyatt-Brown continued to claim that “southern honor” was distinct from masculinity.\footnote{Lorri Glover, \textit{Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation} (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 2-3; Bertram Wyatt-Brown, \textit{The Shaping of Southern Culture: Honor, Grace, and War, 1760s-1880s} (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), xi.}

Shearer Bowman Davis’ \textit{At the Precipice: Americans North and South during the Secession Crisis} has added nuance to the discussion of southern distinctiveness by arguing convincingly that honor was not merely a southern idea. Further studies are required to demonstrate conclusively how similar northern and southern notions of honor were; however, it seems reasonable to argue that southern honor remained distinctive due to the influence (and later legacy) of slavery which created a much more status-conscious white populace in the South.\footnote{Shearer Davis Bowman, \textit{At the Precipice: Americans North and South during the Secession Crisis} (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010) 7, 16-17. For the argument that the regional memory of slavery disappeared quickly in the North, see Bowman, \textit{At the Precipice}, 23.}
A still lively element of debate concerning southern masculinity is the tension between the opposing practices of masculinity of the fiery, honor-driven southern men and the more restrained evangelical Christian men. Wyatt-Brown’s initial neglect of evangelicals in *Southern Honor* inspired historians (and later Wyatt-Brown himself) to reappraise the role of religion within the South. The findings of Ted Ownby and Nicholas Syrett have tended to emphasize men of honor and men of religion as distinct groups with non-overlapping ideals of masculinity; however, a truer portrait of the South would likely include a substantial gray area between the two extremes. More recent scholarship by Peter Carmichael, Jennifer Green, Amy Greenberg, Shearer Davis Bowman, and Timothy Williams has analyzed the murky overlap between evangelical manhood and violent manhood, but there remains a great amount of research to perform concerning how men in the South compartmentalized or integrated their religious beliefs with their desire for societally recognized honor.

The most unexplored historiographical territory in this dissertation is that of masculinity among African Americans and Native Americans in higher education. Very little has been written on gender for these two groups in southern higher education after the Civil War. David Wallace Adams’ groundbreaking *Education for Extinction* begins to address gender in Indian boarding school education. However, he does not focus on Hampton Institute’s Indian Program very much, and much of his narrative concentrates

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34 Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, ix, 14; Wyatt-Brown, *The Shaping of Southern Culture*, 83-174; Syrett, *The Company He Keeps*, 54-61. It should be noted that Syrett does not look at only southern universities and is thus presenting a more general finding, though along with Shearer Davis Bowman, he seems to find few substantial differences between northern and southern versions of honor. Also, Ownby’s admitted exclusion of Appalachia and—somewhat more understandably—Catholics necessarily renders his research problematic. Ownby, *Subduing Satan*, x.

on administrative policies rather than student life. Donal Lindsey, in his history of Native Americans at Hampton Institute, has made excellent use of the underutilized Hampton archives and offers a more detailed look at the Indian program at Hampton. Unfortunately, this early scholarship still remains primarily focused on policy issues and offers but a few tantalizing windows into student culture through student perspectives and does not explore gender issues.\(^{36}\)

The literature on gender in African American higher education is also scarce. This seems remarkable since African American educationists like Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois so often publicly talked about manhood in their goals for education. Though it does not focus on higher education, Samuel Horst’s 1987 book, *Education for Manhood* points out a number of instances of manhood as a driving force in black education, but unfortunately, the scholarship contains minimal analysis of gender or its role in education.\(^{37}\) Otherwise the only two major peer-reviewed publications on gender and nineteenth-century African American higher education are historiographic pieces lamenting the complete lack of gender in the field of study.\(^{38}\) Thus, a study of gender and African American higher education is long overdue.

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\(^{36}\) Adams, *Education for Extinction*; Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton University*.


Seven Schools of Higher Education: Their Founding and Development to 1900

The University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill was chartered in 1789 and first held classes in 1795—the basis for its claim as the first public university to open in the United States. The primary purpose of any antebellum southern college was to “store the minds of young men with useful knowledge and to develop their intellectual and moral faculties, fitting them for civic participation in a republic,” and UNC accomplished this primarily through a classical education. The classical education rested on the medieval university model of learning the trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and logic) and the quadrivium (arithmetic, astronomy, geometry and music). Male students as young as fifteen took entrance examinations mostly in the classics and, if accepted, were placed into a class based on their performance. Though students could place into advanced classes, most students who began in the freshman class could expect two years of studying mathematics and Greek and Latin almost exclusively before advancing to wider fields like “natural philosophy, astronomy, trigonometry… calculus…rhetoric and logic…moral philosophy, political economy, and constitutional history.”39

The University of North Carolina was not a “university” in the multi-collegiate sense. The school simply consisted of one college, though it later added a grammar school and a loosely affiliated law school. After its first session, the University established a preparatory primary school for insufficiently advanced students, but did away with it in 1819. In 1845, the study of law was introduced through a semi-independent law school headed by Judge William Battle (father of the UNC historian Kemp Battle). The law school admitted its own students unaffiliated with the University

in addition to UNC students.\textsuperscript{40} The law program was the only path for professional training at UNC before the Civil War. On the eve of the war in 1860, UNC had 376 students enrolled, with about fifty-nine percent of them in-state.\textsuperscript{41}

The University of Virginia in Charlottesville was famously the brainchild of Thomas Jefferson. The idea to create an experimental new university in Virginia had been in Jefferson’s mind for almost two decades when it was chartered in 1819. Classes began in March 1825 in Jefferson’s “Academical Village.” Just as Jefferson’s own learning straddled the wisdom and tradition of the classical world and the innovation of the Enlightenment, his university retained the emphasis on classical education but with many departures from previous university models. Unlike all other American universities to that time, the University of Virginia was established as a completely secular institution with no religious ties at all. Unlike UNC (or Washington College or the Virginia Military Institute), there were no required religious services for students to attend. In fact there was no church or chapel on campus at all. Instead, the heart of the university was its library. Believing in the unhindered humanistic spirit, Jefferson created no disciplinary codes or fixed curricula. Students were free to make their own plans of study and stay as little or long as they liked—though Jefferson intended a three-year course.

\textsuperscript{40} Kemp P. Battle, \textit{History of the University of North Carolina: From its Beginning to the Death of President Swain, 1789-1868}, Vol. I., (Raleigh: Edwards and Broughton, 1907), 93, 283, 495-496, 664-665.

\textsuperscript{41}\textit{Ibid.}, 718. The full breakdown of students’ home states in 1860 was: 221 from North Carolina, twenty-six from Mississippi, twenty-six from Tennessee, twenty-two from Louisiana, nineteen from Alabama, seventeen from Georgia, fifteen from South Carolina, ten from Texas, five from Florida, four from Virginia, three from Arkansas, two from Missouri, two from New Mexico, one from California, one from Kentucky, one from Iowa, and one from Ohio. Thus only eight students of 376 (two percent) came from states that did not join the Confederacy.
Unlike UNC, the University of Virginia was divided into eight colleges—or schools—and degrees were extremely hard to obtain. The eight UVA colleges consisted of three literary schools, three scientific, and two professional. The literary colleges were Ancient Languages, Modern Languages, and Moral Philosophy, the scientific Natural Philosophy, Mathematics, and Chemistry, and the two professional schools were Law and Medicine. Many students could pass the examinations to graduate a single college in a year or two, and this was enough to earn them the title of “graduate,” though they did not receive a degree. As of 1831, the only degrees a student could earn were an M.D. for passing the medical course or a Master of Arts for passing the final examinations for all six non-professional colleges. The latter was an exceptional feat, the mark of a true Jeffersonian scholar. There were only 107 of these in the first thirty-five years of classes. Eventually, the Bachelor of Law was introduced in 1840 and the Bachelor of Arts in 1848. Even these bachelor’s degrees represented a greater academic achievement than comparable degrees at other universities. In the remaining prewar decades, faculty members repeatedly attempted and failed to add a College of Agriculture, but they were able to create a College of Engineering. By 1860, UVA had surpassed Harvard and Yale as the largest and most expensive university in the country, enrolling 633 students in the fall of 1860.42

Washington College in Lexington, Virginia, is actually an older educational institution than even UNC. It began as a Presbyterian academy, Augusta Academy, in Fairfield, about ten miles northeast of Lexington, in the mid-1770s. The two major initial

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42 Philip Alexander Bruce, *History of the University of Virginia, 1819-1919, the Lengthened Shadow of One Man* (New York: MacMillan, 1920), II: 72-76, 135-140; Philip Alexander Bruce, *History of the University of Virginia, 1819-1919, the Lengthened Shadow of One Man* (New York: MacMillan, 1921), III: 49-52, 62-65; Charles Coleman Wall, Jr., “Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia, 1825 to 1861,” (Ph.D. Diss, University of Virginia, 1978), 1, 24-28, 55, 66, 284.
benefactors of the institution were Alexander Stuart, great-grandfather of J.E.B. Stuart, and Samuel Houston, father of the eponymous Texas statesman. The Board of Trustees decided to change the school’s name to Liberty Hall Academy in May 1776 to demonstrate support for American independence. True to the academy name, students took part in the 1781 Battle of Guilford Courthouse as Patriot militia. The school relocated to just outside Lexington in 1782. George Washington saved the school from closing in 1796 with an enormous endowment given to him by the Virginia legislature to disperse for philanthropic purposes. In acknowledgement of Washington’s deed, the trustees changed the name to Washington Academy. After an unsuccessful attempt at chartering the school as a public college in 1798 and a fire in 1803 that forced the school to move to its present location in Lexington, the school received a charter as a private college in 1813. The state legislature was responsible for the third (but not final) name change, calling the school Washington College.\footnote{Mame Warren, ed., \textit{Come Cheer for Washington and Lee: The University at 250 Years} (Lexington, VA: Washington and Lee University Press, 1998), 303-304; Henry B. McClellan, \textit{I Rode with Jeb Stuart: The Life and Campaigns of Major General J.E.B. Stuart}, ed. Burke Davis (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1958), 1-2.}

The Virginia Military Institute, also in Lexington, originated after the Virginia legislature, in 1816, created an arsenal in the town. In the aftermath of the War of 1812, the arsenal was to hold 30,000 stands of state arms. For two decades after this, a small garrison of about two dozen militiamen defended the arsenal. Even this tiny number of militia was enough to cause trouble in the small town of Lexington, which had barely a thousand residents. After a while, the Franklin Society of Lexington, a library and literary debate society made up of the town’s “most influential citizens,” took up the question of removing the garrison in favor of a military academy to guard the arsenal.
John T.L. Preston became one of the main advocates of the idea to the Virginia legislature. By the mid-1830s, the legislature consented.  

In November 1839, the school opened with twenty-three cadets. John Preston, one of the founders and first professors, stated that the model for the school was the United States Military Academy at West Point. One key difference, though, was that while the school sought to train good militiamen and potential soldiers, the primary goal was “to prepare young men for varied work of civil life” in what he called “the practical pursuits of life.” VMI cadets were groomed to enter the professions, and they overwhelmingly did. Unlike students at UNC, UVA, or Washington College, cadets were usually not wealthy planters’ sons. Lower tuition and state scholarships for military education attracted students from the middle and even lower classes. Jennifer Green points out that “each year, dozens of cadets of VMI received free tuition in exchange for guarding state arms during their cadetship and for teaching two years in the state after graduation.”

Training students for professional life, not military instruction, was the essence of the VMI curriculum. Military drill was rare in American colleges and universities before the Civil War. Of the institutions in this study, only the University of Virginia even briefly experimented with it. Yet at VMI, the military program served primarily as a means of

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46 Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, II: 116-124. For a discussion of the rise of military education outside of military academies after the Civil War, see Michael David Cohen, Reconstructing the Campus: Higher Education and the American Civil War (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012), 52-72.
instilling discipline that would benefit a middle-class man professionally. Though the school began with a three-year course of study, the Board of Visitors adopted a four-year curriculum in 1845. Cadets studied mathematics, mechanics, chemistry, engineering and military tactics, drawing, English and German literature, and the French and German languages. Latin soon replaced German language study. Besides the addition of military tactics, the curriculum resembled a slightly scaled-down model of the University of North Carolina. Even if Greek and the classics as a whole did not occupy as central a role in the VMI curriculum as state universities, elements of the classical education were present. In 1860, the graduating class consisted of forty-one cadets out of an initial freshman class of over eighty. The Institute had grown quickly and surpassed the enrollment of Washington College, though it remained slightly smaller than UNC and much smaller than UVA.  

The Civil War brought marked changes for white southern colleges. UVA and UNC were unusual for staying open throughout the war’s entirety. The two Lexington schools closed down temporarily after Union forces ransacked Lexington in June 1864 in retribution for the VMI cadets’ participation in the Battle of New Market. Enrollments dropped across the board, and as the war went on, college classrooms were progressively filled with disabled veterans and students under seventeen or eighteen who were too young to serve in the military. By the time Washington College closed in 1864, almost every student was admitted into the preparatory program rather than the practically defunct college department. As early as autumn 1861, Washington College had even considered opening its doors to women and young girls. During wartime the

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other schools joined VMI in instituting military drill as a major component of school curricula.\textsuperscript{48}

Within months of the outbreak of the Civil War, African Americans began seizing opportunities for organized education. In May 1861 US Major General Benjamin F. Butler took command of Fortress Monroe, which protected the approaches to Hampton Roads in southeastern Virginia, and presented local black slaves a chance to gain their freedom. The stars and stripes over the fort were easily visible from Confederate military camps, where the Southern army forced hundreds of conscripted slaves to perform menial tasks such as cooking and building trenches. By July, there were nearly one thousand escaped slaves in Union protection in Fortress Monroe, the very point where the first chained Africans were brought by corsair into the English North American colonies in the summer of 1619.\textsuperscript{49}

In Fortress Monroe and the adjacent city of Hampton began the first widespread black efforts at education. The desire for education was not something external that northern philanthropists imparted to the “contrabands.” Rather, freedpeople enthusiastically pursued schooling. Before northern educators from the American Missionary Association (AMA) ever reached Hampton to open schools during the war, local freedmen had created their own educational arrangements. After many whites abandoned Hampton in April 1861, an ex-slave of President John Tyler named Peter Herbert discovered an old spelling book and opened up the basement of Tyler’s


abandoned home as a school for African Americans. "Uncle Peter’s School" boasted around fifty regular attendees. A decade earlier, Mary Peake, the freeborn daughter of a light-skinned freedwoman and a white man, began secretly teaching local blacks to read. Peake’s underground school attracted attention in September 1861 when the first members of the AMA reached Hampton and were inundated by local African American children requesting for her to teach them. The AMA began funding Peake’s teaching, and she became the first African American teacher on the Association’s payroll. She began formalized teaching, according to tradition, under a grand oak tree that still stands today, known as "Emancipation Oak." Peake died in 1862, but within a few years, the first formal black schools of higher learning would spring up across the South.

Hampton Institute began educating twenty African Americans in 1868 and was officially incorporated by the Virginia legislature in June 1870 as Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute. As the name implied, the purpose of the school was to train blacks as teachers and manual laborers. It was an AMA school headed by whites. Its first principal, Samuel Chapman Armstrong, a former Union general, served until his death in 1893, when he was replaced by Hollis B. Frissell. Under these two leaders, Hampton developed quickly and gained national and international attention. The mission of Hampton Institute was to develop a trained, disciplined black work force. Armstrong’s wife, Mary, described the school’s industrial focus as more likely to provide racial uplift.

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for blacks than Atlanta University’s liberal arts curricula since the typical African American need not be “proficient in a dead language or facile in oratory.” Unlike Atlanta University, most Hampton students paid nothing in tuition or room and board through scholarships and work agreements.  

The Tuskegee Normal School held its first classes on July 4, 1881 and became the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute a decade later. The inspiration for the school came to its first principal, Booker T. Washington, while a student at Hampton Institute during the 1870s. His experience at Hampton, he wrote, “caused me for the first time to realize what it meant to be a man instead of a piece of property. While there I resolved that… I would go… into the Black Belt of the South, and give my life to providing the same kind of opportunity for self-reliance and self-awakening that I had found… at Hampton.” Washington pressed the message of industrial education and passive political behavior (even as Jim Crow worsened) to the point that he became the chief spokesperson of the Hampton-Tuskegee philosophy. He drew the particular ire of black educators like W.E.B. Du Bois who favored liberal arts and black activism—especially in the wake of Washington’s 1895 “Atlanta Compromise” speech in which he seemed to accept the justness of segregation in the South. As for Tuskegee itself, unlike Hampton or even Atlanta University, the AMA had no role in the creation of the school, and there was therefore almost no white presence whatsoever. All the students were African American or foreign-born, all of the faculty were black, and the majority of the school’s Board of Trustees were black. Tuskegee, like Hampton, was inexpensive (less than fifty dollars a year in 1900) and had abundant scholarships and chances for

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students to pay off their tuition through work. The school grew at astonishing rates; by the 1899-1900 academic year, between the day and night schools and normal and industrial departments, Tuskegee enrolled over one thousand students from across the eastern United States as well as Cuba, Jamaica, “Porto Rico,” Africa, and “Barbadoes.”

Atlanta University was the brainchild of Edmund Asa Ware, an 1863 graduate of Yale University and an AMA missionary who imagined building “a university which would…train talented Negro youth…educate teachers, and…disseminate civilization among the untaught masses.” With fitting symbolism, Atlanta University was built over Confederate earthworks that were demolished to make room for the black cultural center. Ware assembled a board of trustees by 1867 and opened a normal school for training teachers, the first part of what would become Atlanta University, in 1869. The following year a grammar school and preparatory school (akin to the idea of a high school) opened. The College Department began in 1872, only the seventh black college in the country, and graduated its first class in 1876. It offered a classical curriculum similar to antebellum white colleges. A total of 121 men graduated the college program by 1907 (156 others attended but did not graduate), and several went on to prestigious institutions such as Harvard, Dartmouth, Chicago, Pennsylvania, and

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Michigan for further degrees. In most instances, an Atlanta University degree was worth two or three years of credit at one of these premier four-year colleges.\textsuperscript{53}

Although Atlanta would add an industrial education component in the 1880s the school remained primarily associated with liberal education and its mission continued to be, as Clarence Bacote explained, to “develop in the Negro race a cultured class” to “obtain the respect of the white people, but also that of their own race, who would look upon them as leaders in thought and action. In addition, they would serve to guide the Negro in the intelligent use of the ballot, which was essential to his freedom.” Horace Bumstead, who served as Atlanta University president from 1889 to 1907, remarked to Atlanta University students that they “should show courtesy without servility; conciliation without humiliation; and manhood without defiance.” The grand purpose for Atlanta University continued to be to educate African American teachers and political leaders who would help bring to fruition the unfinished goals of Radical Reconstruction.\textsuperscript{54}

After the war, the University of North Carolina fell upon hard times. Enrollments continued to dwindle since few southerners escaped the war with the financial means to afford college. The university fell into extreme debt, and the faculty and administration all resigned in 1867. Radical Republicans rose to power in North Carolina in 1868 and


\textsuperscript{54} Bacote, \textit{The Story of Atlanta University}, 105, 179; George. A. Towns, "The Sources of Traditions of Atlanta University," \textit{Phylon: The Atlanta University Review of Race and Culture}, III, 2 (1942), 130, quoted in Bacote, \textit{The Story of Atlanta University}, 106. Atlanta University was fairly unique for being an integrated institution with whites and blacks attending. The majority of the small number of white students were children of faculty members. See Link, \textit{Atlanta, Cradle of the New South}, 130-134.
quickly replaced the university’s trustees with Republicans, further discouraging wealthy conservative families from sending their sons to UNC. Chapel Hill resident Cornelia Spencer led the vocal opposition to the Republican control of the university. Financially insolvent and lacking political allies, the Board of Trustees closed the university in 1870. Spencer actively spearheaded the effort to reopen the university with Democratic leaders and finally succeeded in 1875. Once the university resumed, the trustees reorganized the curriculum so that classics was no longer essential to get a degree. The traditional Bachelor of Arts (A.B.) degree still required a classical background and proficiency in Greek and Latin, but the Bachelor of Science and new Bachelor of Agriculture did not. In 1877 the university reopened the law school and established a normal school for training teachers. Since teaching was predominantly a female profession, they accepted women into the normal program—a radical decision within white southern higher education. A medical school opened in 1879 and a pharmacy school the following year. By the early 1880s, UNC enrollments (including the normal school) had finally returned to 1850s levels.⁵⁵

The University of Virginia’s transition into the postwar era was considerably less rocky but still fraught with challenges. Enrollments dropped precipitously and did not return to 1865 levels until the early 1890s. Many of the earliest postwar students were Confederate veterans who still wore their uniforms to class. The university expanded from eight colleges to fourteen from 1865 to 1895, and the curriculum branched out to

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include more scientific, agricultural, and engineering study. By the 1880s knowledge of classical languages was no longer necessary, but it was not deemphasized as much as at UNC or other schools. Unlike UNC, UVA did not establish a normal school for teacher training. Only a few women were admitted in the 1890s as graduate students before the faculty and Board of Visitors decided that women should not be allowed at all for fear the experience would unsex and sterilize them. Likewise, they argued, their status as taxpayers no more guaranteed them entrance than it did for blacks.56

Washington College underwent perhaps the most dramatic change after the Civil War. After closing down in 1864, it reopened in the fall of 1865. To the surprise of the school's trustees, Robert E. Lee had accepted their offer to serve as president of the school. He instituted the regulation that all students must comport themselves as gentlemen. He relaxed rules somewhat, allowing dancing and fraternities, and, as Ollinger Crenshaw observed, “the forbidding Calvinist spirit receded.” Lee reorganized the college into nine different “schools” or departments: Latin, Greek, Mathematics, Chemistry, Moral Philosophy, Natural Philosophy, Applied Mathematics, Practical Chemistry, and Modern Languages. Lee also established a school of civil and mining engineering and tried in vain to create a school of agriculture. Additionally he arranged for the independent Lexington School of Law to merge with the college. After his death in 1870, the school was renamed for the fourth time to Washington and Lee University. Though Lee’s son, Custis Lee, took over as president in 1870, enrollments plummeted.

56 Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, III: 350-359, 389-402; Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, IV: 61-68, 93-101.
As part of the effort to bring in more students, by 1888 the school no longer required a classical education to obtain a degree.⁵⁷

After the Union army ransacked VMI’s campus and destroyed its buildings and ten thousand books, VMI temporarily moved to Richmond for the 1864-1865 year. When the superintendent, Francis Smith, reconvened the faculty in Lexington in the fall of 1865, holding classes seemed nearly impossible. In order to cope with the intense financial burden, the faculty agreed to work on one-third pay, which they did until 1870. VMI reopened with fifty-five cadets in the fall of 1865 to less pomp than their neighbors at Washington College. They could, however, boast that their new faculty included Custis Lee and renowned naval strategist Matthew Fontaine Maury. The cadets’ role in the Battle of New Market created lingering tensions with the Republican government elected in 1867. When the government questioned why they should not close the school, Smith presented a convincing argument for VMI’s scientific utility in rebuilding Virginia’s economy. Despite the mutual hatred between the VMI administration and Republican politicians, the school remained open and regained financial stability, which it quickly lost after the conservative Democrats regained power. The school’s primary response to the dwindling student body was to expand the curriculum in 1886 to deemphasize classics and offer more engineering, science, mathematics, and military-related studies. In 1898, the school further strengthened its science and engineering offerings by creating a major in the new field of electrical engineering.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Crenshaw, General Lee’s College, 145-146, 158-165, 234-235.

Chapter Overviews

Chapter 2 of this dissertation covers the period from 1820 to 1860 and discusses how white antebellum students understood and responded to questions of manhood and honor. It details the origins of violent southern honor as a form of patriarchal mastery at southern universities and the economic and social origins of a more bourgeois, restrained manhood that corresponded with the spread of evangelical religion and market values. By the mid-1840s, the riots and greatest disorders that had characterized the previous two decades on southern college campuses began declining (albeit slowly). Even more than the development of honor codes and the end of spying on students, the spread of bourgeois, evangelical values to elite college students facilitated this change. As Timothy Williams demonstrates, the University of North Carolina developed a culture of “academic manhood” in which academic performance and rule-abiding behavior was encouraged. The Virginia Military Institute, made up of mostly middle-class students, was characterized by a strongly bourgeois student character from its founding. As a military institution, however, hazing assumed a central role in the rites of manhood, even though it conflicted with school regulations.

Chapter 3 follows the experiences of white college students during the Civil War, both as students and in combat. As historians have noted, the experience of the Civil War indelibly shaped the masculinity of an entire generation—and even those that followed. Many schools closed down during the four years of the Civil War either from lack of pupils or Union occupation. Remarkably, the four antebellum institutions examined here all stayed open for most or all of the war. This chapter argues that traditional violent honor and restrained, evangelical manhood largely converged in this time period into a single martial masculinity. Though several professors and clergymen
were conditional Unionists, their ultimate decisions to take up arms for the Confederacy strongly affected the views of the bourgeois, evangelical students who looked to them for moral guidance. Those students who were too young to join the military effort sought to evince their masculinity in traditional ways by demonstrating social superiority over African Americans, women, and by hazing younger students.

Chapter 4 covers the rise of black higher education in the South from the 1860s to 1900. It argues that black liberal arts college and vocational schools fostered very different ideas about manhood. Many of the wealthier liberal arts students at Atlanta University understood manhood as exercising (and leading legal and political fights for) full civil and political rights, closely linking manhood and citizenship. For the generally working-class students at Hampton Institute and Tuskegee Institute, manhood meant freedom from oppressive white regulations and forced agricultural labor. As school disciplinary records show, students were generally much more disruptive and rebellious at Hampton, where the faculty was mostly white, than at Tuskegee, where the faculty was almost exclusively black. For both types of schools, the introduction of competitive, organized sports was central to masculinity. Students prized athletic skill, but even more important was demonstrating teamwork, practice, and sportsmanship to signal to whites that African Americans were civilized and deserving of equality.  

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Chapter 5 examines the various masculinities of Native Americans in Hampton Institute’s Indian Program from 1878 to 1900. Using theory from sociologist Terry Huffman, this chapter distinguishes four types of Native American masculinity based on responses to Hampton educators’ efforts at cultural indoctrination. These include major resistance, minor resistance, transculturation, and acculturation. Disciplinary records expose the drastic lengths many students went to in order to hold onto their native cultures, while the Native American student newspaper, *Talks and Thoughts*, demonstrates the ability of some students to accept Anglo-American culture and synthesize it with their own traditions. As with African Americans, public behavior—especially in athletics—was an important marker of civilization and integral to acculturated and transculturated Native Americans’ claims to be treated equality.

Chapter 6 returns to white college students after the Civil War and follows them up to 1900. Dealing with the embarrassment of defeat and the challenge to elite claims of mastery, students played integral roles in developing the Lost Cause mythology to justify the Old South and Confederate defeat. White college students were also central actors in the postwar white supremacy campaign of violence and intimidation to deprive African Americans of their civil and voting rights. This was part of the larger effort to re-establish the antebellum patriarchy of the elite white planter in the aftermath of the vastly increased freedoms experienced by African Americans and white women during the Civil War. Violent honor and evangelical masculinity again separated into more distinct ideas. Even as the twentieth century dawned, honor and mastery remained defining features of elite white southern masculinity.
“The people around here are getting up to murdering,” Giles Gunn wrote his sister in Connecticut in February 1854. Gunn was a teacher in Lexington, Virginia, and was new to the South. Thomas Blackburn, a cadet at the Virginia Military Institute had died two weeks earlier. He was stabbed four times in the head and neck, the latter strike severing his jugular. The knife-wielder was Charles Christian, a law student at neighboring Lexington Law School (which would become Washington and Lee Law School in the late 1860s). The grizzly business had started several weeks earlier over a young woman. Christian, introduced to Mary Anderson at a social gathering, asked for the privilege of escorting her to church. She was Blackburn’s cousin, and he did not approve because he disliked Christian. One chronicler maintains that Blackburn had overheard Christian loudly proclaiming that he could seduce any woman in Lexington.\(^1\)

Blackburn told Mary to refuse the law student’s request in writing. Christian responded by asking who the troublemaker was keeping them apart. She showed the note to her cousin, who confronted Christian, acknowledging that it was he who had advised against seeing him.

Christian took offense to the confrontation, interference with his courtship, and implicit judgment upon his family name. He awaited Blackburn at church the night of January 15. When Blackburn entered, Christian asked to have a word with him. After dragging him outside into the street, Christian demanded Blackburn retract his

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judgment. He refused, and Christian immediately lunged at him with a knife and, according to Gunn, "killed him so dead that he never kicked." Though Christian was arrested, he was acquitted for murder as many believed the insult was too great to be ignored. "You see how nice a sense of honor the southerners have," the northerner Gunn wrote. "In law here if one man calls another a liar and he beats him almost to death for it the law does nothing with him for it is considered sufficient provocation."²

For an increasingly larger number of young men across the South, the college experience became their initiation into manhood, where amidst a youth culture of other adolescents they were able to declare and demonstrate themselves masters. Honor justly remains the dominant lens through which historians interpret elite white manhood in the antebellum South. In a society devoid of aristocratic titles, where class status was based on owning slaves and public reputation, demonstrating mastery became an essential quality for elite white manhood.³ During the period from 1820 to 1860,

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³ Rex Bowman and Carlos Santos, Rot, Riot, and Rebellion: Mr. Jefferson's Struggle to Save the University That Changed America (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 5. Despite Bertram Wyatt-Brown's initial linkage of honor with the South, honor was not a distinctly southern idea. As Shearer Bowman Davis demonstrates in At the Precipice, northerners very keenly possessed a sense of honor. Likewise, Jeffrey Adler's First in Violence: Deepest in Dirt provides further evidence of the centrality of values of honor to northern men. See Bertram Wyatt-Brown, Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Shearer Davis Bowman, At the Precipice: Americans North and South during the Secession Crisis (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010) 7, 16-17; Jeffrey S. Adler, First in Violence, Deepest in Dirt: Homicide in Chicago, 1875-1920 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

Elite southern honor was distinctive by 1820, however, because the conditions of the southern plantation required a form of mastery no longer compatible with the market-driven wealth of the northern elite. The pervasiveness of slavery, the ubiquity of slave patrols, and the threat of rebellion led to greater sensitivity to honor and mastery than in the North. See John Hope Franklin, The Militant South, 1800-1861 (Boston: Beacon, 1956), vii-viii, 70-85; Kenneth S. Greenberg, Honor and Slavery: Lies, Duels, Noses, Masks, Dressing as a Woman, Gifts, Strangers, Humanitarianism, Death, Slave Rebellions, the Proslavery Argument, Baseball, Hunting, and Gambling in the Old South (Princeton: Princeton University
southern men’s conceptions of honor and mastery slowly and unevenly began to change. With the influx of evangelical religion from the Second Great Awakening, the extension of market capitalism and the Industrial Revolution, ideas about slavery and manhood started shifting. In the aftermath of the Nat Turner Revolt in southern Virginia in 1831 and the growth of the international abolitionist and antislavery campaigns, the southern defense of slavery was transformed from one of a necessary evil to a positive good. Mastery was no longer just rooted in inducing fear and awe, but in the appearance of compassion and benevolence. As the outward projection of masculinity softened, the inner feelings of masculinity often did as well through the influences of evangelicalism and bourgeoisification.

This change was significant if not immense. Southern colleges in the 1850s remained places of unruly behavior. Students’ incessant nocturnal noisemaking, alcohol consumption, fighting, and pranking were responsible for many sleepless nights and graying hairs for college faculty. Yet, it was a different kind of disorder than in earlier decades when direct challenges to faculty authority, riots, destroying school property, and physically assaulting professors was almost routine. Student pranks against faculty were generally milder by the 1850s and the percentage of students in constant trouble declined sharply. Though a large number of students remained devoted to a life of gambling, drinking, and fighting, more southern college students were adopting either bourgeois manhood, or what Timothy Williams has termed

“intellectual manhood.” Built upon the idea of professionalism in study and self-reflection and abstention in behavior, intellectual manhood was especially prevalent from the founding of the Virginia Military Institute and at the University of Virginia and the University of North Carolina by the 1850s.

The changing attitudes about manhood occurred at an individual level but were shaped by and reflected in the culture of specific colleges. Most southern colleges in the 1820s and 1830s were disorderly places where the honor impulse led to frequent violence. But by the 1850s, intellectual manhood was common among the students of UNC and UVA. Honor increasingly meant respecting school authorities and regulations in addition to performing well in studies. Older cavalier honor and manhood was still very strong at Washington College, a small, private college in Lexington, Virginia. The Virginia Military Institute, also in Lexington, was a very different type of institution by virtue of its focus on military education. Cadets were much more likely to come from the middle class than any of the other institutions, and their bourgeois mentality combined with the effect of military education to redefine honor and manhood in terms of discipline and submission to proper authority. An examination of the writings of students from these four schools between 1820 and 1860 shows the diversity and transformation of masculine ideals in a fluctuating Upper South.4

**Far From Elysium: Volatile and Violent Honor at UNC and UVA**

Most early antebellum University of North Carolina and University of Virginia students embraced college life as an opportunity to demonstrate their manhood. Many

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4 Personal letters and diaries offer the best available windows into young men's thoughts, yet these are still imperfect sources. As Stephen Berry discusses, truly private details are hard to find in the written record because diarists self-edited, descendants edited, and letters were only semi-private to begin with in a Victorian culture that was repelled by public discussions of sexuality or other intimate matters. See Berry, *All That Makes a Man*, 115.
played cards, gambled, drank, swore, and made excessive noise in their merrymaking. They also courted women and visited prostitutes, in addition to varying degrees of studying. When anyone stood in the way of enacting their ideals of manhood, conflict usually ensued. Altercations could be verbal, consisting of threats and insults, or they could be physically violent. Violence could entail informal brawling, planned assault, dueling, or mass rioting.

From the 1820s through the 1840s, the prevailing form of masculinity at UNC and UVA was an often violent masculinity in which perceived insults from students, faculty, townspeople, or slaves demanded retribution. As historian John Hope Franklin observed, a typical elite white southern man “enjoyed the reputation of being sensitive, quick to defend his honor, adept and skilled in the use of weapons” and had “an inherited capacity to rule the conquered with enviable effectiveness.” There were of course some students with evangelical sentiments and a more restrained idea of manhood. Yet students, faculty, visitors and nearby citizens alike regularly commented on the frequency of frightening student violence and misbehavior. At UNC, “fighting and drinking and gambling were almost universally fashionable,” wrote historian Kemp Battle. “There was in the air a spirit of revolt against university, divine and human.” A similar rebelliousness gripped northern universities from the 1760s through the antebellum period. Southern students were not alone in creating disorder, but more than their northern counterparts, their protests reflected a culture shaped by the planter hierarchy. Although Timothy Williams argues that “students associated this rowdy life with youth, not manhood,” it seems that the majority of student misbehavior in the early
antebellum period was an enactment of elite manhood ideals, even if students did not acknowledge it consciously.⁵

For most, manhood meant playing the part of gentleman planter, which entailed demonstrating mastery over African American slaves and commanding respect and submission from women and the lower classes. To do this, students could not look weak or timid publicly. Backing down from a challenge indicated weakness and inferiority, and students were eager to show themselves manlier than their classmates. Many students' diaries and letters home were filled with observations of other students, and they tended to focus on their negatives rather than positives in many cases. William Sidney Mullins recorded his often catty personal opinions of all of his UNC classmates almost obsessively in his diary in the early 1840s.⁶

Students especially loathed faculty challenges to their independence. Young elite southern boys were not socialized to defy all authority inherently, but in the early antebellum period they responded very negatively to faculty members’ attempts to act in loco parentis. Southern students detested that the usually middle-class faculty, who were their social inferiors, addressed them condescendingly and insultingly. Even if

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⁶ William Sidney Mullins Diary, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Charles Ellis was less critical of his classmates at UVA, but still inscribed in his diary: “I find myself constantly comparing myself with my associates” in order to try to improve himself and his standing. See Charles Ellis Diary, March 14, 1835, Charles Ellis Diary, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia.
student misbehavior prompted the angry words of offense, students rarely tolerated it passively. Especially overbearing school regulations and adversarial disciplinary enforcement methods further antagonized students and produced the greatest disorders.\textsuperscript{7} In addition to teaching, professors and especially the younger tutors were expected to keep order on campus. Instead of simply reporting violations if they saw them, they were supposed to actively search them out “like police officers in carrying out the discipline of the institution,” Kemp Battle wrote.\textsuperscript{8} Faculty inspected rooms nightly and could freely barge into a room at any time. This practice infuriated students since they felt sneaking around to catch violators did not constitute honorable behavior.\textsuperscript{9}

Irrevocable expulsion was rare since, with any punishment, administrators wanted to instill guilt, shame, and regret as part of converting students to a more bourgeois code of submissive manhood like their own. In all but the most extreme cases, an apology and a pledge to improve in the future would allow a student to return to his studies. Often, however, public shaming led to a cavalier response of anger. Since honor was based upon reputation, students considered the act of shaming a dishonorable act by the professors. Instead of prompting a desire for self-improvement, it elicited anger and willful resistance. Throughout the 1820s and early 1830s especially, many students refused to apologize or acknowledge wrongdoing. The

\textsuperscript{7} For the argument of the adverse effects of adversarial enforcement practices in a similar situation at UVA, see Charles Coleman Wall, Jr., “Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia, 1825 to 1861,” (Ph.D. Diss, University of Virginia, 1978), 259. As Timothy Williams argues, Bertram Wyatt-Brown probably overstated the case that elite southern boys were free of discipline at home. See Wyatt-Brown, \textit{Southern Honor}, 138; Williams, “Intellectual Manhood,” 23, fn. 1.

\textsuperscript{8} Tutors were not technically considered faculty, according to Battle, but I will include them as such in the future for linguistic ease. Battle, \textit{History of the University of North Carolina}, I: 8.

\textsuperscript{9} Students reporting others was rare before the Civil War. Students actually tarred and feathered one UVA student in 1838 for turning in three others for serious punishments. See Thomas Henry to Thomas M. Spragins, December 28, 1839, Spragins Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society.
faculty and Board members dismissed several students for relatively minor infractions simply because their code of honor did not allow for them to submit to discipline.¹⁰

University of North Carolina and University of Virginia students often sought to evince their manliness in their performance of adult activities like drinking and gambling. They did not undertake these specifically to agitate the generally middle-class, bourgeois faculty. Actively violating rules added an element of danger and bravery, but it was only a secondary motivation to perform these rites of manhood. Drinking was a favorite pastime of students. Enoch Sawyer wrote to William Pettigrew in 1833 that with all the drinking, “I don’t study a bit.” Charles Ellis at UVA repeatedly bemoaned “a violent headache and nausea” after the previous night’s “debauch.” Hundreds if not thousands of students were cited for drinking at UNC and UVA, but the faculty still only caught a small percentage of offenders, to the chagrin of tee-totaling students.¹¹

Holidays were notorious occasions for intoxication and extreme indulgence. James Dusenbery wrote that on Washington’s Birthday in 1842 “the amount of liquor drank by the students was tremendous. More than 2/3ds of college were intoxicated.”¹²

¹⁰ Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina*, I: 304-307. For students refusing to apologize even when it would have meant returning to school with only minor punishment, see Faculty Meeting Minutes, General Faculty and Faculty Council of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Records (hereafter Faculty Meeting Minutes), January 29-30, 1821, February 20, 1822, September 16, 1822, February 23, 1824, September 8, 1824, October 5, 1825 February 16, 1828, February 20, 1830, University Archives, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. For students with long-term suspensions who refused to apologize to ameliorate their punishment, see February 22, 1826, February 8, 1827, Faculty Meeting Minutes, University Archives, UNC..

¹¹ Enoch Sawyer to William Pettigrew, November 23, 1833, Pettigrew Family Papers, SHC; Charles Ellis, Diary, March 21, 1835, April 3, 1835, Charles Ellis Diary, UVA. One tee-totaling student complained in 1841 that the school allowed too many drinking violations to go unpunished even for those students “whose tiny hands could scarcely grasp the bottle.” Charles Pettigrew recalled that his young roommate of fifteen had been a good student until seduced by the fiddle and drink. See Walter W. Lenoir to father, October 20, 1841, Lenoir Family Papers, SHC; Charles J. Pettigrew to father, January 21, 1834, Pettigrew Family Papers, SHC.
With the wide availability of alcohol and the masculine imperative to consume it, neither faculty spying nor religion could keep some students from drinking. A plethora of taverns operated even in the small towns of Charlottesville and Chapel Hill. Students could also buy liquor from local freedmen or slaves in the underground economy. As for the influence of religion, William Sidney Mullins recorded his conversion experience in his diary, bookended by accounts of drinking excursions in the weeks before and after. James Dusenbery went even further, signing a temperance pledge and posting it on his wall. “In it,” he wrote, “I pledge myself to drink no liquor” for the rest of the school year. He made his pledge immediately before Washington’s Birthday in 1842 mentioned above. He was “gloriously tight before breakfast,” he boasted, and “kept the thing hot throughout the day,” passing all the sunlight hours in intoxication. He recorded both the pledge and subsequent drunkenness in the same diary entry and did not seem bothered by the contradiction. It appears he left the temperance pledge on his wall.

Gambling was another popular student activity, which, like most rules violations, often accompanied drinking. Playing cards in student rooms was relatively common. William Bagley wrote to his father in 1843 that he was horrified by the “lewdness, dissipation, & gambling” that occurred all around him. The ultimate goals for their life seemed to be “in shuffling cards, turning off a dose of liquor, or engaging in any low

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12 John Hawkins Jr. to John Hawkins Sr., February 26, 1840, Hawkins Family Papers, SHC; William Bagley to D. W. Bagley, February 27, 1845, Bagley Family Papers, SHC; James L. Dusenbery, Diary, February 27, 1842, James L. Dusenbery Diary, SHC.

13 Faculty Meeting Minutes, January 9, 1821, UNC; Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, II: 284. James Johnston Pettigrew detailed another way in which students were able to buy liquor from a local through the guise of paying for a dinner party. See James Johnston Pettigrew to Ebenezer Pettigrew, April 14, 1844, Pettigrew Family Papers, SHC.

14 William Sidney Mullins, Diary, January 5, 1841, January 6, 1841, January 8, 1841, January 21, 1841, William Sidney Mullins Diary, SHC; James L. Dusenbery, Diary, February 27, 1842, James L. Dusenbery Diary, SHC.
revelry.” Dozens of students had to answer to faculty for card-playing. Hundreds more engaged in it and avoided the invasive faculty spying. Students would appoint lookouts for tutors and professors on patrol and would use a series of signals to relay impending danger of being caught. Off campus, several students found their way to horse races where they could gamble, not always as discretely as they hoped.\textsuperscript{15}

Pursuing women was another favorite leisure activity of University of North Carolina students. They hoped in women for a mixture of love, marriage, and sex—not always in that order. Courtship and sex were both central elements of elite male manhood; they were activities for men, not boys. Sexual conquests of lower-class women or prostitutes represented an act of dominance and mastery. Meanwhile, students courting prospective wives took part in a crucial sociocultural ritual. Marriage was expected of southerners and the elite man needed to have his plantation mistress to follow decorum.\textsuperscript{16}

Some elements of romantic love and companionate romance are discernible in antebellum student writings, but most viewed women as possessions, status symbols, or accomplishments, and their physical and social graces as a corporeal reaffirmation of

\textsuperscript{15} William Bagley to D.W. Bagley, September 12, 1843, April 23, 1844, Bagley Family Papers, SHC; Faculty Meeting Minutes, October 27, 1823, June 1, 1824, October 25, 1826, December 13, 1827, UNC; Battle, History of the University of North Carolina, I: 305.

\textsuperscript{16} A large number of students did not write about the opposite sex. Some likely felt uncomfortable writing to their family about the subject. UNC student Douglas Beatty suggests that they never thought about women because they never saw any; however, there were a fair number of lower- and middle-class women in both the towns of Charlottesville and Chapel Hill and on campus (the daughters of professors). Dances and opportunities for socializing with women were not uncommon, especially at UVA. Even at UNC, James Dusenbery wrote about a very exciting July 1841 dance with men and women packed in very tight, sweaty quarters. See James L. Dusenbery, Diary, July 31, 1841, James L. Dusenbery Diary, SHC; Douglas Pearson Beatty to Gustavus Adolphus Bingham, October 8, 1848, University of North Carolina Miscellaneous Papers, SHC. As for the availability of “respectable” young women, Fayette B. Spragins wrote that “there are not half a dozen respectable families on Chapel Hill...as for young ladies, ther [sic] are but two respectable ones...and those are the daughters of the professors.” See Fayette B. Spragins to Eliza Ann Spragins, October 10, 1836, Spragins Family Papers, VHS.
their own self-worth. “Women are a great addition to the happiness of man,” opined Charles Ellis at UVA in 1835.\(^\text{17}\) Joseph Jordan Summerell found it “strange” that any man would want to be without a wife and the comforts one could provide. He believed men “ought to cherish, honor, & respect [women] as being the origin of our existence [as] sensitive beings. But they are also the best company that we can possibly have to cheer us on the eventful journey of life, ministers of comfort in sickness & tribulation, and the guardian spirits of our tender affections.” Women could soften men’s dispositions, and marriage would be nothing but a joy. Summerell idolized elite womanhood and diminished women’s individuality. He did not speak of obligations to a wife, but of what she would bring to him in the form of happiness and companionship.\(^\text{18}\)

James Dusenbery was a romantic, but sexualized romance much more than public Victorian mores tolerated. Dusenbery, as seen in his drinking habits, was no stranger to contradiction. He came to school in July 1841 with a buckhorn and two hydrangea plants named after women with whom he shared affection. But his real romantic interest was in another woman, “loving, languid, black-eyed” Mary with whom he kept up a long-term correspondence. “She is a sweet girl,” he wrote, and “although I do not love her…there’s none I would rather be kissing.” Thinking of his next chance to visit her over the Christmas recess, he wrote in his diary: “I tremble for her virtue, if indeed she has any—of which there are many doubts….My passions are unused to restraint & she is so warm—so passionate & withal so yielding in her disposition that I see no way of escape without committing the unpardonable sin against love & gallantry.” Despite his characterization of Mary as weak, she seems to have upheld her

\(^\text{17}\) Charles Ellis, Diary, April 11, 1835, Charles Ellis Diary, UVA.

