

New Errands



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Welcome to New Errands!

The Eastern American Studies Association and the American Studies Program at Penn State Harrisburg are pleased to present the second issue of New Errands, an online journal that publishes exemplary American Studies work by undergraduate students.

Seeking to develop the next generation of Americanists, New Errands' mission is both to provide a venue for the publication of important original scholarship by emerging young scholars and to provide a teaching resource for instructors of American Studies looking for exemplary work to use in the classroom.

New Errands will be published semi-annually, after the end of each academic semester. The goal of this timetable will be to collect and publish essays produced during the previous term, so that they can be made available as quickly as possible for use in the following term.

We encourage both self-submission by undergraduate students and nominated submissions by instructional faculty. They must have an Americanist focus, but can employ a variety of disciplinary methods. Submissions can be emailed as Word documents to newerrandsjournal@gmail.com.

Essays can be of any length, but they must have a research focus. Any visual images should be placed at the end of the manuscript, and tags should be placed in the text to indicate the intended placement of each image. Manuscripts should conform to MLA guidelines.

Papers accepted for presentation at the Undergraduate Roundtable of the Eastern American Studies Association Annual Conference will be published in the Fall issue of New Errands.

New Errands Staff:

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For further information about the Eastern American Studies Association, including the annual undergraduate roundtable and the EASA undergraduate honors society, please visit:
<http://harrisburg.psu.edu/eastern-american-studies-association>.

A Message from the Editor -

The editorial staff at *New Errands* is proud to present the outstanding papers that have been selected for the March 2014 issue. These papers have been selected because they represent exemplary undergraduate research that shows an appreciation for and critical understanding of American culture.

Our goal at *New Errands* is to encourage undergraduate study and research in all areas of American culture and society. *New Errands* allows us to meet this challenge by recognizing and publishing exceptional work produced by a new generation of American Studies scholars, and by providing a primary forum for sharing their work.

We look forward to continuing this tradition in the months and years ahead.

Eileen Fresta

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Volume 2

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Liminality and the Triple Dream: Streetcar and Post-War Suburbs

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The built landscapes that developed across American time and place are among the most significant resources of social history. Dell Upton has referred to architecture as an art of this sort of social storytelling. With Upton in mind, suburbs become a particular landscape of interest because of their place between the city and country, the rich and the poor. As liminal vernacular landscapes, both streetcar and post-war 'sitcom' suburban developments represent the built manifestations of the desire for home-ownership and social well-being by the working and middle class of America.

The suburban communities that developed on the fringe of American cities after the advent of public transportation systems demonstrate the desire of ordinary citizens for a house, land, and a community - what Dolores Hayden refers to as the triple dream (see figure 1). In these communities, a pattern of development around a central streetcar artery to the economic hub of the city emerged, and homes radiating from this center were divided into spheres of individuality-minded architecture (see figure 2). These environments developed out of two factors. First was the desire to move outward from the cities as they became increasingly crowded due to influxes of southern and central Europeans during the nineteenth century. Dolores Hayden describes, "rough wooden wagons jostled elegant horse-drawn carriages in muddy streets strewn with filth and rubbish...One by one, American middle class families chose to reside at the edge of the city." [1] Overcrowding lead to less than desirable conditions for the middle and upper class, and thus gave rise to the picturesque enclaves of Llewellyn Park and its counterparts. However, the distance from the city and high costs of living in these enclaves deterred most of the working and middle class. Still desiring the triple dream, a gap was opened for a new two-part city that would allow suburbs to be within reach of lower social strata.

Streetcars themselves are the second factor to develop the streetcar suburb. The introduction of the streetcar in the 1880s was rapidly embraced by most cities and solved the problem of suburban enclaves

being too far from the city to be feasible for the working and middle class. According to Gwendolyn Wright, "the suburban expansion of the period depended directly and indirectly on many different forms of technological innovation. The suburbs of the 1870s had been constrained by the public transportation networks." [2] With the technological innovation of the streetcar, development could be explored outside of the boundaries of the city and provide the alternative, suburban landscape wanted by the middle class.

With the desire for affordable housing and the accessibility of public transit, the streetcar suburb landscape was shaped architecturally. Taxpayer blocks materialized as a temporary means of attracting citizens exploring on the new transportation lines, earning their owners enough income to pay their taxes. These blocks were typically single story, indistinctive, multi-shop units, which is reflexive of their temporary, economically-motivated nature. These blocks fronted the streetcar line, shaping the suburbs into linear landscapes (see figure 2), and provided a community and commodity center around which citizens settled. The housing developed set back from the trolley line and taxpayer blocks, and consisted of single, double, and triple family homes. Architecturally, the homes were indistinct, "a sentimental Victorian hodgepodge of borrowed forms." [3] This is demonstrative of the architecture being planned around affordability, rather than the superfluity of the earlier, picturesque suburban architecture. Floor plans reveal horizontal division, separating multi-family units into individual spheres of home-ownership. Despite the possibility of another family living upstairs, these architectural forms allowed for the sense of individual home-ownership on a widely accessible scale. Homes within the streetcar suburbs provided the triple dream for liminal Americans in desirous of the idealized life in a liminal zone.

The commodification and reproduction of streetcar suburbs indicates their ability to allow working and middle class Americans play out the triple dream. Businessmen such as Samuel Eberly Gross capitalized on this desire of the middle class, offering cheap housing and payment plans to allow anyone the chance at a home, land, and community. Wright evidences this, stating, "Chicago's Samuel Eberly Gross completed forty thousand lots, developed sixteen towns and 150 subdivisions, built and sold over seven thousand houses, all between 1880 and 1892." [4] Soon, communities such as Grossdale, IL, Chevy Chase, MD, and Brighton, MA were all extant within the streetcar

suburb landscape. The success of these communities was directly related to their easy access via streetcar, but also by the rise of simple, available, and affordable housing around these streetcars that allowed working and middle class Americans to fulfill a desire for the triple dream.

The suburban communities that developed after World War II represent that same attempt as streetcar suburbs to fulfill the dream of home ownership, land, and community. In these vernacular landscapes, however, the single family home came to dominate, unlike the multi family homes of the streetcar suburbs. Its architectural pattern is also similar yet unique to that of the streetcar suburbs, in that it continues on the commodification introduced by Eberly and his colleagues but on an entirely grander scale. When World War II commenced, resources were deployed for the military, leaving nearly nothing for housing development. Despite many working and middle class Americans having stable jobs in the war-time economy, housing supply was low and demand surged. By 1947, discussions were to sort out this new housing crisis. Out of the hearings came the idea of government-subsidized private development, which would provide Federal Housing Administration Loans and Veterans Housing Administration Loans. Hayden posits, American suburbs of the post-World War II era were shaped by legislative processes reflecting the power of the real estate, banking, and construction sectors, and the relative weakness of planning and design professions." [5] It was with loans that white Americans were able to pour money into housing development and the post-war 'sitcom' suburb was shaped.

Post-war suburbs are indicative of their era, much like streetcar suburbs. Whereas streetcar suburbs centered upon and were spurred by immigration concerns and the technological innovation of the electric streetcar, post-war suburbs centered upon and were spurred by assembly-line mass production and economic growth and complexity. With federal money flowing into housing development, construction development firms such as William Levitt's were able to standardize and mass-produce housing. Hayden explains that "The postwar suburbs were constructed at great speed, but they were deliberately planned to maximize consumption of mass-produced goods and minimize the responsibility of the developers to create public spaces and public services." [6] These houses became cheap to produce as these developers bought out industries they worked with vertically, and made it

possible for even semi-skilled laborers to construct a house. This assembly line approach is reflected in the architectural styles of these post-war suburbs. The houses in communities such as Levittown are indistinguishable, on small plots of land with small yards. Developers would produce varying styles of home design one could choose from, but all remained dulled and standardized sketches of vernacular forms such as the Cape Cod home (see figure 3).

Post-war suburbs were built with automobiles in mind as the only mode of transportation, and were built around a taxpayer-funded infrastructure. In the mid-20th century, "Families moved into a culture of consumption and became dependent on cars." [7] The automobile effectively defined the post-war suburban developments. Architecturally, each house had a driveway and a paved road leading to and from a major highway artery or city; malls developed as an economic and community center accessible only by automobile. Socially, automobiles excluded the poorer working class of the city, and defined the space as wholly a middle class effort to achieving the triple dream; they confined malls to a patron-ship made only of middle-class suburbanites able to afford an automobile and mortgaged home. This is a departure from the streetcar suburbs, which, due to their proximity to the city and foundation upon public infrastructure, allowed for a wider inclusion of strata seeking the dream of home-ownership in the idealized suburban environment.

Differences do persist between the streetcar suburbs and the post-war sitcom suburbs. In regards to infrastructure, streetcar suburbs relied entirely on the centralized transit line; the street shaped these landscapes physically and socially. Linearity, flanking taxpayer blocks, and variable affordability of housing are demonstrative to this end. In the post-war suburbs, the emphasis was instead on the automobile. This reliance dictated the architectural development of homes with driveways and garages, but also highway systems and shopping malls with massive parking lots. Additionally, the landscape of the post-war suburb was made possible only by the government loans that had been introduced, whereas the streetcar suburbs had not. In regards to the social aspect of these landscapes, post-war suburbs were more homogenized due to the racist predilections in loan criteria. Because these developments were made possible only by government loans and were characterized by the single family home, the triple dream was more restricted than it had been in the streetcar suburbs. Hayden agrees, stating that

“Racial segregation...was now enforced by government loan policies and local bankers' red-lining...Compared to the streetcar suburbs, sitcom suburbs offered far less flexibility about multiple units and family types.” [8] The landscape of the post-war sitcom suburbs was more homogenized, socially and architecturally.

Despite their differences, these two landscapes trend more toward sharing many similarities. Both were made possible through the rise of technological innovation. For the streetcar suburbs, it was public transportation. For the post-war suburbs, it was the mass availability of automobiles. Housing architecture in both landscapes was based on a muted vernacular, but designed to maintain individual spheres. In the streetcar suburbs, this was achieved through horizontally divided spaces in multi-family homes and the attempt to make houses appear to be single family homes from the facade. In the post-war suburbs, this was achieved through ‘cookie cutter’ choices that allowed choices of differentiated housing. Both landscapes became dominated by large-scale private development, which indicates their popularity through this reproduction. All of these similarities, however, point towards the largest parallel of the two landscapes, which is the story they reveal socially. The individuality implicit in the architecture of the landscapes demonstrates that streetcar and post-war suburbs arose as a way for working and middle class Americans to move away from congested cities and own their own house within a like-minded community. These suburbs were designed as a more affordable alternative to the enclave suburbs of the higher class but wanting more than the tenements of the city, and arose from the desire for Hayden’s triple dream.

Both the streetcar and post-war sitcom suburbs reflect the desires of their inhabitants, when investigated under a critical scope. Through their architectural forms, their infrastructures, and the people who resided in them, these landscapes speak to the social underpinnings that created the need for their formation. In this manner, both suburban forms represent the desire for a home, land, and community by the working and middle class of America.



Figure 1. This advertisement from General Electric promotes the trolley as “transforming the conditions of city life”. It speaks to the possibility of attaining the triple dream, made available by suburbanization. (“Enter Suburbs, Exit Slums”, General Electric Company, 1932)



Figure 2. This advertisement for the streetcar suburb of Gross Park demonstrates the centrality of the streetcar line to the development of the landscape. Taxpayer blocks fronted the trolley line, and single and multi-family houses were set back from the noise of the street. (“Outside Fire Limits, You Can Build Wooden Houses”, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1885)



Figure 3. These two renderings of Levittown house designs demonstrate the minor variations homeowners could buy. The designs are rooted in Cape Cod style, but designed on an impersonal scale that loses the style’s context. (Sketches of Cape Cod houses at Levittown, Nassau County Museum Collection, unknown date)

References

- [1] Dolores Hayden, *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth, 1820-2000* (Knopf: 2003), 21.
- [2] Gwendolyn Wright, *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing America* (MIT Press: 1983), 103.
- [3] Hayden, 78.
- [4] Wright, 100.
- [5] Hayden, 151.
- [6] Hayden, 128.
- [7] Hayden, 147.
- [8] Hayden, 147.