\(^\text{18}\) Joseph Jordan Summerell, Diary, July 14, 1841, Joseph Jordan Summerell Diary, SHC.
virtue as a respectable elite woman was expected at the time. Timothy Williams argues effectively that Dusenbery was not willing or able to have sex with Mary, “having to control his sexual urges out of respect for her chastity, when all he wanted to do was have sex with her.” To resolve his psychological and physiological dilemma, he turned to the comfort of prostitutes.¹⁹

Prostitutes and women of the lower classes were the main sexual outlets for students to practice their mastery of women. A free black woman ran a brothel on the south side of Charlottesville. There women practiced the “Cyprian evil” within walking distance of the university. Faculty members caught students with prostitutes in their dormitories in 1827, 1828, and 1842 (at which point UVA stopped detailing student offenses in the records).²⁰ Specifics about prostitution in Chapel Hill are murkier. Based on Dusenbery’s unusually candid writings and Timothy Williams’ research, it seems prostitutes were available for those who sought them.²¹

Lower-class or “common” women who were sexually available to students were nearly indistinguishable from prostitutes in students’ writings. Charles Ellis recorded in his diary in May 1835: “[I] went in the evening with Harrison to the house of one of these

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¹⁹ James L. Dusenbery, Diary, July 14, 1831, July 31, 1841, October 24, 1841, James L. Dusenbery Diary, SHC; Williams, “Intellectual Manhood,” 301. Though Jane Turner Censer asserted that North Carolina planters had little control of their children’s courtship, as Anya Jabour argues, ante bellum courtship rituals remained strictly observed and kept physical intimacy to a minimum. Furthermore, elite southern women intentionally drew out the length of courtships because it was the time in their lives in which they were the most publicly social and enjoyed the most autonomy, thus frustrating Dusenbery and other students further in their sexual attempts. See Jane Turner Censer, North Carolina Planters and their Children, 1800-1860 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1984), 74; Anya Jabour, Scarlett’s Sisters: Young Women in the Old South (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2007), 13, 118, 124, 139-141.

²⁰ Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, II: 274; Wall, “Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia,” 276-277.

²¹ Williams, “Intellectual Manhood,” 268-269; James L. Dusenbery, Diary, August 14, 1841, James L. Dusenbery Diary, SHC.
common women, but found no inducements to proceed any farther, and indeed I can not see what pleasure any man can derive from embracing such filthy sluts as abound here, since he cannot even do that with the danger of catching the Wildfire, a college name for Gonorrhea.” Charles Wall believes the woman Ellis mentioned was a prostitute, but this seems unclear. Contempt of the male elite for lower-class women often lent itself to scathing hyperbole. Edward Carrington Cabell expressed derision for Mary Chapman, a young woman of sixteen, who traveled from Orange Court House to attend a ball with one of the students. While visiting, Cabell claimed she entertained fifteen or twenty young men a day. Cabell thought very little of the class of her suitors and declared that “she is visited promiscuously by all.” In Chapel Hill, William Sidney Mullins recorded in his diary the saga of a local woman named Nancy who had recently been discovered having affairs with several students.

Mullins himself was keenly interested in sex despite his collegiate acceptance of Christianity. He gleefully records having “quite an amusing discussion de adjunctis et membro Veneris” with some classmates. He may have been ashamed to write in English about young men talking about sex, but later that year in 1841 he wrote of his overwhelming emotional and physical reaction to receiving a bouquet of flowers from a young woman named Ellen. “The poetry of my feelings aroused…I felt in the very humour of making love to the whole female sex.” Premarital sexuality was an active component of manhood for UNC students through the 1840s. While romantic ideals

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22 Charles Ellis, Diary, May 12, 1835, Charles Ellis Diary, UVA; Wall, “Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia,” 277.

23 Edward Carrington Cabell to Henry Coulter Cabell, April 18, 1835, Cabell Family Papers, VHS; William Sidney Mullins, August 12, 1841, William Sidney Mullins Diary, SHC.

24 William Sidney Mullins, January 20, 1841, August 9, 1841, William Sidney Mullins Diary, SHC.
slowly took root in students’ thoughts about women, manhood remained more
passionate than restrained concerning sex and romance. Students did not surrender to
every urge, but in a system that allowed them to turn to prostitutes, poor, and enslaved
women for sexual fulfillment, it is difficult to consider their sexuality truly “restrained.”

**Duels, Calathumps, Sprees, and Riots: Impulsive Manhood of Honor and Mastery**

From the 1820s through 1840s, the predominant form of masculinity at the
University of Virginia and the University of North Carolina was a violent and impulsive
one that demanded retribution for any insult to preserve one’s public image. Many
students became embroiled with conflicts against other students or, more commonly,
against the faculty of UVA or UNC. The frequency of these violent disagreements in the
early antebellum years and their gradual diminishment suggests that more than sheer
youthfulness was responsible. The almost complete absence of this behavior at the
much stricter Virginia Military Institute also suggests that more than overbearing
regulations were responsible.  

In a small, seemingly forgotten line of his five-volume history of the University of
Virginia written in the early 1920s, half a century before the organized study of gender,
Philip Bruce mentioned in passing the main cause of student riots: “It was not always
headiness and intemperance of youth….Rather, it was most frequently a distorted idea

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25 Youthful exuberance alone could lead to fighting. While a student at UVA in 1826, Edgar Allan Poe
wrote that “a common fight is so trifling an occurrence that no notice is taken of it.” At UNC, James
Dusenbery conducted a pillow fight with five students in 1841. See Edgar Allan Poe to John Allan, May
1826, quoted in Wall, “Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia,” 88; James L. Dusenbery,
Diary, August 29, 1841, James L. Dusenbery Diary, SHC. For the argument for the impetuosity of youth
as the cause of disorder, see Williams, "Intellectual Manhood," 273. For the argument that faculty
regulations were the primary cause of student misbehavior, see Battle, *History of the University of North
Carolina*, I: 560; Bruce, *History of the University of Virginia*, II: 131, 262-266, III: 1; Wall, “Students and
Student Life at the University of Virginia,” 182-183, 278. Joseph Kett realized that faculty policies and
enforcement alone did not explain the severity of student rebellion, North and South. See Joseph F. Kett,
of what [the students] considered was due to their own manhood.” His conclusion holds true for students at the University of North Carolina as well.\textsuperscript{26} The primary reason for the disruptions was that violent, elite manhood combined with the youth culture of colleges and faculty regulations to create a cauldron of turmoil. As long as elite manhood rejected calmer, restrained ideals of the bourgeois man, college would be a dangerous place for property and professor.

Incendiary language and accusations of lying or poor character often precipitated violence in reputation-conscious elite white southerners. In Chapel Hill in September 1820, perpetual hothead Henry Martin “finding himself irritated with certain language alleged to be used by one of the students,” drew a loaded pistol on the offender and began beating him. Once a crowd formed, he cocked the pistol and “advanced with menacing attitude and language towards another student.” Even after a three-month suspension, the following February he had what the faculty labeled a “misunderstanding & quarrel” with a student named Robert Martin. Henry’s anger over a perceived insult did not subside, and he resolved to attack Robert again. He broke free from a group attempting to restrain him and ran into Robert’s room “with fury, and commenced an assault, which continued until a separation was effected by the bystanders.”\textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{26} Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, III: 59. Placing the responsibility for college disorders on elite, honor-based masculinity is not necessarily an argument for southern exceptionalism. As discussed, northerners possessed a sense of honor too, and a number of historians including Jeffrey Mullins have shown that northern colleges in the Early Republic and antebellum years experienced extensive rioting. Mullins makes the argument that elite values were the commonality between northern and southern collegiates, with masculinity the common thread. See Jeffrey A. Mullins, “Honorable Violence: Youth Culture, Masculinity, and Contested Authority in Liberal Education in the Early Republic,” American Transcendental Quarterly 17 (2003): 161-179. The key difference between northern and southern elite masculinity was the degree of mastery in public performance. In the plantation South, demonstrating absolute control of oneself and one’s perceived inferiors was of much greater importance. The degree of fear that gripped Virginia after Gabriel Prosser’s Rebellion or Nat Turner’s Rebellion was unequalled in the North. Mastery could literally be a matter of life and death for southern plantation owners.

\textsuperscript{27} Faculty Meeting Minutes, September 12, 1820, February 27, 1821, UNC.
Even the UNC faculty recognized that offensive language could lead to fisticuffs. The day of Martin’s hearing in 1821, the faculty heard the cases of four other students who had been “quarreling & fighting.” In the fight between Willis Alston and Samuel Sneed, Alston initially insulted Sneed repeatedly in a “very offensive” manner, but was not solely to blame as the faculty believed that the language Sneed responded with was “in a high degree culpable & contrary to the peace of society, a language which no person ought to think himself authorised to use.” After an 1823 altercation, UNC faculty resolved to “recommend to the students never even in sport to charge each other with opinions or conduct, which if proved, would injure the character for integrity, as such charges have a natural tendency to excite quarrels.”

Disputes involving the threat or use of weapons were common in demonstrations of manliness. UVA students Barton Norris and Jacob Warwick had a dangerous quarrel in April 1835. When Norris made too pointed a joke about Warwick, Warwick cursed him. Norris later demanded a meeting with Warwick and asked for a retraction. When Warwick refused, Norris “fell aboard of him with his stick, which was quickly broken, and also Warwick’s, when they closed and Warwick drew a dirk and stabbed Norris twice in the back, tho’ not seriously.” Another incident involving a knife occurred in the fall of 1836, during which Robert Cunningham and his brother terrorized fellow UNC student Archibald Purcell. After being “teased and plagued” endlessly, Purcell changed residences to avoid them. All the same, Cunningham attacked Purcell on at least two different occasions, drawing a knife on him the first time and showing him a pistol the second. In the middle of a recitation at UNC in February 1844, Elias Hines drew a knife

28 Faculty Meeting Minutes, February 27, 1821, February 10, 1823, UNC.
on David Hinton when he tried to remove him from his seat. Another student altercation in 1849 involved the use of a shovel as a blunt weapon.\footnote{29}{Charles Ellis, Diary, April 11, 1835, Charles Ellis Diary, UVA; Faculty Meeting Minutes, October 22, 1836, February 16, 1844, UNC; Thomas Miles Garrett, Diary, July 19, 1849, Thomas Miles Garrett Diary, SHC.}

One of the more notorious gunfights between students resulted from a dispute between Dorsey Rice and Joseph Bunch at UNC. During a Philanthropic Society meeting on September 3, 1841, Dorsey Rice seemed bored and stared out the window past Bunch. Bunch thought he was looking at him and scowled at him to be less “familiar.” Rice angrily replied: “Damn your soul, if you say another word I’ll give you this.” Bunch left the meeting to retrieve a stick and a pistol and, after the meeting ended, turned the gun on Rice, saying “oh damn you, you want to curse me again.” While a student rushed Rice out of the Philanthropic Hall, another grabbed Bunch, telling him he would not allow an unarmed man to be shot. The next day, as the society drew up papers for Bunch’s expulsion from society for his cowardly and dishonorable action, Rice conveyed that he would fight Bunch in a fair fight with his fists, clubs, or in a duel. Bunch answered that he would fight “no such damned rascal!” Because of an additional rumor circulating that Rice had fled town fearfully, William Mullins wrote that “of course there was no other alternative than a street fight.” Despite Timothy Williams’ description of the following fight as a duel, Mullins’ account suggests otherwise as Bunch refused to recognize Rice’s suitability as an equal in honor and elite manliness.\footnote{30}{William Sidney Mullins, Diary, September 3, 1841, September 4, 1841, William Sidney Mullins Diary, SHC; Williams, “Intellectual Manhood,” 275.}

Students arranged a meeting in town for the two with large numbers of society members present to ensure a fair fight. In the ensuing melee where fists, clubs, canes,
and guns were employed, the only person seriously injured was Jamieson Rice, Dorsey’s brother, who took an errant pistol shot in the hip from his own brother. Students feared a mortal wound, but the shot had deflected off his hip bone. Students did not try to prevent the fight since they deemed it to be on fair terms over a legitimate challenge to a man’s honor. Only a professor’s intervention stopped it. The Philanthropic Society voted overwhelmingly for a strong censure of Bunch and but a minor censure for Rice. The harsher punishment for Bunch stemmed from his initial attempt to shoot an unarmed man, which students considered the height of dishonor and unmanliness. Killing a fellow society member in a fair fight was a different story. The university faculty did not see it that way and dismissed both Bunch and Rice.\(^{31}\)

Dueling was the one of the most exalted and antiquated forms of honor violence between antebellum students. Between Virginia’s older, more culturally and economically powerful aristocracy and the status derived from attending the nation’s most expensive school, the University of Virginia experienced many more duels than the University of North Carolina. There is no record of any proper duels at UNC. A myth survives about the mysterious Peter Dromgoole, who came to UNC in 1831 an intemperate student who enjoyed cards and “wild company.” One day, according to Kemp Battle, “he took offence at a remark of one of the professors and refused to submit to further examination” and simply disappeared. Rumors spread throughout the university that he engaged in a secret duel, was killed, and his body secretly buried. Numerous stories of vendettas and love interests circulated. Dromgoole’s uncle, a lawyer, came to campus to investigate but could find no evidence of a duel. The boy’s

\(^{31}\) William Sidney Mullins, Diary, September 4, 1841, September 10, 1841, William Sidney Mullins Diary, SHC; James L. Dusenbery, Diary, September 6, 1841, James L. Dusenbery Diary, SHC; Faculty Meeting Minutes, September 4, 1841, UNC; Williams, “Intellectual Manhood,” 275-276.
former roommate, John Williams, had heard of no quarrel and said he left town on a stage. Battle believed he had been embarrassed and rode off to the southwest to an early grave. Otherwise, the closest event to a duel was the “sham duel” instigated by William Sidney Mullins and a few friends in 1840. The idea was to stage a duel as a prank. Timothy Williams writes that it “promised to be a funny joke until word spread around campus.” Suddenly Mullins became the butt of jokes, and the ridicule drove him to perpetual defensiveness, leading him to challenge any detractor to a duel. Although none occurred, he carried his pistol on him at all hours should the need arise.

For the antebellum period at UVA, however, Philip Bruce documented six incidents of dueling. Robert Lewis Dabney bitingly referred to his 1841 UVA classmates as “fine gentle men who, if you were to insinuate any insult, would insist on shooting you for it.” Many proposed duels failed to materialize since dueling was by nature a public matter and was relatively easy to prevent. Henry Dixon and Livingston Lindsay prepared to duel in 1826 before the civil and school authorities intervened. Students staged two mock duels in 1831 and 1832 to agitate the faculty (apparently without the student shaming Mullins received at UNC). T.J. Pretlow and Daniel Johnson were caught before they could duel in 1834. In 1835, two students left campus and traveled to Washington D.C. to evade Virginia authorities in order to duel. Philip Bruce reported that two students supposedly successfully dueled in the District of Columbia in 1840.

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33 William Sidney Mullins, Diary, November 17, 1840, November 18, 1840, November 20, 1840, November 21, 1840, William Sidney Mullins Diary, SHC; Williams, “Intellectual Manhood,” 278-279.
That same year, a warrant prevented students W.H. Armistead and H.C. Chambers from carrying out their duel.  

The most notorious near-duel at the University of Virginia took place in 1835 between Charles Hamer of Mississippi and quick-tempered Louis Wigfall from South Carolina. The dispute began at a party over a woman named Ann Leiper. Wigfall had made prior arrangements to secure a dance with Leiper, and when he saw Hamer attempting to escort her to her home before he had his dance, Wigfall intervened. Wigfall asked for his dance and Leiper refused, so he grabbed her hand and forcibly took her into the dancing room. Hamer told Wigfall he was acting rudely, but no further incident occurred that evening. The next day, Wigfall asked Hamer the meaning of speaking so brusquely to him and demanded a retraction. Hamer said he would only if “Miss Leiper said he had not acted rudely.” An incensed Wigfall challenged him to a duel. They decided to “settle the matter with rifles, as Wigfall was an excellent shot with the pistol.” Two professors discovered the plot and sent for the sheriff. Since dueling was one of the few crimes for which UVA students risked legal trial, Wigfall and Hamer fled. Hamer escaped, but two professors found Wigfall in the woods near campus and dragged him back to campus. Their attempted duel demonstrates how little provocation was needed and how quickly a duel could be arranged. For status-conscious students in the highest echelons of the southern elite, duels were an acceptable method of demonstrating honor and manliness.

34 Robert Lewis Dabney to Elizabeth Randolph Price Dabney, November 6, 1841, Dabney Family Papers, UVA; Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, II: 295-297; Wall, “Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia,” 94.

35 Charles Ellis, Diary, May 10, 1835, Charles Ellis Diary, UVA; Wall, “Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia,” 192.
UNC and UVA students frequently exhibited their mastery and manliness by resisting university faculty through noisemaking, assaulting professors, destroying property of the university and professors, and rioting. Noisemaking was a popular method by which students exerted their mastery over professors by subjecting them to unwanted, intrusive noise. By the 1840s these midnight festivals of sound were often called Calathumps or rough music. Conducted in the middle of the night, they aimed to disrupt the sleep of tutors, professors, and their families. The noisemaking often centered on ringing the campus bell. Midnight bell ringing startled faculty and their family with fears of fire or other emergency. Symbolically, student bell-ringing represented the ultimate form of subversion and masculine dominance. Rung at regular intervals to mark the university schedule, the bell stood for regimentation and order, which were characteristics of urban, industrial society and middle-class manhood. Through their nocturnal romps, students rejected bourgeois values and transformed the bell into a symbol of disorder. They noisily proclaimed their dominance as elite men while frightening overbearing and socioeconomically inferior faculty. Rough music also undercut professors’ masculinity in revealing their inability to provide a peaceful and protected home for their families.

Noisemaking escalated in severity to a grand scale in the antebellum era. In November 1825, George Pierson, an outsider, recorded that “some of the students succeeded in forcing an ox or bull up into…the Rotunda and then left it to amuse the

36 The Calathumpians were initially a well-intentioned student musical society, but this ideal disintegrated quickly into noisy disorder. See Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, III: 113. As the term caught on at other universities to apply to any type of noisy disorder, I use the term broadly, rather than indicating the actions of a small group. See also James J. Broomall, “Personal Confederacies: War and Peace in the American South, 1840-1890” (Ph.D. Diss, University of Florida, 2011), 69.

37 Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, II: 268.
students and to awake the Professors by its noisy bellowing.” Unamused, George Pierson editorialized: “Well done boys, governed by Virginia honour!” Though the faculty locked the belfry to prevent student access to the bell, UVA’s 1828 decision to begin classes at 5:30 in the morning only further encouraged students to appropriate the bell for their own uses. In April 1831, four students used a ladder to break into a library window and sneak into the belfry. They used a series of ropes to drag the bell to the main lawn where they began ringing it incessantly. At UNC, a group of nineteen students styling themselves the Ugly Club stole the university bell in early 1838 for noisemaking. By the end of the 1840s, dozens of other UNC students had participated in midnight bell ringing.

Calathumps grew more elaborate by the 1840s, combining various forms of noise to maximize the cacophony and irritation for the faculty. Robert Lewis Dabney wrote in November 1841 that a crowd of drunken students created a ruckus outside the house of one of the faculty members, “ringing his door bell” and “throwing stones against his window shutters.” He refused to lecture again until he could do so without being harassed and insulted. One UVA Calathump so terrified Professor Rogers’ family that

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38 George Pierson to Albert Pierson, November 2, 1825, George Pierson Letter, UVA.

39 Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, II: 131, 268; Battle, History of the University of North Carolina, I: 452. For just a few examples of faculty prosecution of bell-ringing, see Faculty Meeting Minutes, June 4, 1838, [n.d.] 1841, February 24, 1845, October 18, 1847, April 5, 1849, UNC. For instances recorded by students, see William Bagley to D.W. Bagley, July 22, 1843, February 27, 1845, Bagley Family Papers, SHC; Thomas Miles Garrett, Diary, September 12, 1849, Thomas Miles Garrett Diary, SHC; Bartholomew Fuller, “The Dangers of a College Life,” Student Composition, Fall 1848, Bartholomew Fuller Papers, SHC. The Ugly Club came into popularity around many southern universities in the nineteenth century. Though their exact activities varied, their primary purpose was to provoke laughter and merriment, often by giving humorous speeches at commencement. The members were usually recruited for their comical appearances with “awards” being given to the ugliest, smallest, prettiest, vainest, etc. See Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, III: 164.

40 Robert Lewis Dabney to Elizabeth Randolph Price Dabney, November 6, 1841, Dabney Family Papers, UVA.
he “picked up one of the students bodily and bore him struggling into the hall” and "threatened to shoot" anyone else troubling him. Students at UVA in 1845 galloped horses up and down the lawn at night and performed a great deal of nightly shouting, horn-blast ing, and parading. They resembled a giant, drunken musical ensemble. The songs they often chose to sing loudly were known as “corn songs,” songs with "coarse and sometimes very obscene humor" learned from overhearing slaves harvest corn. Though students probably did not appreciate the irony, appropriating slave songs and using noise and humor as resistance symbolically refuted the professors’ bourgeois values and demonstrated their own commitment to masterful manhood.

Of all aspects of antebellum university life, rioting has attracted the most historical attention. Charles Coleman Wall described riots as “collective defiance and resistance to policies and authority of the Faculty.” Rioting was the logical extension and escalation of Calathumps—with only two small differences. Whereas noisemaking occurred in the obscurity of night, rioting continued into the sunlight hours. Even though students often wore masks or disguises while rioting, getting caught was much less of a concern. Secondly, there was almost total disregard for university authority during riots. Students stopped going to classes (if teachers made any attempt to hold them), all respect for university property disappeared, and violence against faculty was routine.

41 William B. Rogers Printed Circular Letter regarding Virginia Students Riot of 1845, April 29, 1845, UVA; Philip Claiborne Gooch, Diary, April 19, 1845, Gooch Family Papers, VHS; Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, II: 268, III: 113.

42 Wall, “Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia,” 87-88. Joseph Kett argues that riots only erupted in antebellum universities “only when the faculty tried to force students to testify against each other or when the faculty intruded in an area of student life that the students viewed as private.” See Kett, Rites of Passage, 59.

Though historians primarily think of the University of Virginia as the epicenter of rioting in antebellum southern universities, the University of North Carolina had several of its own. Even before UVA opened, the UNC faculty expelled Augustus Alston and Leonidas King for “raising a riot” in September 1824. One armed with a club and the other a loaded pistol, they commenced “attacking the persons of different members of the Faculty.” The faculty admonished four other students for participating in a riot in 1827 and expelled two more in 1845. At UVA, however, riots assumed much greater proportion and occurred more frequently.\textsuperscript{44}

Riots at UNC and UVA erupted primarily because students’ ideas of manhood clashed with the faculty’s. As Charles Wall notes, professors’ desire to regulate students and force them to submit to discipline did not account for students’ “background or identity,” in other words their easily offended and violent sense of honor. Most students recognized them mostly as middle-class inferiors.\textsuperscript{45} Students never challenged faculty members to duels or spoke of them as honorable men; when students fought faculty, it was as a common beating. Though some students liked their teachers and adhered to the rules, they never explained their behavior as submission to social equals. Even those who appreciated the academic lectures of teachers did not often care for the ethical lessons tutors and professors insisted on imparting.

Students at UVA first rioted as an impromptu demonstration of their disapproval of the faculty, but it became a somewhat regular part of student life. The first major riot in October 1825, just seven months after the first classes began at UVA, spurred the

\textsuperscript{44} Faculty Meeting Minutes, October 1, 1824, October 2, 1824, October 22, 1827, February 27, 1845, UNC.

\textsuperscript{45} Bruce, \textit{History of the University of Virginia}, III: 59; Wall, “Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia,” 43. I disagree with Bruce’s notion that the students viewed faculty more or less as equals.
creation of a formal disciplinary code. The students were unhappy with yearlong attendance. They had been in classes every week since March 7 because Jefferson did not believe there should be a summer recess. Students were also upset that the university had hired a free black man in a position of authority. William Spinner, the first “janitor” of UVA, did not simply perform custodial work, but had various semi-professional duties assisting around campus. His most important—and to students, most infuriating—task, was “to visit the dormitories in the morning to report every case of violation of the ordinance that enforced early rising.” Having a black man intrude into their rooms and report them for misconduct was an egregious offense to students’ sense of honor. In their estimation of elite white manhood, no black man should be able to hold power over them or be able to accuse them of wrongdoing. Lastly, many students resented that Thomas Jefferson hired five of the original eight professors from Europe. Students loathed the European professors and felt mistreated by them.46

These factors created a tense situation ripe for student unrest. On the last day of September 1825, a student threw a bottle of urine through a European professor’s window. The next night, fourteen students gathered on the lawn in Indian disguises, imitating the colonists in the Boston Tea Party. Some were intoxicated, and together they shouted out: “Damn the European professors!” Two professors attempted to quell the protest and singled out one rioter to grab and unmask. As Jennings Wagoner argues, the students viewed two men attacking one as dishonorable, and they came to the student’s rescue, driving the two professors off with sticks and canes, while throwing bricks and stones at them. The following day, sixty-five students signed a petition

46 Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, II: 56, 65-66; Wagoner, “Honor and Disorder at Mr. Jefferson’s University,” 164. Spinner was not re-hired the following year and all subsequent antebellum janitors were white.
refusing to name the students involved, placing blame for the incident on the professors. Two professors resigned and the rest threatened to if the Board of Visitors did not bring order to campus. The Board, consisting of a downtrodden and defeated Jefferson, along with James Madison and James Monroe, came together to sort out the trouble. Jefferson sorrowfully realized his university needed a code of student behavior. Order returned temporarily but the resulting regulations proved overbearing and sensationally unpopular with the student body, ensuring additional riots.  

A series of riots transpired in the 1830s. One of the smaller episodes occurred on May 18, 1831 when a mass of students formed on the lawn during a faculty meeting to protest a law requiring them to wear uniforms. They raised a commotion firing pistols, shouting, screaming, blaring horns, and ringing the bell. When two faculty members came out to silence them, students drove them off by throwing stones at them. A near-riot occurred in November 1833 when students broke into a school building in order to assert their freedom of assembly, which they believed a new regulation prohibited. After initial plans to punish the responsible parties, the faculty wisely concluded that any punishment would launch a full-scale rebellion.  

The 1836 riot was the largest to date and had significant long-term consequences. The students had organized their own military battalion in 1830, but the

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47 Wagoner, “Honor and Disorder at Mr. Jefferson’s University,” 175-176; Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, II: 298. Philip St. George Cocke wrote to his father a week after the disorder (before the new regulations) that the university had become a much more cheerful place. See Philip St. George Cocke to John H. Cocke, October 12, 1825, Cocke Family Papers, UVA. The next year under the new regulations, a student wrote to his father: “the Faculty are becoming perfect despots. We are subject to the most inquisitorial & arbitrary rules….the students are deprived of their rights as gentlemen and I am very much afraid will tend to the inevitable ruin of this institution.” See Robert Walter Blow to Father, August 11, 1826, Blow Family Papers, VHS.

48 Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, II: 301-302; Charles Bonnycastle to Edmund Ruffin Sr., November 29, 1833, Edmund Ruffin Papers, VHS; Edmund Ruffin Jr. to Edmund Ruffin Sr., December 7, 1833, Edmund Ruffin Papers, VHS; John Shelton Patton, Jefferson, Cabell and the University of Virginia (New York: Neale, 1906), 143-146.
unruliness of its members led to its demise in the spring of 1833. It was re-chartered in the autumn but only with extensive safety and disciplinary stipulations. By November 1836, members grew weary of the university’s rules and asserted that the battalion was an independent state military body outside of UVA’s jurisdiction. Because the battalion refused to obey the university’s regulations, faculty demanded they return their drilling muskets. The sixty-six men in the company refused. “We have our arms and intend to keep them,” the student battalion leader threatened. Philip Bruce writes that “no patriotic association in the War of the Revolution ever breathed forth more burning sentiments of defiance and tyranny” than the student soldiers. After the faculty expelled every member, the group raised its flag over the Rotunda and began two straight days of noisemaking, property destruction, threats, and throwing stones at professors. Professors began to arm themselves and remove their families to the second floors of their homes. The faculty reluctantly called for the sheriff, and only an armed guard finally restored peace. Every November for the next four years dozens of students commemorated the great riot of 1836 with bouts of disorderly conduct.49

The 1840 commemoration of the riot prompted one of the bloodiest events in UVA’s history. As students gathered to create chaos, two masked individuals, Joseph Semmes from Georgia and Charles Kincaid of South Carolina, started shooting pistol blanks into the air. One student overheard Semmes say that he would shoot the first faculty member to try to take off his mask. When Professor John Davis came outside to disburse the crowd and unmask the gunmen, Robert Lewis Dabney saw Semmes load

49 Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, II: 303-309; Walker M. Hite to Isaac Hite, October 25, 1831, University of Virginia Student Letters, 1831-1838, UVA; Untitled Circular, University Volunteers, November 21, 1836, Letter to Mordecai Manuel Noah, UVA. About half of the battalion members eventually apologized and were allowed to return.
a ball in his pistol instead of just powder. Semmes then turned the pistol on Davis and fired, hitting him in the hip, leading to his death two days later. Faculty and civil authorities were paralyzed with shock, and the students eventually led the effort to apprehend the gunmen. Just as student opinion would turn against Bunch at UNC in 1841 for trying to shoot an unarmed man, UVA students could not condone the murder and unprecedentedly voted unanimously to help bring fellow students to justice.  

From the 1820s through the 1840s, students at UNC and UVA repeatedly demonstrated the prevalence of highly sensitive, impulsive, and often violent honor-based manhood. Slowly by midcentury, as second-generation college students became more common in the South, views of manhood in large, cosmopolitan universities like UNC and UVA began to change and manhood began to soften.

**Manhood Comes of Age: New Bourgeois Values in the Old South, UVA and UNC**

Over the antebellum period, conceptions of manhood at UVA and UNC gradually morphed into less violent, more restrained forms, stemming from the spread of evangelical and bourgeois cultural values. By no means did the universities shed all

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50 Robert Lewis Dabney to C.W. Dabney, November 13, 1840, Fishburne Family Papers, UVA; Robert Lewis Dabney to G.W. Payne, November 15, 1840, Fishburne Family Papers, UVA; John B. Washington to Jane C. Washington, November 20, 1840, Fishburne Family Papers, UVA; Robert Lewis Dabney to Elizabeth Randolph Price Dabney, December 18, 1840, Fishburne Family Papers, UVA; Bruce, *History of the University of Virginia*, II: 310-311.

51 Timothy Williams argues that “a more serious, intellectual culture co-existed with the rowdy campus culture that historians commonly depict as southern college life.” See Williams, “Intellectual Manhood,” 2. I attempt to add greater nuance to this interpretation by discussing the evolution of this type of manhood over time and by examining additional institutions of higher education, including a military academy and private college. I use the term “bourgeois” to refer to the culture of the middle-class professional, which actually spread beyond the middle class into the upper class. As Peter Carmichael has shown in his textured depiction of young elite Virginia men on the eve of the Civil War, many planters’ sons became evangelical, market-driven, and dedicated to the idea of progress—all characteristics of the northern bourgeoisie. Jennifer Green echoes these claims, citing the frequency with which younger sons of planters shared more cultural and economic characteristics with the middle class than upper class. See Carmichael, *The Last Generation*, 10-11, 30; Jennifer R. Green, “Born of the Aristocracy? Professionals with Planter and Middle-Class Origins in Late Antebellum South Carolina,” in *The Southern Middle Class in the Long Nineteenth Century*, eds. Jonathan Daniel Wells and Jennifer Green (Baton Rouge: Louisiana
their disorder. The number of disciplinary violations at UNC actually increased in the 1850s (largely due to vastly increased enrollments). These disorders were generally the work of a minority of students since troublemaking was not nearly as pervasive a part of student culture, and more and more students avoided disciplinary hearings or getting into serious trouble of any kind.\textsuperscript{52} Disciplinary methods changed markedly throughout the late 1830s and 1840s, leading to less student resentment of the faculty. By 1837, UVA no longer started class at the often pre-dawn hour of 5:30 in the morning. They adopted an honor code in 1842 as part of an effort to remold honor to promote disciplined, restrained behavior, and the following year they began dismissing students quietly at the end of the school year, rather than calling them to a hearing and making their punishment public spectacle.\textsuperscript{53} Though these reforms ameliorated student-faculty relations considerably, the greatest change to student behavior, culture, and manhood ideals resulted from the progressive spread of bourgeois values to students.\textsuperscript{54}

As Timothy Williams demonstrates, student creation of literary societies represented one of the earliest bourgeois influences on southern college students. The

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\textsuperscript{52} Wall, “Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia,” 255; Battle, \textit{History of the University of North Carolina}, I: 554, 561. For the 1850-1851 year, Kemp Battle documented every disorder listed in the Faculty Meeting Minutes and came to the same conclusion. The 1850s saw a small but substantial rise in town-gown conflicts between students and townspeople, especially in Charlottesville. See John K. McIver to Aunt Caty, December 8, 1855, John K. McIver Letter, UVA; James Hilliard Polk, Diary, August 4, 1859, James Hilliard Polk Diary, SHC; Wall, “Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia,” 117-120.

\textsuperscript{53} Bruce, \textit{History of the University of Virginia}, II: 131; Wagoner, “Honor and Disorder at Mr. Jefferson’s University,” 178; Wall, “Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia,” 278.

\textsuperscript{54} Carmichael, \textit{The Last Generation}; Jennifer R. Green, \textit{Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class in the Old South} (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Williams, “Intellectual Manhood.”
Philanthropic and Dialectic Societies of UNC, founded in 1795, and the Patrick Henry and Jefferson Societies begun at UVA in 1825, proved to be essential parts of the socialization and education of students. Membership, which was universal at UNC and nearly so at UVA, gave members access to libraries often better than the university's and allowed them to refine their debating skills while practicing formal elite social behavior. Each society had a system of fines to punish unruliness. Serious breaches of conduct could result in expulsion, which for many students was worse than expulsion from the university. Williams writes that competition within and between the two societies “encouraged students to cultivate ambition, pursue greatness, and cultivate sound intellectual and moral characters” dedicated to “order, sobriety, wisdom, and academic distinctions.”

During the 1830s and 1840s, student writings exhibit spreading evangelicalism and greater acceptance of faculty rules, but these students often felt they comprised a minority. UVA student James Poindexter wrote his cousin in 1833 that he was avoiding temptation, but it was difficult, “debarred as I am from any religious society and placed among a large collection of young men who are entirely thoughtless and unconcerned as it respects any thing like religion.” Religious students in the 1840s were equally frustrated at their classmates’ lack of Christian values. At UVA, Richard Eppes grew

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55 Smaller literary societies also sprang up later in the antebellum period at UVA including the Washington Society, the Philomathean Society, the Parthenon Society, and the Columbian Society. See Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, II: 173-176.

56 Battle, History of the University of North Carolina, I: 75-76; Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, II: 353-355; Williams, "Intellectual Manhood," 44-50; Pace, Halls of Honor, 68-72. For examples of society hearings involving censure, impeachment, or expulsions, see Minutes of the Philanthropic Society, October 4, 1823, February 13, 1833, June 24, 1833, September 14, 1834, June 15, 1836, June 7, 1837, March 8, 1843, September 6, 13, 1851, Philanthropic Society Records, UNC. William McLaurin wrote in 1859 that tricksters “are more afraid of the Society than…the Faculty.” See William H. McLaurin to brother, August 1, 1859, William H. McLaurin Papers, SHC.
disgusted with his fellow students for not going to church and instead reading idle fiction, “spending the Sabbath in such a manner as only befitting the savage who knows not that there [is] a God.”  

Active Methodist William Bagley wrote his sister from UNC in 1844, complaining that he was in the “midst of those who are almost regardless of all morality….I feel that I have degenerated very much. A young man comes here at the risk of sacrificing his character which is purer…than any thing else he can possess.” He wrote his father a few weeks prior wishing to leave, claiming “my religion…would stand a severe test as there is very little opportunity for cultivating pious emotions & numberless avenues to sin & degradation through which I could be led on from one degree to another until I should be finally plunged into the whirlpool of shame & disgrace.” James Johnston Pettigrew wrote to his father in 1847 that it “is a source of great mortification to apply myself closely to my studies, to be strict in my morals and to attempt a faithful discharge of my duties….when there are many others who are idle, prodigal, [and] dissipated….A sojourn of two years and a half in a place like this is enough to ruin a saint much more a mortal.”

By the 1850s, UVA and UNC students complained less about their classmates’ lack of religiosity and instead reveled in the joy of their own experiences. “I thank God and praise His holy name, that I am able to inform you that this day I have felt that ‘Christ hath power on earth to forgive sins,’” Alexander Betts exclaimed to his mother in 1853. “I was today, while sitting here in my room reading and praying, enabled to throw

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57 James W. Poindexter to Anne Maria Grymes West, February 1, 1833, James W. Poindexter Letter, UVA; Richard Eppes to Mary Cocke, October 18, 1840, Richard Eppes Letter, UVA.

58 William Bagley to Sister, May 11, 1844, Bagley Family Papers, SHC; William Bagley to D.W. Bagley, April 23, 1844, Bagley Family Papers, SHC; James Johnston Pettigrew to Ebenezer Pettigrew, February 21, 1847, Pettigrew Family Papers, SHC.
myself upon the merits of Jesus Christ, our crucified, ascended and interacting Savior; and I immediately felt his love shed abroad in my soul, and I have been happy ever since….Oh! How happy the thought that I am now going to Heaven with you all!” UNC student Hugh Thomas Brown seemed to struggle with sexual sin, but his faith in God provided inspiration to uphold his moral code. On September 12, 1857 he recorded in his diary that was in a happy mood, “having narrowly escaped falling into one of my worst passions. I hope by the grace of God to overcome it.” After hearing a sermon the following month he strongly considered becoming a minister.59

The establishment of branches of the Young Men’s Christian Association at UVA in 1859 and UNC in 1860 provided an organized support network for religious students outside of churches. The YMCA was the first religious organization at both universities. Though many historians of education have written about nineteenth-century southern higher education as backward, UVA was the first university in the nation with a YMCA chapter.60 The YMCA declared their purpose was to “to promote Christian sympathy

59 Alexander Davis Betts to Mother, October 15, 1853, Alexander Davis Betts Papers, SHC; Hugh Thomas Brown, Diary, September 12, 1857, October 15, 1857, Hamilton Brown Papers, SHC. Brown’s vice seems to have been sex, about which he refers to gratification at having “congressed a certain ‘thing’ tonight.” See Hugh Thomas Brown, Diary, September 25, 1857, December 18, 1857, Hamilton Brown Papers, SHC.

60 Wall, “Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia,” 22. For some recent critics of antebellum southern educational backwardness (either in student behavior or for continuing classical curricula), see Dan R. Frost, Thinking Confederates: Academia and the Idea of Progress in the New South (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2000), 2, 12, 17; Pace, Halls of Honor; Lorri Glover, Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007); Cohen, Reconstructing the Campus. For Timothy Williams’ rebuttal of the stereotypes of the backward and unruly South and its universities, see Williams, “Intellectual Manhood,” 5-6. Clearly disruptive and unruly students still existed on the eve of the Civil War, but they were one part of the multifaceted student body. See Stephen Halcott Townes to Sister, November 4, 1858, Stephen Halcott Townes Letter, UVA; Thomas W. Mason, “The Journal of a Day,” 1, Class Composition, 1856, Sally Jarman Papers, SHC. Relating to classical curricula, two works that have helped to resuscitate the reputation of the classical education against the charge of backwardness are Caroline Winterer, The Culture of Classicism: Ancient Greece and Rome in American Intellectual Life, 1780-1910 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002) and Carl J. Richard, The Golden Age of Classics in America: Greece, Rome, and the Antebellum United States (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).
and brotherhood, and to advance the moral and religious welfare of the students” and those nearby. In their first year of operation, UVA’s YMCA distributed religious tracts, held prayer meetings on campus and in the students’ boarding houses, and led religious services for Charlottesville slaves. Admission to the YMCA was open to “any student, or other person, of good moral character.” By the end of 1859, ninety-three students (nearly one-sixth of the school), and seventeen teachers and faculty were members. Instead of bemoaning the unconverted and irreligious as students did in the 1840s, Launcelot Minor Blackford, an officer in the UVA YMCA, prayed for them.61

Student letters of the 1840s and 1850s indicate the growing prevalence of values commonly associated with the middle class and evangelicals, such as pacifism, submissiveness, humility, and temperance.62 Unlike in the earlier antebellum period, some students began intervening to protect professors from student violence. In 1839, two recently expelled students returned to campus and began vengefully horsewhipping Professor Gessner Harrison, the Chair of the faculty. According to Henry Stokes, the students “interposed” after a few whips with a riding crop, though historian Philip Bruce

61 “Constitution and By-Laws of the Young Men’s Christian Association of the University of North Carolina, 1860” Preamble, II,2, Campus Y of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Records, UNC; Philip Woolcott, “Fifty-four Years of the Y.M.C.A.,” Carolina Magazine (April 1914), typed transcript, Campus Y Records, UNC; “Report,” [n.d.] 1859, YMCA, Papers of the Young Men’s Christian Association, University of Virginia, 1859-1922, UVA; “Constitution and By-Laws of the Young Men’s Christian Association of the University of Virginia, II, 2, Papers of the YMCA, UVA; “Catalogue of Members,” [1859], Papers of the YMCA, UVA; “Circular,” October 1, 1859, Papers of the YMCA, UVA; Launcelot Minor Blackford to Mother, May 6, 1860, Launcelot Minor Blackford Papers, UVA.

claimed that only two or three students tried to interfere and were easily pushed aside while at least a hundred watched the relentless beating continue. In 1857, there was a clear case of student intervention when UNC student Hugh Thomas Brown came upon a pack of intoxicated classmates roughing up a professor. He writes, “I had the good fortune to come up just as one had raised a large stick to the Dr. and I caught the stick and prevented the blow from falling on his head.” Brown deflected praise from himself in his diary, writing that he would be no “gallant student” if he had left the professor to the students. Risking personal injury to prevent harm to a faculty member was uncommon even in the later antebellum period, but it reflected the spread of bourgeois values as more students began shrinking from violence and recognizing professors as their ideological peers, rather than violent students.

Evangelical and bourgeois students still caused trouble from time to time, but they differentiated themselves by their apologies from classmates with more violent, insult-sensitive views of manhood. Large number of students before the 1850s apologized for their misconduct, but many times it was simply a necessity to prevent suspension or expulsion. By the 1850s, professors recognized more genuine regret in bourgeois students. In 1851, George Thompson and Eldridge Scales exchanged punches during Professor Albert Shipp’s lecture before their UNC classmates separated them. Afterward, Thompson approached Shipp and “asked his pardon…and he granted it.” When the Faculty Committee called the two to answer for their misbehavior, Thompson admitted responsibility for pestering Scales and instigating the fight.

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63 A.S. Brown to Charles G. Dickinson, March 23, 1839, Winston-Dickinson Family Papers, UVA; Henry Stokes to Father, April 2, 1839, UVA Student Letters, 1831-1838 [sic], UVA; Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, II: 294. Bruce, writing in 1920, did not provide citations for the source of his claim.

64 Hugh Thomas Brown, Diary, September 27, 1857, Hamilton Brown Papers, SHC.
Thompson’s forthright and candid confession made a remarkable impression on the faculty. He wrote in his diary that he “was surprised at the acclamations of approbation which came from all the faculty…some said, ‘you have spoken like a man,’” and “all had smiling countenances.” One patted him on the shoulder on the way out and praised him, saying: “We can now expect something from you George.” While Thompson’s classroom behavior was juvenile, the faculty recognized a kindred spirit by the manner of his response. He understood and strived for restrained bourgeois manhood.

Temperance was a common element of bourgeois manhood. UNC established a temperance society in 1829 and UVA in 1830. Students and faculty routinely met, gave orations, and distributed tracts on the evils of alcohol. In one speech, Robert Lewis Dabney’s words faintly echo the language of William Lloyd Garrison’s famous appeal for abolition in the first issue of *The Liberator*. He wrote: “If one sees his neighbour perishing in the waves, and neglect to help him, merely from indolence or indifference, do we regard him as innocent? Nay…devoid of humanity.” Answering the charge that temperance amounted to slavery, Dabney proclaimed: “If this be slavery, would that liberty was banished from the earth! Would that our race were a race of slaves!”

Despite initial opposition, temperance made a significant impact on student culture at UNC and UVA. In 1835, Charles Ellis contemptuously related being “saddled with a couple of Temperance papers, which however will be useful in various ways.” Given his tone and proclivity to drink to excess, if he did not mean for use as scratch

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65 George N. Thompson, Diary, February 14-15, 1851, George N. Thompson Diary, SHC.

66 Robert Lewis Dabney, “Temperance Address,” 3, 8, n.d., Dabney Family Papers, UVA. Thomas Miles Garrett recorded two instances of giving speeches to the Sons of Temperance. See Thomas Miles Garrett, Diary, July 5, 1849, September 11, 1849, Thomas Miles Garrett Diary, SHC.
paper, he may well have meant toilet paper.\textsuperscript{67} Other students like James Dusenbery did not take their temperance pledges seriously. Yet, over time, like literary societies and the YMCA, temperance societies contributed to the evolution of bourgeois masculine values. Kemp Battle asserted that the UNC temperance society “had a marked effect in causing a decline in the drinking of spirituous liquors.” Historians agree that temperance did not catch on at UVA very much until the 1840s, but at that point several students attested to its dramatic impact on the student body.\textsuperscript{68}

Fiery, honor-driven manhood did not die out among UNC and UVA students by the eve of the Civil War, but it was challenged for dominance by restrained, bourgeois manhood. Disciplinary offenses were less likely to be direct challenges to faculty authority and were—with a few exceptions—less violent. There was no unifying masculine ideal among students, but there had been a palpable shift by the 1850s.

\textbf{“Make Way for the Southerners”: Washington College’s Masculine Culture of Honor and Violence}

Where restrained manhood gradually gained a foothold among young men at UVA and UNC, the smaller and less cosmopolitan Washington College did not evolve much in the antebellum decades. Honor-based manhood where insults demanded immediate and sometimes violent retribution remained the norm. The students as future plantation owners, slaveholders and patriarchs used what was likely their first time away from home to practice their mastery as elite men. As a result, showdowns

\textsuperscript{67} Charles Ellis, Diary, May 30, 1835, Charles Ellis Diary, UVA.

\textsuperscript{68} Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, II: 289; Battle, History of the University of North Carolina, I: 340; Wall, “Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia,” 78; Wagone, “Honor and Disorder at Mr. Jefferson’s University,” 178; William S. White to J.H. Cocke, June 8, 1842, Cocke Family Papers, UVA; William B. Rogers to J.H. Cocke, June 20, 1842, Cocke Family Papers, UVA; J.L. Cabell to J.H. Cocke, October 18, 1842, Cocke Family Papers, UVA. UVA student Elliot Healy noted in 1859 that “there is a good deal of drinking here,” although he reported that he and all his friends abstained. See E.M. Healy to Brother, November 3, 1858, Healy Family Papers, UVA.
between faculty and students were common through the 1850s at Washington College as planters’ sons insisted upon their dominance and independence. “This college has been under very bad discipline,” Professor Daniel Harvey Hill lamented in 1849. Though students were interested in learning, he was disgusted at the faculty’s encouragement of the pupils “to take liberties” in their behavior.69

While the predominant student sentiments toward manhood looked archaic by 1860, especially compared to the adjacent Virginia Military Institute, Washington College was not merely an elite cotillion or a barren wasteland for knowledge and studiousness. And despite Daniel Harvey Hill’s complaints, the school administration did try to keep order. Archaeologists who excavated dormitories from the school’s eighteenth-century academy days found marbles, “tobacco pipe fragments, a few gunflint fragments, and wine bottle glass.” Yet excavation of a dormitory dating from 1835 did not reveal any banned items. The 1835 dormitory had been specifically designed with no internal hallways—which tended to encourage unruly behavior—and no nooks or crannies that might present the opportunity for tricks or surprises.70

The efforts of the faculty notwithstanding, demonstrating mastery and status was an ingrained element of elite southern manhood, and immersion in a youth culture at the college especially elicited students’ competitiveness and sensitivity to insult. Fighting among students was common. Firearms violations caused several students to be placed on probation or expelled. Although no intentional shootings occurred, one student was fatally shot in a hunting accident in 1856. Carrying a gun indicated status

69 Daniel Harvey Hill to Phelps Collins, January 31, 1849, Daniel Harvey Hill Letter, Special Collections, James Graham Leyburn Library, Washington and Lee University.

in a slave society as the enslaved were not allowed to handle weapons. Having a pistol gave a feeling and appearance of control to the holder.\textsuperscript{71}

Challenges to a student's honor could stem from a personal insult but also a slight against the South or the institution of slavery—the root of elite white mastery. In November 1849, James H. Hundley reported to his brother:

\begin{quote}
We had a row here, a few days ago between the Northern and Southern fellows. I did not wish to participate in it myself, but my warm feelings toward the Southern fellows as well as to the South, forced me at length to take my cane & make way for the Southerners, the glorious sons of Old Virginia. The Northern fellows soon found themselves over powered & gave up....You know full well what kind of people these abolitionists are, running down the South for every word, but I shall keep cool & let them be. But they must not cross my path.\textsuperscript{72}
\end{quote}

Hundley did not indicate what caused the initial scrap, but sectional tensions were near eruption in the aftermath of the Mexican War and before the passage of the Compromise of 1850. Hundley viewed all northerners as a threat to his social and economic dominance. Instead of fighting them in an honorable duel or in a fair fistfight, he grabbed his cane. As Lloyd Benson argues in his study of the 1856 Sumner Caning, beating one with a cane signified social superiority. Hundley, like Preston Brooks, thrashed the troublemaking northerners as he would discipline slaves rather than how he would fight men on equal terms of honor and dignity.\textsuperscript{73}

\textsuperscript{71} Crenshaw, \textit{General Lee's College}, 402, 405, 419; Faculty Meeting Minutes of Washington College, October 25, 1842; November 1, 1842; April 8, 1856, Washington and Lee; Joseph H. Chenoweth to L. Chenoweth, April 15, 1856, Joseph H. Chenoweth Papers, VMI.

\textsuperscript{72} James Harvey Hundley to Brother, November 11, 1849, Hundley Family Papers, VHS. Hundley identified all northerners as abolitionists, though few antislavery northerners would have sent their sons to school in Virginia. Ultimately over 450 Washington College alumni fought for the Confederacy, while less than a dozen fought for the Union. See College Board of Trustees Minutes, January 30, 1843, Washington and Lee; Craig T. Monroe, \textit{A Brief Sketch of Those Phi Kappa Psi Brothers from Washington and Lee University (Virginia Betas) who served in the American Civil War} (Unpublished typescript, Sept 2003), 3, Washington and Lee.

\textsuperscript{73} T. Lloyd Benson, \textit{The Caning of Senator Sumner} (Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2004), 23.
Students at Washington College constantly faced faculty challenges to their sense of mastery and manhood. School regulations limited the freedoms students expected to enjoy by being away from home. Swearing, playing cards, drinking, dancing, and even playing sports (in the early years) were prohibited. These rules were especially unpopular, and many students ignored them. Required church attendance prompted disruptions of the service or outright absences. Students frequently took unauthorized leave of campus to go into town or to escape to the top of nearby House Mountain. Students often filled their excuses for absences with thinly veiled insults of the professor to whom they were writing. A student newspaper called “The Wreath,” “poured ridicule upon faculty members” in a very open forum, according to historian Ollinger Crenshaw. Unsurprisingly, faculty shut it down after a single issue in 1848.\textsuperscript{74}

Washington College students took more forceful measures to demonstrate their masterly refusal to submit to faculty. Like at UVA, noisemaking was a popular form of protest.\textsuperscript{75} Major student riots resulting in expulsions occurred in 1827, 1844, and 1858. The 1858 riot, the largest, originated after the college expelled two drunken students in early February. In response, students sent in a petition urging the faculty to reconsider the dismissal. After the faculty rejected the petition, on February 15, a group of disguised students burned effigies of the two professors who had initially reported the two dismissed students. On February 25, the faculty flexed its muscles and dismissed three more students for involvement in this demonstration. By this point a large number

\textsuperscript{74} Crenshaw, \textit{General Lee’s College}, 401, 404, 411. For examples of alcohol violations see Faculty Meeting Minutes of Washington College, May 20, 1843; December 9, 1845; February 22, 1856; February 9, 1858, Washington and Lee. For an example of disturbances during religious services, see Faculty Minute Meetings of Washington College, November 29, 1843, Washington and Lee. For an example of “profane and insulting language” to a professor resulting in dismissial, see Faculty Minute Meetings of Washington College, February 6, 1849, Washington and Lee.

\textsuperscript{75} Benjamin Franklin Doswell to Brother, n.d., Benjamin Franklin Doswell Papers, Washington and Lee.
of students—even those not involved in petitioning or effigy-burning—had stopped going to class out of protest. On the first day of March, forty-five students signed a pledge admitting their guilt in burning the effigies, hoping to present a united student front to the faculty and trustees. All the same, the following week, the faculty sent home twenty more for “continued resistance” and preventing a return to normalcy on campus. Ultimately a large number of the expelled were allowed to return, but only after they apologized. Like faculty at UVA and UNC, Washington College professors insisted on forcing students to understand submissiveness to college discipline. Yet even after a month of protests and punishments only a few students were willing to submit to the faculty’s discipline. At the dawn of the 1860s, Washington College students’ conceptions of manhood had changed very little from previous decades.

“Walk the Chalk Line”: Bourgeois Manhood at the Virginia Military Institute

At the Virginia Military Institute, throughout the antebellum period, most students’ conceptions of manhood aligned with the bourgeois values of patience, discipline, and hard work that blossomed at UNC and UVA by the 1850s. Unlike those schools, restrained manhood was the Institute’s predominant zeitgeist from its founding. As so many students came from middle-class households, students learned these values in childhood. By the early decades of the nineteenth century, Jonathan Wells writes, the southern middle class “came to believe that their interests were distinct from those of the planters, the yeomen, and the white laborers.” They were united in their desire “to bring advancements in urbanization, manufacturing, and culture to the South,” and adapted bourgeois, evangelical values from the northern middle class and refashioned

76 Crenshaw, General Lee’s College, 404, 415, 418-421; Washington College Board of Trustees Minutes, February 8, 1827, Washington and Lee.
them to fit the realities of a slave society. Members of the southern middle class subscribed to northern middle-class periodicals, joined anti-dueling and temperance societies, and attended evangelical churches increasingly headed by educated clergy preaching bourgeois values. They learned as children that giving in to reckless and impulsive behavior was sinful and unmanly.

VMI attracted and also helped develop young men capable of submitting to recognized authority under the school’s strict military regulations. As Jennifer Green argues, middle-class students did not feel subjugated by the distinctive form of military education, but felt their discipline was an honorable marker of manhood. VMI’s no-nonsense demerit policy ensured that “a fellow has to walk the chalk line” or else face expulsion, one student declared. William Riddick Whitehead, member of the VMI class of 1851, wrote in retrospect of his time at the institution:

To be confined more or less closely in a thoroughly military school with all of its requirements and exactions during three and a half years, under close inspection and rigid discipline; to rise at the tap of a drum in winter before daylight, hurriedly dress and rush to roll-call at reveille while the drum and the shrill fife were sounding; to assemble for meals and recitations at the tap of a drum to put out light and go to bed at such sound, and indeed, to do most of the functions of my youthful life in so exacting a way possibly gave a peculiar trend to my habits and thoughts quite different from that of the usual college influences, which permit of greater personal latitude of action.

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77 Wells, Origins of the Southern Middle Class, 12-13, 42, 67, 70-71, 81-87, 152, 190; Beth Barton Schweiger, The Gospel Working Up: Progress and the Pulpit in Nineteenth-Century Virginia (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 48, 60, 66. Both Jonathan Wells and Jennifer Green address the general acceptance of slavery by the southern middle class. As Wells notes, Hinton Rowan Helper, Cassius Clay, and other extreme examples of antislavery, middle-class southerners were far and away the minority. See Wells, Origins of the Southern Middle Class, 15; Green, “Born of the Aristocracy?,” 173-174.

78 Green, Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class, 116-117; Thomas Hamner Dennis to Joel Morton Hannah, May 21, 1863, Hannah Family Papers, VHS.

VMI cadets certainly did not stay out of trouble entirely, but their offenses were less frequent and on a smaller scale. Students still played cards and drank, though others refrained from drinking. Thomas Tredway and Joseph Chenoweth both fervently denied their involvement with alcohol to their fathers, pledging their truthfulness on their honor. Alexander Brown wrote in 1846: “I see no temptation whatever to be dissipated in Lexington, but it has confirmed one in the opinion that men make their own temptations.” Physical violence was routine in the military atmosphere, but conflicts were strictly between cadets and never involved guns or knives.

Hazing, which was related to the idea of honor, was the most prevalent form of violence as VMI. VMI cadets took pride in their professionalism and their school’s reputation and were not unique in hazing new students to familiarize them with the institution’s hierarchy. Older cadets forced new cadets (or fourth classmen) to make camp outside of the barracks on the parade grounds for some time before being allowed into the barracks. While encamped, fourth classmen lived under constant threat of hazing. Much of the hazing was only minimally violent at first but was a crucial rite of passage for cadets. Joseph Chenoweth reported being “dragged a short distance one night, but it did not hurt me any. The cadets attempted to duck me and another new Cadet, but I jumped from under the water and did not get but very little on me. They also tied the Military cravat on me. They did this by tying my cravat in about a dozen knots.” Once he moved into the barracks, the hazing stopped.

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81 Joseph H. Chenoweth to L. Chenoweth, September 28, 1855, Joseph H. Chenoweth Papers, VMI; Alex(?) Bruce to William Ballard Bruce, April 17, 1853, Bruce Family Papers, VHS. Hazing practices
Cadets almost never openly challenged school administrators. Their bourgeois manhood did not hinge on resisting authority since they viewed the discipline necessary for military drill as the pinnacle of manliness. “Our battalion drills are the most splendid thing I ever saw,” wrote cadet Daniel Lee Powell in the mid-1840s, “every person clean and in order, every boot marching at the same time and everything in perfect unison.” General Winfield Scott remarked during an 1858 visit to campus that the “Cadets drilled better than the Cadets at West Point.”

Where Daniel Harvey Hill saw discipline at Washington College as too lax, tolerance for rebellious cadets was low at VMI. By embracing precision and order, VMI cadets demonstrated an acceptance of a collectivist meritocracy, where unity was demanded within a larger schema of achievement-based rank.

In molding middle-class men, VMI cultivated cadets’ ambition and professionalism. Professionals worked in the public sphere and could not treat their clients, patients, students, or congregants with violence or derision as a planter would treat his slaves, overseers, or other social inferiors. Restraining one’s passions was essential to becoming a bourgeois man. In an 1858 cadet composition entitled “Anger,” Roswell Sparks Majette remarked that education was the best means of teaching a man to control his temper. He wrote that “learned men will cast aside anger as a burden, because he knows that another can more easily get the advantage of him.” As with

would increase in severity during the Civil War both due to an increased atmosphere of militarism and also an increase in the prestige of VMI. This will be discussed in the subsequent chapter.

82 Daniel Lee Powell to Mother, August 22, [1844-1846], Daniel Lee Powell Papers, VHS; Joseph H. Chenoweth to L. Chenoweth, March 8, 1858, Joseph H. Chenoweth Papers, VMI.
other unrestrained passions, anger could lead the bourgeois man to lose track of his goal of hard work and economic success.\textsuperscript{83}

Ambition was something of a necessary evil for the bourgeois man; it was required for achievement and middle-class status, but too much of it could ruin a man's character and leave him no more principled than the cavalier aristocrats. Cadet Joseph Chenoweth reflected to his father in 1857: “It is a laudable ambition, that ambition which makes me yearn to excel here in intellectual improvement, in all that makes man, — a man in the highest, truest, noblest, sense of the term! Ambition, of a different kind is a dangerous thing; that ambition which rears…despotism upon the ruins of Liberty, Justice and the rights of man.” Excessive ambition could rob a man of his virtue and poison the American republic. The Virginia Military Institute’s most famous and least liked faculty member became well known for his distrust of his abundant ambition during the coming Civil War. Thomas Jonathan Jackson, a pious Calvinist, on the battlefield felt a deep stirring to crush the enemy with a ferocity that terrified many. Jackson demanded success but was perpetually fearful that his ambition would lead him astray into sin and failure. To Jackson, pride was a vain misunderstanding of God’s omnipotence. Yet the bourgeois professional needed to strive to perform his best work of which he could be proud.\textsuperscript{84}

Overall the unique experience of military education at a primarily middle-class institution both attracted and produced young men with a restrained, bourgeois sense of


manhood. Should cadets “walk the chalk line” by avoiding excessive demerits while mastering their studies, they could be counted as among the most disciplined and hard-working men in the South.

By studying a cross section of various kinds of institutions of higher education in the antebellum Upper South, one can see how time and place, curriculum, discipline, and social class affected the student culture of antebellum universities. While traditional violent honor-based manhood thrived at Washington College, it slowly declined in favor of restrained manhood at UVA and UNC, and it was almost entirely absent from VMI from its founding. Every southern male college student possessed a sense of honor, but what one deemed honorable was directly linked to one’s views of ideal manhood. Within a relatively small geographic portion of the American South, one can detect cultural variations even among young male elites. The South was not stagnant or even singular, and the growth of bourgeois, market-based values would place the Upper South squarely in the middle of an urgent crisis in the fall of 1860 as young southern men confronted the largest challenge to their manhood in the young nation’s history.
CHAPTER 3
“I WILL STAND UP AND FIGHT LIKE A MAN”

The election of Abraham Lincoln in November 1860 confirmed southerners’ worst fears. College students had debated the idea of disunion in literary societies across the South for decades, and now the issue had reached a crisis.¹ By the time South Carolina seceded in December, many students in the Upper South states of North Carolina and Virginia had already endorsed secession. Students from the Deep South were often the first and loudest. There was a minority who remained conditional Unionists and stayed committed to peace and neutrality until the firing on Fort Sumter in April 1861. Yet once sectional war began and President Lincoln called for volunteers to quell the insurrection, almost every student at the University of North Carolina, University of Virginia, Washington College, and Virginia Military Institute remained loyal to the Confederacy. The schools began to empty as those old enough to serve left for home to enlist in the Confederate army.²

This chapter will focus on student masculinity at these four schools from November 1860 through the end of the conflict in mid-1865. Though enrollments dwindled considerably, all four schools remained open until June 1864, when Union soldiers ransacked Lexington, Virginia, forcing Washington College and VMI to close.

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¹ The Washington and Jefferson Societies of the University of Virginia had actually instituted a ban on discussions of political issues, but this was lifted by January 1861 in order to debate secession. See Philip Alexander Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, 1819-1919, the Lengthened Shadow of One Man (New York: MacMillan, 1921), III: 260-261. For the history of disunion discourse in the South, see Elizabeth R. Varon, Disunion! The Coming of the American Civil War, 1789-1859 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008).

² Place of enlistment was important to many students. Though some joined Confederate units in their college town, many wanted to join at home with their longtime friends, where they also stood a greater chance of being chosen as an officer. See William Gordon Ridley to Bet Ridley, June 19, 1861, Ridley Family Papers, Virginia Historical Society.
temporarily.\textsuperscript{3} For the duration of the war, the student body was younger and smaller. Almost all school extracurricular activities ceased, and military drill occupied a large part of students’ days. Those students who remained still tried to demonstrate their manhood in familiar ways—through public mastery over women, African Americans, professors, and other students. The war environment also brought changes to students’ ideas of manhood. Hazing increased in scope and severity, and student sexuality changed, leading to greater sexualization of elite women. The heightened death rate of young men also forced students to reconsider how to die as brave and honorable men. The greatest transformation in the ideals of manhood was the merger of violent, masterful manhood and restrained manhood. By the beginning of summer 1861, no matter how students had understood masculinity and manhood in peacetime, they were ready to fight for the Confederacy to prove their manliness.

The martial spirit of the Civil War altered the entire structure of southern masculinity by temporarily bringing together the older aristocratic ethic (violent honor) with the newer bourgeois ideal (restrained manhood). Though each archetype of masculinity defined honor differently, honor was integral to both. The traditional aristocratic idea of honor countenanced violence as a suitable response to the public disrespect Lincoln showed to the South in refusing to evacuate Fort Sumter and later calling for soldiers. Restrained masculinity entailed patience, calmness, and submission to proper authority. However, the rhetoric of pro-Confederate preachers and professors helped persuade restrained young men that fighting was honorable and

\textsuperscript{3} The University of Virginia and the University of North Carolina were the only two state universities in the Confederacy to remain open for the duration of the war. Dan R. Frost, \textit{Thinking Confederates: Academia and the Idea of Progress in the New South} (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2000), 30; Robert F. Pace, \textit{Halls of Honor: College Men in the Old South} (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 104.
godly. These evangelical public figures claimed Lincoln’s authority was unjust and that his actions offended the honor and will of God and the Founding Fathers. Therefore submission to Lincoln would be improper and sinful. Thus by April 1861 even students who had counseled patience and unionism during the previous months decided manly behavior necessitated secession and war.⁴

The Union of Manhoods and the Secession Impulse

Abraham Lincoln’s election galvanized the most ardent defenders of slavery to act. The official Republican Party platform in 1860 called only for an end to slavery in the territories, but many southerners understood this as part of an ongoing plot to end slavery in the United States altogether. The issue of slavery was so divisive that the southern wing of the Democratic Party broke off and nominated its own candidate who would explicitly protect slavery. Several of the most outspoken advocates of southern rights promised disunion if Lincoln won. Lincoln’s success convinced southern fire-eaters that the antislavery conspiracy was real since the North elected a Republican despite their warnings of secession and Lincoln’s absence from southern ballots.

The election results offended the honor of aristocratic, fire-breathing southern college students. The June 1860 commencement address of University of North Carolina student William Headen explained in detail the effect of honor on a southern man. Honor, he declaimed, “gives the steady burning of the eye of intellect and the fierce flashing of the eye of passion, the love of youth and manhood's ambition and it forms a bright spot in the character of man.” A man “guards [his honor] with a holy

⁴ I do not try to claim that every proponent of restrained or evangelical manhood was a conditional Unionist. However, unrestrained, insult-sensitive southerners were much more likely to advocate secession from the moment of Lincoln’s election. Less impulsive young men would generally need more convincing to leave the union.
care” even though “it often urges men to violence and desperation in return for insults offered and injuries received….Poverty and danger, sickness and death—aYe more, ten thousand deaths would they endure rather than a violation of honor.” Honor drove men to redress wrongs and stand up to injustice. Headen also hinted at the common trope that bribery and corruption bought northern elections:

True there are those destitute of this principle; beings who are scarcely worthy of contempt; who cannot resist the temptation of a bribe; whose opinions are those of the last person they have conversed with, and whose highest aspiration it is to reflect the smile of some notable; who speak loudly of the public good that they may have an opportunity of advancing selfish interests and pronounce the sacred name of patriotism with treason and cowardice concealed in their hearts, but these we would not remember nor would we grant that they have any claim to the high distinction of being called men. And if it should happen that their names go down to later generations they are mentioned only as a warning against the crime and the utter ruin attending a sacrifice of honor.⁵

This sense of honor would lead the more impulsive college students and men of the South to contest the November elections and cry out for separation from the United States. Honorable southern men would not let the North’s corruption affect them.

Support for disunion and solidarity with the Deep South grew steadily at UNC, UVA, VMI, and Washington College in the days after the election. Several of the earliest voices welcoming war came from the militaristic cadet corps at VMI. A week before the election, VMI cadet Charles Conway Floweree declared his allegiance to the United States and the Constitutional Union Party, but also claimed: “We are preparing for the ‘Irresistable [sic] Conflict.’ If come it must I say in the language of Patrick Henry let it come. I fervently pray that this glorious Union may never be dissolved! But if by continual encroachment upon our rights, it shall become necessary, in the dignity of

freedom I will fight upon the threshold of my country.” On November 22 he wrote that “with the election of Lincoln I leave the Union ticket and support the vilest fanaticism of the South.” Though no state had yet seceded, “the Union exists but in name,” he stated. “We float a vast pile in the midst of a stormy sea. Let the extremist come…a conqueror, or be submerged in the blood of our country men.” While Floweree may have been a Constitutional Unionist, he was not much of a conditional Unionist in the traditional sense of the term. Only a Republican defeat would preserve his allegiance.  

VMI cadet Thomas Andrew Stevenson also welcomed war, but with less emotional rhetoric. He wrote to his sister on November 20, 1860 of his willingness to defend the country against Lincoln, whom he considered an abolitionist. Stevenson had sworn an oath to defend VMI and had no obligation to the “corrupt and aggressive” federal government which “shall have been perverted by ambitious and designing men for personal sectional interest.” VMI had already distributed ammunition to cadets and commenced combat drill. Stevenson did not think war would happen, but he did not doubt Lincoln’s ability to deceive and manipulate en route to power.  

Though South Carolina’s secession on December 20 was a major development in the crisis, the Star of the West incident on January 9, 1861 provoked the first major demonstrations of secessionism in Upper South colleges. As the Star of the West, a

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6 Charles Conway Floweree to Cousin, October 29, 1860, November 22, 1860, Floweree Family Papers, VHS. Peter Carmichael states that elite young male Virginians’ support for secession was almost universal after Lincoln’s election. This echoes other scholarship noting the eagerness and ardor of young southern men to fight to demonstrate their manhood. I agree that secessionist spirit was very widespread by late 1860, but it was not universal. There was still a significant minority of conditional Unionists at southern colleges until April 1861. For the overwhelming support for war among young southerners see Carmichael, The Last Generation, 137; Edward L. Ayers, In the Presence of Mine Enemies: The Civil War in the Heart of America, 1859-1863 (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003), 118; Gary W. Gallagher, The Confederate War: How Popular Will, Nationalism, and Military Strategy Could Not Stave Off Defeat (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997).

United States steamship, entered Charleston Harbor to attempt to resupply the beleaguered army garrison at Fort Sumter, students from the Citadel, South Carolina’s military academy, fired on the ship and drove it away. Students across the South felt impassioned and emboldened. Hearing the news, Washington College students raised a secession flag over the college, infuriating Unionist college president George Junkin. He ordered the flag to be removed, but the pro-secession students had hidden the ladder, and once it was found, high winds prevented its removal. The secessionists stood guard over the flag all night. After it was taken down the next day, Junkin ordered the flag burned, but the pro-southern contingent stole the flag back to ensure its safety. This was the first of many flag controversies at a divided Washington College.

Secessionist sentiment swelled at southern schools after the Star of the West incident. At UVA, martial spirit had built slowly since December when the university had re-allowed military training for the first time since the murder of Professor Davis in 1840. Law student Upshur Quinby wrote his mother on January 11 about the Star of the West: “I am for the Union & the Constitution but when one part of the union disregard it to the detriment of the other, it is the duty for the oppressed part to assert her” rights. Two weeks later he observed that “things look very war like, & hostile. Something must be done before the reign of Lincoln. It appears that coercion is his policy, & the only way I think to prevent it is the secession of the Border slave states.” After a lengthy ban on discussing politics, literary societies reintroduced political questions for debate in

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January 1861, and a January 14 vote in one society favored the right of secession.⁹ Students raised the first Confederate flag above the UVA rotunda one night in late February, and the excitement it produced the next morning was enough to suspend classes for the day. A similar incident occurred on the night of March 15, creating a reaction that reminded one observer of a “Lunatic Asylum.”¹⁰

On January 9, the same day as the *Star of the West*, Mississippi became the second state to leave the Union. Florida followed on January 10 and Alabama January 11. After this flurry of secession, Georgia ratified its secession ordinance on January 19; Louisiana, on January 26; and Texas, on February 1. On February 18, Jefferson Davis was inaugurated as provisional president of the seceded states by acclamation of the Confederate constitutional convention. Within a few short weeks, a Confederacy of seven states had been born. A significant minority of UNC, UVA, VMI, and Washington College students came from the seceded states. There was not an immediate flow of students homeward at first, merely a trickle. At UNC, fifteen Louisianans met in late January after their state’s secession and pledged their services to their home state. “Being deeply impressed with sentiments of patriotism for the honor of our beloved state,” they resolved, “we are ready to forsake the peaceful duties of a college life, and take up the sword, in defence of that sacred Liberty, we have been taught to cherish

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⁹ Upshur Quinby to Mother, January 11, 1861, January 26, 1861, Quinby, Teackle, and Upshur Family Papers, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia. Philip Bruce almost certainly exaggerates by claiming that almost all UVA students had been Constitutional Unionists, especially given the sizeable number of students from the Deep South. Furthermore, very few students if any would have been old enough to vote. See Bruce, *History of the University of Virginia*, III: 260-265.

from our earliest childhood; and in defence of that Institution, at once our pride, and the source of all our health and prosperity.” They informed the Louisiana governor to telegraph them instructions how to best serve their home state.¹¹

Many professors supported secession or barely held to Unionism through the first month of Lincoln’s presidency. University of Virginia law professor James Holcombe became involved in the secessionist movement early on and resigned in January to run as a member of the Virginia secession convention.¹² His colleague John B. Minor retained a sliver of faith in union. “Virginia, I trust, will be mindful of her ancient fame, her historic patriotism, and will interpose a calm and earnest and dignified meditation, worthy of her character[,] of all things it is important that our people should not be fired with the frenzy which reigns in the cotton state mobs,” he wrote in December 1860. He was less hopeful for the rest of the country. He believed that “madness…seems to posses [sic] our Countrymen,” north and south. He quoted a Latin proverb: “Quem Deus vult perdere, prius demontat”—whom God wishes to destroy, he first makes insane. “It will be solely of the Lord’s mercy if we do not perish as a free prosperous people,” he lamented. He was no friend to Lincoln and was not optimistic about peace, but he was not ready to make war just yet.¹³

School administrators tried to maintain the normal rhythms of college life as much as possible, but they faced regular student pro-secession demonstrations by early spring. VMI cadets continued raising secessionist flags in defiance of the

¹¹ Resolution [January 1861], Thomas Benjamin Davidson Papers, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

¹² Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, III: 262; Upshur Quinby to Mother, January 26, 1861, Quinby, Teackle, and Upshur Papers, UVA.

¹³ John B. Minor to Unknown, December 17, 1860, Launcelot Minor Blackford Papers, UVA; John B. Minor to Cousin, January 21, 1861, Launcelot Minor Blackford Papers, UVA.
administration. Cadet Andrew Gatewood shared the frustration of his fellow cadets at the political inaction of the Richmond convention, which began meeting in February to debate Virginia’s secession. He wrote that “there is no choice to save the Union so she [Virginia] might as well secede now as any other time.” Secessionist sentiment swelled at UNC, and by early March, John Halliburton declared to his fiancée: “I verily believe that I am the only union man in College.” At UVA, Professor John Minor found that “the secession feeling is so predominant amongst our youths as practically to have extinguished all Union principle. They hasten to ‘follow a multitude’ to folly,” and through peer pressure, every young man joined in the “frantic ultraism.”

By the end of March, as crisis at Fort Sumter seemed imminent, UVA student Upshur Quinby observed about fifty secessionist flags at the university. He believed that the events at Fort Sumter would decide if there would be war. When President Lincoln decided to resupply the fort, the Confederate batteries around Charleston Harbor opened fire on April 12, 1861. Lincoln declared the bombardment an act of insurrection and called for volunteers to defeat the rebels, and the lives of thousands of students at UNC, UVA, VMI, and Washington College changed.

The conflict and heated emotion that followed the Star of the West and the secession of the first seven states was miniscule compared to the fallout from Fort Sumter. A few VMI professors narrowly averted bloodshed on April 13, the day of

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14 Andrew C. L. Gatewood to Parents, March 10, 1861, Andrew C.L. Gatewood Papers, VMI; John W. Halliburton to Juliet Halliburton, March 6, 1861, John Wesley Halliburton Papers, SHC; John B. Minor to M.B. Blackford, April 8, 1861, Launcelot Minor Blackford Papers, UVA. Even Sandie Pendleton, a studious Washington College alumnus attending UVA for a prestigious Master of Arts degree in 1861, joined one of the newly recommissioned military companies and hoped for Virginia to join the Confederacy to protect its honor. See Sandie Pendleton to William Nelson Pendleton, [n.d.] 1861, Ellinor Porcher Gadsden Papers, Special Collections, James Graham Leyburn Library, Washington and Lee University.

15 Upshur Quinby to Mother, March 28, 1861, Quinby, Teackle, and Upshur Family Papers, UVA.
Sumter’s surrender. Though it would be several days before news of the surrender arrived, on April 13 a group of VMI cadets, Washington students, and townspeople raised a Confederate flag in town, while other townspeople raised a Union flag nearby, leading to a melee. VMI cadet Andrew Gatewood, an ardent secessionist, recorded that the Unionists “wanted to pick a quarrel with some of the cadets, which they did after insulting some of them very cowardly. They drew some pistols on the cadets and the boys pitched into them, come very near whipping them, but there was such a crowd of these rowdies that they were too many for the cadets.” One cadet returned to campus and summoned the cadet corps. “It was not ten minutes until every one of us had on our accoutrements, our guns loaded and were down ready to fight.” Before they could enter the fray, VMI professors persuaded them to come to order. All around them, “women were crying and calling for their husbands and children.” Lexington was on the brink of civil war.\(^{16}\)

While clashes between college students and townspeople were somewhat routine in the antebellum South, nothing of this magnitude had occurred. Sentiments of martial manhood were pulsing through the students' brains. Their growing commitment to southern nationalism, fed by professors, preachers, friends, and family, goaded young men into aggressive action.\(^{17}\) By April 1861 most students at VMI and Washington College considered the Confederacy their nation and would not stand for a

\(^{16}\) Once news of Fort Sumter arrived, most townspeople came around to secessionism. Andrew C.L. Gatewood to Parents, April 15, 1861, Andrew C.L. Gatewood Papers, VMI; Charles Copland Wight, “Recollections,” 6-8, Wight Family Papers, VHS; Crenshaw, General Lee's College, 122-123.

\(^{17}\) Stephen Berry posits that manhood was more important in creating and fighting the Civil War than any form of rights. See Stephen W. Berry, II, All that Makes a Man: Love and Ambition in the Civil War South (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 9. This martial manhood carried on throughout the war and beyond. See James J. Broomall, “Personal Confederacies: War and Peace in the American South, 1840-1890,” (Ph.D. Diss, University of Florida, 2011), 10-11.
challenge from Unionists. The divide between violent, honor-based manhood and subdued, restrained manhood was crumbling and would soon dissolve completely.

Models of bourgeois, restrained manhood, such as school chaplains and evangelical professors, helped sway the remaining Unionist students to the Confederacy. By the 1850s, most southern evangelical preachers had constructed a social and moral defense of slavery. Most were vehemently opposed to war and still preached union into the spring of 1861. Yet, as Beth Barton Schweiger argues, by that point they came to see war as inevitable and accepted it as part of God's plan. Most interpreted the impending conflict as a sign that God willed an independent Confederacy headed by Virginia. Clergymen became “the most important supporters of the Confederacy,” according to historian Charles Irons. Their words and examples held the power to convince religious students that war was just. At UVA, Chaplain John Cowper Granberry drilled with one of the student military companies in spring 1861. He preferred to continue preaching, but he was willing to fight, setting an example for his student congregants to do likewise. Southern preachers did not create the conflict, but they did provide a Christian justification for seceding and going to war.18

University of Virginia law professor John Blackford Minor, who was hired in 1845 for his evangelical moral leadership, gradually warmed to secession and war as well. He thought both the Union and Confederacy had acted rashly, but ultimately his hatred for Lincoln’s plan to abolish slavery “rudely and hastily” led him to believe Virginia had

sufficient cause to take up arms. In war, he foresaw an unparalleled chance for men to display the noblest, bravest manhood and women the most compassionate, nurturing womanhood.\textsuperscript{19} Once almost all former Unionist professors, chaplains, and preachers embraced war, there were precious few spokesmen for restrained manhood urging young men to avoid violence. Among the southern collegiate student body in April 1861, \textit{rage militaire} and Confederate nationalism were practically universal.

Since the issue of sectional war had loomed over the nation for the entire lives of college students, they quickly responded to news of Sumter's surrender and Lincoln's call for volunteers.\textsuperscript{20} UVA student Upshur Quinby wrote his mother on April 17 that "students are leaving for home on every train," and he expected he would not be far behind. "Every body is in a perfect state of military excitements," he observed. Although faculty insisted that classes continue, no one was studying. After the Virginia convention’s vote to secede two days later, the convention ordered a Confederate flag raised above the school.\textsuperscript{21} At Governor John Letcher’s orders, the two military companies that had been training since December—the Sons of Liberty and the Southern Guard—took part in the occupation of the federal armory at Harper's Ferry from April 19 to 22. These roughly 140 student soldiers participated in the earliest

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\textsuperscript{19} Rex Bowman and Carlos Santos, \textit{Rot, Riot, and Rebellion: Mr. Jefferson’s Struggle to Save the University that Changed America} (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 146; John Blackford Minor to M.B. Blackford, April 16, 1861, Launcelot Minor Blackford Papers, UVA; Bruce, \textit{History of the University of Virginia}, III: 285.

\textsuperscript{20} According to Daniel Crofts, Lincoln’s call for volunteers (rather than the battle at Fort Sumter itself) was the primary incident that sufficiently convinced Upper South conditional Unionists to support secession. See Daniel W. Crofts, \textit{Reluctant Confederates: Upper South Unionists in the Secession Crisis} (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 336.

\textsuperscript{21} Upshur Quinby to Mother, April 17, 1861, Quinby, Teackle, and Upshur Papers, UVA; Joseph T. Allyn to Father, April 19, 1861, Joseph T. Allyn Papers, UVA.
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stages of war. After their return, the companies disbanded since most returned home to enlist. A third company formed and drilled at UVA until mid-summer.\footnote{Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, III: 265, 275-279, 281.}

The initial response to Fort Sumter and Virginia’s secession was even more fever-pitched among Lexington’s students. The undercurrent of secessionism in Washington students and faculty in the previous months found full expression. Unlike at UVA or VMI, however, the school president did not share their zeal. George Junkin remained a committed Unionist and, finding his political position untenable, soon resigned and moved to Pennsylvania. Meanwhile, the college created and trained a student military company known as the Liberty Hall Volunteers in honor of the school’s prior name. When they were called into military service on June 8, the school suspended classes until the fall.\footnote{Crenshaw, General Lee’s College, 124-126; Pace, Halls of Honor, 100.}

The militaristic and secessionist spirit of VMI cadets produced an environment rife with a primal, martial animosity. A normally quiet and disliked instructor, Thomas J. Jackson, delivered an invigorating speech to the student body, stating: “All I have to say is, that when you once draw the sword in a civil war, throw away the scabbard.” A devout evangelical like Jackson voicing such a violent impulse roused the students into a bloodlust.\footnote{Charles Copland Wight, “Recollections,” 10, Wight Family Papers, VHS. I use “militarism,” as Rod Andrew does, to mean “exaltation of military ideals and virtues,” not the political philosophy. See Rod Andrew, Jr., Long Gray Lines: The Southern Military School Tradition, 1839-1915 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 2.} Like Granberry and Minor at UVA, Jackson’s acceptance of war proved a vivid example for like-minded men who believed in restrained manhood. If a man like Jackson wanted to kill, evangelical students would be reassured and morally justified in their desire to bring death to northerners in battle.
VMI began mobilizing for war immediately after Virginia’s secession. “Great excitement prevails here,” cadet Thomas Stevenson informed his sister on April 19, “since the reception of the secession ordinance (on which occasion fifteen guns were fired as a salute of honor). All academic duties have been suspended if not thrown aside with the intention never to be resumed. Military instruction constitutes the order of the day. We drill from five in the morning until dusk with slight intermissions.” The governor had ordered VMI Superintendent Colonel Francis Smith to Richmond and several of the students to training centers across the state to help instruct recruits. The cadets themselves were to remain ready for orders. Andrew Gatewood explained to his parents on April 18 that “we don’t do anything at all but study tactics and drill.” He urged them not to worry about him, but added: “I would rather die in defense of my country than any other way. I will stand up and fight like a man for our rights with as light a heart as anybody else.”

His letter insisted that performing his duty by risking death for his country did not concern him since it was all he could do—and what he felt he must do—as a man. Most likely he sheltered secret fears and anxieties, but a moment of crisis was no time for a southern man to vent his misgivings. Gatewood and other young soldiers-to-be had to appear sure of themselves and their manliness.

At the outset, the Virginia government realized that the best use for the well-trained cadets would be as instructors for new recruits. Major William Gilham, an instructor at VMI, informed the cadets before they marched to Richmond the week after

25 Thomas Andrew Stevenson to Maria Stevenson, April 19, 1861, Thomas Andrew Stevenson Letters, VMI; Andrew C.L. Gatewood to Parents, April 18, 1861, Andrew C.L. Gatewood Papers, VMI.

26 As Stephen Berry notes, early 1861 was full of public demonstration and bluster. The public performance of manhood required displays of bravery. Only God or true love allowed a young man the chance to “confess himself” and his shortcomings and worries about manhood to someone. See Berry, All that Makes a Man, 12, 41-42, 90-92, 172.
Fort Sumter: “You all are too high bred to be food for powder. I don’t intend that you shall go and fight against the Yankees of the North.” All the same, Andrew Gatewood promised his parents: “I will behave myself like a Gentleman, and will try and distinguish myself.” Even without fighting, he could demonstrate himself a man by dutiful attention to work. During the march to Richmond, Charles Copland Wight recalled that civilians viewed the column of nearly two hundred cadets with “gravity and respect.”

Once in Richmond, the cadets appeared the picture of manhood. Andrew Gatewood reported to his parents that “the cadets have the best name now of any Corps in the United States. The people say they keep them selves so clean and nice and drill so well, we have gained a high reputation since we came to Richmond.” Though he and the cadets had no official position in the Confederate army, he said they were treated as officers. By the end of the month, he was one of a dozen to return to VMI to instruct approximately fifty new cadets. Gatewood resented leaving a semi-official military position to return to campus, where he felt he was not needed. He reported that dozens of the cadets who had been ordered to Richmond had already returned home to enlist at this point, and he seemed eager to do the same.

Farther from the front lines of the conflict, in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, the students of UNC showed a similar eagerness to join the army and demonstrate their manly bravery and devotion to their country. Though North Carolina was slower to secede and did not leave the Union until May 20, UNC students were all ready to abandon their studies by the end of April. The prospect of excitement, adventure, and

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27 Andrew C.L. Gatewood to Parents, April 20, 1861, Andrew C.L. Gatewood Papers, VMI; Charles Copland Wight, “Recollections,” 12-14, Wight Family Papers, VHS.

28 Andrew C.L. Gatewood to Parents, April 28, 1861, May 11, 1861, May 29, 1861, Andrew C.L. Gatewood Papers, VMI.
publicly demonstrating their manhood caused students to skip classes and ignore assignments after hearing about Sumter and Lincoln’s response. Edward Armstrong wrote his father on April 20 expressing his dismay and frustration that he had not told him to come home and enlist yet. Armstrong spoke tellingly about a military company marching off to report for duty from nearby Hillsboro that day, enviously recounting that “there were few dry eyes in the crowd congregated to see them depart.” He wanted to be the center of public attention and admiration. He implored his father: “I beg you to let me be one to proceed…and frighten Lincoln out of his witts [sic], if possible and if…war should actually be necessary, I should be happy to bear a part, humble though it be, in defense of my country.” For Armstrong and other students who felt compelled to ask their father’s permission in important decisions about life, school, or finances, the war offered an opportunity for transformation from dependent son to independent man.  

Armstrong was not alone in his frustration that he was unable to join the military. On April 27, the freshman, sophomore, and junior classes of UNC sent a petition requesting the university to suspend classes so that they could aid the war effort. “We have been actuated by no desire to be released from our studies,” the petitioners claimed, “but by a thorough conviction that the present perilous condition of our country and our own interested demand it. From a week[’]s experience we are thoroughly convinced that it is impossible for us to attend to our duties in the midst of so much excitement.” The university administration did not grant the suspension, but they did

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29 Edward H. Armstrong to Thomas G. Armstrong, April 20, 1861, Julien Dwight Martin Papers, SHC; Broomall, “Personal Confederacies,” 92; Berry, All that Makes a Man, 168.
offer diplomas to all seniors—even if they left for the army before taking their exams.\textsuperscript{30} With this exception, UNC and other southern colleges tried to maintain a normal campus atmosphere as much as possible during wartime.

From November 1860 to May 1861, students at UVA, UNC, VMI, and Washington College gradually abandoned hopes for unity and hardened in their secessionism. Even pious champions of reserved manhood rallied to the Confederate cause thanks in part to the militaristic spirit that took professors and preachers to whom they looked for guidance. As intellectuals and clergy were able to explain Lincoln’s actions as an insult to the nation’s history, the states, and God, the bourgeois and evangelical students accepted secession and war as the only measures to avenge the dishonor. They joined other students itching to go into battle and prove their manhood.

\textit{Islands in the Storm: College Life and Mastery in the Midst of War}

After the initial flurry of students enlisting in the army in the spring and summer of 1861, UNC, UVA, VMI, and Washington College attempted to operate as normally as possible in the fall. Enrollments plummeted, some schools began accepting younger students, and military instruction assumed a central role in student life.\textsuperscript{31} While war was never far from the minds of students, those who were too young to fight or lacked their parents’ permission sought other ways to display their manliness. Many of these echoed familiar antebellum themes of drinking, fighting, hazing, courting and pursuing


\textsuperscript{31} School enrollments dropped to well under one hundred at UNC, UVA, and Washington College. The University of Virginia essentially became a military school by the end of 1861. Students there would not have had a radically different experience than at VMI. See Michael David Cohen, \textit{Reconstructing the Campus: Higher Education and the American Civil War} (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012), 37.
women, and abusing slaves. Students attempting to demonstrate mastery and traditional elite masculinity sought to prove themselves superior to teachers, women, slaves, and other students. They were practicing at patriarchy and assuming the elite male’s position atop the social ladders of race, class, and gender. Though militarized by war, religion remained the last vestige of restrained manhood.

The younger student base during the Civil War meant that more boys grew into physical, intellectual, and emotional adulthood at college than before. Robert E. Lee’s youngest son, Robert E. Lee, Jr., was one of only about fifty students left at UVA in December 1861, down from over five hundred at the beginning of the year. At eighteen years of age, he was struggling with the realization that he was growing into manhood. “I really believe I am getting to be a young man but ca’nt [sic] realize it, but there is no mistake about it, for I am five feet ten strikingly handsome, with a strong tendency to mustache & whiskers,” he wrote to his sister Annie Lee. Students also experienced emotional maturity as they adjusted to youth culture and institutional life. After two years at VMI, cadet John Hanna reflected on the great change to his character. Though he still was concerned about the opinion of others (as were most status-conscious southern elite), Hanna felt more comfortable as himself. He believed that his “calm and deliberate view of affairs[,] that feeling of independence and that spirit of determination which I so much have tried to possess myself with has come to my rescue” on many occasions and forced him to view a situation from another’s perspective to resolve a

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33 Robert E. Lee, Jr. to Annie Lee, December 1, 1861, Lee Family Papers, VHS.
Hanna’s emotional maturation embodies the type of outward-looking worldview that characterized restrained masculinity.

As mentioned, the only remaining sign of restrained manhood in the Civil War was religious devotion. Restrained, academic manhood essentially disappeared. Though academics remained rigorous at UNC, other schools concentrated mostly on military training during the war. Most students did not focus on preparation for professions; they were biding time until they could join the army. Though wartime exigencies and teacher and student shortages forced most campus YMCAs and related evangelical societies to close, religious students found outlets to practice and express their religiosity. VMI cadet J. Kent Langhorne wrote his parents in September 1862, telling them he read his Bible thirty minutes every day. When healthy, Langhorne attended church regularly. As he lay ill in the hospital, it was the fellowship of the church that he most missed and desired.

Miriam Gratz Cohen, a Jewish University of Virginia student, had a distinctive religious background. It does not seem that he participated in public religious services—since there likely were no Jewish services in Charlottesville—but he held religion very closely to his heart. “This is my doctrine, & my religion,” he told his sister, “Love and Charity to the world—God is the solver of a great problem,” while men and nations were clay for his molding. Cohen was very conscious of his Jewish heritage.

34 John F. Hanna, Diary, April 17, 1864, John F. Hanna Diary, VMI.

35 As UNC student Lenoir Norwood wrote his aunt: “every thing seems to be favorable to hard study.” T. Lenoir Norwood to Aunt Sade, August 19, 1861, Lenoir Family Papers, SHC. As will be discussed later, the Confederate government extending a draft exemption for juniors and seniors at UNC allowed for advanced academic study, whereas once students reached eighteen at other schools they either enlisted or were drafted. Thus other schools stuck to military instruction or more college preparatory work.