“It is here the romance of my life began”: The Construction of Frontier Masculinity in Late-Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century America

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“It is here the romance of my life began,” wrote Theodore Roosevelt in reference to the American West (qtd. in Jenkinson 5)[1]. The West certainly has held a special place in American history, especially for men. As the nineteenth century transitioned into the twentieth century, a variety of historical developments, including industrialization, immigration, and the close of the frontier, all contributed to a sense of anxiety felt by many white, American men about their manhood. As such, this period, specifically 1880 to 1910, serves as a useful place to investigate frontier masculinity. I argue that a series of lionized cultural products—including a promotional poster for Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show, a bronze sculpture by Frederic Remington, and a political speech given by Theodore Roosevelt—all conveyed a popular portrayal of the ideal, white American frontiersman [2]. This ideal representation was defined by a man’s horsemanship, his shooting ability, and his toilsome, yet fulfilling labor. However, other expressions of masculinity existed on the frontier. From Theodore Roosevelt’s journal recordings, Henry Flipper’s accomplishments as a black frontiersman, and Owen Wister’s homoerotic references in *The Virginian*, I construct a counter-archive that challenges the dominant portrayal of the ideal frontiersman [3].

The archive and counter-archive I have constructed for the purposes of this paper are not

intended as fixed categories of frontier masculinity. Instead, they demonstrate that masculinity was constantly negotiable at the turn of the nineteenth century. At times, the examples in each archive appear paradoxical, which further demonstrates that western masculinity defied rigid classifications. Furthermore, the archive and counter-archive created here are not intended to be an exhaustive portrayal of western masculinity. Instead, they seek to highlight various representations of late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century masculinity, in order to promote dialogue on the subject, not only for scholars, but also for the general public.

In order to enhance the legibility and navigability of this analysis, I have divided the paper into five main sections: Part I explains the methodology and theory used throughout this paper along with the selection criteria used to determine the cultural products present in this study. Part II illuminates the historical context surrounding American men’s understanding of their masculinity at the turn of the century. Part III introduces the three cultural products in my archive, while Part IV presents the three examples in the counter-archive. Part V articulates the conclusions of this analysis.

PART I: Methodology

My thesis relies on an interdisciplinary approach to interpret cultural and historical artifacts. Three disciplines, in particular, influenced my research: “new western history,” gender studies, and performance theory. First, new western history emerged in the late 1990s and challenged the dominant narrative of white men conquering native savages. It investigated the experiences of other westerners, especially women and people of color (Butler and Lansing 7). Similarly, I investigate the excluded representations of frontier masculinity and compare them to dominant portrayals of the ideal westerner.

Second, I draw on gender studies to examine how men constructed their masculine identities. For the context of this work, gender is not an inherent feature of the body (Rico 11). Instead, gender is always constructed (Rico 11). As Judith Butler states, “gender is always a doing” (qtd. in Rico 11). Judith Kegan Gardiner believes that the construction of a masculine identity is a “nostalgic formation, always missing, lost, or about to be lost, its ideal form located in a past that advances with each generation in order to recede just beyond its grasp” (qtd. in Rico 12). Michael Kimmel elaborates on Gardiner’s claim, writing, “we tend to search for the

timeless and eternal during moments of crisis, those points of transition when the old definitions no longer work and the new definitions are yet to be firmly established” (Kimmel 4). The cultural products investigated in the archive and counter-archive reflect the efforts of American men to construct their masculine identity, in particular, during a time of social change.

As a constructed identity, American manhood is influenced by a variety of factors, including race, class, ethnicity, age, sexuality, and region of the country (Kimmel 4). As such, many forms of masculinity exist. Yet, as Kimmel explains, “all American men must also contend with a singular vision of masculinity, a particular definition that is held up as a model against which we all measure ourselves” (4). My work demonstrates a singular version of frontier masculinity in the archive and then illustrates alternative versions of masculinity in the counter-archive.

The single, ideal version of masculinity described by Kimmel relates to the construction of “hegemonic masculinity,” which is at play throughout my archive and counter-archive. This form of manhood often referred to men, typically white, Protestant, and wealthy, who “assumed they were entitled to the labor and resources of others: women, nonwhites, and working people. Hegemony, moreover, entailed ‘the ability to impose a particular definition on other kinds of masculinity’” (qtd. in Rico 11). However, “hegemonic masculinity, like other gender constructions, can never be completely secure” (Rico 12). The words, images, and gestures used to articulate one’s gender are “always vulnerable to contestation” and can be constantly “appropriated, reworked, and challenged” (Rico, 12). The constant appropriation of masculinity constituted a type of performance.

Third, my study relies on performance theory to understand how men enacted their masculinity. The social construction of gender, the insecurity of masculinity, and the tension between the ideal and non-ideal forms of manhood all implied the necessity of performance to assert one’s manhood. According to Schechner, men could “make belief” through everyday performances that “create[d] the social realities they enact[ed]” (Schechner 35) [4]. For many American men, the West provided a stage on which to assert their masculinity and “make belief” in response to a period where industrialization, immigration, and other historical developments challenged their understanding of themselves. The performance, notably through a “rich vocabulary of gestures, objects, sayings, clothing, and

images,” allowed these men to craft a story of masculine triumph over nature and Native Americans (Rico 4).

The three cultural products that create the first archive demonstrate the normative and hegemonic performance of white, frontier masculinity. First, I examine Theodore Roosevelt’s speech, “The Strenuous Life” (1899). Then, I analyze Frederic Remington’s sculpture, *The Broncho Buster* (1895), and finally I interpret a promotional poster from Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show (1894). These artifacts portray the dominant image of the ideal, white American frontiersman, whose physicality was defined by his horsemanship, his shooting ability, and his toilsome, yet fulfilling labor. In each case, the artifacts that comprise this archive have been selected because they were culturally pervasive at their time [5].

Roosevelt was a member of the “Eastern Establishment,” which consisted of a series of institutions—the boarding school, the Ivy League university, the college club, the metropolitan men’s club, and the Social Register (G. White 6). Members of the Eastern Establishment possessed significant cultural capital and attempted to maintain power, traditions, and values through these private, elite institutions. Roosevelt wielded this cultural capital. As a result, his extensive writings about the West reached a wide audience and thus informed the American public’s perceptions of the region and definitions of manhood. Likewise, his presidency further solidified his pervasiveness as a cultural arbiter.

Like Roosevelt, Remington was a member of the Eastern Establishment, and as the nation’s leading illustrator and one of its most popular painters, he possessed a significant ability to visually shape perceptions of the West (G. White 7) [6]. In four years, over four hundred of his illustrations appeared in influential magazines such as *Harper’s*, *Outing*, and *Century Magazine* (Etulain 54). As his work gained attention in various publications, Remington then began to win official recognition as a great artist by receiving awards and showing his work in various exhibitions (G. White 101) [7]. The *Dial* praised Remington as “the delineator par excellence of the Indian, the cowboy and the greaser” and believed that his illustrations would influence generations of Americans long after the cowboys of the open West vanished (qtd. in G. White 192). As a result of his work and fame, Remington created a market for his subject matter and “made the careers of half-a-dozen artists who followed him” (Murdoch 73). In total, he produced over 2,750 paintings

and drawings and cast twenty five bronze sculptures before his premature death in 1909 (Murdoch 71). Remington's prevalence as a visual artist influenced how Americans envisioned the West.

Like Remington, William Frederick Cody, better known as "Buffalo Bill," became a highly influential figure in late-nineteenth century America. In fact, his Wild West Show "did more than any other attraction to popularize the West as a wild frontier" (Etulain xix). Indeed, Cody's popularity and influence remain undeniable. Beginning in 1883, he toured extensively in the United States and Europe for over thirty consecutive years ("Cody's Last Stand" 53). Even at the beginning of his career as a showman, Cody attracted large crowds. Over 40,000 people saw his 1884 show in Chicago; the following year, one million spectators attended the performance in its five month tour (Murdoch 42). By 1886 he had a permanent venue on Staten Island and during the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, six million people visited his nearby fairgrounds (42). Millions of Americans (and foreigners) understood the West through Buffalo Bill's interpretation of the region and its key figures.

Whereas the examples in the archive have been selected due to their cultural pervasiveness, the examples in the counter-archive have been selected to highlight non-normative constructions of masculinity on the frontier. To reiterate, these examples offer a counterpoint to the artifacts contained in the archive, but ultimately demonstrate how the construction of frontier masculinity was constantly negotiable and sometimes paradoxical. First, I examine Theodore Roosevelt's consumption of an elephant heart during a hunting trip throughout Africa in 1909. Then, I analyze the experiences of black frontiersman Henry Ossian Flipper. Finally, I interpret instances of homoeroticism in Owen Wister's novel *The Virginian*.

Roosevelt's consumption of the elephant heart is antithetical to the portrayal of the ideal, white frontiersman demonstrated in the archive. Although the former president helped establish the conventional image of the ideal frontiersman, his gustatory act reflects another performance to assert his masculinity, which needed constant reinforcement. However, this consumption referenced the "savage Eucharist," in which some Native Americans consumed human or animal flesh for rejuvenation or strength (Rico 210; Slotkin 90-91). A similar act by Roosevelt separated him from the image of the ideal frontiersman because it threatened to de-civilize him.

Henry Flipper deviated from the dominant

image because he was black. He also possessed an alternative type of masculinity, which relied on his ingenuity rather than on his physical prowess. In many cases, previous scholars—predominantly educated, white, middle-class males—retold the achievements of white frontiersmen, ultimately neglecting the complexity and diversity of the frontier (Butler and Lansing 7-8). As such, Flipper has been largely excluded from the canon of western figures despite his accomplishments. One scholar also suggests that black civil rights activists dismissed Flipper's story because he failed to use his position in Washington to actively promote racial equality (Cusic 165; 189).

While Flipper was excluded due to his skin color, the principle male characters in Wister's *The Virginian* deviate from the ideal frontiersman because of their homoerotic desires. Cowboys, typically admired for their rugged individualism, hard work, and fearlessness, often engaged in homosocial fraternizing that has not been highlighted by the dominant western narrative. In his book *Queer Cowboys: And Other Erotic Male Friendships in Nineteenth-Century American Literature*, Chris Packard decodes unspoken, homoerotic expressions in literature that have "until now" remained "unrealized" messages (Packard 11).

PART II: Historical Context

With the methodological and theoretical framework established, an investigation of late-nineteenth and early twentieth century historical trends is needed in order to contextualize the cultural products and experiences highlighted in the archive and counter-archive. As Kimmel explains, a variety of factors, including industrialization, immigration, and the close of the frontier, all contributed to a feeling of uncertainty about American masculinity at the time (Kimmel 57). As such, a thorough analysis of influential historical factors proves necessary before moving forward to the archive and counter-archive.

The late nineteenth century marked a period of immense industrial growth in the United States. From 1870 to 1900, U.S. industrial output increased 500 percent (Kimmel 61). This development represented the "incorporation of America," defined by fewer farmers and more factory laborers (61). Thus, American men increasingly lost their means of production and instead became human machines inside factories, which challenged their traditional notions of manhood (62). Urbanization accompanied the rapid industrialization and the decrease of Americans employed in farming.

American cities began to grow as people sought work. In 1830, about one in fifteen Americans lived in a city of over eight thousand, but “by 1900 one-third of Americans lived in cities of at least eight thousand people; and by 1910 one-half lived there” (Kimmel 62). Giant cities shunted men into tiny apartments and factories, symbolizing a loss of outdoor space where men had traditionally proven their masculinity through physical labor.

In conjunction with industrialization and urbanization, the migration of foreign immigrants and freed blacks challenged native-born white men and their sense of masculinity because racial inferiors were sometimes perceived as more sexually potent than white men (Kimmel 96). Between 1880 and 1900, “a total of nine million immigrants came to the United States” including Europeans, such as Irish and Germans, but also Asians, specifically Chinese and Japanese (Kimmel 64). Native-born white men feared that these new immigrants would be unassimilable (Murdoch 64). In addition, the population of African Americans began to grow in northern cities: “Between 1870 and 1890, 156,000 [African Americans] came north, and another 185,000 came north in the 1890s” (64). The changing demographics of these densely-packed cities raised white fears about miscegenation.

In addition to all these forces, the first wave of the women’s movement successfully emerged in the late nineteenth century, “with concurrent campaigns for entry into the workplace, university, and voting booth” (Kimmel 64). The establishment of women’s colleges, such as Vassar, Wellesley, and Bryn Mawr, provided new educational opportunities to young women (65). Likewise, women gained greater access to the workforce, with the number of female workers increasing from 1.8 million in 1870 to 5.3 million in 1900 (65). The consolidation of the women’s movement intensified men’s anxieties about their virility and social standing.