36 J. Kent Langhorne to Father, September 13, 1862, J. Kent Langhorne Papers, VMI; J. Kent Langhorne to Mother, November 2, 1862, J. Kent Langhorne Papers, VMI.
He fervently wished for the creation of Jewish colleges and schools in America. He complained to his father of the unfair national treatment of Jews:

> It is a mournful fact that in these troubled times when intolerance and prejudice cast their baneful seed throughout the land, which from one quarter of it to another ring with abuse of God's people, that we have done nothing for our religion and are blind to our own interest. Jewish wealth ... has been scattered in all directions and for everybody's benefit, but their own ... yet the newspapers of the country lift up their lying tongues against them and no defending voice has been heard.\(^\text{37}\)

Cohen regretted the position of Jews in the United States, but he did not encounter any anti-Semitism while at UVA. Indeed he thrived. He participated in military drill along with other students, and the Jefferson Society elected him as their president in November 1863. Even with only about forty students left, the election of a Jewish man to a position of leadership and honor was significant.\(^\text{38}\) For both Cohen and Christian students, religion was one of the few markers of restrained manhood in a time when martial, impulsive manhood predominated.

Honor-sensitive students found familiar ways to display their mastery publicly. Drinking and rules violations remained a popular method to prove their social superiority and independence to school administrators. Holidays continued to be prime opportunities for imbibing. Charles Biglow recorded that students who stayed at UVA during Christmas 1862 made “quite a noise with their drinking and frolicking.”\(^\text{39}\)

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\(^\text{37}\) Gratz Cohen to Sister, October 10, 1862, Miriam Gratz Cohen Papers, SHC; Gratz Cohen to Papa, January 9, 1864 [1863?], Miriam Gratz Cohen Papers, SHC.


\(^\text{39}\) Charles Biglow to Elvira Woodson, January 17, 1863, Charles Biglow Letter, UVA; Thomas B. Tredway to Father, February 18, 1862, Thomas B. Tredway Letter, VMI.
time when enrollment was already critically low, administrators did not want to dismiss students. As long as a student pledged improved behavior, UNC administrators could excuse misbehavior such as putting farm animals in a recitation room, throwing stones at professors, or publicly insulting preachers.⁴⁰

University of North Carolina student Henry Armand London kept a very candid log of the mischief he and his classmates created to demonstrate their manhood. In August 1862, London recorded that one student “drunk too much apple-brandy & nearly died,” while another became intoxicated and was “trying to fight everybody.” London mentioned many other incidents of drinking, including admitting that he became “quite merry” with a bottle of cider and “put on the drunk.”⁴¹ Pranks were common. London amusedly related “tying a tin pan to a dog’s tail & pouring som [sic] spirits of turpentine on it and the way it ran!” As historian Robert Pace argues, students used pranks to protect their honor and manly dominance over faculty. Pranks demonstrated students’ indifference to academic life and faculty regulations. Pranks and disruptions could be directed at other sources of authority besides faculty. One student disturbed church in November 1862. Afterwards several other students stepped in and would not allow him to be arrested, asserting their mastery over church and civil law. London also recorded a handful of fights between students which often began—like many fights—over a

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⁴⁰ Faculty Meeting Minutes, General Faculty and Faculty Council of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Records (hereafter Faculty Meeting Minutes), May 9, 1862, September 1, 1862, September 10, 1862, September 12, 1862, April 29, 1863, May 2, 1863, University Archives, UNC; Henry Armand London, Diary, September 1, 1862, Henry Armand London Papers, SHC.

⁴¹ Henry Armand London, Diary, August 22, 1862, August 29, 1862, February 28, 1863, June 2, 1863, August 26, 1863, November 28, 1863, Henry Armand London Papers, SHC.
dishonorable insult.\textsuperscript{42} London’s accounts of drinking, fighting, and pranking show students enacting rituals of manhood and demonstrating disregard for authority.

The war’s martial spirit brought violent manhood into the bourgeois institution of VMI. Even evangelical students found themselves fighting to prove their masculinity. In 1864, John Hanna took offense with Edward Smith, whom he felt unduly reported him for violating school visiting rules. Students on sentry duty did not usually enforce the rules without faculty present, but Hanna believed Smith disliked him and had been looking for an opportunity to report him for anything for months. He called Smith a “fool” and they called each other “scoundrel.” Hanna described the fight that broke out:

As the "scoundrel" came up, [I] struck him full in the face. It was not a hard knock on my part; for he did not seem to mind it…. I am not good wrestling nor fighting either, having had but very few fights in my lifetime. I managed to get him round the neck and both coming down together, I saw my advantage and taking it dealt some good blows in the face and the head…. He managed to get one of my fingers between his teeth and nearly bit it in two, through the nail. I kept striking him in the face, disdaining to retaliate in the same cruelty that he had been guilty of. He finally hollered "Enough!" when I let him up….I regretted very much the occasion of the affray both on account of the sin I committed in getting angry and as I dislike to be pointed out and looked at by fellow cadets as "a fighter"…. I have always considered him beneath me and….his recent transaction has not tended to raise him in my estimation.\textsuperscript{43}

Hanna resented being controlled by someone conniving and inferior. Smith’s use of biting was not reflective of sophisticated or genteel fighting but of lower-class “rough and tumble,” and Hanna made a point to not resort to similar tactics in return.

Afterwards, Hanna felt remorse at losing his temper and bourgeois self-control. He was concerned about negative public opinion. Instead of glorifying in victory as a proponent

\textsuperscript{42} Henry Armand London, Diary, October 2, 1862, November 3-4, 1862, February 23, 1863, April 1, 1863, July 2, 1863, August 11, 1863, October 2, 1863, Henry Armand London Papers, SHC; Pace, Halls of Honor, 22.

\textsuperscript{43} John F. Hanna, Diary, April 19, 1864. John F. Hanna Diary, VMI.
of violent honor would, he reflected on his sinfulness and shame.\textsuperscript{44} During the Civil War, even students like Hanna who thought of themselves as bourgeois were influenced by and attracted to martial manhood, which dominated southern schools.

In wartime, hazing assumed even greater importance as a process establishing student hierarchy and inculcating to new students the prestige of an institution. As discussed in the previous chapter, antebellum hazing was mostly restricted to VMI since the practice was counterintuitively related to a culture of bourgeois professionalism. As probably the most bourgeois of the four schools after VMI, UNC endured a spate of hazing during the Civil War.\textsuperscript{45} At the start of the 1862 session, the sophomore class refused to allow the new freshmen to enter the chapel through the front door. The freshmen eventually tried to force their way in with sticks, but the sophomores were able to repulse their advance. The practice continued, and two years later, in September 1864, one of the upperclassmen threatened a freshman to a duel with pistols for entering through the main door. During the war, the practice of “smoking” entered the hazing repertoire of UNC. Later associated with initiating new members into a secret society, smoking often consisted of locking freshmen into a room and filling it with

\textsuperscript{44} Elliot J. Gorn, “‘Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch’: The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry,” American Historical Review 90, 1 (Feb 1985): 18-43; Kenneth S. Greenberg, Honor and Slavery: Lies, Duels, Noses, Masks, Dressing as a Woman, Gifts, Strangers, Humanitarianism, Death, Slave Rebellions, the Proslavery Argument, Baseball, Hunting, and Gambling in the Old South (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 12; Edward E. Baptist, Creating an Old South: Middle Florida’s Plantation Frontier before the Civil War (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 126-127. Hanna recorded a more traditional honor fight later that week between two cadets. See John F. Hanna, Diary, April 24, 1864, John F. Hanna Diary, VMI.

\textsuperscript{45} As Jane Censer remarks, “Virginia had been the cradle both of presidents and of an aristocracy wealthier and more self-conscious” than North Carolina. While Peter Carmichael has shown the extent of bourgeois values in elite Virginians in the Civil War era, it seems likely that on the whole they were still more concerned with mastery than North Carolina elites. See Jane Turner Censer, The Reconstruction of White Southern Womanhood, 1865-1895 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 4; Carmichael, The Last Generation; Williams, “Intellectual Manhood.”
smoke. London reported that the sophomores of UNC smoked the new freshmen in July 1863 until they vomited.\textsuperscript{46}

The worst hazing still took place at VMI, where war accentuated the traditions of militarism and professionalism. A common form of hazing at VMI was bucking. In bucking, Andrew Gatewood explained, “they tie your hands together put them over your legs or knees & then run a stick in between your legs, turn you over & then whip you with a bayonet scabbard.”\textsuperscript{47} In Kent Langhorne’s first autumn at VMI, he wrote his sister: “The old cadets have give [sic] me 2 or 3 buckings every day since I have been here. They hurt at first like the mischief but I am getting tough now and it don’t hurt so bad.” Cadets who informed their family about hazing never requested to leave VMI; they understood it was a process of initiation into VMI manhood. Even after James Reid was knocked out and had his finger dislocated, he assured his parents he was fine. Like many college students, his main complaint was the food.\textsuperscript{48}

Some hazing was primarily psychological, such as giving a freshman (“Rat”) an impossible task and threatening severe consequences for failing at it. In August 1862, a cadet corporal gave a new Rat, James Henry Reid, an unloaded gun and ordered him to stand watch. Keeping watch at night was a regular part of VMI life.\textsuperscript{49} Reid was not to let anyone pass unless they gave the countersign. Reid recalled that soon after “about

\textsuperscript{46} Henry Armand London, Diary, September 2, 1862, September 3, 1862, July 28, 1863, Henry Armand London Papers, SHC; Faculty Meeting Minutes, September 2, 1864, UNC.

\textsuperscript{47} Andrew C.L. Gatewood to Ma and Pa, August 4, 1860, Andrew C.L. Gatewood Papers, VMI.

\textsuperscript{48} J. Kent Langhorne to Sister, September 1, 1862, J. Kent Langhorne Papers, VMI; James Henry Reid to Ma and Pa, August 28, 1862, James Henry Reid Papers, VMI; James Henry Reid to Pa, September 20, 1862, September 30, 1862, James Henry Reid Papers, VMI.

\textsuperscript{49} Cadet Robert Rutherford for one described waking up in the middle of the night and passing long, boring hours in the middle of the night on guard duty as the hardest part of VMI life. See Robert H. Rutherford to Louisa, February 14, 1862, Robert H. Rutherford Collection, VMI.
25 cadets came down & wanted to take my gun but I stuck one of them with my bayonet not very hard (for I knew it was all a trick to frighten me) & drove them off but they came back with guns & got my gun away. The Corporal came & made a big fuss....He said I must be court martialed.” The corporal took him to a vacant room, claiming it was the guardhouse, but when Reid recognized the trick, they let him go, and the hazing temporarily stopped. Yet by retaining composure and not playing along, Reid foiled the hazing process and thus required further humiliation to learn his place.

In such instances, hazing could be dangerous. A few days after Reid spoiled the upperclassmen’s fun, sophomore cadet George Exall ordered Reid to carry a box of clothing to his room for him. Exall, just barely seventeen, was no older than Reid but had class seniority. Reid refused, took offense at the request, and “thrashed [Exall] pretty badly.” Later, Exall and several friends snuck up on Reid and, he wrote, “tied me & hung me over the door until I had no life in me & they had to throw water in my face, bathe my head &c and bring me to.” When given a chance to fight them one-on-one later, Reid knocked two teeth out in one and gave another a black eye. VMI soon expelled Exall’s companions for nearly beating to death the son of Confederate General Philip St. George Cocke in a hazing incident. By March 1863, even the Virginia legislature expressed concerns about hazing freshmen. Because of the wartime militarization of manhood, hazing increased in severity during the Civil War. Engaging in hazing was a marker of status and manhood for VMI upperclassmen and a painful rite of passage for freshmen. The public display of power over subordinates within the

50 James Henry Reid to James Henry Reid, Sr., August 10, 1862, James Henry Reid Papers, VMI.

51 James Henry Reid to James Henry Reid, Sr., August 14, 1862, August 26, 1862, James Henry Reid Papers, VMI; Thomas B. Davis to Sister, March 22, 1863, Thomas B. Davis Papers, VMI.
hierarchy of the school mirrored the mastery students were expected to exercise over women and African Americans in adult life.

Continuing from the late antebellum period, some of the more romantic young men were interested in prospects of a companionate marriage and were keenly interested in a woman’s personality, intelligence, and social graces. Some like VMI cadet Lawrence Royster avoided women altogether. He wrote a friend: “I have long since abandoned all thoughts of them, scarcely even look at them, you know how fatal they are.”

Others continued to see women as future possessions or markers of status and sexual playthings in the meantime.

The Civil War altered sexual dynamics, and students seemed to sexualize respectable women of the middle and upper classes to a greater degree, though they were rarely more successful in their attempts to obtain sex from them. With fewer students and a vast percentage of young men away in the army, the number of prostitutes and sexually available women in southern college towns declined dramatically. With the absence of traditionally sexually available women, young men’s fondness for the female body created challenges to Victorian mores. The very forthright Henry Armand London of UNC mentioned calling on a young woman named Tish,

52 Lawrence Royster to John E Roller, April 21, 1864, John E. Roller Papers, VMI.

53 Due to the difficulty of finding reliable information on sexuality in the nineteenth century, my analysis in this section is primarily suggestive, designed to spur further thinking and research. As Catherine Clinton notes, prostitution in the Civil War is remarkably understudied. The mobilization of Civil War armies created perhaps the greatest boom in prostitution in United States’ history (especially among southern women) as “large numbers of women seeking clients settled near the military headquarters of each warring nation.” She points out that prostitution consisted of more than streetwalking and brothels. “Casual prostitution,” in which “poor and/or wage-earning women frequently sold sexual favors to acquaintances,” was common. See Catherine Clinton, Public Women and the Confederacy (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1999), 6-7, 9, 16-17; Catherine Clinton, “‘Public Women’ and Sexual Politics during the American Civil War,” in Battle Scars: Gender and Sexuality in the American Civil War, eds. Catherine Clinton and Nina Silber (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).
noting that he “sat in her lap” and “put his head in her lap” until he was seen. Charles T. Haigh of VMI admitted to sophomoric voyeurism in his diary. When a dozen young ladies came to watch drill practice at VMI and descended the very steep hill across from the Institute in April 1863, he delighted that they “made quite a show of their ‘understandings.’” To get a better view of their cleavage, Haigh had an opera glass “which drew them right up to me.”

Students who valued chastity and courtliness to women sometimes found sexual allure too strong to keep their thoughts pure. John F. Hanna of VMI followed genteel Victorian protocol in recording the details of his courtships, rarely referring to a woman by anything but her initials to preserve her good name. Most of his accounts of women told of romantic outings such as picking flowers. In one instance, however, he half-jokingly proposed to a young woman that they skip church to socialize. Shocked that she agreed, he spent much of the time fixating on her body, he wrote as a “confession” in his diary. “She wore a lace bodice, this displayed to effect the grace of her figure. I do not take notice of such dress often; but as hers this evening made such an impression- it is right for me to mention it.” Though seemingly tame, writing of elite women in such a manner—even in a diary—suggests increased student sexualization of socially respectable women in wartime. Though sexual mores likely loosened marginally during the Civil War, elite women still generally kept courtships chaste, denying male students the power over them granted by marriage.

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54 Henry Armand London, Diary, September 15, 1863, September 18, 1863, Henry Armand London Papers, SHC. London’s courtship with “Tish” lends support to Stephen Berry’s idea that Civil War era men found the ideal, pure woman boring. See Berry, All that Makes a Man, 85.

55 Charles T. Haigh, Diary, April 16, 1863, Charles T. Haigh Diary, VMI.

56 John F. Hanna, Diary, April 24, 1864, May 8, 1864, John F. Hanna Diary, VMI.
Slavery was ubiquitous on college campuses, and mastery over slaves was an essential part of elite southern manhood. Some schools like UVA used slaves as laborers for the school, some faculty owned slaves, and students brought their own from home. One literate African American slave named Jerry was leased by his master to assist UNC students for wages. Even the more bourgeois, restrained young men did not question the morality of the practice in part since they saw their academic and religious role models embracing slavery. John Preston, wartime rector of the University of Virginia, owned a slave name Charles, whom he described as “a great rogue & so lazy he will not work unless goded [sic] to it like an ox.”

Physically and psychologically abusing blacks was part of manly behavior among college students. Jane Turner Censer notes that planters taught their children from an early age to learn to oppress slaves as a fulfillment of their role atop the South’s racial and economic hierarchy. As with other elements of manhood, college was where they practiced it. Henry Armand London’s diary is one of the few student writings candid enough to testify to students’ abuse of slaves. On August 6, 1863, the UNC student reported that he “impressed to service a Negro’s fruit.” He appropriated the language of wartime necessity to justify his theft. His humor mocked the lack of personhood and citizenship of blacks in the Confederacy. One black person losing a piece of fruit was not analogous to citizens surrendering their rights to a sovereign

57 Jerry to Master, October 19, 1861, John DeBerniere Hooper Papers, SHC; John L. Preston to Peter Saunders, August 12, 1863, Saunders Family Papers, VHS.
government, but with almost no rights to surrender, a piece of fruit was one of the few things African Americans were able to own.\(^{58}\)

Using violence and fear against African Americans was a familiar means for London and other UNC students to demonstrate elite white mastery. Without provocation, one Sunday after church, London chased after a black man with his cousin, who gave the man “two sour licks on his head.” Another UNC student once decided to “frighten some little darkies by shooting his pistol” near them. Most students did not even consider justifying violence against blacks; it was part of the ritual of being an elite white male in the South. London was especially happy to join a sheriff’s posse of about thirty UNC students in February 1864 to raid a camp of fugitive slaves, where they recaptured seven and wounded one.\(^{59}\) Emphasizing that the white students were “men” and the fugitives simply “Negros,” London heralded white physical and intellectual superiority in being able to recapture the escaped slaves. Complete and total mastery of slaves was essential to elite white manhood in the turbulent Confederacy. As African Americans escaped to freedom by the tens of thousands, it was critical for the ruling class to project dominance to make an effort to maintain the appearance of control.

The abundance of death in the Civil War forced students to reckon with dying as another element of manly behavior. Most Americans believed in having a “good death” at peace, surrounded by loved ones, but disease and battle prevented many young men

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\(^{59}\) Henry Armand London, Diary, August 30, 1863, September 16, 1863, Henry Armand London Papers, SHC; Henry Armand London to Lilla London, February 16, 1864, Henry Armand London Papers, SHC. As LeeAnn Whites points out, “dominant groups are frequently ignorant of the manner in which their identities are defined and sustained by their relations with the nondominant.” Thus, London would see no need to reflect on or explain his actions towards blacks. See Whites, *The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender*, 6.
from having a traditional good death, and their friends and classmates were left to 
ruminate on the state of humanity and the human soul.\textsuperscript{60} Part of being a man included 
dying like a man. By denying a man his masculinity in life’s final act, death was the 
ultimate emasculating force in wartime. It unmade manhood as it undid the man.

Disease killed many more people than weapons did in the Civil War, and it struck 
students as well. Though college students occasionally died of disease before the war, 
death had additional poignancy amidst so much dying. Students reacted to classmates’ 
deaths more emotionally than before. On November 2, 1862, William Hubard of VMI 
expressed in his diary: “I feel particularly sad to night for one of our noble Corps lies in 
the Society Hall dead!!! Away from his home and friends and from his Mother!, that 
being who soothes [sic] every care!!....Poor Fleming he died in a hospital! The last place 
in the world for one used to the care of a Mother.”\textsuperscript{61} Seen as the primary nurturer in the 
family, the mother was essential for the good death of a young man. As Fleming was 
dying, another extremely ill cadet was very distraught and found his thoughts drifting 
homeward. He wrote his mother: “It makes me all most cry to think about Home and the 
dear ones their [sic].” When he resumed writing the next day he was shaken by 
Fleming’s death. “Just to think a week ago that Dr. Madison thought that I was the 
sickest one in the Hospital and he poor Fellow is gone and I am yet spared. It makes 
the cold chills run over me to think of it.”\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{60} Drew Gilpin Faust, \textit{This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War} (New York: Alfred A. 
Knopf, 2008), chap. 1; Mark S. Schantz, \textit{Awaiting the Heavenly Country: The Civil War and America’s 

\textsuperscript{61} William James Hubard, Diary, November 2, 1862, William James Hubard Notebook, VMI.

\textsuperscript{62} J. Kent Langhorne to Mother, November 2 & 3, 1862, J. Kent Langhorne Papers, VMI.
The arbitrary nature of death and its power to take anyone at any time and place terrified young men who were supposed to project confidence and bravery. The ideals of manhood were always a challenge, but they set an impossibly high standard in attaining a good death. College students in the Confederacy were never more than a few years away from battle, and many sent emotional letters to their mother, sister, or sweetheart indicating doubts and insecurities about death and dying. After hearing of the death of his very young sister, VMI cadet Edmund Berkeley wrote to his mother: “I am so thankful it was not one of the larger ones that it goes a great deal easier with me than I expected. Do not grieve for her but be thankful it was not one of the larger children who knew right from wrong.” She would be happier than she could have been “in this troublesome world.” As an adult, life was a challenge and dying an obligation.

Hearing about battle deaths and seeing funerals impacted students’ psyches and rendered masculine ideals of fortitude nearly unattainable. After UVA student Nimrod Bramham Hamner learned of the death of his best friend and thought of five of his dead comrades, he lamented: “Oh how dreary does this south look now—I care not how soon my life draws to a close.” In May 1863 a bleak mood descended over Lexington, Virginia when Stonewall Jackson was buried. The day before, a cannon fired every thirty minutes as a salute. The ceremony had a procession with a band playing a doleful, “slow & solemn tune” to which the VMI cadets marched. Even in Chapel Hill,

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63 Stephen Berry’s description of a man’s need to “confess himself” and his weakness and worries to a loving woman is especially apt concerning death. See Berry, *All that Makes a Man*, 12, 90-92.

64 Edmund Berkeley to Mother, November 26, 1863, Edmund Berkeley Letter, VMI.

65 Nimrod Bramham Hamner, Diary, May 9, 1862, Hamner Family Papers, VHS.
Jackson’s death “cast a universal gloom over every thing.”\textsuperscript{66} In the presence of so much death, it was impossible for young men to escape fearful thoughts of mortality. As the war pressed on, it seemed increasingly unlikely that any man would be spared from the possibility of an unhappy, unfulfilling death.

Even as students counted more and more of their acquaintances among the dead, they increasingly longed to leave their depleted colleges for war in order to display their bravery and avoid the embarrassment of conscription. VMI cadets collectively offered their services to the Virginia governor in February 1862, but he declined to accept them. Eighteen-year-old cadet John Snodgrass was disappointed that he had to remain at VMI. He remarked to his sister in April 1862 that “it will be the proudest day of my life when we receive marching orders to defend our own homes against the invader. I am not content to stay here when the Old Dominion—the Mother of Statesmen & heroes is calling so loudly upon her sons to rally to her defense.” Snodgrass and the cadets mobilized in support of Stonewall Jackson’s Shenandoah campaign in May, but they did not see combat and soon returned to Lexington.\textsuperscript{67} Seventeen-year-old Nimrod Hamner at UVA was also restless to join the service after initially being refused. By May 1862 he finally had his father’s permission and enlisted in the Seventeenth Virginia Regiment. Students who were not old enough or lacked parental permission to join the army remained behind, occasionally embarrassingly working with townswomen on soldier benefits, unable to prove their own manliness.\textsuperscript{68}

\textsuperscript{66} Thomas Hamner Dennis to Joel Morton Hannah, May 21, 1863, Hannah Family Papers, VHS; Miriam Gratz Cohen to Unknown, May 11, 1863, Miriam Gratz Cohen Papers, SHC.

\textsuperscript{67} John B. Snodgrass to Sister, February 22, 1862, April 29, 1862, May 18, 1862, John B. Snodgrass Letters, VMI.
The threat of conscription into the army was a concern for students and often hurried enlistment. After the first Confederate Conscription Act in April 1862, men eighteen to thirty-five were eligible to be drafted into military service. At VMI in September 1862, James Henry Reid noted that “ten cadets deserted the other day & 10 or 12 more are making preparations to leave also" to join the war before being drafted.\(^{69}\) A draft officer visited Chapel Hill in October 1863, and Henry London recorded that “the students bored at the idea of going as conscripts to Raleigh.” When the Confederate government lowered the minimum draft age to seventeen in February 1864, a draft official returned and conscripted a handful of students. Seventeen-year-old London wrote to his sister, wishing he were one of them, saying: “I hate the idea of skulking, as it were, out of the army, when my Country needs my services so much.” It seems his father was keeping him at school. London was also subject to a unique draft exemption that UNC president David Swain had secured for all UNC juniors and seniors in October 1862.\(^{70}\) Waiting for war was an inherently unmanly act, but some students may have had little choice. As the schools continued to empty, war finally reached the remaining students in some form in 1864 and 1865.

\(^{68}\) Nimrod Bramham Hamner, Diary, November 10, 1861, February 26, 1862, May 20, 1862, Hamner Family Papers, VHS. Hamner was killed four months later in the Antietam Campaign a few weeks after his eighteenth birthday. For an example of UNC students working with townswomen on a soldier benefit, see T.L. Norwood to Grandmother, October 1861, Lenoir Family Papers, SHC.

\(^{69}\) James Henry Reid to Pa, September 14, 1862, James Henry Reid Papers, VMI. The law permitted substitutes, which gave wealthy parents an additional opportunity to keep their sons out of battle if they desired. See “An Act to further provide for the Public Defence,” The Statutes at Large of the Confederate States of America. 29-31, Documenting the American South, UNC, http://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/statutes/statutes.html.

\(^{70}\) Henry Armand London, Diary, October 3, 1863, October 6, 1863, Henry Armand London Papers, SHC; Henry Armand London to Lilla London, February 16, 1864, Henry Armand London Papers, SHC; Battle, History of the University of North Carolina, I: 732-733. It is possible that London was using the UNC exemption as an excuse not to enlist, though his letter to his sister reflected his father’s concern that he stay out of war. London left UNC six months later during his senior year to join the Confederate army.
Seeing the Elephant: War Comes to Campus and the End of the War

The campuses and remaining students experienced radical change in the final two years of war. The Lexington schools and their students were most heavily affected. VMI cadets were always ready to become active military. After their ten-day march to assist in the Shenandoah Valley campaign in May 1862, the Confederate government again called on them in November 1863 to help repel a Union advance. Again there was no battle. Cadet James Merritt, perhaps bitter because he was assigned to guard duty on campus instead of participating, believed the students would have been captured by the larger Union force had they been engaged.\(^71\) The next spring the cadets would finally have their opportunity to stare across at Union rifles.

On May 15, 1864, responding to Confederate General John Breckinridge’s call for aid, Superintendent Francis Smith led 247 VMI cadets to join 4,500 Confederates in the Battle of New Market against 6,500 Union soldiers. The cadets, aged fifteen to seventeen, valiantly charged and helped drive the larger Union army from the field. Ten of the cadets ultimately lost their lives while forty-seven were wounded.\(^72\) Cadet Samuel Atwill was mortally wounded and died on July 20. Superintendent Smith wrote his father that in his last three days of “agony and suffering” he was closely attended by a nurse and “expressed a perfect knowledge of his situation, and…it is not surprising that he was at peace. The Sunday before the Battle of New Market, he united himself with the church here and had given evidence that he was indeed a child of God.” Smith did his best to assure Atwill’s father that he had died as good and manly a death as

\(^{71}\) James L. Merritt to Pa, November 24, 1863, James L. Merritt Letter, VMI.

possible without his family. The nurse had performed her role as surrogate mother and his son had felt peace with God and confidence in his salvation. He had died a man.

The VMI cadets who survived were eager to let their family know they were okay and had emerged from battle as men. William Radford sent a letter to his mother the day of battle announcing that “we had a fight this evening I am unhurt” and a telegram to his father the next day stating: “I escaped unhurt in the fight yesterday will probably return to Lexington in day or so.” James Merritt was not quite as lucky and penned a letter to his father the day after the battle, saying: “I was in the battle fought here yesterday and was wounded…in the lower part of my stomach. It is a very painful wound but I do not think it is dangerous,” he decided, after initially fearing that it might be mortal. Merritt emphasized that the cadets helped secure victory and earned the thanks of General Breckinridge and the top Confederate commanders. As Robert Pace states, that instant at New Market “would forever become a symbol of youthful heroism.” The VMI cadets who were too young to enlist in the army finally had their moment in the sun to publicly display the extent of their manliness.

VMI’s participation in the Confederate military brought harsh recriminations upon the Lexington schools. A month after New Market, in June 1864, Union General David Hunter raided Lexington. For the cadets' participation at New Market, Hunter's men torched VMI and utterly destroyed the campus. Cadets were given furloughs and were free to join the Confederate army. Classes did not resume until December, and even

73 Francis H. Smith to S.B. Atwill, July 28, 1864, Samuel F. Atwill Papers, VMI.

74 William N. Radford to Mother, May 15, 1864, William N. Radford Papers, VMI; William N. Radford to Father, Telegram, May 16, 1864, William N. Radford Papers, VMI.

75 James L. Merritt to Pa, May 16, 1864, James L. Merritt Letter, VMI; Pace, Halls of Honor, 107.
then they were held in Richmond, rather than Lexington. Neighboring Washington College fared slightly better. By 1864 almost no one remained in the college department. Nearly all of the approximately sixty students enrolled were in the preparatory department for boys too young to fight. The trustees of Washington College pleaded with Hunter and his men to spare their campus since they had no military affiliation and because George Washington had provided for the campus and buildings. The soldiers did not burn the buildings, but they destroyed the laboratory apparatus and vandalized the literary societies' libraries. The college managed to reopen in the fall of 1864 for a few dozen students who were under eighteen or disabled.  

The University of Virginia's proximity to the front lines led to its frequent use as a military hospital. Already by summer 1862, sick and wounded soldiers occupied every dormitory. To no avail, UVA officials protested the Confederate appropriation of their buildings. School enrollment reached a nadir of forty-six before younger students and disabled veterans nudged enrollment to fifty-five in 1864-1865. Union troops overran the university in March 1865, and every able-bodied student fled. The US army generally honored its promise not to disturb the university. Chapel Hill faced a similar fate as Charlottesville during the following month. Of sixty students at UNC in the fall of 1864, less than a handful remained after the Union occupation in April. “I feel provoked to hear the college bell sounding on as though the college was in full blast,” Chapel Hill resident Charles Mallett wrote. He called the students and school administrators “a miserable set,” saying that there was “not one true man among them” although “they  

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76 Lawrence Royster to John E. Roller, December 7, 1864, John E. Roller Papers, VMI; Pace, Halls of Honor, 114-115; Crenshaw, General Lee’s College, 135-141.

77 Bruce, History of the University of Virginia, III: 312-313, 321, 323, 331-339.
desire to hand it down in History that the dear Yankees, did not interfere with the regular exercise of the college—when in truth there were not five students here.”

Southerners’ pride and honor—the essence of elite masculinity—suffered grave injuries in the Civil War. In the midst of war, restrained, evangelical manhood largely merged with violent, aggressive masculinity as students of all kinds thirsted for war by April 1861. Students who remained at school during the war longed for battle to publicly demonstrate their manly bravery and devotion to the Confederacy. Some students continued to violate rules as an expression of independence. Hazing spread and increased in intensity, especially at VMI, where extreme martial spirit, institutional pride, and frustration at missing the war abounded. The war transformed elite male sexuality through the absence of sexually available women, leading to greater sexualization of middle- and upper-class women. The looming possibility of an early grave forced students to reappraise how to die as a man with honor and valor. Students continued to demonize blacks as a marker of elite manhood and racial superiority, even as slavery fell apart all around them. Despite the continued public projections of mastery, southern manhood and the southern patriarchy were in trouble in April 1865.

The persistent “ridiculous…ding dong” of the university bell summoning absent young men to their daily obligations, which so irritated Charles Mallett, is a fitting symbol of elite white southern manhood at war’s end. With defeat, all antebellum and wartime rhetoric praising the devotion, honor, and manliness of the southerner seemed hollow and meaningless, like a tolling bell none could hear. The bell had always been the

78 Battle, History of the University of North Carolina, I: 734; C.P. Mallett to C.B. Mallett, April 18, 1865, C.B. Mallett Papers, SHC.

79 C.P. Mallett to C.B. Mallett, April 18, 1865, C.B. Mallett Papers, SHC.
principal sign of authority on campus, and so the university continued ringing it, refusing to accept defeat and powerlessness. It was not a death knell, but a call for men to return and reclaim southern manhood.
Two ideas of black education predominated in the later nineteenth century: education for the mind—liberal arts—and education for the hands—vocational training. Liberal arts education, most commonly associated with W.E.B. Du Bois, derived from classical models of education dating to ancient Greece and Rome. Liberal arts education aimed to produce leadership skills, such as reasoning and rhetorical prowess. African American proponents of the liberal arts hoped to train the next generation of black leaders to fight postwar racial oppression in the classroom, courtroom, and statehouse, while also demonstrating that blacks were the intellectual equals of whites. Vocational education, the brainchild of Samuel Chapman Armstrong and later popularized further by his protégé Booker T. Washington, focused on providing blacks with the necessary skills to work in farming, industry, and skilled trades. Whereas liberal arts education was fundamentally political, vocational education was by its nature apolitical. Armstrong and Chapman encouraged students to speak with their deeds as good workers and law-abiding citizens. Equality would only come with time.¹

These two educational paths attracted distinct types of individuals. Liberal arts schools drew more interest from the black middle class, generally made up of families who had been free before the Civil War and had carved out a life of modest economic success. With more to lose financially than most recently freed African Americans, the black elite were more actively invested in the political process and protecting their privilege against the oncoming wave of white supremacy. Despite the gradual increase

of financial scholarships at black liberal arts colleges, tuition—roughly one hundred dollars a year by the 1880s—was more than impoverished black field hands could afford.\(^2\) For the poor, vocational training was a more feasible possibility with its low tuition and the chance to work for the school to pay off expenses. Vocational education was also much more practical to many blacks who simply wanted to get a job in the barren economic wasteland of the postwar South.

Young African American men in these two educational environments tended to have different views of proper masculine behavior. Black males who went to liberal arts colleges like Atlanta University in Atlanta, Georgia often associated manliness with citizenship and civil rights. Their ideals of manhood reflected their roles as ambassadors to the white community on behalf of the oppressed black population. They were generally more serious and focused on succeeding in the classroom, on the athletic field, and in the public sphere. A large number of blacks at vocational schools such as the Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia and Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama refused to consent to their schools’ regulations, which they believed perpetuated white supremacy. Any system that tried to teach them to accept the white man’s whip and gavel was not a system for them. Many students rebelled because, as former slaves and sons of slaves, they understood the meaning of manhood as freedom and freedom alone.

“**My Share of the Peculiar Responsibilities**: Masculinity among the Talented Tenth

Black students at liberal arts institutions exhibited a stern masculinity focused on demonstrating that blacks were the complete equals of whites. The uncompromising

drive for equality made Atlanta men attentive and devoted students, but it also translated to the athletic fields. While school administrators had traditionally viewed organized athletics as a waste of time, by the late nineteenth century they joined students in embracing athletics to develop physical fitness and strong moral faculties.³ Male students at Atlanta University did not always agree with faculty regulations, however, and some chafed at the school’s overly moralistic code of conduct.

Some of the most articulate expressions of black manhood at Atlanta University emanated from the pens of George Alexander Towns and James Weldon Johnson. Born in Albany, Georgia in 1870, Towns graduated from Atlanta University in 1894, went on to Harvard for his bachelor’s degree in English, and returned to get his master’s degree at Atlanta University in 1900. Towns displayed a strong devotion to the cause of black equality and would go on to be a charter member of the Atlanta chapter of the NAACP in 1917 after years of serving as professor of Pedagogy and English at Atlanta University. Towns was a good friend, classmate, and roommate of James Weldon Johnson. Johnson was born in Jacksonville, Florida in 1871 into a multi-ethnic middle-class family with roots in Virginia, the Bahamas, and Haiti. Johnson attended Atlanta University from 1887 to 1894. Like Towns, he embarked on a career of racial advocacy through work with the NAACP, teaching positions in Literature at New York University and Fisk University, and especially through his nationally known poetry, prose, and songwriting.⁴


⁴ Clarence A. Bacote, The Story of Atlanta University: A Century of Service, 1865-1965 (Atlanta: Atlanta University Press, 1969), 130; Johnson, Along this Way, 3-6, 8, 12, 64-65, 121. I focus primarily on these two exemplars of black manhood in part because personal accounts of African American college life in the nineteenth century are rare. The paucity of letters to friends and family largely stems from the low—
As members of the black middle class, Towns, Johnson, and their classmates not only differentiated themselves from other blacks by their socioeconomic status, but also by their appearance, most notably in their lighter skin color. In his semi-fictional Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man, James Weldon Johnson described Atlanta University students from his own experiences as having “the more intelligent types predominating.” Johnson seemingly associated intellect and leadership with having light, straight hair and light-colored eyes that made it “difficult to believe that they had Negro blood in them.” Even the few darker skinned students stood out as “decidedly pretty” or “fine specimens of young manhood…the kind of boys who developed into the patriarchal ‘uncles’ of the old slave regime.”

Johnson did not believe the theories of scientific racism that nonwhites were centuries or millennia behind whites in evolution and the development of intellect and civilization. Instead, historians have identified several factors that helped create a light-skinned African American elite. Throughout slavery, white slaveholders considered the lightest-skinned blacks—those with a more apparent white ancestry—racially superior to darker slaves and often assigned them more elevated and preferable positions, such as working in the house, driving buggies, or acting as overseer. As Eric Foner states,


lighter skinned blacks were much more likely to earn or receive their freedom before the Civil War, allowing them to become educated and culturally and economically established before the postwar period. Heather Williams found that white prejudice further influenced the creation of a black middle class in the postwar period. When white northern female missionaries came to the South to teach blacks during and after the Civil War, they frequently identified their lighter-skinned students for commendation and for consideration for college scholarships funded by northern philanthropists. “By so doing,” Williams argues, “teachers made critical choices about who should enter the middle class, thus helping to shore up and exacerbate racially tinged socioeconomic hierarchies that already existed within freed communities.” Most blacks in the postwar South could not obtain a liberal education, and the young men who went to these institutions grounded their understanding of elite masculinity firmly on that realization.⁶

**Academics and “the Spirit of the Institution”**

At Atlanta University, both Towns and Johnson espoused the belief that a liberally educated black man should be able to demonstrate himself the intellectual equal of whites in order to assert and win citizenship, the true marker of manhood. “The Negro is an American citizen,” Towns wrote in a student essay, “and ought to have the same rights, and privileges as any other citizen, and he feels the denial of these privileges as keenly as any others [sic] citizen would feel them.” He urged that “the Negro must prove the merits of his case, that manhood is manhood, and that the

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possibilities of the mind are not judged on the narrow bases of the complexion of the individual.”

Atlanta University made James Weldon Johnson aware of his obligation to lead the charge for black citizenship as an educated elite man. This change did not stem from the university’s curriculum necessarily, instead “it was simply…the spirit of the institution; the atmosphere of the place was charged with it. Students talked ‘race.’ It was the subject of essays, orations, and debates. Nearly all that was acquired, mental and moral, was destined to be fitted into a particular system of which ‘race’ was the center.” Quickly he began to realize “that education for me meant, fundamentally: preparation to meet the tasks and exigencies of life as a Negro, a realization of the peculiar responsibilities due to my own racial group, and a comprehension of the application of American democracy to Negro citizens.” He continued:

I began to get the full understanding of my relationship to America, and to take on my share of the peculiar responsibilities and burdens additional to those of the common lot, which every Negro in the United States is compelled to carry. I began my mental and spiritual training to meet and cope not only with the hardships that are common, but with planned wrong, concerted injustice, and applied prejudice.

Black liberal arts students believed that a classical education was essential to elite manhood. Consistent with W.E.B. Du Bois’ Talented Tenth model, liberal

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8 Johnson, _Along this Way_, 66.
education for the elite, Towns noted, was designed “to make of men specialists in no one department” but “with the view to cultivating man’s aesthetical nature” by studying the Greek and Roman classics, the building blocks for “culture and development.” As historian Adam Fairclough argues, “the study of Latin and Greek symbolized…black ambition, a determination to share in the highest culture that America had to offer. It demonstrated that some blacks could be the intellectual equals, even superiors, of white people.” With a classical education, black elites could share the same intellectual heritage as white elites and speak a common ideological language in politics and law. While Towns encouraged black women to receive a liberal education, it was strictly the province of men to demonstrate black equality in the public sphere.⁹

Liberally educated black elites at Atlanta University viewed vocational education as unmanly and generally unhelpful to the cause of black citizenship. George Towns wrote that although a black man “has almost every spark of manhood crushed and every lofty aspiration smothered” from being barred from white schools, all-black trade schools were nearly as emasculating for black men. Vocational schools like Hampton and Tuskegee would only perpetuate a black underclass of menial laborers and further convince whites that African Americans were intellectually incapable of anything greater. Towns believed class mobility and equity should not strictly be privileges of whiteness. He hoped African Americans could enjoy the benefits of capitalism instead of only its barriers.¹⁰

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Even if an African American in the postwar Jim Crow South managed to defy the odds and escape from the black “caste” into the middle class, the ideology of political inactivity propagated by vocational schools would prevent them from enjoying their status. Using the example of Hampton Institute graduate Booker T. Washington, Towns related that Washington, “the most worthy founder and principal of the Tuskegee school, although known throughout his own state, must ride in a car with the vilest and dirtiest of his race and of all other races, must eat his lunch in his hand at a railroad stations and must not seek accommodation at any hotel, though he may [be] wealthier and worthier than any of its guest[s].” Under the Hampton-Tuskegee model, Washington would continue in perpetuity as an emasculated social outcast according to the laws of the white power structure.¹¹

“Baseball Was My Game”: Athletics and Student Culture

Another area where African American liberal arts students gave expression to their elite masculinity was on the athletic field. Though seemingly only participating in children’s games, many believed playing sports competitively and demonstrating hard work and discipline could make a compelling case for their equality and deservingness of civil rights. They believed the same was true for being informed fans of sports.

Games involving running and the use of balls had always existed among American youth, but several became formalized, codified, and popularized among

¹⁰ Towns, “The Best Method of Removing the Disabilities of Cast from the Negro,” 6-7, George A. Towns Collection, AUC; George A. Towns, “Is the Idea of Tuskegee and Calhoun Schools the Solution to the Negro Problem?,” 1-2, 5, 13-16, Harvard University Essay, May 8, 1899, George A. Towns Collection, AUC. Towns still saw utility in laborers learning skills, though he did not believe it an effective educational approach for the whole black population. See George A. Towns, “Do we require a Greater Proportion of College-bred Men and Women in the Community?,” 11, 20-21, George A. Towns Collection, AUC.

¹¹ Towns, “Is the Idea of Tuskegee and Calhoun Schools the Solution to the Negro Problem?,” 16, George A. Towns Collection, AUC.
adolescents and even adult men in the nineteenth century, particularly “base ball” and “foot ball.” Baseball and football were not uniquely American; they descended from variations of cricket and rugby-style football (soccer), respectively. Both sports—but especially baseball—worked themselves into the cultural fabric of a nascent American society longing to solidify its national identity. The earliest formal, organized intercollegiate baseball and football games occurred in 1859 and 1869, respectively. Through involvement in the two most popular national sports, black liberal arts students hoped to demonstrate that they were as fully American and worthy of citizenship as whites.

Elite black students hoped to chip away at white stereotypes of black savagery by playing and watching sports well as signs of civilization. The idea of Muscular Christianity came into prominence soon after the end of the Civil War, and it especially took hold in the northern middle-class culture of the missionaries that headed Atlanta University. It transformed body image and lifestyle, emphasizing that a well-disciplined and trained body was not only healthy physically, but mentally and spiritually also. Whereas earlier Christian social thought tended to disparage sports as idle or sinful for arousing the passions, by the later nineteenth century, sports were a healthy outlet for young men. As sociologist Norbert Elias posited, sports were the civilized world’s answer to the inherent testosterone-fueled aggression within young men. Like warfare, except safer, sports provided an outlet for young men’s passions. It would not only

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make them less violent, but less sexually aggressive. As evidence of what Elias called
the “civilizing process,” spectator sports indicated a substantial change in Western
values over the prior centuries. Instead of congregating around events such as the
public immolation of cats in a large bag in 1500s France, patrons could now watch men
face off against each other in competitive, but gentlemanly games of strategy and
physical skill.13

How male Atlanta students conducted themselves on the fields was therefore
extremely important, and athlete and fan alike tended to espouse a belief that elite black
manhood depended on success on the field. Even the annual field day festival was a
source of intense athletic competition. The 1896 field day at Atlanta University
consisted of putting a twelve-pound shot, kicking a football, a three-legged race, a one-
hundred-yard dash, a standing broad jump, a running broad jump, a high jump, a high
kick, the 120-yard hurdles, and the fifty-yard dash. Held in mid-March with snow still on
the ground, attendance was quite good. In front of the school and a large number of the
outside community, Atlanta University men demonstrated their athletic prowess and
were rewarded, among other ways, by having their names recorded in the student

13 Jonathan Fletcher, Violence and Civilization: An Introduction to the Works of Norbert Elias (Malden,
MA: Blackwell, 1997), 24-25; Bundgaard, Muscle and Manliness, 30; Thorn, Baseball in the Garden of
Eden, 98. Demonstrating “good” behavior—in this case through sports—is similar to Hilary Moss’s idea of
“moral suasion.” Elite free African Americans before the Civil War believed their “good”—pacifistic and
undisruptive—behavior could ultimately convince whites of their worthiness of citizenship, a quality which
had become exclusively associated with whiteness. Even with the Fourteenth and Fifteenth
Amendments, Redemption and Jim Crow prevented white recognition of black citizenship in the South.
Glenda Gilmore makes a similar argument about the “best man” idea of postwar black middle-class
manhood. See Hilary J. Moss, Schooling Citizens: The Struggle for African American Education in
Antebellum America. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 9, 31; Gilmore, Gender and Jim Crow,
62-63. For an excellent treatment of baseball spectating as a sign of urban refinement and
Americanization (and by extension, whiteness), see Gunther Barth, City People: The Rise of Modern City
Culture in Nineteenth-Century America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 149-188.
newspaper. Though the event was undoubtedly fun for the participants, glory and success were obvious motivating factors.\textsuperscript{14}

The 1890s were an especially competitive time for Atlanta University students as the baseball and football teams were both in their nascent stages. Atlanta University began playing organized baseball in the early 1880s and joined the newly formed “Inter-Collegiate Base-Ball League” of Atlanta-area black colleges and universities in spring 1896. The league established a twelve-game season schedule, and the overall winner would receive a silk pennant which they would retain and display over the offseason. Atlanta students were extraordinarily excited by the arrangement. A writer for \textit{The Scroll}, the student newspaper, rejoiced at the idea of awarding a pennant to the winner as it would “secure greater interest and better ball playing. The college which wins this year will strive so much the harder to keep it and the other colleges will strive so much the harder to wrench it away.” The idea of competition was especially welcome since, the students complained, “we have not had a good game of base-ball in two years.” At the start of the season in March 1896, the \textit{Scroll} reported that “everyone has the baseball fever from the highest down.” The newspaper expected competitiveness from the athletes and devotion by every fan. “Every student should attend as many games as possible,” the writers of the \textit{Scroll} implored, and “wear your colors, learn our college yell and yell—it—the team must have your support.” Students clamored for a mascot to add to the feeling of school spirit and to encourage “doing good conscientious practice, better than ever before.”\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{14} \textit{The Scroll}, February 8, 1896, March 14, 1896.