Frederick Jackson Turner’s frontier thesis, presented in 1893, further complicated the conception of American masculinity. The perceived elimination of the American frontier in 1890 caused considerable anxiety among men who believed the proving ground for masculinity slowly dissolved with the close of the frontier (Turner 2). Cities and machines, defined as feminine, did not require the physical effort men used on the frontier, which in turn demonstrated their masculinity (R. White 2). As the cities expanded and the frontier closed, American men lost a clear sense of their manhood.

In the face of all these threatening developments, two pseudoscientific phenomena—Social Darwinism and Neurasthenia—emerged in the nineteenth century and responded to concerns surrounding white manhood. Charles Darwin’s *Origin of Species*, published in 1859, led a variety of social thinkers “to apply his theories of natural selection and survival of the fittest to human societies—something Darwin himself had been hesitant to do” (Kimmel 67). Such attempts manifested themselves in the belief that men existed at a higher stage of Darwinian evolution than women. As such, white men often equated minority men with women or children, which emasculated them by suggesting that they existed on a lower evolutionary level than Anglo-Saxons (Kimmel 68). Such theories sometimes generated actual tests to measure inferiority; by the 1880s and 1890s, the weighing of brains to determine innate intelligence became a big business. One anatomist “proved” conclusively that black men “have a brain scarcely heavier than that of white women” (qtd. in Kimmel 68-69). Comparing black men and immigrants to women and children emasculated them, but a contradictory stereotype simultaneously prevailed. Racial inferiors were sometimes considered more manly, especially more sexually voracious and potent, than white men (Kimmel 69). As a result, some Social Darwinists placed these marginalized men alongside primitive beasts on the evolutionary ladder. By comparing minority men to women, children, and animals, white men could assert their racial superiority and their masculinity in a period where they felt threatened and emasculated by social changes.

Neurasthenia pathologized men’s fear about their masculinity. In *American Nervousness* (1881) and *Sexual Neurasthenia* (1884; revised 1902), George Beard described Neurasthenia as a disorder resulting from “overcivilization” (qtd. in Kimmel 99). In essence, steam power, the telegraph, and other technological innovations quickened the pace of life, preventing people from keeping up despite their tireless effort (Kimmel 99). Symptoms, including insomnia, hysteria, hypochondria, asthma, headaches, and skin rashes, sapped a man’s vital energy (99). To recover, Beard prescribed “cold baths, outdoor exercise, wearing a urethral ring, sleeping on a hair mattress with little covering of the genitals, and avoiding all erotic novels or dalliances with women of compromised virtue” (99). In addition, he encouraged men to venture West in order to revitalize their masculinity by riding, hunting, and living outdoors (100).

With masculinity destabilized in the late nineteenth century, American men “ran away to the frontier, to the West, to start over, to make their fortunes and thus remake themselves, to escape the civilizing constraints of domestic life represented by the Victorian woman” (Kimmel 32). One commentator compared two men in a magazine essay, writing “Let one remain in a quiet city . . . leading to an unambitious namby-pamby life, . . . while the other goes out on the frontier, runs his chance in encounters with wild animals, finds that to make his way he must take his life in his hands, and assert his rights, if necessary with deadly weapons” (qtd. in Kimmel 66). The writer clearly characterized the city man as inferior. As another commentator noted, “The wilderness will take hold of you. It will give you good red blood; it will turn you from a weakling into a man” (qtd. in Kimmel 66). The West, then, offered a viable option for men to assert their masculinity. In particular, men such as Theodore Roosevelt, Frederic Remington, and Owen Wister, journeyed West “to find a cure for their insufficient manhood” and each returned East, trumpeting the restorative value of the strenuous life (Kimmel 100).

Industrialization, urbanization, immigration, and the women’s movement all challenged white men’s understanding of their manhood. Neurasthenia justified these anxieties under a scientific guise, which pushed some men West to restore their masculinity. The West, then, acquired a unique identity, perceived by American men as a space to recapture lost or depleted energy. The dynamic between East and West at this time also influenced the public’s understanding of masculinity. In particular, the Eastern Establishment had a tremendous impact on the formation of the western masculine identity.

The societal changes of the late nineteenth century elicited a response from the upper class, especially the Eastern Establishment. A series of institutions—the boarding school, the Ivy League university [8], the college club, the metropolitan men’s club [9], and the *Social Register*—all “formed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century” or “changed their shape to meet the demands of industrialism” (G. White 6). These institutions grew in prestige throughout this period and ultimately served to consolidate “power in the hands of a relatively small number of individuals and families” (6). They also acculturated future generations into an environment steeped in upper-class traditions and values (20). These institutions delineated the line between inclusion and exclusion. For example, Ivy

League universities and elite, metropolitan men’s clubs all represented “islands of homogeneity in an ever-diversifying urban ocean” (G. White 27). Similarly, the *Social Register*, founded in 1887 by Louis Keller, an ex-gunsmith from New Jersey, selected those notable families worthy of recognition in society’s upper echelon (G. White 28). The formal criterion for qualification lacked strict definition, but the Social Register Association once described “family descent,” “social standing,” and “other qualifications” as factors for deciding eligibility (qtd. in G. White 27).

Unsurprisingly, the wealthy and homogenous Eastern Establishment wielded significant cultural influence, primarily because its members often held positions of national power. As such, they “set the styles in arts and letters, in the universities, in sports” and in “popular culture which governs the aspirations and values of the masses” (qtd. in G. White 11). Members of the Eastern Establishment, such as Roosevelt and Remington, served as influential cultural arbiters. Their representations of hegemonic masculinity in art and writing pervaded throughout American culture and imposed a particular definition of manhood over other forms of masculinity. The cultural products in the archive represent this control of power by the Eastern Establishment and their ability to market a version of the ideal, white frontiersman that permeated throughout American culture, especially the East. For example, Roosevelt and Remington represented powerful cultural arbiters, but together their collaboration succeeded in offering the public a uniform image of the ideal, white frontiersman. Remington illustrated Roosevelt’s book *Ranch Life and the Hunting-Trail*, so their words and drawings literally came together in one work to portray a particular version of western masculinity (Etulain 54). As a war artist in Cuba during the Spanish American War, Remington produced two paintings [10], both of which cast Roosevelt as a national hero before his first term as President (Murdoch 71). Likewise, the politician praised Remington, writing that Americans “owe him a debt of gratitude” for making “the most interesting features of our national life” permanent (qtd. in G. White 197-198). Their friendship, collaboration, and shared viewpoints demonstrate the cohesiveness of the Eastern Establishment and their ability to construct and perpetuate a particular image of the West.

PART III: Archive

Let us now consider, in detail, the archive. One of Buffalo Bill’s 1894 promotional posters, entitled

“Buffalo Bill to the Rescue,” demonstrates the showman’s physicality, specifically his coordination, as he charges into a group of Indians on horseback (Fig. 1).



Figure 1: A. Hoen Co., Baltimore

Buffalo Bill to the Rescue

1894

Colored Lithograph Poster

Buffalo Bill Center of the West, Cody, WY: Gift of the Coe Foundation,

1.69.108

Wielding two pistols, Buffalo Bill effortlessly maneuvers his horse, depicted at mid-stride in the poster. He physically commands attention at the center of the poster, especially in contrast to the fleeing bunch of frightened Indians. His rescue demonstrates his masculine power, not only because he defeated the Indians, but because he fought on horseback. To be on foot signified failure because “to be unhorsed was to be unmanned” (“Cody’s Last Stand” 58). A man’s masculinity was closely linked with the virility and power of his stallion (“Cody’s Last Stand” 58).

In addition to asserting a physically dominant position in the poster, Buffalo Bill displays his masculinity through a heroic act. He represents a savior as he fearlessly charges into a group of Indians to save the captured white couple shown in the lower left corner. Rescuing white families served both as a means to demonstrate physical masculinity and as a means to assert the superiority of the white race by depicting white victims terrorized by savage Indians. The liberation of this white couple alludes to similar rescue scenes that featured prominently in Buffalo Bill’s shows: typically in these performances, Buffalo Bill and his compatriots would save a white family whose house was under attack by ruthless Indians. The assault enabled Buffalo Bill to assert his masculinity by defeating the Native American attackers. The scene also defined manhood because the male protector could restore the household to safety and therefore reinforce

the women’s domestic role. (“Cody’s Last Stand” 57). Women who chose to leave the home were a perceived threat to masculinity:

The presence of gun-toting [Annie] Oakley and other female sharpshooters, cowgirls, and trick riders highlighted these concerns. The willingness of white women to combat established notions of home and domesticity in this way left them open to accusations of weakening the white race and the culture. (“Cody’s Last Stand” 57)

The rescue scenes allowed Buffalo Bill and his Congress of Rough Riders to define their masculinity in contrast to violent Indians and domestic women. Buffalo Bill’s show not only demonstrated “civilization trumping savagery,” it portrayed “settlement triumphing over mobility and nomadism,” showing white “domesticity as the culmination of American history” (“Cody’s Last Stand” 59). The representations of the home and attacking Indians were both equally important to reflect white superiority and masculinity.

A fine line existed between masculinity and hyper-masculinity, commonly associated with racial inferiors. In the summer of 1876, General Custer became a “martyr” in the fight against Native Americans (“Cody’s Last Stand” 51). Seeking revenge, Buffalo Bill “scalped a Cheyenne sub-chief named Yellow Hair” (51). Such a display of brutality, however, would not have appeared on Buffalo Bill’s stage because in order for the show to succeed, the content needed to be suitable for middle-class men, women, and their families (59). Hyper-masculinity, defined by brutal violence, was considered inappropriate for general audiences, in part because it created anxiety about race. Considering the popularity of Social Darwinism in that era, a hyper-masculine man might be compared to an animal and therefore be relegated to a lower rung on the evolutionary ladder. Controlling hyper-masculinity, then, proved essential in order to distinguish between white, civilized men and savage Indians as well as blacks in postbellum America. As Louis Warren maintains, “the presence of white women allowed white men to ‘tame’ their savage natures, an option Indians, Mexicans, and others ostensibly did not have” (60). In other words, white men were not savages because their hyper-masculinity could be controlled, primarily by the presence of women. Buffalo Bill carefully balanced displays of masculinity with scenes of domesticity in order to maintain white civility in his show.

The “Buffalo Bill to the Rescue” poster outlines

a nuanced understanding of race. As Audrey Smedley argues, the “myth of Anglo-Saxonism” was defined by a sense of English superiority and uniqueness, which was then imported from Great Britain to the United States by colonists (694). As a result, Americans became deeply consciousness about race (Smedley 694). Smedley maintains that “by the mid-nineteenth century virtually all Americans had been conditioned to this arbitrary ranking of the American peoples” (695). Indians were typically viewed as the savage aggressors against white victims, which the poster represents by showing the white couple tied up (R. White 34). Brutal treatment towards the Indian aggressor was justified because they threatened white people.

Like Buffalo Bill, Remington similarly depicted images of the ideal, white frontiersman. The artist’s experiences in the West as a young man informed his portrayal of backwoodsmen. In August 1881, Remington made his first journey West to Montana, and by 1883 he decided to become a sheep rancher in Peabody, Kansas (G. White 57; 59) [11]. Remington believed that western men had “all the rude virtues,” such as “perfect courage,” strength, “moral fiber,” and of course, self-reliance (qtd. in G. White 106) [12]. He knew the “wild riders” and the “vacant land” were quickly vanishing, so he began to record the “facts” around him (qtd. in Murdoch 71-72). Remington’s work, however, depicts a West constructed by his imagination rather than purely based on fact (Murdoch 72). His success taught him to paint what the public wanted to see (Murdoch 73). He knew that he was marketing a product: in a letter to Owen Wister, Remington wrote, “I am as you know working on a big picture book—of the West and I want you to write a preface . . . telling the d— public that this is the real old thing—set up and buy a copy—last chance—ain’t going to be any more West etc.” (qtd. in Murdoch 73).

Remington’s sculpture, *The Broncho Buster*, completed in 1895, embodies the masculine qualities he imagined after spending time in the West (Fig. 2).



Figure 2: Frederic Remington
 The Broncho Buster
 1895
 Bronze
 Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth
 Acc. no. 1961.6

The rider’s masculinity is intimately tied with his physicality as he rides the bucking bronco. Most noticeably, the rider’s hat brim is pinned backwards. His ruffled shirt and flailing chaps indicate the forcefulness of the horse’s rearing. As a result of the horse’s powerful bucking, the rider’s right foot has slipped out of the stirrup, which demonstrates the physical interaction between horse and rider. Lastly, the misalignment of the rider’s shoulders demonstrates his twisting upper body to compensate for the horse’s movement.

The physicality of breaking in the horse emphasizes the interaction as a man’s job where the rider can prove his masculinity. The frontier, as a proving ground for manhood, eroded as the nation industrialized. The cities and machines that replaced the frontier emasculated men (R. White 49); as the artist Charlie Russell wrote:

A lady with manicured fingers can drive an automobile with out [sic] maring [sic] her polished nails. But to sit behind six range bred horses with both hands full of ribbons these are God made animals and have branes [sic]. To drive these over a mountain road takes both hands feet and head its [sic] no lady’s job. (R. White 49)

Remington’s sculpture is representative of this description, as the rider and horse vie for physical control. Regardless of who wins, the job of busting the bronco resides with men, not women, because of the physical demand.

The rider also displays the virtues of white superiority in Remington’s sculpture. Although the rider is not explicitly white because the sculpture is bronze, he “reads” white because visual corollaries connect him with other depictions of white cowboys (Fig. 3) [13].



Figure 3: Frederic Remington

In a Stampede

1888

His clothing helps clarify his complexion. The rider's shirt, chaps, spurs, riding boots, and hat distinguish him from stereotypical Indian garb, such as a feather headdress, beads, moccasins, and revealing clothing. Hair is another indicator of his whiteness. His close cropped haircut and full mustache resemble that of a typical cowboy. By contrast, Indian men were typically drawn with long hair and no facial hair. His riding style also demonstrates his difference from Indians because he uses reins, a saddle, and stirrups whereas Indians usually rode bareback.

The rider's whiteness is also made clear in light of Remington's own racial attitudes. As Louis Warren explains, Remington's "fantasies verged on ethnic cleansing" (Warren 214). The artist's oft-quoted remark reads, "Jews, Injuns, Chinamen, Italians, Huns—the rubbish of the Earth I hate—I've got some Winchesters and when the massaging begins, I can get my share of 'em" (qtd. in G. White 109). His images were "suffused with a sense that white American racial strengths were frontier virtues, and that they were about to be lost amid rapidly multiplying and unmanly immigrants" (Warren 214). Remington's sculpture therefore reads as the ideal frontiersman: white, male, and capable of breaking in a horse.

While posters and sculptures visually depict an image of an ideal white man, Theodore Roosevelt's speech, "The Strenuous Life," verbally asserts a parallel image as those produced by Buffalo Bill and Remington. In 1899, Roosevelt, as the governor of New York, addressed an audience at the Hamilton Club in Chicago in which he extolled the strenuous life insofar as it would bring "the highest form of success," not to the lazy man, "but to the man who does not shrink from danger, from hardship or from bitter toil" (Roosevelt). Using words like

"toil," "effort," and "labor," Roosevelt clearly valued the importance of physical work. He claimed that a "man must be glad to do a man's work, to dare and endure and to labor" and protect and provide for his family (Roosevelt). Conversely, the mother must be fearless, wise, and bear children (Roosevelt). These virtues not only represented domestic rules, but acted as defenses against civilization decline. Roosevelt echoed his fear of gender disorder and racial decline in a letter to his close friend, Cecil Spring Rice, a British diplomat. Roosevelt, "characterized population decline as 'evil' and worried about 'the Slavs' defeating 'us . . . in the warfare of the cradle.' When women chose not to bear as many children as they humanly could, they were traitors to their country" (qtd. in Rico 187).

Likewise, Roosevelt believed men had a duty first to their home and then to the nation, both of which demanded men's respect. Indeed, Roosevelt insisted on the development and expansion of the army and navy, which relates to his belief in a dominant white race. Roosevelt regarded the armed forces as America's "sword and shield," which the country "must carry if she is to do her duty among the nations of the earth" (Roosevelt). In order for the United States to become powerful, Roosevelt believed that "we must grasp the points of vantage which will enable us to have our say in deciding the destiny of the oceans of the East and the West" (Roosevelt). In order to achieve these vantage points, the army and navy would play a crucial role in conquering other people. In essence, Roosevelt wanted to reopen the American frontier on an international scale. His motivation to conquer foreigners resembles similar arguments used to justify the conquest of Native Americans, namely to advance the vanguard of civilization. For example, Roosevelt believed Filipinos were "utterly unfit for self-government, and show[ed] no signs of becoming fit" (Roosevelt). All these sentiments expressed in Roosevelt's speech are confirmed by historian Walter LaFeber, who wrote, Roosevelt "personally exemplified central themes of post-1890 U.S. foreign policy—a responsibility to guarantee stability in Latin America and Asia, and a belief that Anglo-Saxon values and successes gave Americans a right to conduct such foreign policy" (LaFeber 235).

The examples in the archive, including Buffalo Bill's promotional poster, Remington's *The Broncho Buster*, and Roosevelt's speech, "The Strenuous Life," all portray an image of the ideal, white frontiersman, defined against femininity, characterized by his physical labor, and undeniably portrayed as white. These cultural

products permeated widely throughout American society, but they did not represent the only form of masculine identity in the West.

PART IV: Counter-Archive

The counter-archive provides three examples that challenge the conventional image of the ideal frontiersman. The first example in this collection is Roosevelt's consumption of an elephant heart in Africa. Although this account centers on Roosevelt's experience in Africa instead of the United States, it nevertheless represents an extension of the American West. According to Turner, the American frontier closed in 1890, which implied the elimination of a proving ground for masculinity (Turner 2). However, military conquest allowed men to prove their manhood through acts of valor, while simultaneously expanding the borders of the frontier in foreign nations (Kimmel 83). Roosevelt's comments in "The Strenuous Life" speech demonstrate his desire to reopen the American frontier on an international scale. He enacted this desire by fighting as a Rough Rider in the Spanish American War of 1898 [14]. As a result of Spain's defeat in the war, the United States expanded its empire, gaining temporary control of Cuba and indefinite colonial authority over Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines (Jenkinson 77).

Similar to the early American frontier, Africa represented a primordial state that whites could civilize. Roosevelt's hunting safari across the country's terrain symbolized "a movement from the dawn of civilization to the modern day, a recapitulation that echoed the evolution of humanity itself as well as of individual men as they grew from boyhood to manhood" (Rico 198). At that time, many believed that the same social-evolutionary stages had played out on the American West as pioneers once advanced the vanguard of civilization across the land. In fact, Roosevelt encouraged a similar brand of white settlement in East Africa. He believed the "prime need" was "to build up a large, healthy population of true settlers, white home-makers, who shall take the land as an inheritance for their children's children." In other words, East Africa could be, and should be, settled as the American West was settled, by white people intent on making it into a home" (qtd. in Rico 199).

In addition to military and colonial opportunities in Africa, the continent served as a logical extension of the American West because Roosevelt actually envisioned himself there as he rode on horseback

across the African expanse. He wrote, "I might have been on the plains anywhere, from Texas to Montana" (qtd. in Rico 200). His experience in Africa, then, serves as an extension of the American West and therefore remains suitable for analysis here.

Roosevelt's primary goal in Africa was to hunt big game. He recorded one particular kill in his book *African Game Trails*, which recounted his trip throughout the continent (Rico 165). As the hulking grey elephant revealed itself in Roosevelt's crosshairs, he squeezed the trigger twice, killing the animal (Fig. 4).



Figure 4: Kermit Roosevelt
Col. Roosevelt and a bull elephant shot at Meru
Published c. May 14, 1919
Photographic Print
Library of Congress, Washington, DC
LC-USZ62-998

In order to preserve the skin for later exhibition, the native guides, porters, and gun-bearers began "chattering like monkeys" as they delicately skinned the animal (qtd. in Rico 209). "One of the trackers took off his blanket and squatted stark naked inside the carcass the better to use his knife" (qtd. in Rico 209). As night fell and men huddled around the campfire, the ex-president of the United States "toasted slices of elephant's heart on a pronged stick before the fire" (qtd. in Rico 209). "It [was] delicious," he wrote, "for I was hungry, and the night was cold" (qtd. in Rico 209).

The scene itself evokes a fine line between civility and savagery. Roosevelt with his gun, an emblem of technology, kills the elephant from a distance with precision, efficiency, and with little bloodshed (Rico 209). By contrast, the native guides, covered in blood and compared to animals themselves, must cut the flesh with their hands (209). As this scene demonstrates, a man's style of hunting could categorize him as a particular type of man, either noble or savage. Prior to the 1820s, hunting in America often represented the nation's savage past (173). Only afterward in the throes of industrialization, immigration, and urbanization did the

practice become a means for American men to escape “the urbanized routine of their lives” (173). The creation of hunting clubs and strict guidelines for killing animals separated the noble sportsman, who hunted for sport, from the savage hunter, who depended on wild game for survival (173-174) [15].

Although the sportsman’s hunting code assuaged some fear about hunting’s primitive nature, the act of stalking an animal threatened to de-civilize the huntsman as he himself became animalistic: his sensory perception heightened, he moved on all fours over harsh terrain, and he feasted on his kills (Rico 179). In order to reconcile this primitive act, sportsmen erected hunting trophies in their houses, thereby separating the wilderness from civilization, while also demonstrating their ability to kill but also to resurrect (Rico 179).

The act of hunting signified a delicate balance between civility and savagery. Roosevelt’s consumption of the elephant heart symbolizes a personal “moment of triumphant savagery,” and threatens to cast him as a savage inferior. His gustatory act also relates to the “savage Eucharist,” a term which denotes some Native Americans’ consumption of human or animal flesh for rejuvenation or strength (Rico 210; Slotkin 90-91). Nathaniel Saltonstall recounts this practice in a scene from his book, *The Present State of New England*, in which one Native American sucks out the heart-blood of an executed enemy (Slotkin 90). Describing the motive behind this action, the Indian states, “Me stronger than I was before, me be so strong as me and he too, he be ver strong Man fore he die” (qtd. in Slotkin 90). By drinking the heart-blood of another man, the Native American believed he acquired the strength of his enemy (Slotkin 90). Similarly, an American Indian might consume a raw piece of a just-killed bear or wolf in order to obtain the bear’s strength or the wolf’s cunning (90). Although Saltonstall’s account dates from the seventeenth century, it undoubtedly added to sportsmen’s fear about hunting’s primitive nature. Roosevelt’s consumption of the elephant heart, therefore, seems to be flirting dangerously close with the line delineating white, masculine huntsman and dark, violent savage.

Around the same time Roosevelt ate the elephant heart, a debate about meat consumption gained momentum in America. Some turn-of-the-century reformers discouraged meat consumption for fear that it stimulated animal passions, but others believed a meat-heavy diet prevented the development of feminized manhood (Kimmel 101). According to popular medical

belief, “one needs blood to make blood, muscle to make muscle” and eating large amounts of barely cooked beef could maintain a person’s health (101). Therefore, by eating red meat, men could literally consume manhood (101). Roosevelt’s consumption of the elephant heart, therefore, represents an attempt to assert his masculinity. Although Roosevelt perpetuated the image of the ideal frontiersman, this gustatory act defies the dominant portrayal of masculinity. Constructions of masculinity required constant definition because they were never secure. As such, one could over-exert his masculinity and cast himself as a racial inferior. Roosevelt’s consumption of the heart demonstrates an attempt to assert his masculinity, even if it simultaneously threatened to cast him as a violent savage who partook in the wilderness Eucharist. His gustatory act coincides with a list of other activities he performed, mostly in the American West, to legitimate his manhood. Roosevelt “made belief,” or created the social realities that he enacted (Schechner 35). Regarding the West, he articulated this principle clearly when he wrote, “There were all kinds of things I was afraid of at first, ranging from grizzly bears to ‘mean’ horses and gun-fighters; but by *acting* as if I was not afraid I gradually ceased to be afraid” (qtd. in Jenkinson 5; *emphasis mine*). He reiterated his desire to become a westerner in a letter to his elder sister: “I have been fulfilling a boyish ambition of mine, *playing* at frontier hunter in good earnest” (qtd. in G. White 83; *emphasis mine*).