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{The Scroll}. March 14, 1896, March 21, 1896, March 28, 1896; Bacote, \textit{The Story of Atlanta University}, 220-222.
As the two-month season unfolded in 1896, it was clear that Atlanta University had been practicing diligently and had amassed a great deal of talent, but it was still not enough for the perfection-demanding student body. The Atlanta University team went undefeated, claiming the inaugural conference championship cup. The student newspaper expressed pride in the team for having achieved its goal of winning the league and going undefeated, lauding the talent and work ethic of the team and the captain’s leadership. Yet the drive for perfection led the writers of the *Scroll* to lambast the team’s yearlong defensive performance, relating it to poor sportsmanship, saying: “A failure in class is unfortunate and disgraceful; one ever misplaying [fielding error] should mean the same.” Even worse, the Atlanta players “did not seem to feel with any keenness the disgrace of poor playing.” 16 Elite manhood demanded crisp play to demonstrate African Americans’ rigorous practice and discipline.

The writers of the *Scroll* wanted more players like James Weldon Johnson, one of the stars of the early 1890s AU baseball teams, who approached the game of baseball like a voracious student. “Baseball was my game,” Johnson recollected in his autobiography. “I not only practiced steadily but studied assiduously. I worked to master what is now known as ‘inside baseball.’” Johnson’s parents were able to afford a subscription to *Sporting Life* throughout his youth, through which he kept up with white major league baseball. Before leaving Jacksonville for Atlanta University, Johnson learned how to throw a curveball from a pitcher for the New York Cuban Giants, a Negro League team. Johnson’s curve was so dominating that he struck out an incredible sixteen batters in one game playing for an amateur team in Jacksonville. “No medicine man ever appeared before the tribe with more confidence in his magic than I

had in mine when I faced the crowd,” he boasted. It was Johnson’s conscientious study and desire for perfection that the *Scroll* demanded from players.¹⁷

In a final reflection on the 1896 season, the *Scroll*’s student author declared forcefully that “the base-ball captain with the support of the student body should demand either the best play or no play of every base-ball aspirant. Let us learn that poor playing is disgraceful whether we win a game or not.” Atlanta’s players had to be polished and refined. They had to look the equal of slick-fielding white National League stars like Bid McPhee, Herman Long, Bill Dahlen, or—James Weldon Johnson’s favorite—Fred Dunlap. Participating in the national pastime was a marker of American male identity, and playing the game poorly would reflect negatively on African Americans. Atlanta students were not trying to break into the all-white Major Leagues, but as future activists and civil rights leaders, they sought to pave the way for all African Americans to be able to rise to any rank previously excluded to them.¹⁸ The baseball field, already an enshrined icon of American male culture by the 1890s, could be every bit as significant an arena of racial reform as the courtroom or the Capitol.

On the gridiron of the football field, black liberal arts students sought to prove themselves men of talent, cooperation, and ability. Just as the Atlanta University baseball team took immense pride in beating other black college teams, the members of the football team aspired to prove themselves the best. They wanted to demonstrate


¹⁸ Johnson, *Along this Way*, 36; *The Scroll*, May 23, 1896. There were three known African American professional baseball players in the 1870s and 1880s. Fleet Walker was especially singled out for verbal and physical abuse by other players—especially the patriarch of the National League, Chicago Cubs’ Cap Anson. By the mid-1880s, National League and American Association league presidents and team owners agreed to ban blacks from the game. See Thorn, *Baseball in the Garden of Eden*, 185-187.
black equality with their play, but football games also gave them the opportunity to prove that they were better men than blacks at vocational schools.

Atlanta University’s football team began practicing in 1893 and played its inaugural interscholastic football game on New Year’s Day, 1897 against the Tuskegee Institute before an Atlanta crowd of four hundred people. In the first black intercollegiate football game in the South, Atlanta won ten to zero. Atlanta challenged a much tougher Fisk University team in Nashville in October, 1897 and fell thirty-six to zero. The team played no games in 1898, refusing a challenge from Tuskegee to focus on beating Fisk in a rematch. Another game with Fisk was not forthcoming, and Atlanta’s solitary game in 1899 was against Tuskegee, whom they defeated sixteen to zero (with a young Atlanta Baptist College professor named John Hope as the timekeeper). In 1900, they had four games on their schedule, which they all won. Much as their 1896 baseball team, the football team annihilated all competition with George Towns coaching. They downed Atlanta Baptist College thirty-five to zero, neighboring Clark University fifty-six to zero, and Claflin University in South Carolina ten to zero. The only especially close game—indeed the only one in which the opponent scored—was in a rematch with Tuskegee Institute. In 1900, Tuskegee was much better prepared and made a game of it, though they still fell to Atlanta in December, seventeen to twelve.

The game against Tuskegee reveals the balance elite black men sought between complete dominance and sportsmanship. Clearly, the Atlantans thought they were

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20 Some accounts of the score were seventeen to eleven. Even Clarence Bacote errs in saying the score was seventeen to zero at one point. See Bacote, *The Story of Atlanta University*, 228. “Atlanta University Football Game Report-Dec. 17 & 18, 1900, Report by G.A. Towns and F. Clemmer,” Horace Bumstead Presidential Records, AUC; Tuskegee University Football Scores Collection, Tuskegee.
better than the Tuskegee men both physically and intellectually, but humiliating them by adding points onto the score when victory was already assured would not help diminish stereotypes of black savagery. Thus they did not run up the score at the end of the game. Elite young men at Atlanta University wanted to be seen as intelligent and athletic but also humane and decent. The idea of sportsmanship was not unlike the notion of chivalric male competition in events such as dueling or jousting where respect for the opponent was paramount. For young men who actively trained to be elite leaders, respect was the highest ideal they could obtain from the white power structure. It was therefore not something they would take lightly or refuse their black brethren.21

Frances Clemmer’s account of the 1900 game against Tuskegee further elucidates the connections between football, class, and elite masculinity. Clemmer framed the contest as one of Atlanta’s “discipline and agility” versus Tuskegee’s brute “physical strength.” Clemmer portrayed the Atlanta team as skillful, crafty, and graceful—not unlike the middle-class society from which many came. She declamed of the result: “And is this not more than a football victory? May we not see in the results of this game another vindication of the power of the higher education to mould men for conquest over their physically stronger opponents in the game of life?” Mental and physical exercise, combined with respect and courtesy—all integral to the idea of masculinity rooted in citizenship—would allow Atlanta students to succeed in athletic competitions against lesser prepared opponents. These same qualities would allow

21 A similar sentiment prevailed in an 1891 baseball scrimmage of the Second Nine (the B-Team) against a local Atlanta team. When a “serious disturbance” broke out after the game, the members of the Second Nine wrote a letter to school president Horace Bumstead to apologize, requesting that no punishments be extended to the First Nine (the Varsity). Though they blamed the other team for instigating the fray, the team made it clear that poor sportsmanship reflected negatively on Atlanta University. See Bacote, The Story of Atlanta University, 221; Atlanta University Bulletin, November 1891, 6.
them to succeed in their lifelong goals of creating equality where Washington’s students would presumably succumb to the status quo.22

“Petty Regulations and a Puritanical Zeal”: School Discipline and Student Behavior

Though most Atlanta University students and faculty agreed that a liberal education and disciplined athletic performance were essential qualities of elite black manhood, there was much greater dissonance when it came to matters of personal behavior. According to James Weldon Johnson, the greatest chasms between students and faculty pertained to romantic interactions and the use of alcohol and tobacco. It was here the paternalistic influence of the American Missionary Association rendered itself most visible.23

Although Atlanta University was a coeducational school, the administration ensured that the two sexes had minimal opportunities for socializing, much to the consternation of the male students. Johnson remembered that “there was no offense in the Atlanta University calendar that more perturbed the authorities than approaching a girl.” One of the most regular “interactions” was that in doing their daily chores, the young men would have often to carry wood into the kitchen, which would take them by the female dormitory. Every young man would gather as much wood in his arms as possible to “make a show of how much wood he could carry, while the unapproachable creatures looked down on him from their windows.” There were occasional social gatherings, but dancing was not allowed. “Instead,” Clarence Bacote writes, “the boys

22 Frances B. Clemmer, “Negro Football. Atlanta University and Tuskegee Institute contend on the Gridiron. A spirited game illustrating some of the qualities produced by higher and industrial education of the Negro,” Horace Bumstead Presidential Records, AUC.

23 For some of the major differences between the AMA and its students, as well as the origins of its paternalism, see Jacqueline Jones, Soldiers of Light and Love: Northern Teachers and Georgia Blacks, 1865-1873 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 9.
and girls marched side by side to the accompaniment of music” with extensive chaperoning. There was a way to call upon a lady but it was complicated and embarrassing. Johnson recalled that “a boy could see a girl upon a written application with the girl’s name filled in, signed by himself, and, if granted, countersigned by the president or dean. The caller was limited to twenty minutes in the parlor in North Hall.” Word of these visits spread quickly and crowds would gather in dorm windows along the path Johnson and other men at Atlanta University would take to make these social calls. Johnson “found this whole procedure humiliating” and, he said, “I made it a point of honor not to make out an application to call on a girl—a resolution I broke only twice during my six years.”

The strict control over romance and dating led to a defeatist attitude among the young men. Instead of creating a culture of rule violators and surreptitious midnight visits, Johnson and AU male students refrained from any type of “sexy talk,” as Johnson called it, but instead talked about girls “always on an expurgated, I might say, emasculated level….There was an amazing absence of realistic discussion of sex; and no boy would have dared to bring the girls of North Hall into such a discussion. North Hall girls, love, and sex formed one of the spiritual mysteries.” Depriving young men of the chance for any type of organic interaction with the opposite sex robbed them of a large aspect of their manhood. This of course was the goal of the Atlanta University administration since the middle-class Victorian ideas of sexuality that permeated the

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24 Johnson, Along this Way, 67-68; Bacote, The Story of Atlanta University, 251. As for carrying wood, William Link notes that working for the school was required in some fashion for all students—farm work for males and domestic work for females. See Link, Atlanta, Cradle of the New South, 124.
AMA encouraged total abstinence from premarital sex. Preventing almost all male-female interactions was therefore the most secure way to ensure this.\textsuperscript{25}

Many students and faculty did not see so eye-to-eye concerning the use of alcohol and tobacco. Atlanta University faculty required incoming students to sign a pledge “to abstain from the use of all intoxicating drinks and tobacco in every form while a member of the school.” Conscientious students like James Weldon Johnson had no trouble keeping their vow, but many others struggled. While at Atlanta University, Johnson and his two roommates (one of whom was Cuban) received permission to go to a St. Louis Browns exhibition baseball game in Atlanta one afternoon. His two roommates purchased cigarettes along the way and smoked them at the game. Johnson refused them for fear of being punished—not because of “any goody-goody motive”—and tried to get them to stop. Coincidentally, the man sitting behind them was a new instructor at Atlanta University and reported them. Though they were let off with only a warning, Johnson’s roommates eventually were expelled when caught drinking wine. Johnson was at baseball practice at the time, but still wondered decades later if he would have made the decision to say no had he been there.\textsuperscript{26}

Writing in the early 1930s, near the end of his life, Johnson still looked back fondly at his time at Atlanta University, deeming it “an excellent school” even “in spite of petty regulations and a puritanical zeal.” AU’s “code of moral conduct was as narrow as it was high,” he recalled.\textsuperscript{27} While he appreciated the opportunity for intelligent African

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\textsuperscript{25} Johnson, \textit{Along this Way}, 68. For a discussion of restrained middle-class black masculinity, see Gilmore, \textit{Gender and Jim Crow}, 62-63.

\textsuperscript{26} Johnson, \textit{Along this Way}, 71-73, 83.

\textsuperscript{27} Johnson, \textit{Along this Way}, 83.
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Americans to convene in a single place to discuss the meaning of race and the best methods to obtain equality, the AMA’s lingering influence in the form of heavy-handed discipline and policing of students was a significant detraction from the experience. While the culture of the institution helped foster a perfection-driven masculinity in academics and athletics, the flawlessness demanded in personal behavior proved irritating and unproductive. Students desired more autonomy to control their social lives and did not believe the school’s “petty regulations” would help African Americans at all in their quest for citizenship.

**Men and Machinery: Masculinity and Vocational Education**

Vocational schools such as Hampton and Tuskegee attracted different types of students than liberal arts colleges like Atlanta. Vocational students often had more modest aspirations in life and did not in general pursue the idea of perfection quite so rigidly. While a number of students went along with the accommodationist teachings of Samuel Chapman Armstrong and Booker T. Washington, many others publicly refused to accept the principles of the Hampton-Tuskegee philosophy. Instead of being the type of restrained, passive, law-abiding citizens Armstrong and Washington desired, they chose to raise hell. They understood the fundamental idea of manliness as having freedom of person and were willing to resist white supremacy and anyone—including their teachers—who tried to force it on them.28

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Unlike Atlanta University, Hampton and Tuskegee students generally came from the lower class, and graduation was no guarantee of moving into the middle class. Many historians have noted that vocational schools deemphasized academics in favor of the physical labor that paid students’ tuitions. Work generally took up at least half of their days, and those in night school worked ten hours each day before two hours of night classes. Hampton and Tuskegee did not teach the classics; instead, their most valuable academic contributions stemmed from training black teachers. Because of Armstrong’s and Washington’s well-known acceptance of black political inequality, their graduates actually had a much easier time finding work as teachers. Adam Fairclough notes that whites often referred to Atlanta University as “Nigger College,” and white school boards were reluctant to hire any black teacher they suspected of advocating civil rights. Accordingly, some students were willing to accept the Hampton-Tuskegee philosophy in order to gain economic stability.\textsuperscript{29}

A handful of students expressed their support for the system, but even these accounts were often simultaneously partially damning. Hampton and Tuskegee Institutes often published student letters as recruiting tools for students and (more

\textsuperscript{29} Anderson, The Education of Blacks in the South, 75; Fairclough, A Class of Their Own, 104, 121, 124; Williams, Self-Taught, 176-177; Christine A. Ogren, The American State Normal School: “An Instrument of Great Good” (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 67. J.P. Weaver recalled that “the little hardships made it a glorious good time” at Hampton. See J.P. Weaver to M.J. Sherman, June 1, 1914, Armstrong Early Hampton Students Box, University Archives, Hampton University. As for the occupations of vocational graduates, a Hampton survey of living male graduates from 1871 to 1908 revealed that they were nearly evenly divided between white-collar teaching and professional positions and blue-collar agricultural and mechanical occupations. Occupation of Hampton Graduates Classes ’71 to ’08, Negro Men, Armstrong Early Hampton Students Box, Hampton.
importantly) investors. Though both schools claimed that the students they selected to publish wrote voluntarily and were chosen “at random,” these pamphlets and books were clearly propaganda. Nonetheless, even the most glowing reviews of the Hampton-Tuskegee model still raised several poignant critiques that more openly unsatisfied students shared. Most of the sideways jabs at industrial education can be found in a 1905 book assembled by Booker T. Washington and his secretary, Emmett J. Scott, titled *Tuskegee and its People: Their Ideals and Achievements*. These two men likely included the criticisms of the school as examples of students overcoming their doubts about Tuskegee, even though that was not always the case.

As the testimony of several students suggests, farming and manufacturing work were not pleasurable pursuits and often conflicted with student ideas about masculinity. Working in the fields and in the hot sun was not work fit for free men. George W. Lovejoy, who entered Tuskegee in 1884, wrote: “When I entered Tuskegee I was filled with loathing for all forms of manual labor. I had been a slave to toil all my life and had resolved that, if it were possible for a colored man to make a living by doing something besides farming, splitting rails, or picking and hoeing cotton, I would be one of that number.” Lovejoy kept his resolution and went into law, although Washington was not happy that he opted out of labor. Another Tuskegee student named Martin Menafee found manual labor equally distasteful. After beginning work in the school’s brickyard, he wrote: “I found that the sun had no pity on, or patience with me; it seemed to blister me through and through.” When he expressed his frustration with the craft, the Director of Industries would not let him change fields, so he pretended to be ill to avoid work. When this did not work, he went home and enrolled in Talladega College for a year.
before returning and having to make a public apology to the school in order to be readmitted. He was humiliated by the experience, but ultimately found his way into farming, which he enjoyed a bit more, though he recalled that “I did not have all smooth sailing, and, at times, I would all but give up.” Another student named John Robinson expressed his loathing of farming because of its connotations of slavery. To him, “even the word ‘farm’ brought to my mind visions of dull, hard work and drudgery without comforts.” Robinson eventually accepted the life of a farmer, though he chose not to finish the agricultural program. He stated that he did not owe his success in farming to the agricultural department, “but to the general awakening and stimulating influence which permeates and is a part of the training of Tuskegee students.”

Others mentioned a similar serendipity in discovering and embracing the zeitgeist of Tuskegee—that black manhood meant labor without protest. Russell Calhoun abhorred Tuskegee for the first eight or nine months he attended. Like others who disliked the institution, Calhoun decided to leave. All that stood in his way was his fare home. He attempted to sell his trunk for seven dollars, but only receiving an offer of six, he opted to stay instead. This bit of chance ultimately allowed him to acclimate to the institution and grow to love it (or so he informed the public). James Canty was ambivalent about the school when he began, but, he recalled, it “was not long at Tuskegee before an indescribable force began to have its influence upon me….It was both refining and energizing. People who know the school…call this force ‘the Tuskegee spirit.’ This spirit, to the student possessing a spark of manhood, is

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irresistible.” Canty found that his view of manhood perfectly aligned with Tuskegee’s, and it was no surprise he returned as an instructor in manufacturing. Calhoun, Canty, and Robinson all eventually embraced manufacturing and farming as perfectly masculine career choices and did not (publicly) object to the type of political statement associated with their decision.31

However, a rare student letter from the early 1890s exemplifies how rapidly a student could turn against the Hampton-Tuskegee model. In the letter, Hampton student V. Sivels lambasted Samuel Chapman Armstrong for publicly shaming him because his shoes were falling apart and because he had been late for a school event. Armstrong insisted that if Sivels had walked on his toes as “a gentleman…would have done” that his shoes would not have broken and that he was acting ungentlemanly in being tardy. Sivels furiously explained that walking on his toes would have cracked the shoes more and that he did not have time to get them fixed because of his regular obligation of ringing the school bell, which was also why he was late. Sivels’ frustration of dealing with an inflexible code of behavior alienated him from the school and its philosophy of passivity. He fumed:

To be told…without a legal reason that I am not a gentleman right in the presence of the entire school, hurts the worst than anything I have had said to me since I have been here. I shall never forget it. I am sure that no student has tried to be more loyal to the school and practice what he or she has been taught than I have. So I must say I don’t like the way you treated me last night and never shall. Even if I come back to graduate.32


The events of an evening turned Sivels against vocational education and Armstrong’s principle of accepting injustice without protest. It also created doubt whether he would bother to return to school to finish his final year. Even the strongest believers in the system could be turned once they realized how little autonomy the Hampton-Tuskegee model left them.

A substantial number of black men at Hampton Institute and Tuskegee Institute rebelled against the strict, accommodationist regulations of the schools because, to them, manhood meant personal freedom and opposition to white supremacy. Resistance came in many forms, such as refusing to work or submit to school authority, fighting, engaging in forbidden sexual activities, and stealing.33

**Truants and Work-Shirkers**

Refusing to work was one of the most direct ways students enacted their manhood ideals and rejected the Hampton-Tuskegee philosophy that honest labor would eventually lead to African American rights. Since laboring for the school paid most students’ tuitions, perpetual neglect of work duties suggests that students did not believe a vocational education, which was little more than practice at laboring, would benefit them.

Students who took even an occasional day off from labor for leisure demonstrate a different understanding of masculinity than black liberal arts students. Atlanta University students did not believe that shirking duty was ever acceptable because the code of elite black manhood required complete attention to duty at all times. For lower-class black southerners attending Hampton and Tuskegee, masculinity was less about

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33 While historians have made brief mention of Hampton and Tuskegee students who disagreed with the vocational model of education, none have demonstrated in detail the specific forms and causes. See Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, 61; Fairclough, *A Class of Their Own*, 122.
perfection and more about self. Vocational students were not unduly selfish; rather, they were more “normative” in balancing their desires for self and others than elite black men, who tended towards a disproportionate sense of self-sacrifice for the greater good. Vocational students who occasionally missed work shared a masculine code of ethics which did not demand unwavering attention to institutional regulations or stigmatize running afoul of the faculty. Many young men made a habit of skipping their afternoon work on the farm or in the shops to play in or attend a baseball game or to go to town to socialize. On Monday May 4, 1885, at least two members of Hampton Institute’s baseball team skipped their afternoon work duties to cross the river and play in a game. Samuel Chapman Armstrong disapproved of anything keeping young men from their work and had forbidden the Hampton Nine from participating, but Alvin Cardozo feigned sickness and J.G. Gomes simply did not show up to work in order to play. A healthy desire for leisure and love for the American pastime drove them to leave campus and try to deceive the administrators. Being in their good graces and toiling for white employers was not high on their list of priorities in the postwar South.

Other students took occasional leaves of absence to engage in leisure. In mid-April 1900, Tuskegee student William Glenn skipped his afternoon work to attend a

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34 In 1871, the Board of Visitors noted that Atlanta University students were “being educated for usefulness and not for mere ostentation, or to gratify a selfish ambition.” See Board of Visitors, Atlanta University, June 28, 1871, Edmund Asa Ware Presidential Records, AUC, quoted in Link, Atlanta, Cradle of the New South, 124.

baseball game. Cheering for his school’s all-black baseball team and enjoying leisure that was often denied to his enslaved ancestors, Glenn demonstrated his pride and virility as a free black man in the postbellum South. Stifling under racially oppressive state laws and the demands of labor from Tuskegee, he chose to take a free afternoon. A minstrel show in November 1886 lured Eugene Wright into skipping night school at Hampton Institute. Even if many whites regarded black minstrel shows as low forms of entertainment, it was still a significant social statement to be part of a public culture of art and dramatic performance.

Students who persistently refused to show up for class or work left little doubt about their feelings towards physical toil. Hampton faculty dismissed Joseph Dibble from school in February 1885 for having “shown an obstinate and disobedient spirit, in absenting himself from work and school on plea of sickness.” Hampton expelled Norris Bibbie and fined him ten dollars after he announced that he would not set foot in the frigid fields in January 1885. The school’s demand for labor clashed with his sense of manhood that had been forged in the fires of freedom. Coerced physical toil was not the life for a free man—even if it paid his tuition. On June 2, 1887, the Hampton faculty dismissed George Butler for being worthless, a lazy worker, refusing to put forth any effort in class, “cutting study hours,” being “regarded as generally worthless and demoralizing” to other students, and for an unspecified “act of indecency” reported by farmhands. Butler was a cancer to the school, capable of spreading his discontent with the Hampton-Tuskegee philosophy of labor and obedience.

36 Tuskegee Institute Minutes of the Executive Council, April 16, 1900, Tuskegee.
Tuskegee had its share of work protests as well, even without the provoking presence of white administrators.\textsuperscript{39} The Tuskegee faculty found Samuel Daggett at fault for "using very bad language in his room," claiming he "refuses to go to work and is generally very bad." Tuskegee faculty warned Charles Reeves for "continual absence from work and school" before he finally left school altogether on his own. Henry Whitfield disavowed work and school completely, while still remaining at the school, and was dismissed for "worthlessness." Jerry Pitts not only left work frequently, he refused to go on guard duty in the student military battalion, earning a citation for "general worthlessness."\textsuperscript{40} Like their counterparts at Hampton, Tuskegee students envisioned vocational training and manual labor as antithetical to manliness.

**Challenges to Authority**

Some of the more dramatic confrontations between students and administrators resulted from school codes of conduct infringing on students' ideas of independence and manhood. Still acting \textit{in loco parentis}, schools demanded a strict daily regimen and complete obedience to faculty that chafed many young black men. Students rebelled against codes of classroom behavior, church attendance, military drilling, prohibition of alcohol and tobacco, and against the direct authority of the school officials.\textsuperscript{41}


\textsuperscript{39} Evidence from the meetings of the Executive Council, which was responsible for carrying out disciplinary measures, is regrettably limited only to 1900, although there are many incidents from that year alone.

\textsuperscript{40} Tuskegee Institute Minutes of the Executive Council, March 3, March 8, April 2, November 19, 1900, Tuskegee.

Disrupting class was one of the most direct means of demonstrating unhappiness with an educational institution. Such misbehavior was legion. George Shepherd, a Tuskegee Institute student, was a perpetual truant throughout the winter and early spring of 1900, but finally returned to classes if for no other reason than to demonstrate his hatred for the school. His teachers cited him for being “exceedingly bad” in the classroom. Hampton student Henry Lewis grew increasingly unhappy with his surroundings in the fall of 1884. After being caught drinking in a saloon in Hampton in October and being given two warnings and put on good behavior, a month later he fired off a tirade of “disrespectful language” in class at one of his teachers, Miss Arquit, for which he was forced to make a public apology. Within a week, however, he started a fight “by chaffing” an equally angry and volatile fellow student, Thomas Hebron, who responded by pulling a knife. Lewis was unhappy with Hampton and looking for every means to disrupt campus life before he made his departure, which he did of his own volition shortly thereafter.42

A number of students resented that Hampton and Tuskegee required church attendance. College students—white or black—were especially sensitive to any form of power exercised over them. Just as white southern men, many black students were uncomfortable negotiating the boundaries between religious submission and manly self-assertion.43 Furthermore, historian Beth Barton Schweiger argues, southern African


Americans made quick exits from white churches immediately after the Civil War. Young black men especially wished to stay away from white church services. Distracting others from worship while publicly demonstrating their irreverence and dissatisfaction with compulsory attendance represented a clear form of protest. On October 4, 1884, Samuel Chapman Armstrong personally chastised Jeremiah Wallace “for making an impertinent noise with his feet” during an address in Bethesda Chapel. In a chapel service at Tuskegee Institute in October 1890, Emmanuel Screens repeatedly refused to move seats even when he was ordered to, effectively creating a scene. One student irreverently disrupted a March 1893 Tuskegee chapel service by loudly cursing another student.

Some students simply avoided church services altogether. The Executive Council at Tuskegee reported in March 1900 that “Elsie Smith gives a great deal of trouble, remains away from church,” and “was very much rude and impudent” to school authorities. Tuskegee students Joseph Blood, James Harris, and James Walker continually absented themselves from church services to venture out into the woods in October 1900. Were they running away into the woods for leisure on a fall day, trying to find spiritual meaning in nature rather than in a sterile house of worship? Or, less likely, were they even holding their own services like their ancestors did in the backwoods of the Old South, away from the white establishment? One of the main reasons slaves

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45 “Wallace, Jer.,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1884-1885, Hampton; Tuskegee Institute Officer of the Day Reports, October 10, 1890, March 22, 1893, Tuskegee.
had held their own services in the forest was to forge their own meanings from scripture and religion and avoid being subjected to the slave owners’ Christianity, which Charles Joyner described as a “highly selective form of Christianity, which stressed obedience in the here and now.” If the Tuskegee students did not like hearing about a submissive Christianity, the woods provided a perfect alternative.46

The requirement of military drill at Hampton and Tuskegee was a monumental source of displeasure for many students. The administrators of Hampton, the first black school in the country to require military drill, believed it would promote a submissive, bourgeois masculinity among the students, characterized by “habits of order, neatness and unquestioned obedience,” yielding “a manly bearing” to Armstrong’s liking.47 Instead, the additional discipline only further antagonized many young men. Students voiced their displeasure by questioning the authority of their drill leaders. Cases of impertinence and insubordination abounded in the late nineteenth century. The angry rant of Hampton student John Barksdale at Sergeant Dawkins in 1884 was so severe that he left school rather than suffer school punishment. The Tuskegee Executive


47 Tuskegee Institute Bulletin, 1897-1898, 89, Tuskegee; Rod Andrew, Jr., Long Gray Lines: The Southern Military School Tradition, 1839-1915 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 90-91. Although Eric Foner and Hannah Rosen described black Union soldiers as among the most masculine and powerful black men in the South during the Civil War, the military was not nearly as glorious for African American men by the 1880s. While blacks were still allowed in the military, they remained in segregated units generally led by white officers. But, above all, the radical visions of equal citizenship circulating about the country in the mid-1860s were now almost all gone, leaving a hazy residue of an overoptimistic dream. By the 1880s, soldiering was no longer the grand masculine symbol of the African American male it had once been and was instead a reminder of the failures of Reconstruction. See Foner, Reconstruction, 9; Hannah Rosen, Terror in the Heart of Freedom: Citizenship, Sexual Violence, and the Meaning of Race in the Postemancipation South (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 44-45; Andrew, Long Gray Lines, 102.
Council warned George Jenkins and Joseph Cants for their language towards two of their officers. Hampton student Davis Banks was warned in December 1884 for “disorderly conduct in ranks” as well as “impertinence to [the] official commanding.” Hampton student Frank Michael appeared at drill for six straight weeks in late fall 1884 without his proper cadet cap, despite weekly notices. Superintendent Samuel Chapman Armstrong noted that Michael had an “aggravated case of shirking falling-in at Roll-calls” and was without a doubt “the worst case in school.” Hamptonian Joe Essel also perpetually ignored the orders of the military commandant of the student battalion to mend his cap. After “repeatedly” absenting himself from cadet roll-call, which was considered “conduct unbecoming a student and an officer,” he was reduced in rank.

Students who protested by refusing to take drill seriously created the most poignant challenges to the military regimen. Individuals like cadets Gayle and Johnson of Tuskegee “playing during military drill” in 1893 publicly demonstrated their disregard for their officers, the process, and school policies. By rejecting the austerity and uniformity required of soldiers, they shattered the illusion of a military environment where officers had the power of life and death over soldiers. Merrymaking powerfully undercut the purpose of martial instruction.

Students irked Hampton and Tuskegee faculty with their use of alcohol and tobacco. Like non-evangelical white students, many young men were eager to engage in these rites of manhood. Repeated school citations reveal that some students

48 “Banks, Davis,” “Barksdale, Jno.,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1884-1885, Hampton; Tuskegee Institute Minutes of the Executive Council, October 22, 1900, Tuskegee.


50 Tuskegee Institute Officer of the Day Reports, March 22, 1893, Tuskegee.
believed that it was their right as free men to use these substances, regardless of how
their school sought to mold them into a clean and sober labor force. Administrators
believed smoking or chewing tobacco was unbecoming conduct for a gentleman. Three
warnings usually merited a suspension, and faculty handed out dozens of warnings
annually for tobacco. One incoming Hampton student worried about his tobacco habit,
fearing he would be unable to quit. He wrote to the Hampton faculty on May 29, 1876:

I have considered the subject of abstaining from the use of tobacco. If I
make a promise, I mean to keep it. I might say as I can say at present I
will not use it anywhere; but there I could not vouch for my keeping it. I
must confess that it has such a hold on me that I am not sure whether I
can withstand the temptation. I will pledge you my word that I will strive to
discontinue the use of it as hard as ever I strove to do anything in my life.

Serious punishments for tobacco use were uncommon. Hampton threatened Joseph L.
Gordon with a reduction in rank after “repeated tobacco issues” throughout 1884 and
1885 if he did not cease. Hampton faculty handed down one of the most drastic
punishments for tobacco in 1884 when they suspended Willis Hodges for a year for
smoking in his room. 51

Drinking was a far weightier but similarly frequent offense. Vocational schools
did not tolerate inebriation or slothfulness among students preparing to be workers.
Hampton Institute’s proximity to a major port, military installations, and several large
cities allowed much easier access to spirits than in the small, isolated hamlet of
Tuskegee. Hampton students routinely went into town and bought, begged, or traded
for whiskey off of soldiers and seamen. On Saturday evening, February 21, 1885,

51 Dennis F. Douglass to Faculty, May 29, 1876, Armstrong Early Hampton Students Box, Hampton;
For a few incidents of smoking, see Tuskegee Institute Minutes of the Executive Council, October 22,
November 19, December 3, 1900, Tuskegee. On those three days alone, twenty-five boys were cited for
tobacco.
Charles Hunt crossed the Hampton River to go into town without permission and proceeded to imbibe until a faculty member found him in a bar room at 11 p.m. and brought him back to campus. He received a reduction in cadet rank and was put on good behavior. Wilson Joyner returned to campus in 1891 so intoxicated that he was unable to remain on his feet without support, all the while denying his drunkenness. After he slept it off, he was expelled. Violations still occurred frequently at Tuskegee. For but one example, in May 1900, the Tuskegee faculty suspended a student for a full year for “frequent intoxication and laziness.” Young black men who sought to show their manliness by ignoring school rules and drinking did not imbibe the message of the Hampton-Tuskegee model. Alcohol hampered labor and caused indecorous behavior that flew in the face of the industriousness envisioned by Armstrong and Washington.52

Some individuals conspicuously fixated on undermining the authority of school officials in myriad manners. At the simplest level, young men at Hampton and Tuskegee could thwart school authority by actually doing very little. Hampton student William Bones routinely refused to clean his room, enduring fine after fine, while consistently staying up long after lights out, making noise and leaving his light on. One of the largest violations of curfew occurred on December 20, 1894 when thirty-six Tuskegee students were out after the last bell.53

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Students tried to evince their autonomy and manhood even more transparently by directly challenging or insulting faculty. In 1886, Hampton student Thomas Jenkins refused to allow the janitor, who was acting on the orders of the administration, to move another student into his room as his roommate. Administrators called Jenkins into “the office,” where he was “insolent” and refused the arrangement until they threatened to call law enforcement to physically remove him. P.E. Jones broke the Hampton discipline code in June 1890 by sauntering across the “teacher’s walk,” reserved only for the faculty. Gary Myers pelted several Hampton faculty with snowballs during a January 1887 snowstorm. In April 1895, Tuskegee student Henry Banks took out his frustrations with student life on the officer of the guard, a student liaison to the faculty who took attendance and was vigilant for disruptions to record and report. Banks became very “disorderly” and attempted to fight the officer of the guard, while cursing him roundly. Banks’ aggression at the omnipresent representative of military discipline was not coincidental. He was among the most loathed figures on campus.\footnote{Gary S. Myers,” “Thos. A. Jenkins,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1886-1887, Hampton; “P.E. Jones,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1889-1890, Hampton; Tuskegee Institute Officer of the Day Reports, April 4, 1895, Tuskegee.}

Hampton’s R.J. Brown constantly rebelled against school authority and amassed an impressively long disciplinary file. In February 1885, a school official found Brown late at night in a Hampton bar. After accruing dozens of absences, he was fined the substantial sum of two dollars for his twenty-nine absences from March roll call. April fared no better for him; he was absent fifty-one times, missing roll call multiple times a day. On May 5, Hampton faculty suspended him for five months after he had directly refused to appear at Sunday morning inspection, exhibiting “open defiance of school authority in a public place.” Brown’s defense was that the commandant “had treated
him with indignity & disrespect in ordering him back to his room.” Being ordered about constantly challenged his sense of honor, dignity, and masculine independence. Not being able to control his own schedule made him no freer than a slave.55

**Sex, Violence, and Theft**

The most taboo violations of vocational schools’ Victorian, evangelical regulations involved engaging in sex, physical violence, or theft. These actions signaled on a dramatic scale students’ disavowal of bourgeois masculinity in favor of a belief that manhood involved freedom of thought and action. Hampton and Tuskegee’s restrictions on sexual interaction were a major point of contention between students and administrators throughout the nineteenth century. While Armstrong and Washington constructed their disciplinary codes to act in place of parents, most male students viewed their time at school as a chance to move into the realm of manhood. Central to their imagined adult lives as men was their sexuality. Historically, southern African Americans had been far less rigid about sex than the puritanical northern missionaries and educators in black institutions in the postwar South.56 After being raised in a culture with more fluid notions of sexuality, more than a few Hampton and Tuskegee students balked at having one of the fundamental markers of manhood repressed.

Vocational schools aspired to socialize young black men and women to consider premarital sex as immoral and sinful, and administrators celebrated when a student would “confess” their transgressions, a (nominal) indication of their acceptance of the

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56 For examples of the differences of marriage, living together, sweethearting, and “taking up,” see Kaye, *Joining Places*, 52. Wilma King Hunter notes that AMA teachers at Hampton could never fully process these different relationship norms which carried over from slavery. See Wilma King Hunter, “Coming of Age: Hollis B. Frissell and the Emergence of Hampton Institute, 1893-1917,” (Ph.D. Diss., Indiana University, 1982), 9-10.
school’s Victorian sexual mores. By December 1886, Thomas Turner of Hampton had been caught multiple times sneaking into girls’ dormitories. To the surprise and joy of the disciplinary committee, he “made a manly confession” of his guilt and was only anonymously reproved in chapel without further punishment. Hampton officials delighted at producing student guilt since it was a sign of internalization of the school’s message of discipline, self-control, and submission over independent self-assertion and individuality.57

Hampton and Tuskegee demanded that male and female students remain chaste, not only because it was prevailing Christian orthodoxy, but because uninhibited sexuality could threaten the productivity of a laborer. School grounds had clearly delineated male- and female-only areas, and crossing them for any reason was punishable. L.L. Vicula of Hampton received a warning simply for being on the girls’ side of campus on July 18, 1891. Seth Hummons, a Tuskegee student, likewise was subject to a disciplinary warning for trying to visit girls at work. The working space was intended to be a sexless area for productivity and reliable, subordinate behavior. Romantic or sexual passion was a distraction.58

Without an admission of guilt and an apology, even relatively minor acts of a sexual nature were expellable. Hampton commandant George Curtis wrote to Mrs. Lucy Laney in 1885, explaining that her nephew, David Laney, “was dismissed from this school Oct. 24th for stealing a book belonging to a fellow-student and filling it with drawings which were vile and indecent beyond description.” Writing love letters of a


58 “L.L. Vicula,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1890-1891, Hampton; Tuskegee Institute Minutes of the Executive Council, May 19, 1900, Tuskegee.
sexually explicit nature to a black female student caused William Lindsey to be expelled from Hampton in February 1887. Tuskegee expelled Robert Hill in July of 1900 for similarly “writing improper notes to a girl” at the school.\(^{59}\)

Hampton faculty especially discouraged romances between black men and Native American women from Hampton’s Indian Program. Hampton administrators frequently found Charles J. Foole around the Omaha Cottages for Indian girls. The Disciplinary Council specifically cited him and warned him for being found with Julia St. C[harles?] after prayers on the evening of February 22, 1885.\(^{60}\) Over the winter of 1887 and 1888, three African American students took “midnight strolls with Indian girls from Winona [Hall],” the Native American dorm. In March 1888, the commandant warned them to cease “all intimacy or association with Indian girls on harm of being sent at once from school.” They apparently did not as Hampton expelled two of them. It is unclear whether the third, James Atkinson, graduated or left on his own, but when he turned up at school event in 1889 and “confessed the midnight meeting” to Armstrong, he banished him from campus indefinitely. Such drastic and unusual measures reveal the severity of Hampton’s restrictions on sex—especially if it occurred across races and perverted their view of the natural order.\(^{61}\)

Interacting with prostitutes represented the height of depravity and idleness. In the spring of 1885, Major Boykin of Hampton Institute ran across a student, Sam Jones,

\(^{59}\) Interestingly in Hill’s case, the woman involved, Lerbeta Lyons, was suspended for a year for “lack of progress” but also for receiving the notes, ergo receiving blame herself for being the object of Hill’s affections. See Geo. Curtis (Com’d’t) to Mrs. Lucy C. Laney, November 2, 1885, Commandant’s Letter Book, 1885-1887, Hampton; “Wm Lindsey,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1886-1887, Hampton; Tuskegee Institute Minutes of the Executive Council, July 30, 1900, Tuskegee.

\(^{60}\) “Chas. J. Foole,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1884-1885, Hampton. The surname is possibly Foote or Toole.

in the city of Hampton “under suspicious circumstances and with improper company.”

The wording strongly suggests Jones was with a prostitute. “Refusing to give any
account of himself” to any of the school administrators, the faculty expelled Jones. The
semester prior, David Thomas Young went into a brothel in Richmond accompanied by
Anna Mose, a female Hampton student. Spending the night together in the brothel, she
later asserted that he twice attempted to crawl into bed with her. These improprieties
ended Young’s time at Hampton. Even away from the watchful eyes of the faculty, he
was still liable for his actions. His willingness to venture into a brothel and his audacity
to try to seduce a respectable Hampton girl was antithetical to the school’s ideology.\(^2\)  

Fighting was one of the clearest forms of student masculinity. Giving physical
expression to anger was a form of self-assertion denied to African Americans under
slavery without the possibility of death. Slaveholders discouraged blacks from any form
of violence, not just against whites, but against each other since it represented damage
of property.\(^3\) Being able to fight was a type of bodily ownership that threatened
vocational schools’ traditional understanding of black bodies as laboring bodies.
Disagreements could turn physical as young black men sought to assert their
independence and establish their honor through bravery and strength in combat with
others. The masculine urge to fight was antipodal to the subdued and submissive

\(^2\) “Sam Jones,” “Young, David Thomas,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1884-1885, Hampton.
To be sure, Young’s was an odd case, and it seems many crucial details were excluded from the record.

\(^3\) For black self-ownership and assertions of the right to fight even under slavery, see John Hope
Franklin, *The Militant South, 1800-1861* (Boston: Beacon, 1956), 12-13; Rex Bowman and Carlos Santos,
*Rot, Riot, and Rebellion: Mr. Jefferson’s Struggle to Save the University that Changed America*
(Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 119-120. Though, as Douglas Blackmon points out,
any type of legal offense by black men in the postwar South had the possibility of leading to a life working
as a convict laborer for private companies in nefarious partnerships with local law enforcement, which
often amounted to torture and death. See Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-
evangelical manhood preached by Armstrong and Washington. When individuals came to blows or pulled guns and knives, they publicly proclaimed that they would not passively accept an insult or slight.

Most commonly associated with antebellum white southern masculinity, honor was also a fundamental aspect of African American manhood in the postwar South.\textsuperscript{64} Insults or accusations of lying or cowardice could precipitate a tussle. In November 1887, a Hampton student with a history of fighting named George Mays engaged in another violent altercation. Mays was infuriated by a fellow student’s purported lies about his behavior. To defend his good name, Mays threatened him and challenged him to fight—though the bout never materialized. Reputation carried immense import for young black males after the war.\textsuperscript{65}

The most dramatic illustration of African American honor at nineteenth-century industrial schools started as a flare-up between two students but eventually involved dozens of armed students fighting over honor and race. After Thomas Hebron threatened two students with a knife in 1884, Hampton faculty deemed him a serious threat to other students and placed him under watch and locked him in the guardhouse. The guardhouse was a punishment Hampton administrators reserved exclusively for Indians who could not be expelled as easily since they lived a thousand miles away.

\textsuperscript{64} Early examples of historians focusing on honor and/or masculinity to only elite whites include Bertram Wyatt-Brown, \textit{Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Bertram Wyatt-Brown, \textit{The Shaping of Southern Culture: Honor, Grace, and War, 1760s-1880s} (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), xi; J.A. Mangan and James Walvin, eds., \textit{Manliness and Morality: Middle-Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940} (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1987). For more recent studies taking a more inclusive view of honor and masculinity, see: Lorri Glover, \textit{Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation} (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 2-3; Bowman, \textit{At the Precipice}, 7, 16-17.

\textsuperscript{65} “Mays, Geo.” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1887-1888, Hampton. Mays was suspended the following month for a year when he fled from a teacher attempting to get his name to report him for another violation.
During the first night of his confinement, about a dozen black students assembled and attempted to break Hebron out. The liberation party brought an ax and managed to remove the door latch, but they were unable to effect his escape. Once the guards and administrators quelled the riot, they charged eleven students with “mutinous” behavior. Five of them left school instead of facing charges, two others were suspended for a year, and Hebron was expelled. Hebron’s recent behavior had demonstrated his unhappiness with life at Hampton Institute, but those who came to his aid tarnished their generally good records to uphold their honor as black men and their superiority over Indians. Since Hampton’s white administration publicly proclaimed black inferiority to whites, black students held immense pride in being more civilized and American than Indians. Once faculty challenged that distinction, all hell broke loose, and Hampton officials never again attempted to put another black student in the guardhouse.66

In response to the spread of Jim Crow segregation, black students occasionally attacked Indians as part of an effort to protect racial privilege. Tension mounted between the two groups, especially during the 1880s and 1890s, as the rising shadow of Jim Crow increasingly limited black freedoms, even as Indians were still able to enter white churches and hotels and compete against local white sports teams. The AMA established Hampton to teach African Americans, and blacks resented Indians for having more freedoms. Black and Indian interactions were somewhat infrequent as Hampton was even more systematic in keeping apart African Americans and Native

Americans than they were with males and females. As Elaine Goodale Eastman writes, Indians and blacks “had little direct contact. They were organized into separate companies, ate in different dining rooms, took their recreation separately, and the racial blocs were maintained in the seating at chapel.” Nonetheless, Hampton faculty could not accomplish total separation on campus, which created the possibility for trouble.

While black and Native American students threw clumps of snow at each other in generally light-hearted fashion in December 1886, a black student named Sidney E. Hunt instead hurled a solid brick at an Indian named John Bear, seriously injuring him. Although the Indian student recovered, Hunt was suspended until the next fall.

Presuming there was little or no prior interaction due to Hampton’s stringent segregation, Hunt’s motive was likely racial. Although white Redeemers were the architects of black disfranchisement and inequality in the South, Hampton’s Indian students were much easier targets for blacks to fight back against. Violent acts like Hunt’s attempted to exert social control over a small, isolated population of Indians whom Virginia granted more rights than they enjoyed themselves. Such fights reflected African Americans’ attempts to retain some honor in staying a rung above the bottom of the social ladder.