Roosevelt not only articulated his performance in words, he also expressed his western fantasy through a carefully constructed costume. For this young member of the Eastern elite in the Dakota Badlands, the buckskin shirt represented the ultimate symbol of the rugged backwoodsman (Jenkinson 41). In the summer of 1884, Roosevelt traveled to Sand Creek, Dakota, where an acquaintance, Mrs. Maddox, measured him for the quintessential American tunic (41). When he returned to New York that winter, he wore the buckskin shirt for a staged photo shoot (Fig. 5).



Figure 5: George Grantham Bain
Theodore Roosevelt, full-length portrait, standing, facing right, in deer skin hunting suit, holding rifle
 1885
 Photographic Print
 Library of Congress, Washington, DC
 Bain Collection, LC-USZ62-41723

The painted background, theatrical rocks, and imitation grass, which barely concealed the rug, dramatized Roosevelt's performance (G. White 84). The studio photo demonstrates Roosevelt's attempt to consciously cast himself as an "authentic" westerner who possessed manly characteristics.

Henry Ossian Flipper also departed from the ideal image of the frontiersman, but in different ways. Born into slavery on March 21, 1856, in Thomasville, Georgia, Flipper has been excluded from the dominant western narrative despite his success as the first black graduate of West Point to be commissioned as a second lieutenant in the regular army (Harris 84) (Fig. 6).



Figure 6: Kennedy
Lt. Henry O. Flipper
 ca. 1877
 Photographic Print
 Records of the US House of Representatives, 1789-2011; Series:
 Committee Papers, compiled 1822-1946; Congress, Record Group 233;
 National Archives, Washington, DC

Other black figures, such as Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois, gained prominence in Flipper's lifetime, but they resided in the East where they could fight for black equality. Even when Flipper did move East to work for the U.S. government, he failed to gain widespread attention, perhaps because he did not use his position to actively promote civil rights like others involved with the NAACP or the Urban League (Cusic 165). For this reason, the civil rights leaders of the 1960s seem to have dismissed Flipper and his accomplishments (Cusic 189).

Flipper's race separated him from the idealized white frontiersman. He also differs due to his alternative masculine identity. As a military officer, he certainly engaged in acts that reinforced the physicality of western manhood, such as exercise [16] and military combat [17]. After Flipper's military discharge, he wanted to re-enlist, especially once the Spanish American War began in 1898. Ultimately, however, Flipper's definition of manhood relied more heavily on the strength of individual character rather than physical prowess (Cusic 28). He wrote, "To stoop to retaliation is not compatible with true dignity, nor is vindictiveness manly" (qtd. in Cusic 29). In all matters, he attempted to display honor and integrity.

The examples in the archive demonstrated a masculinity defined by physicality. By contrast, Flipper tended to assert his manhood through ingenuity in the field. While stationed at Fort Still, Flipper demonstrated his skill through reason and negotiation. One day, Lt. S.R. Whitall, an infantry officer, attempted to arrest a local Indian. Flipper reported that Whitall, "a mean, brutal, overbearing fellow," failed to complete the arrest once the Native American began to fire his gun (qtd. in Cusic 41). Flipper then set out to finish the job. He travelled with ten soldiers in a covered wagon, but approached the Indian camp alone. Through sign language, Flipper negotiated the arrest of the Native American. When he arrived back to the base with prisoner in hand, Whitall appeared "dumfounded [sic], surly and discourteous" (qtd. in Cusic 41). Flipper's strategy and negotiating skills proved more effective than the technique employed by his white counterpart.

Also at Fort Sill, Flipper accomplished one of his best-known achievements, referred to as "Flipper's ditch" (Harris 88). Since the fort's founding in 1869, malaria had plagued soldiers, sometimes leading to death. As such, a white engineering officer was commissioned to solve the problem, but he failed (88). In 1879, a young Lieutenant Flipper successfully

designed a drainage system that eradicated malaria at Fort Sill (88). In fact, in 1977 it won official recognition as a National Historic Landmark and it still controls floods and erosion today (88). Flipper's ingenuity, then, proved a better indicator of his masculinity than his physical prowess.

While Flipper deviated from the normative western narrative due to his skin color and performance of masculinity through mental and strategic ingenuity, the male characters in Owen Wister's novel, *The Virginian* (1902), differ from the ideal white frontiersman because of their homosocial fraternizing. Wister, like Roosevelt and Remington, was a member of the Eastern Establishment and is often considered to be another cultural arbiter who portrayed an idealized image of the West (Murdoch 74; 80). Indeed, his famous novel circulated widely. It underwent fifteen reprints in eight months and has been adapted multiple times for the stage and the screen (74). Wister's work, therefore, could easily appear in the archive, but his writing also hints at another aspect of cowboy life that receives little attention and is therefore included in this counter-archive: homoeroticism.

Chris Packard's book *Queer Cowboy* adds to the body of scholarship called new western history by questioning the dominant western narrative in order to decode the "unspoken and, until now, unrealized message" of homoeroticism in American literature (Packard 11). While the protagonist in Wister's *The Virginian* represents a rugged frontiersman, Packard uncovers several instances that display intense moments of homoeroticism. As such, the Virginian defies the conception of the ideal, white frontiersman. Here, the male narrator, an easterner visiting Wyoming for the first time, becomes enamored with the Virginian, "a slim young giant, more beautiful than pictures" (qtd. in Packard 44). The narrator's fascination with the Virginian focuses on the physique: "the undulations of a tiger, smooth and easy, as if all his muscles flowed beneath his skin" (qtd. in Packard 44). After overhearing the Virginian talk about failed marriage attempts, the narrator states, "Had I been the bride, I should have taken the giant, dust and all" (qtd. in Packard 44). Later, the narrator remarks, "had I been a woman, it would have made me do what he please with on the spot" in response to the Virginian's lusty smile (qtd. in Packard 44). According to Packard, the narrator "wants to marry this cowboy in all senses of the word" (Packard 44). Wister used the language of marriage to express the narrator's homoerotic desires.

A year after their first hunting excursion, the narrator and the Virginian meet again, this time for an elk hunting trip (Packard 48). During this expedition, their relationship intensifies, moving from casual talk about sex to a more intimate physical experience. While camped on an island in the Snake River, the two men strip naked for a private swim together (48). The phrase "cool, slow, deep" in this context heightens the eroticism of their skinny-dipping (48). As they emerge from the water, each man remains naked, drying by the fire while cooking a meal. In conversation the Virginian states, "Yu' might say the whole year's strength flows hearty in every waggle of your thumb" (qtd. in Packard 49). As Packard notes, "Since the partners are still naked at this point, it would be difficult to believe that their thumbs are the only appendages wagging" (Packard 49). Packard's observation strengthens considering the men swam together in the Snake River, which serves as another euphemism for their genitals. Although the Virginian eventually marries Molly Stark Wood, a schoolmarm, their lack of intimacy stands in stark contrast to the homoerotic affection shared between the Virginian and the narrator (Packard 54). During their honeymoon, the bride and groom also retreat to a private island, but they dress in separate tents and bathe on opposite ends of the island. In fact, the cowboy will not allow Molly to see him naked.

In contrast to heterosexual unions, homosocial friendship and eroticism on the frontier allowed men similar forms of safety, consolation, and support, but without the problems associated with reproduction (Packard 3). Children hindered the cowboy's spontaneous life and his ability to ride freely on the open range (Packard 3). Likewise, same-sex relationships quelled the fear of miscegenation in this period where racial mixing created panic for many Americans (Packard 6).

The presence of homoeroticism in *The Virginian* presents a non-normative image of masculinity that actually existed in late-nineteenth century America, even if the dominant western narrative failed to address it. As Packard notes, "Prior to the invention of the 'homosexual' illness, U.S. culture tolerated a great deal of same-sex erotic touching, kissing, bed sharing, and bathing, whether in East Coast cities or in Western prairies" (Packard 56). For example, men danced intimately together in the "Stag Dance," a common pastime on the frontier (72) (Fig. 7).



Figure 7: Erwin E. Smith

Dancing, seemingly not hampered by lack of women
1908-1912

Gelatin dry plate negative

Erwin E. Smith Collection of the Library of Congress on Deposit at the
Amon Carter Museum of American Art, Fort Worth, TX

Acc. no. LC.S6.058

In another instance, cowboys at the W.D. Boice Cattle Company, slept outside together in pairs under the same blankets (42).

PART V: Conclusion

The archive—comprised of a promotional poster from Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, Remington's sculpture *The Broncho Buster*, and Roosevelt's speech "The Strenuous Life"—demonstrated various portrayals of the ideal, white frontiersman. The counter-archive, which included Roosevelt's consumption of an elephant heart, Flipper's experience as a black frontiersman, and homoeroticism in Wister's novel *The Virginian*, challenged the representation of the conventional western man presented in the archive.

The creation of these two archives is not intended to authenticate one version of the West over the other. Each body of historical information demonstrates that frontier masculinity was not fixed, but constantly negotiable. The aim of this project has been to highlight an unconventional western narrative alongside the dominant version, and in doing so to present a more complete depiction of masculinity in the West. Future work in the field should focus on a cultural and historiographical analysis of the popular image's formation and investigate how and why it persists today.

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[1] Throughout this paper, the “West” refers to territory within the continental United States that falls west of the Mississippi River.

[2] In this analysis, the term “frontiersman” refers to men who lived or traveled extensively throughout the West. It does not distinguish between different figures of the frontier, such as the miner or the cowboy, but instead seeks to capture all these men.

[3] Unfortunately, the experience of western women is beyond the scope of this paper. However, a study related to the non-normative performances of femininity would complement the analysis given here. Hannah Duston’s violent escape from her Native American captors in the 1690s serves as one example that defies traditional notions of domestic femininity.

[4] Schechner distinguishes between “make belief” and “make believe.” He writes, “In ‘make believe’ performances, the distinction between what’s real and what’s pretended is kept clear” (Schechner 35).

[5] A number of men, including writer Henry James, artist Thomas Hart, musician Charles Ives, and architect Louis Sullivan, railed against the perception of a feminized world in favor of a strong masculine aesthetic,

which they portrayed in their work (Kimmel 87, 108-109). The three works in my archive similarly present the image of manly figures. I have selected these cultural artifacts because they originated from the most notable and influential cultural arbiters of their time.

[6] A number of other painters did, in fact, depict non-normative views of the West, especially those in the Taos and Santa Fe art colonies, but Remington’s fame and pervasiveness overshadowed their representations of the West (Etulain 69).

[7] By 1888, Remington had exhibited his work in the American Water Color Society and the National Academy of Design (G. White 101). In the same year, his painting, ‘Return of a Blackfoot War Party,’ won the Hallgarten and the Clarke prizes (101). The American Water Color Society exhibited him again, and his fame continued to grow, especially as more magazines began to request his illustrations (101-102).

[8] Harvard, Princeton, Yale, and the University of Pennsylvania represent the most important Ivy League universities for the Eastern Establishment (G. White 20).

[9] Examples include the Union in Boston, the Knickerbocker in New York, and the Rittenhouse in Philadelphia (G. White 27).

[10] The Scream of Shrapnel at San Juan Hill and The Charge of the Rough Riders at San Juan Hill, both by Remington, depicted Roosevelt during his campaign in Cuba as a Rough Rider in the Spanish American War (Murdoch 71).

[11] Remington’s decision to open the sheep ranch signaled an impulsive attempt to associate himself with the West and assert his masculinity, even if doing so threatened him with bankruptcy (G. White 94).

[12] In order to retain these masculine qualities, Remington suggested “that a man should for one month of the year live on the roots of the grass, in order to understand for the eleven following that so-called necessities are in reality luxuries” (qtd. in G. White 107).

[13] The rider in Remington’s *The Broncho Buster* “reads” white and interestingly resembles the artist’s friend and fellow member of the Eastern Establishment, Theodore Roosevelt. In fact, the ex-President appeared several times in the artist’s work, such as *The Scream of Shrapnel at San Juan Hill* and *The Charge of the Rough Riders at San Juan Hill* (Murdoch 71). Even more striking, Remington illustrated Roosevelt in a cattle stampede, which appeared in the future president’s book, *Ranch Life and the Hunting-Trail* (1888) (Jenkinson 49). The similarity between this drawing and *The Broncho Buster* is undeniable.

[14] Years after the Spanish American war, Roosevelt expressed regret: "I have always been unhappy, most unhappy, that I was not severely wounded in Cuba . . . in some striking and disfiguring way" (qtd. in Jenkinson 77).

[15] Roosevelt codified this hunting ethic in the Boone and Crockett club, which he co-founded with naturalist George Bird Grinnell in December 1887 (Jenkinson 75). Among other requirements and qualifications needed to gain acceptance into the club, "members were sworn to maintain a strict code of honor—always to engage in a 'fair chase,' never to lie about a kill, and always to maintain a focus on natural history as well as hunting" (Jenkinson 75). Clubs such as this one also maintained a level of dignity by drawing on the rugged glamor of pioneers such as Daniel Boone and by sourcing inspiration from the refined hunting culture in Great Britain (Rico 173).

[16] Flipper believed that daily exercise routines called "plebe drill" transformed the "most crooked, distorted creature" into "an erect, noble, and manly being" (qtd. in Cusic 22).

[17] Flipper did see active combat in the Indian Wars (1866-1891). Flipper and his troop pursued the Apache chieftain Victorio and his war party (Cusic 45). In one skirmish, several soldiers were wounded and nineteen Indians were killed. Flipper recorded later, "This was the first and only time I was under fire, but escaped without a scratch" (49).

Hester Prynne's Individuality in a Puritanical Community

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During the nineteenth century, the theme of the individual in opposition to the community was prolific in politics, culture, and literature. In Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, Hester Prynne, the bearer of the scarlet letter, struggles with her community's ostracization of her because she commits adultery, resulting in a pregnancy. Although the isolation is difficult for her, she maintains her dignity through her sustaining strength. Although the community solely blames Hester for the sin because she is the mother of her illegitimate child, Pearl, Hester is not the only one who suffers as

the individual excluded from the community. As one of the reverends in the community, Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale's unresolved guilt isolates him from his parish. The community isolates Pearl because she has an irrevocable connection to her mother and her mother's sin. Community is a singular thing, but it is made up of individuals. As soon as an individual rebels from the group, as Hester does, the entire group must denounce the individual because she mars their image as a whole, and as individuals. When it comes to religion, a community must disapprove wholeheartedly, especially of Hester's deviant sin. Ignoring the sin implies acceptance and therefore approval. The community needs to show God and its church that it condemns the sin and the sinner and are more devout Puritans than the individual.

Hester's punishment, assigned by her magistrates, is to stand on a scaffold for three hours with her shameful baby, and from that point on, to wear a scarlet letter A on her chest to signify her sin. The purpose of the A is solely to differentiate between the sinner and the innocents. When walking through town, visitors will know that Hester is somehow unlike the rest of the community without even knowing her story. By requiring her to openly display her difference, the community forces Hester into exclusion. The entire community gathered around the scaffold to show their solidarity against her and her sin, and to scoff and ridicule the sinner. An older woman, clearly influential among peers, disapproves of this punishment because she does not think it is harsh enough. She said that the church, the community, and Hester would benefit if the women, "being of mature age and church-members in good repute, should have the handling of such malefactresses as Hester" (Hawthorne, 48). These "self-constituted judges" are harder on Hester than they may be otherwise because they are her elders and are upstanding members of the church (Hawthorne, 49). They need to assert their authority over the younger woman in order to further elevate their standing in the church and the community. Not only is there an age gap between Hester and the older women, but she also separates herself further by committing adultery. The "shame" Hester brought to the church further inflames their hatred of her (Hawthorne, 49). In order to move that shame from the community to the individual, they must isolate the sinner. According to the elder women, since the magistrates' punishment was not harsh enough, they will have no one to blame but themselves when "their own wives and daughters go astray"

(Hawthorne, 49). In the extremely devout Puritan community, sin is infectious. If the community does not isolate Hester, other women will follow in her treacherous footsteps.

When the town-beadle brings Hester from the prison to stand on the scaffold, with “an action marked with natural dignity, ... [she] stepped into the open air, as if by her own free will” (Hawthorne, 49). This punishment is given to her and she must accept it, but it is her dignity, which allows her to accept it gracefully. Even as she faces humiliation at the hands of her community, she is not afraid to admit to her sin. As much as the community pushes her out, she pushes the community away from her as well. She stands on the scaffold, and “with a burning blush, and yet a haughty smile, and a glance that would not be abashed, looked around at her townspeople and neighbours” (Hawthorne, 50). She understands her sin, but she reclaims the power to ostracize herself by acting as if she is not afraid. If she were embarrassed, ashamed or uncomfortable, they would be able to make her feel worse. But her outward display of dignity shows her extreme individuality. If she begged for their forgiveness or acted ashamed to try to regain admission into the community, whether or not they accepted her, she would not be an individual. She is not conforming to their standards: a sinless woman, or, if a sinner, remorseful and ashamed.

This scarlet letter A on her bosom symbolizes her sin and the life of repentance she must endure because of her indiscretion. However, Hester made her letter in “fine red cloth, surrounded with an elaborate embroidery and fantastic flourishes of gold thread.” It looked as though it was “greatly beyond what was allowed by the sumptuary regulations of the colony” (Hawthorne, 50). By wearing the symbol at all and then making it ornate, Hester shirks many social norms and expectations: she admits her sin and proves she is not ashamed, she expresses her creativity and individuality, and she wears something that appears to be more expensive than what is socially acceptable to spend on personal items. Not only is her letter ornate, but it also seems to mystically “take her out of the ordinary relations with humanity, and enclose her in a sphere by herself” (Hawthorne, 51). Because she wears her badge of dishonor with dignity and the community views it with disdain and relief that her soul is the condemned and not theirs, people cannot relate to her because she views her plight differently than they would view it if they were in her position.

Hester constantly accepts abuse when she could easily run away from her situation and the community. In order to purge her sin, she is required to remain in Boston. She is free to leave and live where she can “hide her character and identity under a new exterior” (Hawthorne, 72). She could make a new life with her daughter without the social and religious stigma and subsequent punishment. However, she has enough dignity and individuality to endure the abuse and punishment. Because of this choice to stay, she is a “martyr” (Hawthorne, 77). Her sin forces her to relinquish her place in society. Her community is bound to take her status whether she agrees that her sin is bad or not, but she could graciously hand over her status to them. Her remaining in the community – even if on the outskirts – and wearing the letter A maintains her dignity.

Hester’s graceful acceptance of her punishment to stand on the scaffold even though it makes her extremely vulnerable and uncomfortable shows her strength. From this strength comes her dignity. She is embarrassed of the A, but still wears it in elaborate form. Throughout the years, she still goes to the marketplace, embroiders linens for people, and is kind to her daughter – the most consistent and obvious proof of her sin. Although she is confined to the outskirts of the community, she still interacts as much as she can. All of these qualities require strength and dignity

While exploring the woods, Pearl throws flowers at Hester’s letter A. Hester’s “first motion [is] to cover her bosom with her clasped hands. But, whether from pride or resignation...she resisted the impulse, and sat erect, pale as death” allowing the child to continue her game (Hawthorne, 87). The flowers ironically represent her lost virginity. Pearl, the result of Hester’s lost virginity, constantly reminds Hester of her sinful loss. The child laughs devilishly, “dancing up and down, like a little elf, whenever she hit the scarlet letter” (Hawthorne, 87), but Hester sits there and takes it out of “pride” or “resignation” because what is done cannot be undone.

Since Pearl is the direct result of Hester’s sin, Pearl is guilty by extension. Hester was beautiful and she performed the miracle of giving birth, but unfortunately, the birth had a “taint of deepest sin in the most sacred quality of human life.” Because of this sin, instead of the world benefitting from Pearl’s birth as with other children, “the world was only the darker...and the more lost for the infant that [Hester] had borne” (Hawthorne, 53). Pearl will always be a bastard child, no matter her personality, spirituality, or beauty. The sight of Hester holding Pearl on the scaffold even reminds

Dimmesdale of the “image of Divine Maternity,” (Hawthorne, 53) but since she came from her mother’s sin, Pearl will forever be the “sin-born infant” and nothing else she accomplishes will matter (Hawthorne, 59).

Because of her isolation, Pearl is a strong-willed, disobedient child. Hester sees her own “wild, desperate, defiant mood, the flightiness of her temper, and even some of the very cloud-shapes of gloom and despondency that had brooded in her heart” in Pearl (Hawthorne, 82). Because Hester knows that Pearl will not obey her, Hester finally gives up disciplining Pearl. Like Hester, Pearl is headstrong and stubborn. Hester finally “stands aside, and permits the child to be swayed by her own impulses” (Hawthorne, 82). Similarly, Hester will not reveal who impregnated her to the magistrates. No amount of “smiles and frowns” is going to persuade Pearl or Hester to do anything they do not want to do (Hawthorne, 82). Because of her mother’s sin, “Pearl was a born outcast of the infantile world” (Hawthorne, 84). Hester wants to see her child playing with other children, but because Pearl is not allowed in the community either, Pearl will grow up solely interacting with her mother.

Since the church controls the community, they do not allow Pearl to be baptized (Hawthorne, 84). Hester’s sin is sexually deviant, which is a much more serious sin because women’s chastity is extremely important in Puritan societies. Because this sin is so vile, the community is even forced to religiously ostracize Pearl, who did not actually commit any sins. Hester describes Pearl as “worthy to have been brought forth in Eden; worthy to have been left there, to be the plaything of the angels, after the world’s first parents were driven out” (Hawthorne, 80). Pearl was such a beautiful, innocent child, and more devout than Adam and Eve, she could have been left in Eden by herself to play with angels. Yet the religious leaders who ostracized Hester even exclude this innocent babe. Because of this palpable isolation, when Hester tells her the heavenly father sent her, Pearl touches the A and says “he did not send me...I have no heavenly father” (Hawthorne, 88). They are taking religion from her because she feels abandoned. She knows that, somehow, this scarlet letter A is forcing Pearl and her mother into isolation.

Pearl’s “singularity lay in the hostile feelings with which the child regarded all these offspring of her own heart and mind. She never created a friend,” (Hawthorne, 85). Hawthorne’s use of the word “created”

suggests that Pearl chose to not make friends. Pearl does not respect her peers because she had been born into isolation. Had she lived a normal childhood and then been sent into isolation, then she might have missed her friends and understood that her situation was abnormal. Since she never experiences friendship and her only interactions with the community are filled with judgment, anger and ridicule, Pearl does not want to be friends with her peers. However, Hester knows the feeling of acceptance and ostracization. Hester’s multiple experiences allow her to look at people with pity, sympathy, and sadness, whereas Pearl singular experience forces her to be hostile towards people.

Because of her isolation, Hester has the ability to view the community from a particular angle. She was once an insider, but is now an outsider. This angle is unique because most community members have never been isolated. From her perch on the scaffold where she is completely vulnerable and alone, she can see “her native village,” “her paternal house” (Hawthorne, 54) and “the intricate and narrow thoroughfares, the tall, gray houses, the huge cathedrals, and the public edifices...of a continental city” (Hawthorne, 55). She can see the community that once supported her and eventually ostracizes her. She also “looked from this estranged point of view at human institutions, and whatever priests or legislators had established; criticizing all with hardly more reverence than the Indian would feel for the clerical band” (Hawthorne, 174). Because of her removal from the community, she can perceive its politics from a different angle than other individuals who are completely engrained in the community.

Her cottage is “on the outskirts of town...not in close vicinity to any other habitation...comparative remoteness put it out of the sphere of that social activity which already marked the habits of the emigrants...shut out from the sphere of human charities” (Hawthorne, 73). She is physically removed from her community, but her sin emotionally isolates her from her community. An individual cannot be part of the community if she knows other individuals’ secret. This knowledge brings out the worse in people and does not allow them anonymity within the community. The letter A “gave her a sympathetic knowledge of the hidden sin in other hearts”, which people can perceive (Hawthorne, 78).