A final means by which Hampton and Tuskegee students enacted independent manhood was through theft. Whatever their personal motivations, by stealing students

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refused to conform to the “trustworthy Negro” image that interested philanthropic northerners financing Hampton and Tuskegee. Students stole from each other as well as the school. One student, Benjamin Wilson, not only took various items from his classmates, but stole official Tuskegee stationary that he was able to procure from his job in the school office. He then sold it for profit. In February 1885, Hampton expelled Ulysses Ricks for stealing clothes from the office as well as robbing the school mail and removing all monetary contents.\textsuperscript{70}

The saga of Vincent Gwinn perfectly illustrates student resistance to Hampton-Tuskegee values. In January 1887, Gwinn “stole money and other articles from several fellow students” while working at Shellbanks Farm, an off-campus farm where Hampton often sent unruly students as punishment. The faculty extracted a confession out of Gwinn “after much lying” and decided on a genuinely rare punishment in black higher education. Charles Vanison, an African American graduate of Hampton and the director of Shellbanks, administered five lashings to Gwinn. Instead of correcting Gwinn’s behavior, emasculating the adolescent freedman by whipping him like an overseer would a slave shamed and infuriated him, causing him to run away and later withdraw from school. His idea of manhood clashed too strongly with the institution’s to allow any reconciliation.\textsuperscript{71}

While each individual student understood and experienced manhood differently, one can glean two predominant archetypes of black manhood among students in

\textsuperscript{70} Tuskegee Institute Minutes of the Executive Council, March 3, 1900, Tuskegee; “Ricks, Ulysses,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1884-1885, Hampton.

\textsuperscript{71} “Vincent Gwinn,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1886-1887, Hampton. This was the only record I found of any student—white, black, or Native American—being lashed as an official punishment in nineteenth-century southern higher education.

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nineteenth-century southern higher education. Black men attending liberal arts schools like Atlanta rooted their masculinity in the desire for equal citizenship. They demanded perfection of themselves academically and athletically since they believed displays of intelligence and civilized behavior would ultimately help prove their equality to whites. Some were less than happy with the excessive regulations of the universities, however, and preferred to make their own lifestyle choices regarding dating, smoking, and alcohol without supervision. While some African Americans who went to vocational schools like Hampton and Tuskegee enjoyed the experience and agreed with the goals and philosophies of the administration, many did not. Countless young men recognized too much of the white legal structure under slavery and Jim Crow in the Hampton-Tuskegee model. They did not appreciate the overt message of political passivity and thus expressed their discontent through all manners of unruly behavior in the name of freedom. While Samuel Chapman Armstrong and Booker T. Washington primarily wanted to produce reliable workers, many young students simply wanted to be their own man and make their own decisions, living a life markedly different than slavery. To them manhood very clearly meant freedom.
CHAPTER 5
“FIGHT THE WHITE MAN WITH HIS OWN WEAPON”: NATIVE AMERICAN MASCULINITY AND EDUCATION AT HAMPTON INSTITUTE

Much like the Hampton-Tuskegee model for educating blacks, Hampton Institute’s Indian Program set out to imperfectly assimilate people of color into white, American society. Hampton and Tuskegee wanted to instill bourgeois values and labor discipline into black workers, while also training teachers to instruct young African Americans to follow suit. Booker T. Washington, Samuel Chapman Armstrong, and Hollis Frissell fully expected blacks to remain an outside underclass until white society could accept them at some indefinite point in the future. Similarly, Hampton administrators hoped to convince Native Americans to accept Christianity and capitalism. Armstrong and Frissell did not intend to quash Native Americans’ cultural heritage entirely, however. They wanted their Indian graduates to retain enough of their language and culture to return to their reservations to teach other Indians the superiority of American culture. Hampton administrators believed instilling middle-class values and gender roles to Native Americans provided them the best chance for eventual acceptance into American society.1

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1 The objectives of vocational schools like Hampton and Tuskegee are nearly identical to Carl Kaestle’s pillars of the republic, with Hilary J. Moss’s more recent addition of race as the fourth pillar. With the exception of teaching republicanism, the same ideas that drove the creation of antebellum common schools in the North continued to be the primary emphasis at vocational black colleges in the postwar South. See Carl F. Kaestle, Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780-1860 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983); Hilary J. Moss, Schooling Citizens: The Struggle for African American Education in Antebellum America (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 9.

2 Ironically, by the end of the nineteenth century, Native Americans actually appeared to have a better chance of enjoying the privileges of citizenship than African Americans in the South. Though the Fourteenth Amendment legally granted blacks citizenship (and Congress would not extend citizenship to Indians until 1924), local and state governments across the South gradually stripped blacks of civil and voting rights between the 1860s and 1890s. Jim Crow segregation laws kept blacks out of “white” public spaces, where Hampton Indians were generally allowed. As a small, isolated population under the tutelage of a school committed to preserving white privilege, Indians did not pose a threat to the southern social order. Historian Donal Lindsey writes: “Unlike blacks, Indians were often treated (especially when...
Because of the cultural differences between Native Americans at Hampton and their mostly white, middle-class teachers, students arrived with different ideals about the meaning of manhood compared to their instructors. Faculty hoped to teach Indians that manhood meant restraint and submission to God and proper authorities. Native Americans at Hampton came from dozens of tribes with different cultural constructions of masculinity, but many questioned this definition of manliness. During their years at Hampton, many male Indians held to their beliefs that manhood entailed autonomy and freedom of action. Others seemed to accept restrained, evangelical manhood. The rest syncretized the two discourses of masculinity into a gray middle ground.

More specifically, students’ views of masculinity generally fell into four categories, based on their response to Hampton’s cultural indoctrination. Hampton’s Indian students did not leave private, unpublished writings; only those who misbehaved or wrote in the student newspaper imparted a clear voice in the historical record. Based on this evidence, one of the most common student reactions to school authority was minor resistance. These individuals occasionally broke Hampton regulations, sometimes intentionally and sometimes because of linguistic and cultural misunderstandings. They did not conform to white, middle-class masculinity, but they did not offer violent or frequent protest. A small group offered major resistance, vigorously contesting every aspect of the boarding-school experience. They proved unwilling to compromise their native beliefs or conceptions of autonomous manhood, even after physical and psychological punishment. Other students became completely acculturated, as shown in their writings in the Indian newspaper and their general

among easterners) as the equals of whites in regard to public accommodations, schools, employments, wages, union affiliation, and even marriage.” See Donal F. Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute, 1877-1923* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 164.
absence from disciplinary records. Publicly, they condemned tribal Native American
culture and masculinity. A final group of students experienced transculturation and
embraced both white and Native American identities. They displayed elements of both
autonomous and evangelical masculinities. They often used their unique position to
critique both white and uneducated, unassimilated Indians.³

As educators in the postwar South established colleges for African Americans,
some also turned their attention to the education of Native Americans. Most American
Indians had been removed from the Southeast decades before the Civil War. A tiny
number of Indians matriculated through antebellum southern academies and colleges
like Maryville College in Tennessee. A few Indian preparatory schools such as the
Choctaw Academy in Kentucky had operated briefly, but there were no institutions
devoted specifically to Indian higher education in the 1860s South.⁴ By the 1870s, a
movement quickly developed among East Coast reformers and educators to establish

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³ Sociologist Terry Huffman’s study of present-day Native American identity and responses to college
environments strongly influenced my analysis of Native American masculinity. He believes contemporary
Indian student responses can be classified as assimilated, marginal, estranged, or transculturated. I have
kept assimilated and transculturated as labels, but I have replaced marginal with “minor resistance” and
estranged with “major resistance.” Whereas the estranged and those offering major resistance are
essentially equivalent, there are some differences between marginal and minor resistance. Huffman uses
marginal to imply almost a nihilistic ambivalence, whereas my minor resisters were upset with the
Hampton experience but did not necessarily feel completely alienated from their home culture (at least
yet). For his definitions, see Terry Huffman, American Indian Higher Educational Experiences: Cultural
Visions and Personal Journeys (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), 11, 102. Clyde Ellis’s study of the Rainy
Mountain Boarding School demonstrates the varying Native American responses to assimilationist
philosophies. Some resisted while others welcomed the opportunity. See Clyde Ellis, To Change Them
Forever: Indian Education at the Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1893-1920 (Norman: University of

⁴ As Donal Lindsey indicates, Hampton Institute was not the first boarding institution to host Native
Americans. That honor belongs to Lincoln and Howard Universities. Lindsey does not see either of these
as “precedent setting,” however, since “neither institution formulated an organized, well-developed plan
leading to the proliferation of Indian schools.” See Lindsey, Indians at Hampton Institute, 12, 21. Indian
higher education was extremely rare in the 1860s United States—not just the South, which I define as
east of the Mississippi River and south of the Mason-Dixon Line. For the extraordinary example of
Cherokees establishing their own female seminary in Indian Territory (Oklahoma) in 1851, see Devon A.
Mihesuah, Cultivating the Rosebuds: The Education of Women at the Cherokee Female Seminary, 1851-
off-reservation boarding schools where Native Americans could be exposed to Anglo-American culture and values with the ultimate goal of assimilation.\textsuperscript{5} Purely by circumstance, the first major off-reservation boarding school to educate Indians began at Hampton Institute in Virginia in April 1878. The program received much national attention, yet Hampton remained the only Indian boarding school in the Southeast throughout the end of the century.

The Hampton experiment in educating Indians grew out of the 1875 imprisonment of about 150 Kiowa, Comanche, Cheyenne, and Arapaho Indians in Fort Marion in Saint Augustine, Florida, for their part in an uprising in Oklahoma. The warden of the captured Indians, United States Army Captain Richard Henry Pratt, had developed an interest in reforming and educating Native Americans from his military service in the West. He allowed the Indian captives freedom to roam about Saint Augustine, giving them the power to police themselves while they received a basic education at the hands of American Missionary Association teachers—including sometimes Harriet Beecher Stowe, who wintered there. After two years, Pratt and his military superiors decided to relocate the Indians to an eastern school to complete their educational experiment. When no white schools expressed interest, Pratt turned to Samuel Chapman Armstrong at Hampton Institute to see if his school for African Americans would take Indians. Armstrong initially wanted only a few Indians, but the promise of lucrative government funding for the students drove him to acquire as many as possible. In April 1878 Pratt arrived at Armstrong’s school with fifteen students (with

\textsuperscript{5} Indian day and boarding schools on reservations appeared first, but reformers were not happy with the design because they worried parents could still interfere with their children’s cultural learning. See David Wallace Adams, \textit{Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928} (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995), 28-31.
two more to come). Pratt stayed on for a year and helped recruit Indians from the West before leaving to begin his own Indian boarding school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.\textsuperscript{6}

From its humble beginnings, Hampton’s Indian Program grew rapidly. Over the next ten years, 417 Native Americans passed through Hampton, the majority of them Sioux. In all, Donal Lindsey reckoned, 1,388 Indian students from sixty-five tribes came to Hampton from 1878 until the program ended in 1923. At its pinnacle from 1883 to 1902, over 120 Indians attended each year. Even as the number of primary schools on reservations increased, the vast majority of Indians who came to Hampton required five years of grammar and prep school before they could enter the standard normal school for educating teachers. Government funding for Indian students only lasted three years, at which point many returned to their reservations. About a dozen students per year secured outside, private funds and continued through the five-year Indian program and into the normal school, from which around 160 Native Americans graduated.\textsuperscript{7}

Hampton began the process of removing and refashioning Native Americans’ cultural and masculine identities immediately upon their arrival. The first thing faculty did to an Indian male was cut his hair, even though many Indians believed this would cause the death of a close relative. Afterward, they put him in a “blue school uniform, cap, and uncomfortable brogan shoes,” which “cut links to the Indians’ spirit world contained in traditional dress and adornment.” Male Indians experienced this alienation greater than females since their dress and hair largely went unchanged. Often Hampton at least partially Christianized the student’s name. Though Hampton was

\textsuperscript{6} Lindsey, \textit{Indians at Hampton Institute}, 28-30; Robert Francis Engs, \textit{Educating the Disfranchised and Disinherited} (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), 117.

\textsuperscript{7} Lindsey, \textit{Indians at Hampton Institute}, xi; Engs, \textit{Educating the Disfranchised and Disinherited}, 119, 121.
atypical in only changing names with students' permission, the existence of students with names like “Julius Caesar” suggests at least occasional levity on the part of white administrators in consigning identities. After all, naming black slaves after Greek and Roman statesmen of antiquity was common earlier in the nineteenth century as a form of mockery of the unfree non-citizen in juxtaposition to a great civic leader.8

In attempting to refashion the appearance of male Native Americans, school administrators demanded that he sound like a white man. Hampton forbade Indian students from speaking their native tongues for much of the day and most days of the year. They could only lapse into their native language before breakfast, after supper, on Sundays, and on holidays. Since Armstrong hoped to train Indians as cultural missionaries to their tribes, he wanted them to retain proficiency in their native language. Hampton’s policy may appear lenient compared to Pratt’s complete prohibition of “Indian talk” at Carlisle Academy, but it repressed and frustrated students. According to Donal Lindsey, students were given “pretty badges” known as “eagles” if they spoke only English “and were fined a quarter and sent to the commandant each time they did not.” Though many pupils had prior exposure to English at a primary school, it was still a difficult regulation to accept.9

Resistance: Masculinity of Defiance and Determination

Resistance was a common reaction for Native American students attending a boarding school that attempted to separate them from their traditions. Historian David


Wallace Adams argues that resistance arose from psychological, environmental, and political tensions. Psychologically, Hampton subjected Indians to “acculturation stress,” “cultural dissonance,” “cognitive dissonance,” and the loss of “cognitive control.” Adams focuses on the challenge to cognitive control as the primary psychological trigger for rebellion. Cognitive control refers to the “maintenance” of a cultural worldview, which acts as a filter of one’s experiences. This filter sorts out the complexities of sensory stimuli and makes sense of a person’s thoughts and interactions. Psychologist George Spindler writes: “Confront a native who is already operating with a complex cognitive system with another that is equally complex and divergent in a conflicting way and the result may be failure—a breakdown in the ability to think at all. His cognitive control may be threatened.” Without cognitive control, the individual “has no ability to predict, to plan, to choose, to put things first, to keep his wits about him.” Indians immersed in a vastly different American culture at Hampton had to try to synthesize two incongruous worldviews. Many rejected Anglo-American culture, finding that resistance offered them the best chance to feel normal and think clearly again.  

The environmental change prompted Indian resistance. Adams writes that “the forced separation of parents and children was traumatic for the children, and following that they were thrown into a completely alien environment where strangers (white ones at that) stripped away all exterior indicators of tribal identity.” Besides changing students’ appearance, dress, language, and names, “Hamptonians inadvertently insulted Sioux warriors,” the dominant tribe at Hampton, “by voicing their names in

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public, by asking reasons for their actions, and by closely questioning them without giving time for reflection.” Students’ failure to follow rules in the harsh new environment often resulted in corporal or psychological punishment. Indian students had not expected to travel so far from home or be away so long. As Adams relates, “it is hardly surprising that in the first few days and weeks the tortured sound of grieving children crying themselves to sleep was a regular feature of institutional life.”

Resistance could also assume a political form, especially for older students. For them, Adams argues, “it took little imagination to discern that the entire school program constituted an uncompromising hegemonic assault on their cultural identity.” Most parents feared their children losing their identity and warned them of this before they left. Compulsory prayer services and history lessons justifying Manifest Destiny and American treatment of Indians confirmed parents’ and students’ fears. Faced with this curriculum, for many Indians, “acquiescence was tantamount to racial betrayal.”

**Minor Resistance**

Students who offered minor resistance to Hampton regulations demonstrated that they did not exchange their cultural values for white values, but retained traditional Native American ideas of masculinity. Unlike major resistance, minor resistance did not intentionally seek to undermine Hampton’s ideology. It was more often an expression of learned traditional masculine behaviors, and students usually accepted their punishment without protest or frequent repeat offenses. Certainly some of these minor violations arose primarily because of cultural and linguistic barriers. Some entered with little or no knowledge of English, and many did not understand the Christian idea of sin.


or shame. Although most minor resisters “learned their lesson” and did not repeat their mischief, it is impossible to determine whether they accepted Hampton’s bourgeois, Christian morality or simply learned how to avoid detection and punishment for their traditional ideals. Indian students exhibited minor resistance through speaking their native languages, fighting one another, and using tobacco and alcohol.

Often stemming from unfamiliarity with the English language and Hampton’s rules, “talking Indian” constituted one of the most frequent forms of minor resistance. Many students punished for “speaking Indian” were otherwise well-behaved. Young Eagle received two twenty-five-cent fines for speaking in his tribal language in the dining hall in November 1886 and again the following May. For his second offense, he was sentenced to extra work. Harry Hand earned a fine for not using English on December 16, 1892, and was fined with George House and John Charging Hawk for “speaking Indian” on December 30. Of these students, only George House experienced any other serious disciplinary issues. House ran afoul of the faculty again in April 1893 after eating his dinner out of a bucket. Clearly, House was not adjusting to Hampton’s standards of “civilized” life. His language violations with Hawk and Hand do not seem an act of conspiracy, but of familiarity. With generally clean records, these students probably did not speak their tribal languages to irk Hampton officials. More likely it stemmed from habit and convenience or the assumption they would not be caught.

13 “Young Eagle,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1886-1887, Hampton; “Running With,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1887-1888, Hampton; “George House,” “Harry Hand,” “John Charging Hawk,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1892-1893, Hampton. Jon L. Brudvig’s catalog of Hampton Indian students was very useful for me throughout this chapter in establishing names, tribes, and dates of attendance of Indian students. According to him, Charging Hawk and Hand were both Sioux, and Hand was an Oneida from Wisconsin. See Jon L. Brudvig, ed., “Hampton Normal & Agricultural Institutes American Indian Students, 1878-1923,” http://twofrog.com/hampton.
Another way that Indian students displayed casual disdain for the Hampton code of conduct was through fighting a fellow Indian student. Punching and shoving were rampant throughout nineteenth-century educational institutions—white, black, or Indian. Fighting was not necessarily an act of rebellion, but a common expression of honor and manhood which flew in the face of Hampton’s evangelical disciplinary code. In April 1885, Fore Star was sentenced to four Mondays of work for fighting with Sam Darter. On November 3, 1888, a fight occurred between Hyson Powless and Frank Tebo. They both accepted the other’s challenge to fight, making the perpetrator unclear, but Powless seemed to get the better of it as he injured Tebo with a kick to the forehead. Neither was allowed to leave the school grounds for any reason for a month.14

Some Indian students who offered only minimal resistance over issues like tobacco and alcohol were still subjected to Hampton’s most cruel and torturous disciplinary measure: confinement in the guardhouse. The guardhouse was an unlit, poorly ventilated cell under the principal’s office, where Indian students were sent for offenses that would have resulted in suspension or expulsion for black students. Reverend Thomas Spencer Childs published a report in 1887 on the living conditions of Hampton Indians, which led to small improvements in lighting and ventilation, but conditions still remained abysmal.15 The guardhouse existed because expelling Indian


15 Childs had some experience in government negotiations with Native Americans and was chosen by Acting Indian Commissioner Alexander Upshaw to investigate complaints made by a local Hampton woman, Caroline E.G. Colby, that Hampton mistreated its Indian students. The report was extensive in its condemnation of the diet, sanitation, and treatment of Hampton’s Native American students. Childs specifically decried the existence of the guardhouse as cruel and unjust. Upshaw and the Bureau of Indian Commissioners ultimately did little with the report besides temporarily prohibiting Armstrong from using the guardhouse. It was then that Armstrong somewhat improved the room, diet, and sanitation. See Lindsey, Indians at Hampton Institute, 220-233.
students was costly and counterproductive for Hampton. The school sought as many Indians as possible to keep federal grant money for Indian education, and Hampton administrators wished only to send acculturated or transculturated students back to western reservations. Armstrong believed that solitary confinement would give the student time enough to think, confess their wrongdoing, and tell them where they acquired the banned substance.\textsuperscript{16}

Using tobacco was a means of reenacting rituals of male Indian adulthood that students had observed in their native cultures. On February 1, 1893, Oneida student Alex Parkhurst emerged from the dank guardhouse after a nearly weeklong stay for refusing to move to the front of his classroom as a punishment for misbehaving. Almost immediately, he commenced chewing tobacco, and at once the faculty sent him back in for another six days. Parkhurst’s dismissive behavior might have qualified as major resistance had he not broken down and agreed to reform during his second stint in the guardhouse. He eventually “consented to do his best in everything and would not give any more tobacco to any of the boys again.” Parkhurst’s vision of manhood did not compel him to continue fighting Hampton’s regulations. The harshness of the punishment outweighed his desire to make his own choices as a man.\textsuperscript{17}

Consuming alcohol also constituted a learned rite of manhood for Native Americans at Hampton. Purchasing alcohol from soldiers on the nearby military bases further “recreated conditions on the reservations.”\textsuperscript{18} Alcohol was a common ingredient

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\item \textsuperscript{16}Engs, \textit{Educating the Disfranchised and Disinherited}, 123; Lindsey, \textit{Indians at Hampton Institute}, 225.
\item \textsuperscript{17}“Alex Parkhurst,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1892-1893, Hampton.
\item \textsuperscript{18}Lindsey, \textit{Indians at Hampton Institute}, 160.
\end{itemize}

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in both major and minor Native American resistance at Hampton. Unlike major resisters, though, minor resisters often made sure not to get caught drinking again.

Since Americans stereotypically considered alcoholism universal among Indians, Hampton punished the use of intoxicants especially harshly—even for first-time offenders. In April 1885, Fore Star became one of precious few students to avoid the guardhouse as punishment for drinking. Most were not so lucky. In September 1888, upon returning from a summer “outing”—a system in which Indian and black students apprenticed in a northern workshop for the summer—several Indians were found drinking on a riverboat on the Hudson River. Thomas Ikinicapi, Frank Keokuk, Thomas Goodwood, Moses Culbertson, and Thomas Wildcat Alford were all confined in the guardhouse as soon as they returned to Hampton. A Native American student named Andrew Johnson was thrown into the guardhouse on February 10, 1889 after acquiring liquor with George Haas and Frank Bagham the night before. Another student who chose the name of a former president, William Harrison, was caught purchasing spirits in Hampton in November 1892 and had a lengthy stay of nine days in the guardhouse and was sentenced to confinement on Hampton grounds for two months afterwards.\footnote{“Fore Star,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1884-1885, Hampton; “Ikinicapi,” “Frank Keokuk,” “Wildcat (Thompson Alford),” “Thomas Goodwood,” Moses Culbertson,” “Andrew Johnson,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1888-1889, Hampton; “William Harrison,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1892-1893, Hampton.}

Unlike the American legal system, Hampton’s tribunals did not presume innocence and seek to prove guilt. Hampton faculty suspected Charles Spotted Eyes of intoxication on May 19, 1885, but could not extract a confession. Instead of turning to evidence to prove his guilt, they simply locked him in his room from May 22 to May 27, hoping he would confess. Yet by the sixth day of his confinement he was finally allowed
out after “asseveration” of his innocence. Spotted Eyes never succumbed to pressure and falsely accepted blame. Neither did he attempt to break free from his confinement as angrier classmates might have. Unlike major resisters, his idea of manhood did not involve turning to violence or other forms of extreme protest.20

**Major Resistance**

Hampton’s attempts to indoctrinate Native Americans drove some students to massive resistance. To prove themselves as Native American men, major resisters rejected the values of evangelical white manhood taught by Hampton. Already angered that their tribes had been lied to, decimated, and displaced by the United States for generations, they refused to let white Americans change their understanding of manhood. These students did not oppose one or two regulations but the entirety of Hampton’s disciplinary code. Whenever possible they spurned rules, flaunted their rejection of authority, and resisted all types of discipline. They believed Hampton’s standards of conduct were utterly invalid and inapplicable to them as Indian men.

Two of the most notorious student rebels were brothers Frank and Peter Black Hawk. Frank, the elder brother, arrived at Hampton in 1881 and was notable for being the first “black Indian.” Raised by a Lakota mother, the Black Hawks were already fluent in Lakota as well as English. Unlike most Indians, they were able to move between black and Indian social groups seamlessly, even with Hampton’s segregated housing and scheduling. Frank’s disciplinary issues earned him the moniker of “bad boy” from the Institute, which believed him so poorly behaved because he “inherited the infirmities of both races.” Frank never warmed to the institute and never reformed.

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After graduation he served eighteen months in prison for stealing whiskey and was later convicted of aiding the murder of a white family.\textsuperscript{21}

The Black Hawks expressed their loathing for white values and rejection of Christian masculinity through a plethora of violations. Frank Black Hawk’s infractions ran the gamut. On October 29, 1884 Frank “procured a drink of whiskey…through a Hampton boy.” The tenth of November he was reported for disturbing an Indian prayer meeting. Two weeks later, faculty found him around Winona, the Indian girls’ dormitory, which was strictly off-limits to males. The following February he was caught smoking after lights out (and was again accused of it on May 8). On April 1, the sergeant in charge of drill reported him for “not falling in & of walking around while the roll was being called.” Finally, Hampton put him in the guardhouse for a week on May 14 for his second alcohol violation of the year.\textsuperscript{22} Frank Black Hawk repeatedly used tobacco and alcohol, challenged Hampton’s religious authority by disrupting mandatory religious services for Native American, and ignored the sexual boundaries set by the institution.

His brother’s disciplinary record was similar. In the fall of 1889, Peter Black Hawk was caught drinking, talking and absenting himself from both drill and chapel services, breaking windows in the Wigwam, and repeatedly refusing to black his shoes and don his uniform coat as ordered. He was caught with liquor again the following February and placed in the guardhouse—with an all-day guard—for nine days.\textsuperscript{23} Like

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\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{22} “Black-Hawk, Frank,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1884-1885, Hampton. Hampton’s earliest extant Discipline Books are for 1884-1885, which was Frank Black Hawk’s final year.
\end{itemize}

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his brother, Peter Black Hawk refused to stop drinking. He apparently saw alcohol consumption as a sign of Indian manhood, and he likely welcomed the temporary escape from the prison-like restrictions of Hampton that drink provided. Even more than Frank, he was adamant about standing up to Hampton’s authority figures, especially preachers and military officers—two of the most reviled characters on reservations since they were the embodiments of cultural and martial oppression.

Peter Black Hawk’s destruction of private property may have been part of a larger vein of major resistance in the aftermath of the Dawes Severalty Act, which proved devastating to Native Americans. Enacted by Congress in 1887, the law privatized tribal Indian lands to encourage them to adopt sedentary farming (despite most Indians’ opposition). By damaging private property, Black Hawk and others mocked American attachment to an abstract idea of “ownership” of land. While held in the guardhouse on December 1, 1889, Jones Hill knocked out all the glass in the windows (which had only been added after Childs’ 1887 report). After his ten-day imprisonment in the guardhouse in February and March 1890, Pawnee Thomas Pratt went on a spree, breaking windows and knocking down brickwork in the bricklaying department. April 1 saw perpetual agitators Charles Parkhurst, Philip Long Tail, and Walter Decora combine in “lawless destruction of property.”

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23 “Peter Black Hawk,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1889-1890, Hampton.

property of Hampton, their literal and figurative prison, young Indian men forcefully declared their contempt for cultural imperialism and its physical manifestations.

Male Indian students were also able to exploit their non-Christian sexuality as a form of major rebellion. To recreate reservation conditions and spurn Hampton’s reform efforts, some students snuck away to town to find soldiers to procure prostitutes—and alcohol—for them. Several students bore the unfortunate marks likely caused by this experience. Samuel Four Star was diagnosed with venereal disease on January 31, 1887 and was reduced in cadet rank for it. So was Martin Hawk during the following year. In the 1887-1888 school year alone, Hampton disciplined Hawk frequently. He was reported for “talking Indian” in class in November 1887, and his disobedience to a faculty member at the dinner table in January 1888 resulted in taking meals of strictly bread and water in his room until he apologized. In June, he left night school, claiming illness, but he in fact went to the baseball diamond and then a social gathering. Discovered and sent to his room, he was locked in the guardhouse the next morning. He resisted the student officer and was only moved after handcuffing. Martin Hawk’s venereal disease, uncovered in March, led to charges of “licentious conduct,” which he denied. Sexual activity outside of marriage did not constitute immoral behavior to Indians like Hawk and Four Star who vehemently resisted Hampton’s evangelical vision of manhood.


26 “Samuel Four Stars,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1886-1887, Hampton; “Martin Hawk,” “M. Hawk,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1887-1888, Hampton. As sometimes happened with especially disruptive students, the enormous disciplinary book page was not spacious enough to record Hawk’s misdeeds, necessitating a second entry in the annual record. N.B. Samuel Four Star’s name appeared as “Four Stars” in the Discipline Books.
Students found other paths to violate Hampton’s sexual regulations besides visiting prostitutes. Walter Decora repeatedly found himself in the guardhouse. After a three-day stint in January 1888 for insubordination to a school official, administrators found “obscene drawings” on the walls of the guardhouse. Decora continued protesting the school’s values of submission and chastity even while imprisoned. By defacing property with depictions of sex, he forced Hampton’s faculty to confront an issue middle-class Victorians tried to ignore in public. Another perennial problem student for Hampton administration, Harry Hunter, was found “on female grounds” in April 1888. This was one of his thirty-two disciplinary citations for that school year alone. Antoine De Rockbraine, fined multiple times for “talking Indian,” smoking, refusing to attend Indian prayers, and “conduct unbecoming a student,” was discovered “in company with an Indian girl inside the storm door of V[irginia] Hall during [Sunday] service” during the 1886-1887 year. De Rockbraine’s choice to skip religious services in favor of a romantic liaison speaks volumes of his worldview and ideas of manhood. Rather than hear a white preacher discourse on original sin and the inferiority of Native Americans, he opted to enjoy a romance with an Indian woman equally willing to avoid church.27

Native Americans also employed violence to signal their dismissal of restrained masculinity. Hampton Institute, a place of tri-racial interaction in a climate of cultural imperialism and scientific racism, had surprisingly little violence when compared to white colleges. Not all fights between Indians evinced major resistance. Many were forms of minor resistance, where the purpose of the scuffle was not primarily to rebel against the school. Resistance became much more intentional and “major” when a

faculty member was directly involved. Throughout 1887 and 1888, a Sioux student named John Left Hand repeatedly cut prayers and exhibited little willingness to comply with Hampton’s regime. On May 9, 1888, Left Hand “resisted and attacked” a teacher and was ultimately dragged to the guardhouse only “with difficulty.” By striking out at one of his oppressors, Left Hand imitated the masculine ideals of the warrior. His name transformed into a warning of the power of his hands, rather than an extended palm of friendship to whites.28

As it turned out, violence against black students became one of the few ways for Indian students to secure their passage home. The unhappiest Native Americans at Hampton Institute eagerly longed to return to their families, though almost all were frustrated. Offenses that would cause African American students to be expelled would generally only merit time in the guardhouse for Indians. From 1887 to 1890, David Bad Fish received an astonishing ninety-nine official citations, ranging from repeated violations for “talking Indian,” leaving campus without permission, drinking whiskey, using tobacco, using foul language, disobedience, tardiness, skipping prayers and chapel, skipping drill, roll call, and guard duty, playing cards, and being found in the girls’ quarters.29 Bad Fish’s long list of infractions did not result in his expulsion, but in 1890, one of his classmates earned his ticket home with a violent act. That May, John Block, a Caddo, hurled two bricks weighing “five or six lbs.” at African American Charles Stokes “without provocation so as to endanger his life.” This act seemed especially


29 Lindsey, Indians at Hampton Institute, 158, 160; “David Bad Fish,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1886-1887, Hampton; “D. Bad Fish,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1887-1888, Hampton; “David Bad Fish,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1888-1889, Hampton. After thirty-eight citations in ’86-’87 and a high of forty-two citations in ’87-’88, Bad Fish only received nineteen in ’88-’89.
racially motivated since, according to Donal Lindsey, anti-black sentiments ran extremely high in Caddo society. Not wasting time, the faculty decided Block should “be sent home as soon as permission can be obtained from the Interior Department.” By threatening the life of a black student and challenging the daily operation of the school, Block was able to determine his fate and exhibit his free-willed masculinity. His violent actions scared Hampton officials and earned him his freedom.\(^ {30}\)

Running away represented another tactic of major resistance and unrestrained autonomy. Much like antebellum slaves in the Deep South, “freedom” was a thousand miles away for Indians, and running away was more symbolic than practical. Penniless Indians did not stand much chance to cross the country to their reservations. Perhaps some of them did not comprehend the distance to their homeland or simply wanted to get as far away as possible. However, based on the limited evidence in disciplinary records, it is likely that most students who “ran away” were mainly truants.\(^ {31}\) Once reported missing, they were hunted by local law enforcement and returned to Hampton in chains—usually after a quick stop in jail.

Hampton apprehended most escapees quickly. A few months after Samuel Four Star was discovered with venereal disease in 1887, he ran away. Fleeing on April 17, he was found on April 19 and was held in jail for two nights. He was brought back to campus on the 21\(^ {st}\) in handcuffs and was immediately sent to work with a ball and chain attached. Albert Cedar Boy ran away from school the same day. School records do not


indicate if they ran away together; however, he was also discovered the same day as Four Star. It is unclear where Four Star was found, but Cedar Boy was at Old Point Comfort, a few miles away by Fort Monroe. Since he had fled east toward the ocean, Cedar Boy was probably not trying to run away to his home in Dakota. While it is possible he went to the fort to try to negotiate passage with the military, more likely he was hiding out, engaging in truancy. Absenting himself from work and classes acted as a political rejection of Hampton’s values of restraint and disciplined labor. To try to show himself a free man, Cedar Boy—if only temporarily—flipped the school’s power dynamics and formulated his own terms for the student-faculty relationship.

More than playing truant, at least one student seemed intent actually to find his way back to the Dakota Territory. On February 21, 1885, Charles Van Metre ran away from Hampton and followed the detailed instructions his father managed to send him from Dakota. Van Metre found his way to Martinsburg, West Virginia, and made it all the way to Chicago before he joined a group of Indians returning to Hampton. The school records leave out his method and means of travel, as well as his reason for ultimately deciding to return peaceably. Someone able to venture so far from the school was highly motivated and had money or incredible resourcefulness. Van Metre’s motivations remain mysterious, but his story stands as a testament to a Native American student’s resolve to return to his home, family, and way of life.

32 Another Indian student, John Coutian, ran away in April 1887. Again the records do not state if it was part of a coordinated attempt. See “A. Cedar Boy,” “John Coutian,” “Samuel Four Stars,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1886-1887, Hampton.

33 “Van Metre, Chas.” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1884-1885, Hampton; Lindsey, Indians at Hampton Institute, 160, 171-172, fn. 12. Adding to the mystery of Van Metre’s escape is the fact that Hampton faculty rigorously inspected student correspondence in part to prevent such discussions of leaving school from occurring.
Even without fleeing campus, some still protested their shackling and imprisonment through improbable escapes from confinement. These students exhibited resoluteness, mental and physical strength, and craftiness—all characteristics of a strong Native American man—in resisting Hampton’s discipline. John Running With was repeatedly punished for acts of disobedience throughout the 1886-1887 year, and disorder and impertinence to Hampton’s commandant led to his imprisonment in the guardhouse on March 21, 1887. Running With shocked and frightened Hampton administrators when he “refused all food and attention to bodily wants for 48 hours after confinement.” He broke the plates on which the food was served as further protest of his incarceration. Hampton officials insisted food was “offered regularly in spite of refusal, as well as every other necessary service.” They even sent an interpreter to ensure that nothing further was wrong with him. By his third day of confinement, though, he finally “came to reason, and [a] better frame of mind,” according to the faculty. His hunger strike did not lead to his release (he stayed in four more days), but it gave him power to turn his confinement into a source of anxiety for the faculty. Rather than adopting the restrained manhood of his captors, he fought against their authority in a sophisticated manner. Running With’s days of resisting punishment were not over, either. In January 1889, after creating a disturbance in shop, he was ordered to the guardhouse. He had to be forcibly taken there in handcuffs but was successfully able to bend the cuffs and get one of them off along the way. Even after several years at Hampton, Running With was still unwilling to yield to punishment for voicing his disagreement with school regulations and ideology.\footnote{Running With,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1886-1887, Hampton; “John Running With,” Hampton Institute Disciplinary Records, 1888-1889, Hampton.}
Not all escapes were so dramatic. In November 1887, Henry Little Eagle’s disobedient behavior in class prompted his teacher to lock him in the recitation room. Little Eagle calmly escaped through a window and headed to dinner, where he was caught and confined in the guardhouse for two nights. In April 1889, Peter Bear Heart faced similar captivity in a recitation room after his teacher, Mary Gorton, locked him in for misbehaving. Likewise, he left through the window. Finding a window out of a locked room both symbolically and practically thwarted the efforts of Hampton teachers to instill white, middle-class discipline and submissive manhood in the Indian students.35

Without question, Sioux Joseph Day performed the most daring, dedicated, and resourceful protests and escapes of any nineteenth-century Hampton Indian. Day’s entry in the 1891-1892 Discipline Book was an unparalleled four-pages long—usually only a handful of students per year even filled a page. Day’s notoriety came from the fact that he was able to escape from the guardhouse itself, the most powerful and hated symbol of Indian oppression at Hampton. Day found himself locked in the guardhouse on January 25, 1892 for one of his many rules violations. Through clever planning he finally figured out an ingenious means of escape:

He pulled off a small square of wire grating which covered a ventilation hole in the inner wall of the cell. Then, having pulled the sash from his window, knocked the glass out, and pulled the sash to pieces, then inserted in the cavity exposed by the removal of the wire grating, and with it succeeded in prying off a board from the wall of his cell. His egress on that side, however, was effectually prevented by the steam-pipes, whose heat had doubtless shrunk the board, and rendered it possible to pry it off so easily. He then used the board which he had pulled off to bend and twist the lowest of the horizontal iron bars which secured his window until he had wrenched it from its socket at one end; he then pulled it out altogether; and by bending the lowest remaining bar upward in the middle, made a space large enough beneath it to admit the passage of his body.

Having climbed through, he went around the passage to [fellow prisoner Cloud] Arrow's cell, which was secured on the outside by an iron padlock. Day broke this to pieces with an iron bar, and liberated Arrow. The two boys then went to the rear side of the building, tore off the wire grating from one of the windows and escaped.

After this incredible feat of ad hoc engineering, Day and Arrow spent the night in the town of Hampton before returning the next day of their own accord. Immediately arrested, Day spent the next twenty days in the guardhouse—an unprecedented sentence. He was finally released on February 15 and avoided the guardhouse for only eight days before “disorder and impertinence” brought his return. At this point, “he smashed everything in his cell that could be smashed, and commenced cutting his way out. Accordingly…he was hand-cuffed” and held for another week. Between January 25 and his release on February 29, Day only slept eight nights in his own bed. Even in March, he had to sleep most nights in the guardhouse as a precaution.

Day did not reform and was in and out of the guardhouse the next several months before illness allowed him to return home. He continued to resist arrest forcibly and exhibit destructive and violent tendencies to those in power. His personal idea of manhood encompassed self-determination, violent self-defense, and protest by any means. Hampton’s mission of producing civilized, restrained men clashed with Day’s understanding of manliness, and no amount of punishment could change his mind.

**Acculturation**

On the opposite end of the spectrum from resistance lay acculturation. Not unlike African Americans who embraced the Hampton-Tuskegee model, some Indian students accepted Hampton’s teachings and saw the need to take on the characteristics of white Americans for the best chance of survival and prosperity. Predominantly

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assimilated students fell into two categories: fully acculturated and transculturated. Fully acculturated students not only followed Hampton’s regulations but accepted the rationale behind them. Many of these students returned to their reservations and worked as pastors and teachers, ambassadors of the promise of white American culture. They usually found themselves uncomfortable and out-of-place in their native culture. Transculturated students, on the other hand, also took to heart Hampton’s educational philosophies and worldview but maintained their tribal identity in the process. The famous Sioux reformer Charles Eastman—though he never attended Hampton—epitomized the transculturated student. He was able to move between cultures seamlessly and used his unique position to advocate for Native Americans, while helping them on a personal level. This was the type of Indian student Samuel Chapman Armstrong and Hollis B. Frissell wanted to produce at Hampton. Ideals of masculinity in transculturated students were much more syncretic than acculturated students, whose values mirrored the Anglo-American middle-class exclusively.

The Acculturated

Fully acculturated students essentially discarded their traditional cultures and worldviews for Hampton’s middle-class, Christian philosophies. These students’ conceptions of ideal masculine behavior aligned with bourgeois masculinity, rooted in moral restraint and hard work. Instead of defending tribal traditions against American cultural imperialism, they embraced American imperialism and exceptionalism, Protestant Christianity, literary societies, military drill, and baseball. Like black liberal arts students, they dedicated themselves to tearing down racial stereotypes of savagery and ignorance in the hopes of obtaining equality and citizenship.
One of the first chances for acculturated Indians to show off their “civilized” masculinity was by writing in Hampton’s Native American newspaper, *Talks and Thoughts of the Hampton Indian Students*, which ran from 1886 to 1907. A resource which has garnered little scholarly attention, *Talks and Thoughts* “was originally intended to serve as a ‘communication link’ between boarding school students and alumni,” writes literary scholar Jacqueline Emery. However, the newspaper soon “enjoyed a broader audience composed of school authorities and other non-Indians interested in Indian reform and the education work of the school.”

A popular topic for Indian students’ columns in *Talks and Thoughts* was American imperialism. By supporting the United States in its past and present treatment of conquered peoples, Native American students could demonstrate their Americanness and “civilization.” The clearest method of displaying this behavior was to lavish praise on the Dawes Severalty Act. This piece of legislation passed by Congress in 1887 was considered progressive for its time in the same way that Richard Pratt at Carlisle and Samuel Chapman Armstrong at Hampton were forward-thinking in “civilizing” Indians by replacing tribal culture with white, middle-class values. The Dawes Act attempted to introduce private property and sedentary agriculture to Native Americans on reservations by giving families or individuals small plots of usually poor-quality land. Many Plains Indians had no experience as farmers, and subpar soil and uncleared land rendered food cultivation difficult and profitless. A large percentage of

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37 Jacqueline Emery, “Writing against Erasure: Native American Students at Hampton Institute and the Periodical Press,” *American Periodicals: A Journal of History, Criticism, and Bibliography* 22, 2 (2012): 178, 181; Daniel F. Littlefield, Jr. and James W. Parins, *American Indian and Alaska Native Newspapers and Periodicals, 1826–1924*, vol. 1 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1984), 357. As a semi-public journal, it would be easy to write off *Talks and Thoughts* as another of Hampton’s propaganda organs like the *Southern Workman*; however, the presence of critical views expressed by transculturated students (which will appear later) demonstrates the degree of freedom to express heterodox views.
Indians sold their lands as soon as they could to pay off debt. Much of the reservation land never went to Indians at all, but fell to white speculators after it was determined to be unused. The Dawes Act not only devastated Indian tribal practices, but also dramatically reduced reservation sizes and Indians’ abilities for self-sustenance. Though Indians would not feel the full impact of the Dawes Act until after 1900, many of its intentions were clear enough, and Hampton Indians writing in the 1880s and 1890s still praised the American government’s efforts to civilize their people.

Just a month after the Dawes Act passed in February 1887, some students already voiced their support. One of the student editors of *Talks and Thoughts*, Omaha Thomas Sloan, was very amenable to the act, declaring that it would bring nothing short of citizenship and manhood to Indians.\(^{38}\) Property was the root of American society and the marker of a citizen and a man.

> At Hampton Normal School, are a number who recognize that the law which has passed was the work of honest Christian men and women who have worked unceasingly to have a law passed which would give the Indian his rights, protect him and make a man of him. Here the day will be celebrated by the Indian students and their friends. It is truly an emancipation day, for instead of the law only punishing, it now offers liberty and protection. Let all Indians and their friends rejoice, for the Indian is now declared a man.

Land ownership provided Indians a physical manifestation of their white manhood. The Dawes Act allowed Sloan the chance to realize his greatest wish as an acculturated Omaha. It was, as he said, his “emancipation day.”\(^{39}\)

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\(^{38}\) Sloan would become the first Native American valedictorian of Hampton’s normal school in 1889 and was a lawyer and politician in his adult life. He became the first Native American admitted to argue before the United States Supreme Court and was named president of the Society of American Indians. In 1909, Sloan was investigated for defrauding his Omaha tribesmen of thousands of dollars. See Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute*, 212-213, 230; “Sloan, Thomas,” Brudvig, *Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute: Male Students, Names G to O*, http://www.twofrog.com/hamptonmale3.txt.
Thomas Sloan believed that the Dawes Act would work exclusively to benefit Native Americans. “This bill practically breaks up tribal organization and liberates the Indian,” he wrote. “This law gives to each individual a home and the protection of the law. As it is known that the ownership of a home securely protected makes a prosperous community, we will hope to see an improvement in the Indians.” He linked private property with the protection of American government, something Native Americans sorely lacked throughout the nineteenth century. Sloan acknowledged that the American government had not always kept its promises, but now sharing in capitalism and democracy offered the Indian a path to assimilation and equal treatment as American men. “If the ignorant Negro, the Irish, the German, the Italian, the Chinaman and many others do not need special law, why should the Indian? Isolated on reservations away from law, order, civilization, what need or what chance have they to improve?” Inclusion into American society would mean great privileges and a hopeful future for Indians.40

Hampton Indians celebrated the anniversary of the Dawes Act every February and continued to write paeans to it through the turn of the century. In an article entitled “Our Indian Day,” an unnamed author rejoiced that the Dawes Bill “gives us the opportunity to reclaim ourselves from an obscure life of barbarism, to climb the ladder of civilization. We rejoice that at last we are emerging from unknown ages of darkness on this great continent, and are beginning to co-operate in the work which God has intended for all men to do.” Like Sloan, the writer believed that private property was the


40 Sloan, “The Day We Celebrate,” 2.
great civilizing factor and that tribal ownership had been one of the major barriers to Indian progress. Through self-sustaining farming, they wrote, “we hope the day is not far distant, when we shall have demonstrated to the people of the United States, that we have become self-supporting citizens, and capable of commanding the esteem of our fellow men.” Native American student Angel DeCora similarly believed that Indians “will have to become a self-supporting people,” and that the Dawes Act “has perhaps stirred up the Indians more than anything else toward civilization.” He argued that most Indians with education welcomed the Dawes Act, which bestowed “citizenship and rights of manhood to the Indians.” For acculturated Indians like DeCora and Sloan, support for the Dawes Act indicated their acceptance of white bourgeois masculinity.