Even though the isolation is positive in granting her this different point of view, she is treated horribly because of her sin. The community views Pearl and Hester’s relationship as perverse. The townspeople view Pearl as a demon offspring and therefore “not

unreasonably argued that a Christian interest in the mother's soul required them to remove such a stumbling-block from her path" (Hawthorne, 89). Pearl's devilish behaviors could hinder Hester's path back to righteousness. Others argue if the child really is capable of "moral and religious growth," it was also their responsibility to transfer Pearl to a "wiser and better guardianship than Hester Prynne's" (Hawthorne, 89). In all, the general census agrees the pair should be split. However, Hester's only form of extended human interaction and feeling of purpose comes from Pearl. She approaches the magistrates "full of concern...but so conscious of her own right that it seemed scarcely an unequal match between the public on the one side, and a lonely woman, backed by the sympathies of nature on the other" (Hawthorne, 90). She knows she is independently against an entire community. Now that they want to take her child from her, she must manipulate the argument so that she can keep her only companion. While the church wants to save their souls, nature dictates the rights of the mother to her child, and the magistrates agree to allow Pearl to remain with Hester.

Not only does Hester suffer from her sin, but so does her companion in the sin. Pearl's father Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale's internal strife stems from his responsibility to lead the community. Ironically unlike Hester, Dimmesdale is awarded his individuality by the community through their deep commitment to follow him. The community appreciates his individuality because they need someone to lead them to heaven. Because of this, it is acceptable for him to stand out. Unfortunately, this individuality tortures Dimmesdale because he is overcome with guilt and cannot reconcile with his community and Hester. Dimmesdale isolates himself by allowing his guilt to consume his life. No one knows he sinned except Hester, and the entire community adores him and his sermons. Yet he imagines how the other ministers will receive him if they discover his sin. He always thinks about how hypocritical it is for him to advise his followers when his sin is oftentimes worse than theirs. His confident, learned preacher-self represents the community while his guilty sinner-self represents the individual. "He seemed to stand apart, and eye this former self with scornful, pitying, but half-envious curiosity" (Hawthorne, 194) because he cannot reconcile his two selves or overcome his guilt.

To further complicate Hester's situation, her husband, Roger Chillingworth, arrives in Boston the day

she stands on the scaffold. He does not want Hester to reveal they were married because he "will not encounter the dishonor that besmirches the husband of the faithless woman...it is [his] purpose to live and die unknown" (Hawthorne, 70). By shedding his identity and assuming that of a single man, he loses his individuality. The community does not accept a man whose wife committed adultery. If it knew his true identity, the community would ostracize him the way it ostracizes Hester. In order to be a member of the community, he must lose his individuality. From the moment he discovers Dimmesdale is the father, Chillingworth is consumed by his want for revenge. This strips him of his individuality as well. He loses all intrinsic qualities and motivation and focuses solely on the destruction of Dimmesdale's mental and physical health. This singular faceted purpose in life makes Chillingworth a one-dimensional person. The community accepts him, but he has no personality or depth.

The isolation caused by the sin affects every character involved. Hester's "life had turned...from passion and feeling, to thought" (Hawthorne, 143). Just as Chillingworth loses depth through his quest for revenge, Hester loses her personality. She once shared emotional connections with other individuals, such as her husband, her minister, and her fellow churchgoers. In her isolation, she is trapped in her mind because she is only allowed to interact with Pearl, a three-year-old child. Hester also lacks guidance and support. As she stood "alone in the world, – alone, as to any dependence on society, and with little Pearl to be guided and protected, – alone, and hopeless of retrieving her position," she had to rely on her own strength to raise Pearl (Hawthorne, 143). In Puritan law, men control their respective women. Hester has no one to depend on or follow. Because she lacks guidance for herself, she struggles to guide Pearl. Had she not sinned, Hester would have a man caring for her, accompanying her, protecting her, and providing for her. Since no one can do that for her, she must take on two roles in caring for herself and her child.

Hawthorne acknowledges that individuals make up the community when he describes how "the multitude [watching Hester on the scaffold] – each man, each woman, each little shrill-voiced child, contributing their individual parts" (Hawthorne, 54). The community in Boston is strong because it is composed of weak, dependent individuals. In order for the magistrates to maintain control over their followers, these followers must lose their individuality and abide by community

standards. They must give up their personal desires and live for the common good of the community. Hester strays from this conformity the first time when she has sexual relations with her minister, a major violation of community standards. She not only defiled herself, but she defiled the leader of the community, and therefore, the entire community. She does not conform again when she bears the scarlet letter A with pride and dignity. The community's intention for punishing Hester is to force her to fully repent. Hester seems to go through the motions of repentance. She stands on the scaffold, she wears the letter A, and she lives on the outskirts of town. However, Hester's "haughtiness," "pride," and "strong, calm, steadfastly enduring spirit" undermines the community's objective (Hawthorne, 213).

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Silhouetted Stereotypes in the Art of Kara Walker

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Kara Walker explores traditional narratives of race and gender power dynamics in her black and white silhouette installations. By presenting most figures in the same black color, racial and individual features are realized through detail. The theme of consumption is prevalent in Walker's work, such as the consumption of people as products in the slave trade as well as the consumption of breast milk in modern versions of the *Madonna lactans*. Walker's work draws on traditional intersections of race, class, and gender dynamics to create an original commentary on the cultural consumption of materials, beings, and art. Despite this commentary, Walker does not offer a clear stance on these issues and leaves the audience without a resolution to her shocking silhouettes.

Born in Stockton, California in 1969, Walker moved to Atlanta, Georgia, at the age of thirteen (Richardson 50). This move exposed Walker to the history of the "Old South" in comparison to her life in liberal California in the 1980s. Slave narratives are prevalent in Walker's work, and the stereotypes Walker draws on are typical of an Old South mentality, but

Walker insists that her work "mimics the past, but it's all about the present" (Tang 161). After her earning her B.F.A. at Atlanta College of Art and further study at the Rhode Island School of Design, Walker rose to prominence by winning the MacArthur Genius Grant in 1997 at the young age of 27 (Richardson 50). This prominent award poised Walker for great accomplishments, yet also exposed her to harsh criticism from fellow African American women artists, such as Betye Saar, who launched a critical letter-writing campaign to boycott Walker's work (Wall 277). Walker's critics are quick to demonize aspects of her personal life, like her marriage to a white European man, and even her mental state, accusing her of mental distress due to the graphic and troubling nature of her work (Wall 295).

Walker's silhouette installations involve black life-size silhouette figures on a white, often panoramic wall. Occasionally, colored lights are used to create an environment for the silhouettes, but most often the installations are strictly black and white. In this way, Walker explores stereotypes of race and gender, revealing individual and racial identities through details, yet forcing the viewer to acknowledge their complicity with stereotypes as the blank spaces of the installation are filled in with the viewer's own definitions of stereotypes, according to the social script. The black color of the silhouette figures is also the "color of all colors combined," commenting on the essential similarities between all human beings despite race and ethnicity. Walker states: "the silhouette says a lot with very little information, but that's also what the stereotype does. So I saw the silhouette and the stereotype as linked" (Kara Walker 1). Also, the shadows of the viewer interact with the silhouettes as each viewer closely examines the works, becoming part of the installation in a similar, black form and placing the viewer in direct conversation with the silhouette figures (Seidl). Walker's work questions binaristic social systems of black and white, male and female, light and dark, violent and delicate, and as such, contributes to the deconstructionist approach to feminist thought.

The use of silhouettes as a medium recalls the eighteenth and nineteenth century domestic tradition of silhouettes as female crafts. Similar to needlework and other craft mediums, silhouettes were used as a pastime for domestic women. Shadow silhouettes were particularly useful for women to record the figure of their lovers as keepsakes, as men travelled for business or military service. The ornamental style of silhouettes is

complicated by Walker's violent and socially charged subject matter, which transforms the traditionally meek and dainty medium and portrays harsh, ugly themes (Seidl). Vivien Green Fryd analyzes Walker's complication of the perception of silhouettes as "feminine, democratic, decorative, middle-class, Victorian art" by comparing the popularity of silhouettes to that of minstrel shows in which "white people rendered themselves black" (149). Phillipe Vergne, deputy director and chief curator of Walker's 2007-2008 exhibit *My Complement, My Enemy, My Oppressor, My Love*, proposes that there is violence in making silhouettes, as "the initial gesture itself – cutting through the material, slashing the figures – cannot be an innocent one" (Kara Walker 14). Eighteenth and nineteenth century silhouettes were created originally in small scale, but Walker's works are life-size and sometimes larger than life size, dwarfing the viewer as the figures are displayed at various heights and positions on the occasionally panoramic walls. Fryd proposes that "by enlarging the scale of the silhouettes and employing them to create narratives, Walker works within and explodes the limits of the medium, creating a new type of history painting" (149). In this way, Walker reappropriates a traditional women's medium to challenge the limitations of women's art and updates an older medium with new subject matter and significance.

Common criticism of Walker's work concerns her use of racial and gendered stereotypes, as Walker rarely provides a concrete conclusion to the controversial images she portrays. A critic of Walker, Betye Saar maintains that Walker uses transgressive as opposed to progressive imagery, perpetuating stereotypes instead of offering a positive solution to harmful representations of African Americans, especially African American women (Wall 277). A recurring question in Walker's work is whether or not her representations reframe the stereotypical images to present an empowered and enlightened message, or if her work merely reappropriates harmful images from the past, reinforcing the negative power dynamics that subjugate women and minorities in dominant culture. Walker's ambiguous treatment of this question contributes to the theme of consumption, as it is difficult to gauge exactly what Walker views as "appropriate" consumption in terms of the slave trade, art, and breastfeeding. In his comparison of Walker to Andy Warhol, Vergne states that "if you penetrate [a philosophy] fully, even if by ruse, you might expose the weaknesses and contradictions of the structure you are

subverting from the inside. That structure, for Warhol, was consumption, fame, and history; for Walker, it is history, authority, and power" (Kara Walker 12). For Vergne, Walker's work can be read as subverting the power structures at play in her images, despite the stereotypical representation of her subject matter, as she continues Warhol's theme of consumption.

One of Walker's early works is *Safety Curtain 1*, displayed in 1998 at the Vienna State Opera House (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1: Kara Walker, *Safety Curtain 1*, 1998.

Walker was the first artist invited to create a safety curtain installation, the goal of which is to hide an installation of an artist of the Third Reich, Rudolf Eisenmenger. Instead of cleansing the theatre of Nazi history, the Opera House manager decided to invite artists to install different works to hide the original curtain during the year, revealing the Eisenmenger during the summer for tourists. In *Safety Curtain 1*, Walker uses Austrian stereotypes, such as *The Sound of Music* inspired mountain imagery and the image of an Austrian coffeehouse logo, the Meinhl Moor, but introduces an element of violence and minstrel musicians to complicate the accepted traditions of both Austrian and international reactions to uncomfortable subjects, like racism and Nazi Germany (Seidl). Walker's use of the African image in the coffeehouse logo explores the use of stereotypes of Africans for profit, much like Saar's manipulation of the Aunt Jemima character in her work. Walker's larger silhouette exhibitions explore slavery narratives at length, but this subtle detail of a specifically Austrian coffeehouse logo demonstrates that the manipulation and "consumption" (in terms of trade) of African images for profit remains an issue. Walker exposes the controversial history the Opera House managers sought to mask, as well as the "hidden" yet glaring racial stereotypes that exist worldwide, beyond the typical representations of the Old South. Walker's handling of the themes of race and power dynamics with violent imagery through a dainty medium is typical of her most well known work with

silhouettes.

Most recently, in early 2013, Walker's work provoked controversy in a Newark, NJ library. Her work, titled *The moral arc of history ideally bends towards justice but just as soon curves around towards barbarism, sadism, and unrestrained chaos* (Fig. 2), was originally hung in a Newark library but was soon covered with cloth after intense backlash from library patrons. The work, a black and white drawing that presents numerous scenes of violence and chaotic relationships, features a depiction of a white man forcing a black woman to perform oral sex in the bottom right corner, the center of the controversy.



Fig. 2: Kara Walker, *The moral arc of history ideally bends towards justice but just as soon as not curves back around toward barbarism, sadism, and unrestrained chaos*, 2012.

This sexually and racially charged detail is typical of Walker's work, which inspires a significant amount of controversy in the more abstract context of a museum, much less a public library. After much debate, the drawing was uncovered and displayed once more. Scott London, the art collector who loaned the piece to the library, said of the decision to uncover the work: Libraries have a view towards the future; their custodians recognize that ideas that may be unpopular today may have influence tomorrow. It is reassuring that the Newark Public Library chose to maintain and uphold this principal by unshrouding and continuing to showcase Ms. Walker's drawing. It was not the easy thing to do. (Carter)

London joins some critics in supporting Walker's work as progressive, in its inspiration of unpleasant but important discussions of racism, sexism, and privilege, yet the excessive use of violent and sexually aggressive imagery in Walker's work begs the question of whether Walker is continually capitalizing on these grotesque themes in a "torture porn" fashion, providing viewers a voyeuristic pleasure in the unconventional and shocking scene.