Indian writers in *Talks and Thoughts* also supported the United States’ government in its decision to open Oklahoma to white settlement in 1889. In April as “Boomers” were lining up to move into Indian Territory, one editor wrote: “I think in the long run it will be better for Indians. At first it will be hard for them to get along with the white people with whom they come in contact, for when people rush to any part of the country, most always the poorer class go first, and by the by the better class comes in.” Remarkably the writer’s primary concern about whites moving into tribal lands was class. Thinking of himself as acculturated and bourgeois, he did not fear whites, but only the disreputable lower classes. Indians had no reason to fear whites, he wrote. They would be able to live beside them just as he had with them. Though “some people

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think that by letting white men take up this land, that they will gradually push beyond their boundaries,” they would not, as “they are held in there by law and cannot take up any other land than that pointed out as Oklahoma.” Not even what Helen Hunt Jackson described as “a century of dishonor” had persuaded the writer that the American government remained self-interested and dishonest in its dealings with Indians.43

*Talks and Thoughts*’ editors approved of American annexation of Hawaii in September 1893. Although the native Hawaiians overwhelmingly opposed annexation, the Indian editor wrote: “We are in favor of the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands, not because General Armstrong was in favor of it, but because after reading both sides of the question we have concluded that it is the duty of this country to give the island the benefit of a republican form of government, and guarantee to the people of those islands the privileges which God intended that all His people should enjoy.” Samuel Chapman Armstrong—the longstanding principal of Hampton until his death a few months prior—was born in Hawaii to missionary parents and had long favored annexing and civilizing Hawaiians. As an acculturated Indian trained by Armstrong’s system, the writer was clearly inclined to agree with his teachings. It is difficult to imagine any unassimilated Indian endorsing American expansion for Christ and republicanism. The writer asserted that if any other nation controlled the Hawaiian Islands, it would be “not for the benefit of those islands, but for their own.” Yet “if the United States annexed the islands it would be for the benefit of both the people of the islands and this government.”

Assimilated Indians viewed the United States government as a liberator that brought civilization to Native Americans and other “uncivilized” peoples like the islanders.\textsuperscript{44}

The Indian newspaper even celebrated the life of the first white imperialist in the western hemisphere, Christopher Columbus. An 1892 article entitled “Columbus Day” expressed how thankful the Hampton Indians were for Columbus “to open the door of this country and let the light of the gospel shine on the Indian people.” Though at first “there were wars and blood shed,” they “passed away and the light of the gospel is shining almost everywhere in this country,” giving Indians the “previlidge to go to school and learn how to live better lives. Thus we celebrated the Columbus Day with our white brother and our colored brother and salute our ‘stars and stripes’” through reciting the pledge of allegiance and singing patriotic songs. Acculturated students endorsed the white-constructed historical narrative of “progress” stretching back to Columbus. By admitting their historical inferiority and apologizing for their past beliefs, assimilated Indians expressed their acceptance of white evangelical values.\textsuperscript{45}

Acculturated Hampton Indians strove to emulate white manhood through active citizenship and engagement in the American political process. At a time when women were nationally disfranchised, showing interest and possibly voting in presidential elections was important for assimilated Indian students to demonstrate their manhood. *Talks and Thoughts* made no mention of Native American students voting, but it is possible that some had reached the age of twenty-one and were enfranchised. The Supreme Court ruled in *Elk v. Wilkins* (1884) that Native Americans could attain citizenship through act of Congress. According to Helen L. Peterson, by the time

\textsuperscript{44} Untitled, *Talks and Thoughts* VIII, 4 (Sep 1893): 4.

\textsuperscript{45} “Columbus Day,” *Talks and Thoughts* VIII, 6 (Nov 1892): 1.
Congress granted all Native Americans citizenship in 1924, “many” had already “acquired the right to vote by having accepted allotments, by special dispensation such as service in the armed forces, or by giving up tribal affiliations and entering the mainstream of American life.”

Even without necessarily voting, acculturated Indians paid close attention to politics. Charles Doxson was one of the lucky students able to travel to Washington D.C. in March 1889 to witness Benjamin Harrison’s inauguration. Despite the rain, Doxson wrote enthusiastically of his experience. Likely some of the excitement was the sheer spectacle, but Doxson seemed to have a sincere appreciation for the process as a patriotic citizen might. Politics returned to Talks and Thoughts again after Democratic candidate Grover Cleveland’s election to a second term in 1892. A student who only used his initials, F.L.H., reported that many of the Indian students at Hampton were supporters of the Democratic Party and were keenly interested in “the grand torchlight procession which so joyously passed our school limits on the evening of November 23rd.” They held great hopes for Cleveland, who had “the full power of giving to the Indians those needs which have been neglected. We shall look to him as ‘The Father of our Country,’ and wish him to continue the prosperous work which was done

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46 Lindsey, Indians at Hampton Institute, 77-78; Helen L. Peterson, “American Indian Political Participation,” Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 311 (May 1957): 121.

47 C. Doxson, “Witnessing Whole Proceedings of Harrison’s Inauguration,” Talks and Thoughts III. 9 (Mar 1889): 1. Doxson, or Doxon, Jon Brudvig states, was an Onondaga from New York and entered Hampton as the first Indian to work to pay for his tuition (like black students). Federal funding did not cover the education of eastern tribes. Doxson was a great proponent of Hampton and later returned to work for the school in various capacities. See “Charles Doxson,” Brudvig, First Person Accounts as written by American Indian Students, at Hampton Institute, 1878-1923, http://www.twofrog.com/hamptonstories4.html.

48 Probably Penobscot student Frank Hubbard. Hubbard attended Hampton from 1890 to 1893 and was afterward a teacher and editor of the Oglala Light. See “Hubbard, Frank,” Brudvig, Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute: Male Students, Names G to O, http://www.twofrog.com/hamptonmale2.txt; Lindsey, Indians at Hampton Institute, 212.
and is still doing by and through the influence of Senator Dawes ….Three cheers for Cleveland. Rah! Rah!! Rah!!" Native Americans’ honest enthusiasm for politics was driven by both their desire to see reforms for Native Americans and their desire to act the part of citizen.49

Assimilated Indians looked to white and black college students for other models of bourgeois manhood. Inspired by their examples, they joined Christian student societies such as the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA). The Hampton YMCA was founded in 1886, according to Sioux student John Bruyier, “to teach the new comers the Bible the best way we know how; to try to make them understand the importance of Christianity in order that when they return to their homes they can have a society similar to this and do good work among their own people.” Students were too shy to speak in early meetings, but by late 1889, Bruyier reported, “they will talk on any subject and are very much interested, and are ready to say something.” Indians often took up collections “to help the poor and needy,” and they would “take some food or wood to these poor colored people and…read the Bible and sing two or three hymns and say a prayer for them.” Service was a central component of evangelical manhood. By learning to serve others, Indians practiced middle-class values, while reaffirming their status as superior to those whom they were helping.50

After discussing the need for another religious organization, Hampton Indians chartered the Indian Christian Association (ICA) in 1888. By March 1889, when Sioux student Baptiste P. Lamberts wrote about the ICA in Talks and Thoughts, it had already grown from six initial members to thirty (with eleven more who had returned home and

two who had died). The ICA’s purpose was to supplement classroom learning with spiritual learning. According to the bylaws, “any boy who has been to school for a long time and has a good education but does not know any thing about God, nothing will do him good. So that is why we choose to do some work for God, and to know what is right and wrong.” Like the YMCA, the ICA provided a Christian atmosphere for students, collected money to help out its members or the larger Hampton community, and performed public service and prayer meetings. Within their first year, Lamberts reported that “we select several boys every Sunday who take food to some of the poor people around, and read, sing, pray and rejoice for them, and with them….We fixed an old colored woman’s house last winter and Mr. Fox gave us some things we took to her on Christmas morning….And [we] built a house for an old man.” They also sent Christmas presents to cheer up their former classmate who returned to his reservation in poor health. “Doing these things,” Lamberts wrote, “shows that the boys try to be Christian boys and give themselves to God and then God will be willing to help them and show them what to do.”

Another aspect of late-nineteenth-century college life that acculturated Hampton Indians recreated was participation in literary societies. Though the heyday of the literary society in white schools occurred in the antebellum period before the rise of the social fraternity, these literary organizations became a fixture in African American schools after the war as a way of improving debate and leadership skills. The Wigwam

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Literary Society held regular meetings for Hampton’s Native Americans who hoped to sharpen their acuity, oratory, and argumentation through mock political debate. The society disseminated ideas beyond just students, too. They also published the Indian student newspaper, *Talks and Thoughts*. Whether in debate or the written word, by emulating white elites, assimilated Indians dispelled stereotypes of their savagery and practiced civilized behavior and restrained manhood.

Assimilated students had further opportunity to demonstrate their civilized demeanor and bourgeois manhood through adhering to military discipline and drill. Hampton Indians proved quite adept at it. The all-Indian student company, Company A, was the ranking company of the student battalion and “kept one of the best military records in the school” by the 1890s. Six mornings a week, students had to present themselves at inspection on time and in perfect order. Students were “expected to have their shoes polished, clothes brushed and look as neat as possible.” They performed drill once a week. Overall, “the military training at Hampton helps the students a great deal,” wrote the editors of *Talks and Thoughts*. “The new boys usually make an unsoldierly appearance beside the older ones. Many of the new students haven’t the least idea how to drill at first, they can’t even keep step with the next man in the rank. Before the year is out the boys stand more erect, walk level and can drill as well as the older boys.” Drilling and marching in step represented order, discipline, unselfishness, unity, and subordination to authority. Moreover, participation in American military drill


53 “Military Drill at Hampton,” *Talks and Thoughts* XIV, 12 (May 1899): 1, 3. For the importance of timeliness and the clock in instilling discipline and civilization into Indian boarding students, see Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 118-119.
represented a resounding rejection of Indian values. The United States military remained one of the most hated and feared images in Indian societies—the last major United States slaughter of Indians occurred in 1890 at Wounded Knee. Imitating the U.S. army meant the ultimate repudiation of traditional Indian identity and customs.

Playing sports, especially baseball, was another way Hampton Indians showed their sophistication and bourgeois manliness. “Base ball is the game now” for Indian boys, *Talks and Thoughts* reported in 1891. Despite the violent nature of the game and the frequent injuries, “as soon as [the players] are well they play harder than before.” The captain of the Hampton baseball team reiterated in 1892 that “one of the most attractive games along the line of athletic sports is the base ball game.”

Like black collegiates in the same era, participating competitively in the national pastime was a means of proving their social equality and Americanness to whites. The same pressures to play skillfully and sportsmanly applied. Playing the game well demonstrated a biological ability to compete on the same level as whites, something most whites doubted based on their understanding of civilization as an inherited condition. Playing with class and sportsmanship helped dispel white notions of Indian savagery.

During the 1880s, most Indian baseball games took place against other Indians or blacks at Hampton Institute. Over the Memorial Day holiday in 1887, Hampton Indians went out for a picnic and played a game of baseball. The Sioux formed one

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55 For playing and spectating baseball well as a sign of advancement, see Gunther Barth, *City People: The Rise of Modern City Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 149-188. Pertaining to white views of Indian’ backwardness, Samuel Chapman Armstrong stated in 1881 that “inherited traits and ideas rather than mere ignorance is the difficulty with low or savage races. Heredity and not vice is the trouble.” See Lindsey, *Indians at Hampton Institute*, 181.
club and all other tribes the second. The lively game thrilled the competitors as well as the male and female onlookers. Henry Lyman recalled that the game was exciting for the “friendly spectators of both clubs, who kept busy encouraging players. They would clap their hands and applaud every good hit or catch.” Knowing when to cheer and showing an understanding of the game was a way for non-participants to prove familiarity and acceptance of American culture. The close contest ended in a sixteen-fifteen victory for the Sioux.\textsuperscript{56} Later that summer on July 23, some Indian students challenged the black student battalion officers in a game of baseball. Though the Indians lost twenty-eight to fourteen, the writers of \textit{Talks and Thoughts} were upbeat at the chance for more practice. “We are trying to provide ourselves with suits,” they added, “so as we improve in playing we may improve in appearance.” Appearance was extremely important to assimilated Indians. As they played more like white Americans, smart new uniforms would help them better outwardly resemble them.\textsuperscript{57}

By the late 1890s, Hampton Indians began playing other opponents, including white teams. In the summer of 1896, the Hampton Indian Nine (the top Indian team), beat a team in the neighboring hamlet of Phoebus seventeen to four, and the Artillery School of Fort Monroe thirteen to six. In the game against Phoebus, the Hampton pitcher, Oneida Albert Ninham, struck out an impressive sixteen batters.\textsuperscript{58} The racial composition of the Phoebus team is unclear, but presumably the artillery school was a


\textsuperscript{57} “Base ball,” \textit{Talks and Thoughts} II, 6 (Aug 1887): 2. For the importance of professional appearance in baseball uniforms, see Burton J. Bledstein, \textit{The Culture of Professionalism: The Middle Class and the Development of Higher Education in America} (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976), 82.

\textsuperscript{58} “Base Ball Notes,” \textit{Talks and Thoughts} XII, 1 & 2 (Jun & Jul 1896): 3.
white team. A dominating victory against a white team made an impressive statement about the capabilities of Native Americans and their capacity for equality and assimilation. Hampton also had the unique opportunity to host an exhibition with the Philadelphia Phillies of the National League in the spring of 1896. Playing this Philadelphia team with three future Hall of Famers—Dan Brouthers, Sam Thompson, and Ed Delahanty—legitimized the Hampton Indian club as a respectable opponent. The twenty-four-to-three defeat was still a better showing than the city of Hampton’s team gave in a thirty-four-to-four crushing by the Phillies. In an era when blacks were excluded from major league competition, simply being able to take the field against a professional team lent credibility to assimilated Native Americans’ claims of manhood and equality.

The Transculturated

Transculturated students viewed an ideal Indian man as one who exhibited signs of civilization and restrained manhood but also revered his native upbringing and found wisdom in its values. In sociologist Terry Huffman’s study of Native American identity in modern universities, he defines transculturation as “the process by which an individual can enter and interact in the milieu of another culture without loss of the person’s native cultural identity and ways.” Transculturated students “used their ethnic identity as a firm social psychological anchor and derived strength and confidence from that cultural mask.” Armstrong and Frissell most wanted to produce transculturated Indian students because they would be ideally suited to interact with their tribes and convince


60 Whereas resisting students pushed American culture away, transculturated students were able to effectively synthesize it with their native practices in a non-stressful way that made sense to them. See Huffman, _American Indian Higher Educational Experiences_ , 11, 147.
them to accept American values. Hampton’s administrators were primarily concerned with maintaining students’ traditional cultures to serve their own purposes in spreading the message of civilization. Unlike the acculturated, however, transculturated students often publicly criticized white treatment of Indians. They used their education and printing access to preserve their native languages, folklore, and values, while they urged other Indians to prevent further loss of their lands or cultures.

Hampton officials’ willingness to allow students to retain their native identities manifested itself in the Indian newspaper, Talks and Thoughts. Though the newspaper reached a wide audience, it was not nearly as censored and self-aggrandizing as Hampton’s other publication, the Southern Workman. Many Native Americans’ writings expressed somewhat heterodox views on Indian matters that indicated a strong tribal identity in addition to a burgeoning American identity. Jacqueline Emery writes: “Much like other Native American writers at that time, the students who contributed to and edited Talks and Thoughts created ‘a middle position’ for themselves between abandoning their Indianness by assuming the markers of civilization and embracing the notion that tribal communities could return to the past.”

A readily apparent example of the degree of transculturation present in Talks and Thoughts was that the official motto of the newspaper, printed on top of every issue for its first six years, was “tahenan upi qa ounkya biye—Come over and help us.” This short (presumably Lakota) phrase acknowledged the legitimacy of the Indian boarding school experiment, while also using a tribal language to affirm the value of Native American culture. Since very few tribes had their own newspapers in the late

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61 Lindsey, Indians at Hampton Institute, 182.
nineteenth century, it was rare for any bit of Native American language to find its way into print. This held even greater symbolic meaning coming from a school where English had to be spoken the vast majority of the day. The editors’ motto perfectly encapsulated the paradox of transculturation. It was enormously difficult to maintain two simultaneous identities and worldviews in which one was predicated on the ultimate destruction of the other.

Perhaps the phrase became too ideologically difficult to justify by 1892, at which point the slogan varied from issue to issue, but always remained in English. “We do not mean that we can lay aside our Indian language all at once,” the editors wrote in response to the change, “for well you know, how we love the language in which we have grown up, but we wish you to know that we realize the need of the English language, and that we are trying very had [sic] to master it, in order that we may be traveling the white man’s road.” Jacqueline Emery insists that this passage “offers a subtle challenge to the assimilationist practices of the boarding school” by acknowledging that the power of English print as a cultural weapon. Rather than giving up their language entirely, acculturated Indians writing in *Talks and Thoughts* could use their print access to express praise for their heritage and concerns about its destruction.

Transculturated students injected their traditions into *Talks and Thoughts* through inclusion of Native American folklore and art. Harry Hand, a Sioux Indian, frequently contributed illustrated Sioux oral traditions and stories to the newspaper. These narratives, like “A Buffalo Hunt” or “The Brave War Chief and the Ghost,” had never appeared in English print before. Through these pieces, Emery argues, Hand

63 “Our Motto Changed,” *Talks and Thoughts* VI, 8 (Jan 1892): 1; Emery, “Writing against Erasure,” 179.
“celebrates and affirms his indigenous oral and pictorial heritage.” Furthermore, he “challenged the widely-held belief among whites that Native Americans did not have their own system of education. This was a significant argument to make in a newspaper printed at an off-reservation boarding school, where it was often mistakenly assumed that white teachers were the first to educate their pupils.” Hand helped dispel myths about the inferiority of Native Americans even as he acclimated to the Hampton environment.

Joseph Du Bray was another student who brought Sioux traditions into his writings in the newspaper. Du Bray came to Hampton in 1890 and was an exemplary student who often discoursed on the state of Indians and recounted oral traditions. Emery describes Du Bray like “a mediator between cultures. He seems to cater to white interest in Native American culture by revealing some of the ‘foolish customs Native Americans practiced before they became ‘civilized.’” But at the same time, “Du Bray preserves in print the oral traditions of his culture so that he can simultaneously celebrate and affirm his indigenous oral heritage by making a seemingly ‘foolish’ custom valuable or relevant again.” In a Sioux tale called “The Cheating of the Indians,” which he recorded in 1894, a hungry spider incited several ducks to close their eyes and dance with the promise that it would sing to them. As the spider commenced his meal of duck, one eventually caught on by opening its eyes, and it began to warn the others. Du Bray candidly explained the meaning of the tale, saying: “today, the bad whites are making the Indians dance with their eyes shut, and will take all their land away from them, if they get the chance….If the Indian is to hold his own, he must fight the white man with his own weapon.” The weapon he spoke of was knowledge. The combative

tone taken against white society is striking. Since Hampton officials reprinted this story in the *Southern Workman*, they must have presumed the malicious white men did not refer to themselves, but rather society as a whole.\(^6^5\) Principal Hollis Frissell was probably not ecstatic about the white race portrayed as a villainous, mendacious spider, but as long as the message was Indian education, such publications by transculturated students were allowed and encouraged.

Embracing the liberating power of education was central to transculturated students' conceptions of manhood. They did not want to "kill the Indian and save the man" as Richard Pratt of Carlisle famously said and practiced; they wanted to educate the Indian in order to save the Indian. Education did not require a complete cultural overhaul. “Indian students, make up your minds to study to learn your education while you are at school,” wrote former Hampton student Benjamin Brave in the December 1890 issue of *Talks and Thoughts*. Brave, a transculturated Indian who often included both his Anglicized and Sioux names (Ohitika) in print, frequently worked as a recruiter to bring Native Americans to Hampton. He referred to himself as having a “white man’s head” and an “Indian heart.” He implored Indian students to value their education:

> Then you can teach or help our poor people when you return. The education will do you good better than anything else in this life or in this world. But some of us were fooled ourselves not get through our good education….There is a flood flew all over of our country. So if any one without knowledge or education he or she will drown or starve. I mean the flood is the White settlement, so if you made up your mind to study your good examples, then you can stand or work against the flood in the future generation. I did not learn enough….It makes me very sorry often times to miss my education.\(^6^6\)

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\(^{6^5}\) Joseph Du Bray, quoted in Emery, “Writing against Erasure,” 190, 192, 194.

\(^{6^6}\) Ben. Brave, “From an Old Hampton Student,” *Talks and Thoughts* V, 6 (Dec 1890): 1. In addition to teaching and recruiting, Ohitika formed the Returned Student and Progressive Indian Association. See
Ohitika’s warning exemplified the transculturated spirit. Whites were actually the enemy, but they also offered a path of freedom for Native Americans lucky enough to acquire an education. White incursions would continue, but an educated Indian citizenry could fight more effectively for their rights.

Educating Native Americans would not be rapid or painless, transculturated students admitted, but failure to educate the Indian peoples would result in disaster. An unnamed author wrote in June 1887: “Well we haven’t learned much, but we have reason for that. We are not like the white students whose parents are intelligent and persevering, but we have no such parents, we have to be our own instructors.” He continued: “But we are not discouraged we are proud that we can do so. We are striving for education, we must strive hard lest the citizenship overtake us and crush us to pieces. We are glad to be here at Hampton School, for Hampton education is good enough for any citizenship of the country.”

The writer recognized that being a citizen did not mean immediate entitlement to wealth and freedom, but instead it brought with it a host of weighty responsibilities that could destroy Native Americans very easily if they did not take it seriously.

Some transculturated students recognized that education could bring about positive changes while retaining the general spirit—if not all the specifics—of traditional Indian societies. “It is wonderful the progress the tribe has made since I can remember,” an Indian student wrote in February 1896. “I think the old Indians had many fine qualities that we do not see in ourselves, but this generation has its Indian lawyers,


doctors, preachers, teachers, farmers, tradesmen, and many other honorable vocations. To do this they had to learn a strange language and live a new life, and I think it shows even more ambition in the Indian than it would for a white man to do the same work.” Indians were not without their problems. “Many Indians do drink and gamble. I know that,” he admitted. “So do many men of other races, but that is not because they are too civilized.” The author accepted contemporary scientific theory that civilization was a heritable trait and would take time to attain. Nevertheless education had brought Indian students much closer than ever before.68

Like acculturated students, transculturated Indians valued their Hampton education because it was their path to social recognition of their restrained manhood and Americanness, which they believed would earn them national respect and citizenship. One of the editors of Talks and Thoughts wrote in April 1889 that Hampton was sincerely interested in promoting the development of manliness, “which is admired in any person without regard to race, color or position.” Civilized, restrained manhood in Indians seemed almost preposterous to many people who were unfamiliar with the school. Visitors frequently insulted Indian boys’ honor by assuming “only the most savage manners” from them. When a group of white visitors observed an Indian recitation in the summer of 1888, they were horrified when the entire class rose at once. “They gave one cry and fled in great disorder.” Presuming an Indian uprising, they had not seen the instructor motion for the students to rise and proceed to their next class. Other than this mistaken group, visitors’ expectations of seeing savage Indians were frustrated. The writer maintained that Indian students had something “in their natures that answers to the cultivation that is given here.” Armstrong believed that men of all

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colors were able to obtain manliness, and he set about teaching it to them through instilling discipline and qualities for citizenship. Above all, he treated them as men.69

Transculturated students ultimately used their collected knowledge and status they acquired from Hampton as a means of fighting white encroachment onto their lands and into their minds. They paradoxically were able to maintain an Indian identity while absorbing white teachings. Through *Talks and Thoughts* they were able to preserve tribal oral traditions in printed word and spread the argument for education in the name of defense of their homelands.

Hampton Institute’s Indian program set out to transform how Native Americans viewed the world and how they should live their lives as men. Indian students responded to Hampton’s teachings in various ways. A good number of students were wary of the school’s efforts to transform their worldviews and behaviors. Some essentially went through the motions to make the three years pass more quickly, while only offering minor resistance at various times. Their conception of masculinity was not radically altered by Hampton. A few utterly refused to accept any semblance of white civilization and regularly offered major resistance to school authorities. Among those who welcomed the school teachings, there was a divide. Some Indians became fully assimilated and grew to deplore their traditional culture. They tried to imitate a middle-class evangelical manhood that emphasized restraint. Others became transculturated and were able to perform the delicate balancing act of simultaneous competing identities. They were able to see the value of American society while taking an active

69 “Manliness,” *Talks and Thoughts* III, 10 (Apr 1889): 3-4. The writer neglected to mention the guardhouse as an example of Armstrong not treating Indians quite the same as white or black men. White students—and except for once, black students—never received similar punishments in nineteenth-century southern higher education for minor rules violations. The only time schools locked up blacks or whites was if they were a physical danger to others.

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interest in preserving traditional customs as much as possible. They saw the value of middle-class masculinity and attempted to embody it in front of white audiences, while maintaining their traditional tribal ideas of manhood when they were around Native Americans. These archetypes of masculinity and resistance are painted with the broadest strokes. Yet the individuals mentioned provide evidence of the varied psychosocial responses to immersion in American society in the midst of the transformation of the reservation system, the culmination of a century of America’s relentless Indian policies.
CHAPTER 6
“'THE HOPE OF THE SOUTH & ALL THAT SORT OF BOSH’”: RESTORING WHITE MANHOOD IN THE POSTWAR SOUTH

From 1865 through the late 1890s, when southern states adopted Jim Crow segregation and disfranchisement, white southern college students were on the front lines of the fight for white supremacy and the reestablishment of southern manhood. In the late 1860s, many students at white southern colleges were either Confederate veterans or the sons of veterans and had an active stake in rescuing southern manhood and honor from the disgrace of defeat. It would prove a monumental task.

Antebellum white southern manhood was rooted in a militarized patriarchal system that exalted elite white southern men while repressing everyone else. As the lawmakers, the elite crafted state laws in their favor.\footnote{Stephanie McCurry, Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, & the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Low Country (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), esp. 13, 83-88.} They used their economic dominance and their power to shape cultural discourse in a very status-conscious society to exert economic and social pressure to minimize the independence of women and the poor. Both state and federal laws protected slavery, and armed slave patrols were a daily reality in most parts of the South. The astonishing hegemony of the white southern planter was only justifiable so long as women were protected and provided for and non-elites felt socially elevated because of their whiteness.\footnote{Ibid., 213-218; LeeAnn Whites, The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender, Augusta, Georgia, 1860-1890 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 8-9.}

The Civil War proved a colossal failure for the elite men of the South to fulfill these duties. The war took many men away from their wives and families. Many women felt abandoned and resented their husbands for leaving them to deal with Union soldiers and African Americans alone. During wartime, southern women proved to be
remarkable providers and home managers, setting the stage for postwar domestic conflicts over gender. Men had failed as protectors and providers and had lost the justification for their claim to household dominance. Furthermore, by 1865, the privileges of white male citizenship were also in jeopardy as black freedmen clamored for recognition of their equal citizenship. Elite white men were no longer the unchallenged ruling class.

Defeated white southerners understood the social need to keep citizenship synonymous with whiteness and manhood, and they did not wait long to renew the fight against African American rights. The presence of United States soldiers and Freedmen’s Bureau agents could only temporarily stall the white supremacy campaign. Once prominent ex-Confederate leaders received pardons from President Andrew Johnson beginning in 1865, they began rewriting state constitutions with explicit provisions called Black Codes to keep African Americans politically and economically impotent. Night-riding paramilitary groups like the Ku Klux Klan appeared to frighten African Americans and prevent them from voting or challenging white authority.

White college students were on the forefront of the movement to rebuild the white patriarchy and save southern manhood. In addition to participation and leadership in racial intimidation, as members of the elite, students helped begin the process of re-crafting the narrative of the Civil War into a celebration of the men of the Confederacy.

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3 Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996). While Nancy Cott’s phrase “separate spheres” long held sway over historians’ understandings of domestic gender relations, it has recently been questioned concerning many aspects. For the purposes of this study, one of the most relevant critiques has been that men still generally held sovereignty over the household in the nineteenth century and that it was not completely a woman’s domain. See Nancy Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: ‘Woman’s Sphere’ in New England, 1780–1835* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977); Joan W. Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” *American Historical Review* 91, 5 (Dec 1986): 1056; John Tosh, *A Man’s Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 4-7; McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds*, 86-88.
It was not just the faculty, but the students who turned Lexington, Virginia, home of the Virginia Military Institute and Washington College, into the geographical center of the Lost Cause. The Lost Cause was a rich vein of pro-Confederate mythology that glorified the bravery and sacrifices of the Confederate soldier so much that defeat appeared as manly as victory. Postbellum white students also took part in an active discourse about proper womanhood, which was ultimately directed at reinforcing women’s inferiority in the wake of the independence they experienced during the war. Undergirding the impulse to revive elite manhood, southern honor continued throughout the late-nineteenth-century South much as before the war. Aristocratic, insult-sensitive honor and manhood coexisted with a restrained, evangelical idea of honor and manhood. From the 1860s through the 1890s, the white male college student was not only an active but integral component of the reconstruction of white southern manhood.

Lost Cause

As major intellectual and cultural centers of the postbellum South, the University of Virginia, VMI, Washington College, and the University of North Carolina assumed prominent roles in perpetuating the idea of the Lost Cause. A large proportion of college presidents in the postwar South had been Confederate generals. No other appointment to college president caused as much of a stir as Washington College’s selection of Robert E. Lee in 1865. Young Confederate veterans and the sons of veterans flocked to the school, sending the enrollment soaring. Even without such a prestigious leader at the other three colleges, the legacy of Confederate defeat constantly hung over the student body. The nature of higher education meant that

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lectures by the predominantly southern faculty and occasional prominent guest speakers exposed students to major currents of southern intellectual culture.\textsuperscript{5} As budding cultural leaders themselves, southern students necessarily had to wrestle with the South’s position and the state of white southern manhood.

Perhaps the most serious challenge in resuscitating white southern manhood was justifying Confederate defeat. As James Broomall states, “military defeat cancelled, or at least undermined Confederate veterans’ manliness.”\textsuperscript{6} Since white southerners had boasted of their martial abilities and their hardier composition than northerners, whom they stereotyped as effete urbanites, military defeat seemed inexplicable. Confederates had believed they had smarter military minds and better leaders than the North.\textsuperscript{7} By the spring of 1865, however, the Confederacy’s soldiers, strategists, and civilians were unwilling to bear the burden of war any longer. Rather than fighting to the last man, one by one Confederate leaders admitted defeat and surrendered their armies. Adding to the humiliation, when Union soldiers found Jefferson Davis in Georgia in May 1865 trying to evade capture by wearing a shawl over

\textsuperscript{5} As Bernard Bailyn has succinctly defined it, education consists of the cultural transfer from one generation to the next. See Bernard Bailyn, \textit{Education in the Forming of American Society} (1960; reprint, New York: W.W. Norton, 1972), 14.


\textsuperscript{7} Over three hundred officers (over one-quarter) of the regular US army resigned to fight for the Confederacy, and they were joined in the officer ranks by over twelve thousand southerners educated at southern military academies by 1861. At the start of the war, there were no state-sponsored military colleges in the North, whereas Texas was the only southern state without one in the Confederacy. James M. McPherson, \textit{Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 328; Rod Andrew, Jr., \textit{Long Gray Lines: The Southern Military School Tradition, 1839-1915} (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 18, 115; Nelson D. Lankford, \textit{Cry Havoc! The Crooked Road to Civil War, 1861} (New York: Viking, 2007), 166; Jennifer R. Green, \textit{Military Education and the Emerging Middle Class in the Old South} (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1, 3.
his head, they claimed he was dressed as a woman. Northern newspapers latched onto the image and freely embellished it to emasculate the Confederate head of state as much as possible.⁸

The task of rescuing white southern manhood and removing the shame of conquest fell initially to southern cultural leaders and public speakers, most notably politicians, preachers, journalists, and academics. Shortly after the war, Virginia journalist Edward Pollard provided the basic outline for a defense of Confederate beliefs and actions, as well as white southern manhood. An 1849 graduate of the University of Virginia, Pollard became an ardent secessionist by the late 1850s and gave voice to his views in the Richmond Examiner. In 1866, Pollard published The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates. He argued that his "severely just account of the War on the basis of contemporary evidence" would help explain the South’s loss.⁹ While much of the rationale for exculpating white southerners from the burden of defeat remained undeveloped, Pollard created the necessary vocabulary of a “Lost Cause” for southern cultural leaders to seize upon. In the following years, the Lost Cause grew into a multi-purpose defense of the Confederacy and antebellum South as a moral, Christian society that only finally succumbed to the numerical and industrial superiority of the Union in 1865. Slavery was generally absent or explained away as a cause of the South’s wealth or rationale for secession. Thus southern men pledged their utmost devotion to a noble cause that rendered them morally blameless, and the

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quantitative data supporting the inevitability of Union victory exonerated them of the emasculation of defeat.¹⁰

In the late 1860s, valedictory and commencement addresses at southern colleges resounded with Lost Cause themes of an honorable southern past, a respectable manhood, and a hope for an end to northern oppression in Reconstruction. VMI cadet Hardaway Hunt Dinwiddie, a veteran of the 1864 Battle of New Market, offered the valedictory address at the 1867 VMI commencement. He spoke of a happier, freer, and more civilized past carried on by the VMI alumni. “It is your task,” he exhorted fellow graduates, “of exalted dignity and most profound responsibility to preserve the soul of the Old Virginia Chivalry.” He continued: “Though rail-roads and telegraphs have not yet penetrated these quiet retreats, it is pleasant to dwell in a land where modern theories and higher laws have not tarnished the simple virtues of a purer age.” By contrasting the agrarian chivalry of the long-established Virginia aristocracy and the “modern theories and higher laws” of an industrializing North, Dinwiddie accentuated and celebrated the South’s regional distinctiveness. Though they had lost the war, they—and the elite specifically—retained a dignity Dinwiddie believed unmatched in the North.¹¹


¹¹ Hardaway Hunt Dinwiddie, Valedictory, Virginia Military Institute, 1867, Hardaway Hunt Dinwiddie Collection, Virginia Military Institute Archives, Preston Library, Virginia Military Institute.
In the 1869 VMI valedictory, cadet Samuel Letcher explicitly mentioned the nascent idea of the Lost Cause, glorifying the former VMI professor Stonewall Jackson and the New Market cadets. Letcher charged that the “tottering ruins” of the South would be returned to “their former splendor…by the will of the Immortal Hero who lies in yonder Cemetery, whose memory lingers with such pathos in the hearts of every lover of the lost cause, whose name can never cease to be heard so long as the memory of generations last.” Letcher’s use of the phrase “lost cause” in 1869 is significant. Since Pollard’s term did not become widely associated with prewar nostalgia until the 1870s, it shows Letcher and his classmates’ active involvement in spreading and shaping cultural discourse about defeat and memory. Letcher grieved the outcome of war and the condition of Virginia in Radical Reconstruction. Virginia, the proud Old Dominion State, was now simply “District One.” “We walk in the vale of oppressions,” he admitted, “stooped under the humiliations and indignities of a Northern domination.” He argued that southern manhood had not faltered or fallen short; all that had beaten them was “force of numbers.” The sacrifices of the VMI cadets and the Confederate soldiers were not in vain. Like Jackson, they would remain alive, unvanquished, and morally justified in fighting for the Confederacy as long as southerners continued to honor them.

White college students did not spread the message of the Lost Cause alone but had reinforcement from their faculty and outside speakers. Wade Hampton, the fiery Confederate general from South Carolina, addressed Robert E. Lee’s Washington College in the June 1868 commencement ceremony. One of the loudest opponents of Radical Reconstruction, he began his oration with a charge to the students soon to “leave these halls forever to assume the toga virilis of manhood, the grave duties and

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12 Samuel H. Letcher, Valedictory, 1869, 2-3, 5-7, 12, Samuel H. Letcher Valedictory, VMI.
responsibilities of the citizen.” Most of these students attracted to the college by Robert E. Lee’s presence had “seen ancient and time-honoured constitutions swept away by the storm of a fierce fanaticism.” Hampton called on them to fight “as becomes men, sprung from the noble stock you are” to preserve their forefathers’ legacy in the South against the North’s oppressive “progress.” He declaimed:

> Destiny has placed you upon the Stage, in the midst of a mighty revolution, which threatens to sweep away and obliterate forever all that has been achieved by the courage, the wisdom, and patriotism of your fathers; and it is to be yours to arrest and roll back this fearful avalanche, or to be crushed into the earth as it sweeps on its direful and relentless progress. It will be yours to repair the shattered fortunes of your State, to heal the wounds inflicted on her by savage war.\(^{13}\)

Hampton voiced the same reverence for the Old South and deep sorrow in its passing as the VMI cadets had. In their vision, the antebellum southern statesmen and leaders of the Confederacy were admirable men who performed well and commanded respect, as elite white men in a patriarchal slave society should. In order to rescue southern masculinity and become the leaders their predecessors were, southern elite men coming of age in the late 1860s would have to free themselves from the restrictions of Reconstruction.

Since elite white masculinity rested on exerting political, economic, and cultural power over others, it is unsurprising that ex-Confederates’ defense of southern manhood led to adulation of the perfect manliness of Confederate generals. Robert E. Lee’s death in 1870 led to his apotheosis alongside Stonewall Jackson as the epitomes of southern manhood. With their bold aggressiveness alongside their Christian faith, Lee and Jackson embodied both traditional, violent masculinity and restrained,

\(^{13}\) Wade Hampton III, Commencement Address, Washington College, June 20, 1868, 1-2, Lucius Desha Papers, Special Collections, James Graham Leyburn Library, Washington and Lee University.
evangelical masculinity. Ex-Confederates loved and revered both men while they lived, but their deaths produced something akin to worship.¹⁴

Celebrations and commemorations of Stonewall Jackson were routine in Lexington. Jackson’s remains rested in a cemetery in downtown Lexington, just a short walk from the campuses of the two adjacent schools. Lewin Barringer of Washington College described to his father the ceremonies for the third anniversary of Jackson’s death. On Friday, May 10, 1867, after church services, there was a procession to the graveyard, where townswomen put flowers on Jackson’s grave as well as those of other veterans.¹⁵ Though men (and college students) publicly expressed sadness at Jackson’s death, grief was the particular domain of white southern women, who could assume the ceremonial role of grieving widows and mothers of every man who had died for the Confederate flag. Female mourning acknowledged the bravery of Confederate soldiers and the successful performance of their duty to defend home and homeland. Women’s sadness for the loss of a valiant and virtuous man validated the deceased soldier’s masculinity.¹⁶ As a leader and inspirational figure in the Confederate Army, Stonewall Jackson embodied elite manhood. The fact that he was ignobly mortally wounded by his own men did not detract from his centrality to Confederate hero worship through the Lost Cause. The power of mythos made him a martyr.

¹⁴ For the evangelical element of Lost Cause reverence, especially for Lee and Jackson, see Andrew, _Long Gray Lines_, 49-50.

¹⁵ Lewin Barringer to Daniel Moreau Barringer, May 14, 1867, Daniel Moreau Barringer Papers, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

¹⁶ Whites, _The Civil War as a Crisis in Gender_, 14, 185; Broomall, “Personal Confederacies,” 162; Caroline Janney, _Burying the Dead But Not the Past: Ladies’ Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause_ (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), chaps. 1-2.
Robert E. Lee’s unexpected death in the autumn of 1870 led to his similar enshrinement in the pantheon of southern manhood. Lee’s recurring strokes and heart problems led to a sudden death for the South’s greatest war hero. Seeing Lee only a few days before he died, VMI cadet William Nalle claimed he was “the picture of health.” Nalle was one of five students from the Lexington colleges given the honor of sitting up with Lee’s body overnight as it lay in state in the Washington College chapel before entombment. Lifeless, Lee’s body now looked to him “to be reduced to half his original size, and desperately thin.” Though his physical remains seemed all too human to Nalle, Lee continued to be venerated to the point of deification. Several thousand people journeyed to Lexington to pay their somber respects. The town itself was draped with black, and VMI students wore black badges of mourning.¹⁷

Lee’s significance to the Lost Cause continued past his death through the Kappa Alpha fraternity, which was dedicated to rescuing the name of the Old South and southern masculinity. National fraternities had spread from the North to the South before the Civil War, but their chapters were small, and they generally disbanded during the war. Afterwards, most eventually reopened, and their number increased with new fraternities. These societies, which slowly began transplanting debate societies as the center of student institutional life, “promoted intimate friendships…competition about grades….awards, and athletics, not to mention prospects for the future,” according to Nicholas Syrett.¹⁸ In Kappa Alpha’s case, they were also keenly interested in the past and its commemoration.


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Kappa Alpha stemmed from a defunct student society founded at the University of North Carolina in 1812. In December 1865, a group of Washington College students established a fraternity and adopted the name Kappa Alpha the following year. Samuel Zenas Ammen transformed the society into an influential cultural creator of Lost Cause mythology. At Washington College for a Master of Arts, Ammen was already a Mason, and he found KA’s initiation rituals and ideological framework lackluster. As Ammen’s biographer explained, through his leadership beginning in 1866, Ammen helped establish the fraternity as one “determined to play whatever part they could to save by persuasion, precept and example the finer and more spiritual part of the ante-bellum life.” Based on Lee’s example of a southern gentleman, “members should cherish the Southern ideal of character—that of the chivalrous warrior of Christ, the Knight who loves God and country, honours and protects pure womanhood, practices courtesy and magnanimity of spirit, and prefers self-respect to ill-gotten wealth.” During Radical Reconstruction, when Congress prevented many ex-Confederate leaders from holding political office, KA was a monument to the South’s godly, honorable, and powerful statesmen and warriors of the past. It was admittedly similar to the Ku Klux Klan in its aims of rescuing the white South, but it did not instigate racial violence as an organization. New chapters appeared at VMI and the University of Georgia in 1867 and 1868, respectively, before the fraternity spread throughout the ex-Confederacy.19


Though the organization did not officially name Lee as the “spiritual founder” until 1923, his legacy was central from its beginning.

While the Kappa Alpha Order paid constant homage to the great leaders of the Confederacy, the Lexington schools in particular held frequent commemorations to celebrate the valor of the student-soldiers who fought and died for the Confederacy. John L. Tunstall entered VMI as a sixteen-year-old cadet in the fall of 1862 and participated in the Battle of New Market with the Corps of Cadets. On the fourth anniversary of the battle in May 1868, VMI arranged for the remains of five cadets who died in action to be reinterred on campus. Tunstall, who had graduated the year before and returned for the event, wrote his mother that “the ceremonies were very solemn,” with the entire town in attendance. The event brought back horrible memories of the “intolerable scenes of suffering.”\(^{20}\) Though the individual fallen cadets did not have recognizable names across the South like Jackson or Lee, VMI regularly memorialized them as a group and perpetuated their memory. Their mortal sacrifices in the prime of their lives perfectly encapsulated the bravery and devotion of southern manhood at the heart of the Lost Cause.

Washington College also exalted the manly bravery of its students fighting in the Civil War. Active school members did not march directly to battle as the VMI cadets at the Battle of New Market, but a group of students organized themselves into a company within five days after the Battle of Fort Sumter. Christened the Liberty Hall Volunteers after the school’s previous name, they were mustered into the Fourth Virginia Infantry Regiment and served in the Army of Northern Virginia from Manassas to Appomattox. Writing in 1898 in the Washington and Lee student newspaper, the *Southern Collegian*,

\(^{20}\) John L. Tunstall to Ma, May 15, 1868, John L. Tunstall Papers, VMI.
G.C. Powell boasted that the student company was one “whose record is un tarnished and whose…story is the story of the ‘Stonewall’ Brigade and…of the war in Virginia.” As the backbone of one of the most famous units in the Civil War, Powell stated of the student-soldiers: “There were no laggerts there, no cowards among those boys, none who thought more of the safety and comfort of home, than of the hardships of battling for their God given rights.” “It is our duty,” he continued, “to single them out and send their names down through the ages as examples of what boys can do, when trained in the sterling principles of integrity and loyalty that have ever marked the precepts of our university.” Lest anyone think the Civil War represented a failure of southern manhood or an embarrassing moment in the southern past, Powell concluded that the young men had left a legacy “of glory, a bequest of all that is noble in man” that must be recorded for all posterity.21

The public efforts by college students and the men and women in college towns to rescue southern manhood in defeat were essential to the propagation of the Lost Cause mythology in the postwar South. College students were not simply consumers of southern elite culture but active creators of it. Students in the Kappa Alpha Order, those participating in memorialization ceremonies, and those writing or speaking about the Lost Cause recognized the cultural necessity to restore and maintain antebellum gender roles which served to justify the elite white patriarchy. Because the Civil War and Reconstruction created the conditions to free African American slaves, empower women, and disfranchise much of the southern elite, the underpinnings of the myth that the elite white male was the only suitable ruler of home and state had never been more

fragile. While seeking to vindicate southern manhood in defeat through the rhetoric of the Lost Cause, elite white southern men also moved to re-exert their authority over blacks and women. In this movement, southern college students too would play an integral role.

**Reestablishing the White Patriarchy**

Because of the Civil War and emancipation, the traditional hegemony of the wealthy white planter was in jeopardy (if not ruins) by the beginning of Reconstruction. The projection of public and private masterful masculinity was critical in an honor-based society in which public opinion and reputation were primary concerns of the wealthy, and by 1865, the southern elite seemed to have lost most of their control. Congress's imposition of Radical Reconstruction in 1867 quashed the southern elite's nascent efforts to return to the status quo ante through Black Codes and other atavistic legal maneuvering. Piece by piece, white southerners under the guidance of the elite began to chip away at Radical Republican regulations—both legally and extralegally—in order to return to their place atop the southern political and economic hierarchy.

The obstacles for elite white men in their attempts to re-impose their oppressive regime were monumental. The war had challenged slaveholders' ability to maintain control of their black workforce, as thousands of slaves fled their masters or refused to work altogether. At war's end, many remaining freedmen initially moved off the land

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where they had been enslaved, and many more refused to work for their former masters. Elite whites no longer possessed the tools of mastery to coerce black labor. Also during the war, white southern women obtained unprecedented levels of political and economic power, leading bread riots and operating plantations. By questioning male governance through public actions and exercising control over homes and plantations, often more efficiently than men, many southern women exposed the fallacies of the myth that only men were fit to lead. Lastly, the poor white men who voted for secession convention delegates and Confederate politicians harbored intense frustration at the failure of southern leadership. Many felt that better management of the war could have brought victory. Without the support of the backbone of the political constituency, elites feared the type of class unrest predicted by Hinton Rowan Helper’s 1857 Impending Crisis of the South. Elite white college students in the postbellum South were actively engaged in reproducing the antebellum social order. The class challenge, however, was the area where college students had the least chance to aid the elite counterrevolution. Though some college students—especially veterans—owned property or engaged in commerce,

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24 Faust, Mothers of Invention; McCurry, Confederate Reckoning, chaps. 4-5.

they were the exception. Most students held little immediate economic power. Instead, they were repositories of vast cultural capital, which they hoped would ensure their future role as political and cultural leaders. Their education would prove indispensable in creating leaders in a highly inequalitarian society. In the early years after the Civil War, the curricula of southern colleges was still primarily classical, focused on studying “great men” in Greek and Roman antiquity as examples of public leadership.\(^\text{26}\) Colleges and literary societies trained future politicians, lawyers, ministers, and teachers in persuasive rhetoric. Classical rhetoricians like Cato the Elder, Cicero, and Quintilian emphasized that rhetoric should only be used by the virtuous “good man” to prevent sophistry and demagoguery. Whether young college-trained leaders truly believed the government was safer for the common citizen in their hands, they graduated with the requisite oratorical power to convince the populace thus.\(^\text{27}\)

Students’ reactionary ideals and distrust of the lower classes were reflected in two debates about voting rights in the Washington Literary Society of Washington College in 1869 and 1871. In both instances, after debate, the majority of the society voted in favor of property qualifications to allow only the landed and educated (white

\(^{26}\) This is of course not to discount the presence of extensive professional training at UNC and UVA especially before the Civil War. It was only really once the antebellum elite had wrested back control of local and state government by the 1870s that colleges began offering a wider variety of more pragmatic programs and de-emphasizing the classics. Even still, college remained the province of the elite as less than five percent of the white population attended college by century’s end. See Colin B. Burke, *American Collegiate Populations: A Test of the Traditional View* (New York: New York University Press, 1982), 226; Roger L. Geiger, “The Era of Multipurpose Colleges in American Higher Education, 1850-1890” in *The American College in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Roger L. Geiger (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2000), 133.

men) to vote.\footnote{28} The antebellum planter hegemony in Virginia had been so entrenched that Virginia was the last state in the union to abolish property qualifications for voting in 1851. Despite college students’ desire to control voters in the lower classes, they could take little real action. Students were similarly limited in their capacity to recreate the antebellum subordination of women.

Most of the elite efforts to restrict women’s wartime freedoms occurred within the legal system and homes, leaving little for college students to do. A student had relatively little power over an elite woman before securing a promise of marriage from her. Several students’ writings about women exemplified the ideals of romance and companionate marriage. VMI cadet John Lancaster Waring took offense at an 1868 newspaper accusation that Lexington was a place where “ladies could not walk the streets for the cadets & college students, without being hooted at.” He insisted that students treated women chivalrously and that the author was a “Yankee scoundrel” trying to profane the reputation of the Lexington schools. Another cadet, Thomas J. Nottingham, wrote of finding love at first sight in 1883. “Went to the Ball and met Miss Graham. She is a real nice little lady. I fell in love with her,” he proclaimed in his diary.\footnote{29} He was won over by her charm and loveliness. Tom Savage at the University of Virginia wrote to his mother to describe his romantic infatuation. “She is one of the sweetest & nicest girls I ever met with,” he fawned. “And she can converse! Not a

\footnote{28}{“WLS,” \textit{Southern Collegian}, December 18, 1869, 5; “WLS,” \textit{Southern Collegian}, December 9, 1871, 5.}

\footnote{29}{John Lancaster Waring to Ma, February 15, 1868, Waring Family Papers, VHS; Thomas J. Nottingham, Diary, June 27, 1883, Thomas J. Nottingham Diary, VMI.}
mere gasbag but talks really well[,] that was the first thing that attracted me. I know you would like her if you could only know her!”

College students often viewed women unromantically as means of ensuring wealth and success. The enraptured Tom Savage gushing over his newfound crush began his description to his mother with the fact that the young woman was attractive and from a prominent, respected family. Walter Carpenter of UVA inquired from his aunt about marriage prospects with her acquaintance, Helen Stagg: “What kind of a wife would she make a man in my position?” Carpenter made it clear to his aunt that he wanted to marry soon to “obtain great success” and “perfection towards Christianity.” Reid Russell of VMI complained in 1888 that “Lexington society is so mixed up. One can’t find out who are the best people….The prettiest girls are second class.” Concerns about socioeconomic class and wealth remained central to young men as they contemplated finding a marriage partner.

Young men’s private perceptions of women did not fully accord with their public proclamations of women’s value. In 1871 and 1872, the Washington Literary Society of newly renamed Washington and Lee University twice voted that women’s minds were inferior to men’s, complicating the possibility for companionate marriage. In writing intended for public consumption, Washington and Lee students were much more flattering—albeit patronizing—towards women. In a May 1879 reflective piece on women’s education in the school newspaper, the student writer argued that men should

30 Tom Savage to Mother, May 9, 1870, A. Duncan Savage Additional Papers, UVA.
31 Ibid.
32 Walter Carpenter to Sarah Harvie, March 14, 1889, Walter Carpenter Letters, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia; Reid Russell to Lucy Russell, February 3, 1888, Charles Phillips Papers, SHC.
use their “chivalry” to encourage women’s equal right to education. While somewhat progressive in sentiment, the invocation of “chivalry” harkens to a male-dominated system in which the male power structure would benevolently allow women the chance to make the most of their talents. An October 1882 essay in Washington and Lee’s *Southern Collegian* entitled “The Influence of Woman” painted a generally positive—if equally patronizing—view of women with “vanity” being their greatest weakness.33

The main situation in which middle- and upper-class college students could exert dominance over white women involved prostitution. Prostitutes remained a sexual outlet for interested students who could not or did not want to have sex with elite women. An 1878 letter from UVA student Willard Saulsbury details the existence of a popular whorehouse in Charlottesville. He wrote a friend about a recent incident where two intoxicated University of Virginia students “went down to the whore house” and “kicked up the mischief, shot a whore, nearly killing her.” He wrote of his own experiences: “I have been down to see the ladies 5 or 6 times but don’t indulge often as there are two certain diseases pretty well diffused around here and if you want to be tolerably certain not to catch the clap or pox the best way to do so is to follow a whore when she gets off the train and take your ‘horizontal refreshments’ before any one” else from college.34 Visiting prostitutes was practice for mastery over women, even if it did not directly help restore elite masculinity or counteract women’s wartime freedoms.

The element of recreating elite white male hegemony in which college students had the most immediate role was in using violence and terror to attempt to reduce


34 Willard Saulsbury to Joe, February 24, 1878, Willard Saulsbury Letter, UVA.
African Americans to near slavery. Especially in the Lost Cause bastions of Lexington and Charlottesville, Virginia, college students were at the forefront of the white supremacy campaign to contest the rights African Americans earned during and after the Civil War. Washington College president Robert E. Lee’s one rule of conduct for students was to “be a gentleman,” but he and VMI Superintendent Francis Smith only half-heartedly discouraged or punished violent behavior against Lexington African Americans in the 1860s. Instead, Freedmen’s Bureau agents in the Lexington area were the ones primarily responsible for accusing, apprehending, and punishing offending students. Bureau agent Captain George Carse heard the first postwar lawsuit by a black plaintiff against a white defendant in April 1866 after a freedman accused three VMI cadets of assault and battery. As historian David Coffey recounts, Carse “threatened to close” Washington College and VMI “unless the disturbances ceased.”  

This was just the beginning, however.

During Reconstruction, college students in Lexington participated in and led acts of political intimidation directed at freedmen to chip away at black political and civil equality. Washington College students barged into black schools and festivals, attempting to disrupt the rhythms of black civic life by encroaching on protected, autonomous spaces for African Americans. Washington law student Charles T. O’Ferrall joined an 1868 mob in chasing down a group of blacks who had made political speeches in the nearby town of Colliersville.  

In February 1868, several Washington

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College students helped locals run off a Freedmen’s Bureau agent investigating complaints of black intimidation. The next month, Washington College student Hugh Moran noted the presence of black crosses, coffins, and skeletons strewn about town—he believed by Washington College students—to indicate the presence of the Ku Klux Klan. “The negroes and little boys are scared half to death,” he wrote.\(^{37}\)

When blacks refused to abide by the rules of white supremacy and show deference, white college students in Lexington could turn to lynching. An April 1869 debate by the Washington Literary Society concerning the propriety of lynch law reveals students’ casual disregard for its lethal implications. The student newspaper, the *Southern Collegian*, reported that neither side debated very eloquently, but that it was “enlivened by quite a display of wit and humor.” No one was laughing a year earlier when a lynching was barely averted. One May night in 1868, a group of African Americans gathered on the road outside the house of Judge John Brockenbrough, the head of the Washington College law school. When Brockenbrough’s wife and his adolescent son, Francis, insisted they move off the pavement—a clear sign of deference—so they could pass, one man named Caesar Griffin refused and cursed them. Brockenbrough took his mother inside and came back out with a stick to attack Griffin. Griffin was carrying a pistol, however, and shot Brockenbrough in the chest. Enraged but not disabled, he summoned a posse of Washington College students to catch Griffin. Only the intervention of a Washington College professor, Harry Estill, prevented the man’s lynching. The U.S. Army transferred an additional company into

\(^{37}\) Hugh Moran to Mother, February 26, 1868, March 29, 1868, Hugh Moran Correspondence, Washington and Lee.
the area after the incident to keep the peace. While Hugh Moran typically reported racial unrest to his parents without editorial comment, he opined to his father that “it has quite a wholesome effect for some of the students to shoot one [black man] occasionally. They are incited to their impudence by a trifling [Freedmen’s] Bureau agent here.”

University of Virginia students also actively aided the revival of white manhood during Reconstruction through political intimidation directed at Charlottesville African Americans. These encounters were generally less violent than in the volatile town of Lexington. Massachusetts schoolteacher Philena Carkin taught at a freedmen’s school in Charlottesville from 1866 to 1875 and kept a record of the white students’ disruptions. Carkin observed immediately upon moving to Charlottesville that “any one living near the University would soon become impressed with the idea that it was a pretty wild and reckless crowd judging from appearances….and our experience of them as neighbors did not tend to raise them in our estimation as a whole.” Carkin believed that the presence of the military in the early years of Reconstruction was responsible for preventing more serious trouble. Even then, UVA students often threw rocks through the windows of her school as they passed on the train. When a group of students heard the news that Ulysses S. Grant had won the presidency in 1868, “a party of students…furious at learning of the Republican success vented their spite” by hurling rocks through the windows of her home, “making the act energetic by a vigorous accompaniment of oaths and imprecations — as if we could have prevented the election

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of Grant had we wished to do so — which we didn't.”39 Students progressively graduated to more serious forms of threats directed at the black school and its teachers.

Though some UVA students—and faculty, such as famous textbook author and evangelical William McGuffey—took a genuine interest in the school, many others demonstrated their distaste for educating blacks, whom white southerners had tried to keep illiterate for centuries. At one point, Carkin recalled, the Ku Klux Klan left a coffin outside her school—although she had no evidence students were involved. “The rougher element among [the UVA students] showed a special spite toward any colored man or boy who was neatly dressed, usually knocking him from the sidewalk if nothing worse,” Carkin remarked. “Occasionally some high spirited young colored man would resent such interference when perhaps pistols would be drawn on both sides.” Unlike in Lexington, nothing more serious transpired from these incidents that might precipitate a “race war.” Nonetheless, many UVA students combined political statements with threats and intimidation to challenge the freed status of African Americans.40

The most terrifying UVA student effort to recreate the conditions of slavery consisted of sexually targeting freedwomen. White sexual assault against black women was an unmistakable, intentional act of white supremacy. Lisa Cardyn argues that Reconstruction-era “violent sex was in each instance a performance of dominance by its perpetrators.” It was born out of the desire to return to prewar conditions in which black women were slaves, subservient to the sexual demands of white men. Raping a black woman publicly demonstrated her lack of respectability and womanhood, and it also

39 Philena S. Carkin, Reminiscences of my Life and Work among the Freedmen of Charlottesville, Virginia, from March 1st 1866 to July 1st 1875. Vol. 1, 40-43, Philena Carkin Papers, UVA.

40 Carkin, Reminiscences of my Life and Work, 45-49, Philena Carkin Papers, UVA.
deprived freedmen of their manhood. As during slavery, white-on-black rape displayed black men’s inability to protect their loved ones, a fundamental marker of manhood. Carkin painfully remembered that young black girls and women “were in constant danger of insult and abusive treatment” by students and townsmen, “and the young colored men were frequently warned of punishment that would be meted out to them if they were rash enough to act as protectors of these girls by escorting them when it was necessary for them to go out in the evening.” Carkin acknowledged that “any colored woman was looked upon by…a majority of the white men of the community as their rightful prey, and she was in a sense helpless and unprotected by the law as well as by public opinion.” Though Carkin shared prevalent white notions that blacks were naturally depraved and somewhat to blame for the assaults, she still felt remorse for the poor young women subject to frequent sexual abuse by the UVA students and Charlottesville men.

White Lexington students also sexually targeted freedwomen. Freedmen’s Bureau agent Captain J.W. Sharp recorded that Washington College and VMI students often tried to “abduct…unwilling colored girls [for] readily divined purposes.” Teachers at freedmen’s schools reported that black girls felt powerless to resist sexual assault since they would face violence if they refused and could not count on the legal system to convict a white man of raping a black woman. When a young black maid came in

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42 Carkin, Reminiscences of my Life and Work, 49-50, Philena Carkin Papers, UVA.
to clean a VMI cadet’s room in June 1866, he attacked her and tried to rape her. The operator of the hotel in which he lived heard her screams and prevented her rape, but she was already badly beaten. Acting on behalf of the Freedmen’s Bureau, Carse urged her family to press charges, but student threats persuaded them not to. In August 1868, another Lexington college student, John Mizner, raped a young black woman named Lizzie Harper and was actively “allowed and assisted” by the mayor and citizens in escaping jail and prosecution.”

In addition to clear-cut instances of rape, sex between black women and white men often occurred in a nebulous gray area between willingness and coercion. As historian John McClure explains, “although some of these encounters may not have constituted rape in a legal sense, the inherent disparity in gender and race relationships in postwar Lexington, combined with the lingering effects of slavery-era sexual subordination of black women, guaranteed that such sexual relations were intrinsically coercive.” Well-off white students often supported black women financially in exchange for sex. These arrangements varied from situation to situation, resembling in various degrees prostitution, rape, or live-in relationships. Interactions more closely approximating prostitution or rape could diminish the public standing of black womanhood and, accordingly, manhood.


44 McClure, “The Freedmen’s Bureau School,” 195; Coffey, “Reconstruction and Redemption in Lexington,” 294. McClure and Coffey disagree whether Mizner was from Washington College or VMI. Since he does not appear in VMI’s extensive student database, it was probably Washington College.

In October 1866, a clash over a black woman’s respectability led Washington College law student James C. Johnson, a Mississippian, to murder freedman Patrick Thompson. While Johnson was trying to seduce a young black woman named Milly, Thompson happened by and attempted to ensure the woman’s safety. Infuriated by the challenge to his unrestricted access to a black woman’s sexuality, a right he claimed as a white man, Johnson left and came back with a pistol. George Carse reported that Johnson called Thompson “a damned son of a bitch” and then shot and mortally wounded him. Carse cited “the indifference and want of energy manifest on the part of the civil authorities” in apprehending Johnson, claiming “that every facility was afforded Johnson to enable him to make his escape.”

Thompson’s exhibition of black manhood by trying to protect Milly from white sexual predation stood in the way of Johnson’s exercise of white manhood and white supremacy.

White college students in Virginia could feel that they had helped recapture white southern manhood by the fall of 1869 when Virginia, along with Tennessee, became the first ex-Confederate states in which the Democratic Party regained power. This “redemption” meant the end of Radical Reconstruction in Virginia and the beginning of the end of widespread black political participation and civil rights. The battle to impose white supremacy and Jim Crow segregation continued during the rest of the century, but in many ways the groundwork had been laid, and white college students had done their part. Racial flare-ups between white students and African Americans declined markedly. In December 1884, for example, a Washington and Lee student noted with

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pride that the student body did not take to lynch law to send a message when a black man named Bill Graham assaulted a student. Graham, the student believed, was an example of the “intensely ignorant, lazy, thick necked set of loafers…who lounge around the streets with nothing to do and nowhere to go…. These are the negroes who hang like a millstone around the neck of their already too degraded race.” The students’ willingness to allow the court system to deal with Graham, rather than publicly disciplining him themselves, exemplifies their confidence in the re-established white male hegemony.

**Postwar Southern Honor**

Though many historical treatments of southern honor conclude with the Civil War, honor continued as a central part of elite white southern masculinity in the later nineteenth century. Despite white elites losing their slaves and the honor of being

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47 “A Case in Point,” *Southern Collegian*, December 1884, 142-143. Strangely, two years later, a writer for the *Southern Collegian* mentioned a local law allowing blacks to walk on the Washington and Lee campus, prompting an outrage. The author wrote: “‘Nigs’ and toothpicks are allowed to swarm on the campus, and the students are to be fined if they take means to make them keep their distance. It is a pretty spectacle that our campus presents every evening- the walks fringed with semi-clad, grinning specimens of niggerhood, all sizes, shapes, and forms. Four or five years ago a darkey knew better than to loaf on the campus.” This likely temporary law does not seem to have caused any significant outbreaks of violence, likewise demonstrating white students’ faith in the strength of white male hegemony. See *Southern Collegian*, May 1886, 336.

48 Since UNC was closed or poorly attended during Reconstruction, no significant racial violence seems to have taken place then. Kemp Battle documented several post-1875 public floggings of black Chapel Hill residents. One occurred the night of the 1884 elections, when racial tensions were already high, after a black man tripped a student. The arrival of other African Americans prevented harm to the tripper, but the students released their animosity on a black servant employed by the school. They lashed him, claiming he cheered on the African Americans during the scuffle. A separate flogging precipitated a fatal shootout between students and blacks, in which one student by the name of “Freeze” died from a gunshot to the chest. See Kemp P. Battle, *History of the University of North Carolina, 1868-1912* (Raleigh, Edwards & Broughton, 1912), II: 301-303.

49 Furthermore, many of the major theoretical works on American masculinity tend to ignore or discount the centrality of masculinity in the South altogether in the time period after the Civil War. See Craig Thompson Friend, “From Southern Manhood to Southern Masculinities: An Introduction,” in *Southern Masculinity: Perspectives on Manhood in the South Since Reconstruction*, ed. Craig Thompson Friend (Athens: University of Georgia, 2009), vii; E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993); Michael Kimmel,
leisured gentlemen, public reputation remained central to social status. The use of Lost Cause mythology and white supremacy to justify and recreate the antebellum social order exemplifies elite white men’s renewed status-consciousness. As demonstrated in Lexington and Charlottesville, violence remained a critical element of white southern manliness during Reconstruction. James Broomall argues that readjustment to peace was not a simple transition, but one “fraught by disorder” as men “sought to mend the wounds of war and reaffirm veterans’ position as Southern men and citizens.”

By the 1870s, though, many evangelical and bourgeois college students began distancing themselves from violence and disorder once again. As in the late antebellum period, violent manhood and restrained manhood operated as largely distinct discourses and ideals.

Student honor remained a vital component of both violent and restrained manhood in southern college students after the Civil War. While honor codes that had

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51 The reemergence of the violent/restrained distinction fits with the findings of Ted Ownby in his work on the postwar South and Nicholas Syrett in his study of postwar college fraternity life. Of course a number of southern men fell into some sort of gray area in between, but these archetypes remain useful for understanding elite southern culture and college life. See Ted Ownby, Subduing Satan: Religion, Recreation, and Manhood in the Rural South, 1865-1920 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), ix-x, 14; Nicholas Syrett, The Company He Keeps: A History of White College Fraternities (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 54-61. I continue to use the terms “restrained,” “evangelical,” and “bourgeois” for what Craig Thompson Friend calls the “Christian gentleman” archetype. Whereas he states that the division between martial manhood and the Christian gentleman comes out of the Civil War, one can see the roots of this division several decades earlier in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. See Friend, “From Southern Manhood to Southern Masculinities,” xi-xii.
been in place since before the Civil War helped improve student behavior, it would be an overstatement to argue that they singlehandedly revolutionized student deportment. Honor codes did not perfectly realign students' loyalties and make them subservient to the faculty. At all four schools, but especially VMI, the esprit de corps often superseded allegiance to professors and school regulations. One of the most striking examples of student solidarity and opposition to school authority occurred in November 1884 after one hundred pounds of gunpowder went missing from VMI's arsenal. When the faculty discovered the missing powder in the rafters of the barracks, Commandant of Cadets Scott Shipp arrested an entire class of cadets. Just a few days later, the arsenal and its several hundred pounds of gunpowder mysteriously exploded. Shipp and the professors led an exasperated inquiry into the matter, forcing around one hundred students to swear an oath concerning their testimony. Cadet Frederick T. Amiss wrote to his father that he skillfully managed to be absent and unreachable whenever the school sent for him for questioning. Another student who had been accused but found innocent attempted to bring a libel claim against the academy. Three other students openly refused to take an oath, claiming they owed the school no such obligation. In response, the administration briefly charged them with mutiny.

52 Greater economic and religious cultural factors discussed in Chapter 2 were more integral to the process. Many historians of the University of Virginia especially overemphasize the importance of the honor code in transforming student behavior, though several of them also offer more nuanced explanations for improved discipline. See Rex Bowman and Carlos Santos, *Rot, Riot, and Rebellion: Mr. Jefferson's Struggle to Save the University that Changed America* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 156-157; Jennings L. Wagoner, Jr., “Honor and Dishonor at Mr. Jefferson’s University: The Antebellum Years,” *History of Education Quarterly* 26,2 (Summer 1986): 177-178; Charles Coleman Wall, Jr., “Students and Student Life at the University of Virginia, 1825 to 1861,” (Ph.D. Diss., University of Virginia, 1978), 264; Philip Alexander Bruce, *History of the University of Virginia, 1819-1919, the Lengthened Shadow of One Man* (New York: MacMillan, 1921), III: 1.

53 Thomas J. Nottingham, Diary, November 29, 1884, December 1, 1884, December 9, 1884, Thomas J. Nottingham Diary, VMI; Frederick T. Amiss to Father, December 14, 1884, Frederick T. Amiss Papers, VMI.
The embarrassing debacle for VMI revealed that student loyalty and resentment for the faculty could still trump school regulations and honor pledges.

Hazing continued throughout the century despite school regulations and pledges to halt it. Though VMI had a long history of hazing, the University of North Carolina may have even surpassed VMI in frequency and severity in the postwar period. When UNC reopened in 1875 under conservative white control, it seemed to arouse students’ pride in their institution, leading to an unprecedented amount of hazing. Historian and UNC president Kemp Battle observed that sophomores—the usual perpetrators—practiced hazing relatively indiscriminately, though the most irritating and least deferential freshmen made the most tempting targets. Almost all freshmen had their faces “blacked” (usually with shoe polish) as part of an originally antebellum ritual that required them to take on the appearance of a slave. Freshmen who resisted often had their whole body “blacked.” One UNC freshman even shot one of his attempted “blackers” after announcing that he would not be hazed in any fashion. UNC students also took freshmen out on snipe hunts and left them alone in the middle of the woods. “Trotting,” another form of hazing, consisted of two sophomores each grabbing one of the freshman’s arms and forcing him to run beside them indefinitely. When the sophomores tired, others would take over, while the weary freshman had to keep up. One short-lived practice involved placing a freshman on a young bull, which was tied to a tree. When the bull ran and reached the end of its tether, the student’s momentum ejected him violently. As president of UNC, Battle longed for the antebellum period when the literary societies effectively policed and prevented hazing.55

54 See Chapter 1 for the political and economic reasons behind UNC’s closing from 1870 to 1875.
White college students who championed a violent, temperamental masculinity still often got in disputes with fellow students. The Calathump and spree traditions targeting faculty and townspeople were not wholly forgotten, though. As University of Virginia student Willard Saulsbury wrote a companion in 1878: “We have a spree about on[c]e a week” in large groups, requiring multiple policemen to disperse them. “The town people think the students are a race of some heathen and it is not much to be wondered at.” By and large, though, these public disruptions were less frequent and severe by the postwar era than in the early antebellum period. Student disagreements and honor conflicts generally followed the antebellum pattern of public bluster with little actual violence. University of Virginia student R.T.W. Duke reminisced that in the 1871-1872 school year elections in the Washington Literary Society nearly led to a duel after "Moses Langley Wickes imagined himself insulted by [Henry T.] Kent & challenged him to deadly combat." Latin Professor William Peters discovered the plan and demanded the two students swear on their honor not to duel. VMI cadet Thomas J. Nottingham recorded several minor fights throughout 1883 revolving around honor conflicts. Of one he wrote: "Henderson drunk last night and cussed the fellows out. This morning McDonald went down to see him, they had a little skirmish, it did not amount to much." 

55 Battle, History of the University of North Carolina, II: 240, 294-298; Walter E. Campbell, Across Fortune's Tracks: A Biography of William Rand Kenan, Jr. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 51-52; Neil Angus Smith to Mother, September 9, 1882, UNC Miscellaneous Papers, SHC; Richard Hackett to Mother, September 10, 1883, Gordon-Hackett Papers, SHC; Reid Russell to Lucy Russell, January 25, 1888, Charles Phillips Papers, SHC; Faculty Meeting Minutes, General Faculty and Faculty Council of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Records, September 14, 1885, September 14, 1886, September 6, 1890, December 23, 1895, November 2, 1897, UNC. An undated, untitled clipping from an 1890s VMI cadet recorded the school’s non-hazing pledge: “I hereby pledge my honor that I will not, while aCadet, of the V.M.I., take part in, nor countenance hazing in any form, directly or indirectly.” Untitled, n.d., Conway Howard Scrapbooks, VMI.

56 Willard Saulsbury to Joe, February 24, 1878, Willard Saulsbury Letter, UVA.
The development of intercollegiate athletics provided an outlet for young men’s aggression, but even sports could precipitate violence too. As mentioned in the discussions of African American and Native American sport in the previous chapters, supporters of athletics heralded sports as gentlemen’s games where sportsmanship and teamwork were the ultimate goals. Occasionally student behavior suggested less idealistic motives. Amidst spectating the bruising play of two teams on the football field, student fans could give into the primal violence of the game. As immediate neighbors, Washington and Lee and VMI became ferocious rivals. After VMI defeated Washington and Lee in football for the second time in 1894 alone, a fight broke out among the students. The Washington and Lee newspaper blamed the VMI freshmen (“rats”) for producing clubs and chair legs in a victory celebration and “go[ing] to pounding” on the Washington and Lee students, who “didn’t decline the combat” and used rocks and sticks to fight to a stalemate. Winning the football game carried immense honor just as losing brought shame. Sports were public contests of virility akin to the Civil War in that the result—not just the performance—mattered. Postbellum violent manhood relied on the appearance of mastery as much as in the slave South.

Violent honor and the need to defend one’s reputation led to the death of at least one VMI cadet. In September 1890, cadets Frank W. McConnico and Warner Throckmorton Taliaferro began to squabble when they both tried to enter a door at the same time. After some pushing and a “wordy war,” Taliaferro passed through first, prompting McConnico to challenge him to meet him in the literary society hall for a fight

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58 Southern Collegian, November 1894, 135.
at any time. “There the matter ended, and was forgotten by both,” cadet John Orr wrote, “until the tattlers and go-betweens got to bearing tales from one to the other and revived the old bad feeling.” Once the spat stretched beyond the two involved, and other cadets ignited their fears of loss of public standing, both McConnico and Taliaferro consented to fight that same evening. Taliaferro, a Virginian, was seventeen at the time and had only been at VMI a little over a week. McConnico was eighteen and a Texan, a “welltrained athlete,” according to John Orr. Though fists were to be the only weapon, each brought several seconds to the fight as a tradition of the elite dueling ritual. “They had a regular battle,” Orr described, and “fought like bulldogs for one hour and a half” before nearly a dozen onlookers. At that point, “both boys were carried out nearly senseless, and Taliaferro died in an hours [sic] time” from all the blows to the face.59

Everyone at VMI was stunned, unable to process that traditional rituals of manhood could bring death. “Every body seemed disgruntled,” wrote Sidney Perry. “Consternation and dismay rule the Barracks. All voices are hushed and a general gloom is over every-body.” John Orr noted that “a deathly stillness prevails over the barracks.” Taliaferro’s older brother, a math professor at VMI, was “nearly dead with grief.” VMI excused all cadets from duties for three days. The police arrived, and McConnico was arrested, bonded, and brought back to his room at VMI, where he was placed under guard. “He is nothing better than a murderer now,” Orr ruminated. “It was a most brutal, and horrible affair, one boy beaten to death by the fist of another, who now lies in his bed in delirium, praying and crying, and saying over and over again, O!

59 John Orr to Papa, September 25, 1890, John Orr Papers, VMI; William S. Weddell to Mother, September 25, 1890, William S. Weddell Letter, VMI; “Beaten to Death by a Fellow Student,” Washington Post, September 26, 1890, 1; New Berne Weekly Journal, October 2, 1890, 2. Orr described the death as blood clotting in the nose, while cadet Sidney Perry attributed it to a broken blood vessel. See Sidney R. Perry, Diary, September 25, 1890, Sidney R. Perry Collection, VMI.
God, it will kill my poor Mother! He seems to be nearly crazy.” While the cadets marveled over the brutality of the death, they generally sympathized with McConnico, believing the death was an unintentional accident. Yet Orr opined that “it is a bad thing for the V.M.I. at best, and if it scatters I suppose it will injure her reputation very much.” More than any other example of honor violence, Warner Taliaferro’s death demonstrated the atavistic nature of honor violence. It shocked even those who condoned violence as a justifiable means of defending public reputation.

College students with a restrained, evangelical view of masculinity were especially critical of the rashness and vulgarity of violent manhood. A tongue-in-cheek 1875 editorial in Washington and Lee’s *Southern Collegian* entitled “Be We Men?” answered their own question: “We doubt it.” The editorialist retorted that too many students behaved well in class and that “men would not be so submissive, so dutiful, so well behaved.” True men address professors by their first names and “curse and drink and use slang. How nice it must be to be a man!” The student writer cleverly identified how elite gender roles attempt to monopolize a cultural discourse and manufacture a consensus of gendered ideals. Courteous and diligent students obviously believed themselves men, and they defined themselves against the behaviors of other students whom they found contemptible.

William Mead Clark of the University of Virginia was the picture of evangelical manliness and one of the sharpest critics of violent manhood. Clark was a

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60 John Orr to Papa, September 25, 1890, John Orr Papers, VMI; Sidney R. Perry, Diary, September 25, 1890, September 26, 1890, Sidney R. Perry Collection, VMI; William S. Weddell to Mother, September 25, 1890, William S. Weddell Letter, VMI.

61 “Be We Men?," *Southern Collegian*, March 20, 1875, 2.

conscientious observer of the Sabbath and Sunday school teacher. When forced to remain on campus over the Christmas holidays in 1876, Clark was left with the immoral, impulsive students he detested. “Nearly all of the sober, hard-working fellows left here to spend the holidays at home & left very few except the drinking ones, & those who do ‘indulge’ certainly tried themselves today,” he wrote on Christmas Day. The presence of so many intoxicated students at dinner produced a chaotic experience. “Such behavior you never imagined among men who passed for the Aristocracy of the South—swearing & vulgar talk & jokes were the mildest part of the bad behavior—we actually came very near having a pitched battle in the dining hall.” Clark further lambasted the alcohol-soaked southern bloodlines, recounting that “one fellow wound up vomiting in his plate at table—Oh! The Chivalry of our glorious ‘Sunny South!’” The spree of drunkenness and bad behavior went on so long that Clark observed that some appeared on the verge of delirium tremens after a few hours’ interlude. “And yet these are the men who people tell us are the ‘hope of the South’ & all that sort of bosh,” he jabbed. Clark was exasperated by the outdated model of masculine behavior and struggled to accept that the social and political elite of Virginia and the South could continue to act in such an irresponsible, indecorous fashion.

Some students took their devotion to bourgeois restraint to extremes. Tom Brem of the University of Virginia struggled with a drinking problem in the early 1870s. Eventually the faculty confronted him and forced him to pledge not to drink anymore or

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63 Before 1876 Clark taught Sunday school away from campus and had to take the train to get there. However, while in transit, he was not conscientious enough to avoid getting hit by the train, and afterwards he remained on campus to teach Sunday school. William Mead Clark to William Bailey Sims, January 24, 1876, Letters to William Bailey Sims, UVA.

64 William Mead Clark to William Bailey Sims, November 4, 1876, December 25, 1876, Letters to William Bailey Sims, UVA.
be expelled. Since remaining at the university was his priority, he stopped drinking, technically. One day, however, classmate R.T.W. Duke found him with his head over the wash basin, inhaling fumes from the whiskey he had poured in it. Classmates convinced Brem that this method of getting “comfortably drunk,” while not technically a violation of the law, violated the spirit. Afterward he ceased inhaling whiskey fumes too.65

A more extreme case of utter submission to school duties and regulations occurred at Washington and Lee in the spring of 1871. Beverly Patrick wrote his brother about a student from Austin, Texas, who vowed to finish at the top of all his classes or kill himself. The student was taking seven classes at once and was unable to keep up with the workload. Once he began falling behind and performing poorly, he walked half a mile out of Lexington and ingested a whole vial of laudanum to try to kill himself. He was discovered alive but senseless, having vomited enough to stave off death. As historian Roger Lane posits, “people who commit suicide are typically careful, obedient, and sensitive to their environments. In contrast, people who commit homicide are those who, when pushed to the limit, tend to lash out recklessly.”66 Frank McConnico prided his appearance as tough and masterful and lashed out at Warner Taliaferro for entering a door before him, ultimately killing him for it. Meanwhile the unnamed Washington and Lee student was so completely focused on academic performance that he took too many classes and was unable to live up to the school’s—


and really his own—expectations. Instead of channeling the anger outward, he had been socialized to restrain it and direct it inward at his own perceived shortcomings. Honor factored into both mindsets and masculinities, but in vastly different manners.

After the Confederate surrender and the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment ending slavery, honor continued as a primary component of elite white southern masculinity. Violent manhood and submissive manhood re-emerged as two distinct subcultures after the Civil War and Reconstruction. As soon as the war was over, white college students assumed central importance in crafting and perpetuating the myth of the Lost Cause of the Old South. They propagated a discourse of women’s inferiority as part of the effort to return liberated wartime women to their antebellum subordinate status. Students also played critical roles in enacting white supremacy in Virginia through carrying out acts of political intimidation and violence against African Americans. By leading the charge to rebuild the white patriarchy of the antebellum period, white college students were quintessential in rescuing the South and southern manhood from the dishonor of military defeat.
CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION

As a child, Daniel Moreau Barringer, Jr., knew he was expected to get a college education. He could not have known that with it he would spark a scientific re-envisioning of the cosmos. Often going by Moreau, he was born in 1860 to a prominent North Carolina political family. His father and namesake was an 1826 graduate of the University of North Carolina and had gone on to be a three-term U.S. congressman, diplomat to Spain, and trustee of the University of North Carolina. Barringer, Sr.’s brother, Rufus Barringer, graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1842. After serving in the North Carolina House of Commons, he rose to the rank of brigadier general in the Confederate army during the Civil War. Moreau’s only surviving sibling, an older brother named Lewin, was born in 1850 and attended Washington College from 1867 to 1869 while Robert E. Lee was the school president. At Washington College, Lewin wrote his young brother affectionate letters inquiring about his literacy and learning both in English and Latin. Lewin expressed to his father an appreciation of the value of his own education, saying: “I know that it is to my advantage to be here endeavoring to lay up a harvest of knowledge to be used in a future with honor to myself, & country: and I trust, and believe that I am improving… and also obtaining a great deal of usefull [sic] knowledge.”¹ Getting a college education was almost assured for young Moreau Barringer, but unforeseeable circumstances nearly prevented it.

In summer 1867, while Lewin was at Washington College, his mother passed away from cancer, leaving just Daniel Moreau Barringer, Sr. to care and provide for the two boys. Never remarrying, Daniel arranged for a cousin, Maggie, to move in and look after young Moreau.² Like many wealthy southerners, the Civil War left the elder Barringer more financially insecure, and providing for both boys’ education was draining. When his father died in 1873, thirteen-year-old Moreau was left in the care of Lewin, then a young lawyer in Philadelphia. Lewin financed Moreau’s college preparatory education and put him through Princeton University. Moreau then studied law at the University of Pennsylvania, but had still not found his calling. He entered Harvard University to study geology and then finished his academic training by studying mineralogy at the University of Virginia, back in the South where he began.³

Benefitting from his studies of the earth’s crust, Moreau Barringer made a comfortable living in the 1890s through successful mining investments, laying the foundation for a lasting legacy. Shortly after his brother Lewin passed away in 1900, Moreau became fixated on a massive crater in northern Arizona. Called variously Coon Mountain, Cañon Diablo, and Diablo Canyon Crater, it was almost a mile in diameter and over five hundred feet deep. It piqued Barringer’s interest, both financially and intellectually. A decade earlier, scientist Grove Karl Gilbert, working for the U.S. Geological Service, determined the crater was the product of an ancient volcanic eruption. Barringer was not convinced. After observing several tons of iron fragments scattered for miles outside the crater and noting the presence of microscopic diamonds

² Lewin chided his father for not hiring formal servants to look after the household. Household finances likely played a role in bringing in Maggie, rather than hired help. See Lewin Barringer to Daniel Moreau Barringer, November 8, 1867, November 19, 1867, Daniel Moreau Barringer Papers, SHC.

³ Ashe, Biographical History of North Carolina, I: 145-147.
indicating a tremendous ancient thermal event, Barringer suspected the crater was left by a gargantuan iron meteorite colliding with the earth. While scientists acknowledged the existence of asteroids and meteors, at the turn of the century very few believed they could strike the earth—especially with such impact. In fact, no scientist had demonstrated credible evidence for any meteorite craters. Seeking to revolutionize astronomy and geology, Barringer began an intense and costly set of experiments to try to prove the crater’s celestial origins, while anticipating handsome rewards from mining the hundred million tons of iron he expected to find.

By the time of his death in 1929, Barringer had failed colossally in his economic venture but had found success in his scientific endeavor. After Barringer purchased the crater property, he began excavating and mining the crater floor in hopes of uncovering the extraterrestrial iron below. After his initial research between 1903 and 1905, he published a persuasive argument for the impact theory of the crater’s origin in The Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia.\(^4\) Over the last two decades of his life, many scientists came to accept Barringer’s argument, but only as it applied to his crater, which became commonly known as Barringer Crater. Barringer nearly went bankrupt from financing his mining operation for over twenty years before concluding at the end of his life that the iron meteorite probably mostly vaporized on impact. The broader implications of impact theory laid by Barringer’s findings materialized after he died, but in his own lifetime Barringer started a transformation of the way scientists and intellectuals conceived of the relationship between humans, 

earth, and outer space. They were not as separate and the earth not as perfectly safe as they had thought.

Moreau Barringer and his family represent a unique but fitting microcosm of the story of the white southern elite and higher education in the nineteenth century. Moreau’s father, a third-generation German-American, was born into a successful Cabarrus County family, of which he was the first of his family to attend college in the 1820s. Daniel and his brother Rufus went to UNC just as the cultural milieu was changing to accommodate a more bourgeois and evangelical masculinity. Daniel Barringer was not an exceedingly evangelical man, but neither was he hostile to religious fervor. His son Lewin frequently expressed to him his own religious thoughts and aspirations while at Washington College in the 1860s. Tellingly, Lewin noted that his role model for Christian devotion was his mother, rather than his father. Moreau grew up in the same environment in which evangelical religion, diligent professionalism, and civility—rather than impassioned, violent mastery—marked a man’s worth. Though violent honor remained an important part of elite white manhood, the very deliberate changes brought on by a more market-connected economy and the spread of evangelical religion gradually transformed elite white manhood in the South from the 1840s through the end of the century.

Of course the narrative of changing masculine ideals and the behavior of southern college students was not quite so simple. At white universities, the imposition of honor codes, the relaxation of extreme rules, and the end of spying on students served to calm students noticeably. The student murder of Professor John Davis at the University of Virginia in 1840 genuinely shocked most students, and no comparable

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5 Lewin Barringer to Daniel Moreau Barringer, March 30, 1868, Daniel Moreau Barringer Papers, SHC.
bodily harm came to a professor for the rest of the century at UVA, UNC, VMI, or Washington College. Many young men were still angry and eager to prove their dominance, however, so violence did not disappear. An appreciable number of students still resorted to violence to defend their public reputation, fighting and sometimes killing other students or townspeople. African American men and women especially felt the brunt of student violence after the Civil War as young white elites sought to recreate the conditions of antebellum slavery and reestablish the dominance of the white patriarchy that so utterly failed to protect the South and defeat the Union in the Civil War. By the 1880s and 1890s, with African Americans nearly completely disfranchised, student violence against blacks declined drastically. During the postwar period, the addition of intramural and intercollegiate athletics provided a less lethal outlet for honor, animosity, and competition. Also the substantial increase in extracurricular activities such as fraternities and student clubs kept young men more occupied and less eager to seek out quite as extreme forms of mischief.

It is more difficult to construct a narrative of change over time for African American and Native American masculinities in nineteenth-century southern higher education. Part of the reason is the dearth of student-authored letters and diaries in which they expressed their thoughts, feelings, and goals. Perhaps the more important driving factor in the challenge of identifying change over time relates to the relatively static environment of prejudice and oppression in which they lived and often were schooled. Many blacks and Native Americans strove to learn and imitate the markers of whiteness and bourgeois white manhood to shatter social and pseudo-scientific
arguments about their innate racial inferiority.⁶ Others turned to either minor or extreme resistance to white regulations. These archetypes of resistance did not disappear from history but were central to the civil rights movements of the twentieth century. One can see many elements of Martin Luther King, Jr., Jackie Robinson, Charles Eastman, and Jim Thorpe in the first and Malcolm X, Robert F. Williams, Huey Newton, and the members of the American Indian Movement in the second.

Samuel Chapman Armstrong built the Hampton Institute Indian Program on the assumption that Native Americans could be assimilated into American society. The curriculum and regulations constituted a carefully organized process of cultural indoctrination aimed at stripping Native Americans of most markers of their cultural identity.⁷ From Hampton’s disciplinary records, it is apparent that many students protested, and some practiced extreme resistance to Americanization. Others tried to adopt bourgeois masculine behaviors while maintaining traditional values. A few seemed to adopt American values entirely and repudiated their former way of life. William Jones, a multiracial member of the Fox tribe, considered himself mostly white and rid himself of all vestiges of Indian identity while at Hampton. He formed a romance with Caroline Andrus, one of his white Hampton teachers, and the two became engaged. After he finished at Hampton, Jones became the first Native American to

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⁶ Resorting to the long-practiced tactics of violent, honor-based masculinity would have been largely unproductive for blacks and Native Americans. White prejudices would not allow for whites to see themselves in such actions. Instead, they would confirm their suspicions of the savage and degraded natures of blacks and Indians. See the example in Chapter 5 where a group of white visitors fled for their lives after observing a class of Native Americans at Hampton rise from their desks in unison. They naturally presumed they were going to attack them.

⁷ And Hampton was relatively mild in their attempts at cultural annihilation in comparison to Carlisle and other Indian boarding schools. See David Wallace Adams, Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928 (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995); Brenda J. Child, Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940 (Lincoln: Nebraska University Press, 2000).
graduate from Harvard University since 1665. He then earned his Ph.D. from Columbia University in anthropology as a student of Franz Boas. Jones studied indigenous cultures through the contemporary white lens of Western superiority, viewing them as primitive savages and “others.” While observing the Ilongot people in the Philippines in 1909, members of the tribe killed him in a dispute originating from his impatience and insensitivity to the rituals of their culture. Jones’ notions of moral and cultural superiority, similar to white Americans’ attitudes toward Indians, led to his death in a foreign land.

The Hampton-Tuskegee model of vocational schooling seemingly offered blacks the chance to obtain a comfortable, even bourgeois lifestyle, but many students did not believe in it. The schools taught African Americans trade or teaching skills in exchange for their manual labor. The underlying Hampton-Tuskegee philosophy was political passivity in refraining from agitating for equal rights. While some were at least publicly willing to accept this condition, many others rejected it, knowing that by the mid-1870s the white, Democratic South on the other side of the school’s gates did not ever want them to have equality or economic equity. The only place blacks could fit in the elite-constructed racial capitalism of the South was at the very bottom. These young men understood manhood to mean freedom from the control and orders of whites. These students flaunted their repeated violations of school rules, especially at Hampton where the faculty who oversaw their labors was almost all white.

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Students dissatisfied with the Hampton-Tuskegee model were not especially different from middle-class African Americans at liberal arts colleges like Atlanta University. The difference was that whereas Hampton and Tuskegee students viewed ownership of their body and labor as the epitome of manhood, Atlanta students believed the marker of manhood was exercise of equal citizenship. As future lawyers and politicians, Atlanta students realized that they were effectively the public spokesmen for the black race and would lead the fight for equal citizenship and rights. Poet, civil rights activist, and 1894 Atlanta University graduate James Weldon Johnson brilliantly distilled the challenge for black elites in his famous 1899 hymn, “Lift Every Voice and Sing.” “Lift every voice and sing, till Earth and heaven ring, ring with the harmonies of liberty,” the song begins triumphantly. However, freedom from slavery was only the initial step and not the final goal for African Americans. Johnson implored: “Facing the rising sun of our new day begun, let us march on till victory is won.” The lingering memory of the “gloomy past” of slavery drenched by the tears and “blood of the slaughtered” was an ever-present reminder to continue pushing forward for black equality even as white supremacy reached new levels of bloodshed in the 1890s South.
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BIографical Sketch

Clay Cooper was born and raised in Chattanooga, Tennessee, where he attended the McCallie School. He graduated from Furman University with a Bachelor of Arts in history and a concentration (minor) in ancient Greek and Roman studies. Clay earned his Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy in history at the University of Florida, studying under Richard J. Milbauer Professor William A. Link and Professor J. Matthew Gallman. At the University of Florida he taught courses in southern and American history, as well as the history of American education.