The most significant of Walker's works in

relation to the theme of consumption is the work *Consume* (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3: Kara Walker, *Consume*, 1998.

Consumption as a theme considers both the "consumption" of people as products in the slave trade as well as the consumption of breast milk in Walker's versions of the Madonna lactans. *Consume* depicts two figures, an ethnically featured female and a young boy with white features. The two figures face each other as the boy appears to suck on an object connected to the woman's skirt as the woman herself sucks from her upturned breast. The objects on the female figure's skirt are of a phallic shape, and could denote gender ambiguity. A complete reading of the objects as phallic appendages would infer that the young boy is performing a sexual act on the female figure, yet the objects encircle the woman's body as if part of a skirt, recalling images of Josephine Baker and her exotic costume.

Josephine Baker was an African American singer, dancer, and actress popular in Paris in the 1920s and 1930s and, as Vergne states, "[became] an incarnation of the European fascination with the sexualized Other" (Kara Walker 18). Baker's career capitalized on the gaze and desire of a white European audience to ogle the exotic other, decked in a banana skirt costume that further placed Baker in an exoticized context. The allusion to Baker in this work as well as the female figure's sucking on her own breast could be an indicator of the power found in using the limited agency available to women in order to provide for oneself. Baker profited from her manipulation of stereotypes, as the female figure in *Consume* provides for herself in her "self-nourishment" (Tang 158).

Consume places the figure of the white boy as one of less power than the female, as the boy is smaller in size. In a strangely pedophilic action, the boy is sucking on the female figure's phallic banana skirt. This action, taken in context with the entire work, could

propose that the boy's submission to the exoticized image of the Other is what allows the ethnic female to provide for herself. In a manipulation of the Madonna lactans, the boy figure is not breastfeeding, but sucking on the phallic shape that alludes to Baker. In this way, the boy's misplaced representation of the Madonna lactans could be a commentary on the Mammy stereotype of African American women as well as an allusion to Baker. As white children found maternal comfort in their black caregivers, they themselves were displaced from their mothers breast, and were unable to participate in a traditional representation of the Madonna lactans. Whether the female figure is a displaced Mammy, or jezebel figure after Baker's image, this reading of *Consume* still interrogates the problematic question of whether Walker's use of stereotypes is progressive. Regardless of the female figure's self-sufficiency, the stereotypes continue to exist, harming other women who lack the business savvy and opportunity to profit from the exotic, erotic representation of the Other. This relates to the theme of consumption, and the question of at what point does the white European audience stop consuming the exotic Other as a source of entertainment? Baker profited from stereotypes, and audiences "consumed" her performance as paying customers, just as Walker profits from her work as audiences view her works.

The title *The End of Uncle Tom and the Grand Allegorical Tableau of Eva in Heaven* (Fig. 4), 1995, demonstrates Walker's direct manipulation of famous slavery narratives, especially the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe.



Fig. 4: Kara Walker, *The End of Uncle Tom and the Grand Allegorical Tableau of Eva in Heaven* (Detail), 1995.

A white woman's story of slavery, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* frames slavery in the specific context of a white female perspective. Walker, a black woman, plays with this narrative in her exhibition with her own updated perspective on slavery narratives. In this particular detail

of the work, three adult women with ethnic features suck each other's breasts while a fourth figure, an infant, strains upwards to one of the female figure's breasts. Unlike *Consume*, this earlier work of Walker's explores breast-feeding as a female issue in the elimination of the male child figure. The infant figure's gender is ambiguous, but due to its age, breastfeeding would be a less controversial act as opposed to the older boy figure's action in *Consume*. In this image, the female figure to the right carries a watermelon, a food stereotypically linked to African Americans in dominant culture, as she suckles the breast of her fellow female figure. The figures are arranged in a pyramidal shape, and as Yasmil Raymond states: "[the women] thrust out their necks, [they] seem to be hurrying to satiate their thirst. The portrait is striking for its unsentimental tone and sense of urgency" (Kara Walker 366). This is different from *Consume*, as no sense of urgency exists there. When the appetite belongs to those in the minority, there is a sense of rushing and quickened time, whereas the work with the young white boy is more fixed, allowing both him and the female figure time to nourish themselves.

Walker's exhibit *My Complement, My Enemy, My Oppressor, My Love* was her first full-scale US museum survey in 2007-2008, combining elements of past exhibits and repeating themes shown together in a comprehensive exhibit (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5: Kara Walker, *My Complement, My Enemy, My Oppressor, My Love*, 2007-2008.

The exhibit traveled throughout cities, such as New York, Los Angeles, and Paris, and was presented in a slightly different way each time. The exhibit contains short films featuring silhouettes in motion, reinforcing the idea of movement in the panoramic installations of silhouette figures. In the gallery guide, the exhibition is divided into eight narrative themes, one to correspond to each of the eight exhibits within *My Complement, My Enemy, My Oppressor, My Love*. The eight themes - Silhouettes, An Historical Romance, Uncle Tom,

Censorship?, Negress Notes, Retelling History, Endless Conundrum, and African America - are expressed in various mediums, including Walker's famous silhouettes, drawings, paintings, and videos (*Gallery Guide*).

While Walker's figures often carry a sense of movement, especially when set in a panoramic installation, her films feature the silhouettes actually in motion. One film in particular, *Eight Possible Beginnings: or, The Creation of an African-America, a Moving Picture by Kara E. Walker* explores the issue of consumption from an economical perspective. Part of the African America narrative of the aforementioned list of themes, this film is divided into eight chapters, some more connected in narrative than others. In her article, Fryd analyses the chapters of *Eight Possible Beginnings*, especially those concerning the character of a black girl situated in the Old South. Fryd states that the girl is positioned within the "Southern economy" and exists "not only in the realm of production but also within the realm of reproduction, nurturing and sex" (152). Fryd's analysis of the character, a recycled image of a young black silhouette girl, who experiences post-traumatic stress disorder-like symptoms following a rape, reinforces that in Walker's work, the theme of consumption is prevalent in terms of the slave trade, breastfeeding, and sexual imagery.

Consumption in terms of economics, nourishment, and sexual appetite occurs in most of Walker's exhibits, and in her work, Walker reveals the binary of consumer / consumed, but does not fully deconstruct this binary in the film or her figures. The power structure of the Old South gives the power of the consumer to dominant white male culture, while women, especially black slave women, are consumed for their work in the fields, as mothers, and as lovers. The women are consumed in Walker's work by both men and women, but consumption in itself implies a power dynamic of control in which black slave women are disenfranchised. Though Walker presents this binary and explores the relationships that exist as a result of the binary, there is no resolution for the young slave girl or the other silhouetted iterations of the character. In this lack of resolution, Walker recycles stereotypes and binaries, but fails to resolve the problematic issues raised by the binaries.

Walker's work explores controversial images from a highly charged historical tradition. These images reflect current social situations, such as the power dynamics of race, class, and gender that continue to

marginalize select groups and operate on a binaristic system. Walker's work manipulates these binaries and themes in panoramic installations of silhouette figures that overwhelm the viewer, but she does not offer a concrete solution. Her work remains ambiguously saturated with violence and repeated themes of subjugation, and her refusal to offer a resolution for these issues contributes to the passionate and consistent criticism of her work. The audience voyeuristically consumes the works, holding the gaze on the sexually explicit and disturbingly violent figures that consume and "devour" each other in sexual and violent acts of domination. Ultimately, Walker's work reveals the viewer's complicity with these figures, as our shadows contribute to the panorama, yet the viewer is made aware of the consequences of complicity in a patriarchal system due to the explicit, no holds barred nature of Walker's exhibitions.

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Half-Comic and Half-Tragic: Irony in Post-World War II Literature

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In their 1982 January issue, *Harper's Magazine* published Paul Fussell's essay "My War: How I got irony in the infantry." Fussell served as a lieutenant in the American infantry during World War II and afterwards became an academic, eventually receiving widespread praise and literary awards for his 1975 study, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, investigating World War I and its force in altering aesthetics. Seven years later, *Harper's* published "My War," documenting Fussell's own shift in personal aesthetics as a result of his World War II experience. Fussell begins by disclosing a few responses from readers repulsed with his depiction of warfare. "Whenever I deliver [an] unhappy view of the war, especially when I try to pass it through a protective screen of irony, I hear from outraged readers" (40). Fussell admits to an emphasis of the "noisome materials" of the war in his treatments, the "corpses, maddened dogs, deserters and looters, pain, Auschwitz, weeping," and the list goes on. By refusing to ignore the cruelty and suffering of the war, and by rendering it ironic, Fussell has been labeled, "callous," his "black and monstrous" work revealing an "overwhelming deficiency in human compassion" (40).

Fussell's ability to speak of the War as a genuinely noble endeavor dissolved during his first operation, when his platoon was ordered to relieve another squad during the night. Pinned down and lost, in "darkness so thick we could see nothing at all" (43), his platoon decided to stop for the night. Fussell and his soldiers awoke in the morning and found that they had bedded down among "dead German boys in greenish-gray uniforms." Fussell wrote, "My adolescent illusion, largely intact to that moment, fell away at once, and I suddenly knew I was not and never would be in a world that was reasonable or just. The scene was less apocalyptic than shabbily ironic: it sorted so ill with modern popular assumptions about the idea of progress and attendant improvements in public health, social welfare, and social justice. (43)

Forget letters from repulsed citizens, there is no doubt that in 1982, Fussell found among his readers, a batch of veterans nodding in agreement, though, perhaps not veterans of the same war. It is harder to discern if

Fussell would have received the same hypothetical response if he had published an exact duplicate essay thirty years early, in 1952. What would be the response to a statement like, "What got us going and carried us through was the conviction that, suffer as we might, we were at least 'making history.' But we didn't do that. Liddell-Hart's 766-page *History of the Second World War* never heard of us"(45)? While Fussell's surprise at waking up among dead soldiers may have rung true to an audience of World War II veterans in 1952, Fussell's ironic bite and disillusionment may not have.

Though this thought experiment proves nothing in and of itself, it offers a potential framework when questioning how America's understanding of warfare—its grim gory reality, its ideals of sacrifice and brave, noble servicemen—has changed since 1945. However, because examining a cultural shift over more than half a century would be a large and unwieldy topic, I hope to pare down its scope by limiting this paper to three seminal Post-World War II texts, MacKinlay Kantor's 268 pages of blank verse, *Glory for Me* (1945); Joseph Heller's outrageously popular *Catch-22* (1961); and Kurt Vonnegut's tragicomic sci-fi novel, *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969). My approach in analysis emerges from an understanding that culture and literature are interactive and reciprocal, and that each writer interpreted their war experience in the context of an American culture shifting from the guarded optimism of 1945 to the contentious Vietnam era. As I review these texts, I will use Fussell's explanation of irony, as "the emotion, whatever it is, occasioned by perceiving some great gulf, half-comic, half-tragic, between what one expects and what one finds" (44), as a sort of dowsing rod for the discussion. With Fussell's irony as a gauge, the three texts reveal a growing prominence of ironic sentiment and an overall darkening of opinion towards WWII conflict and combat in general.

In 1945, Coward-McCann, Inc. published MacKinlay Kantor's *Glory for Me*. The narrative would later be adapted into the popular Samuel Goldwyn film, *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946). Kantor, a novelist and journalist before 1939, became a war correspondent in Europe with the British Royal Air Force. Then, desiring a direct role in the war, Kantor received combat training, and eventual flew eleven missions as a B-17 gunner. Forged out of Kantor's experience with the Eighth and ninth United States Air Force and from interviews with World War II veterans recently discharged, Kantor produced *Glory for Me*, an account of three World War II veterans struggling to adapt to civilian life in Boone,

Iowa (Eckley, "MacKinlay Kantor").

Kantor plucks the title *Glory for Me* from an American gospel song, "O That will be Glory" (Knepper and Lawrence, 335). Its lines are included in the book as an epigram: "When all my labors and trails are o'er / And I am safe on that beautiful shore... / O that will be / Glory for me!" But the triumphant tone of deliverance present in the gospel lyric is not present in Kantor's novel. From the beginning, the veterans feel separation and anxiety as opposed to relief and "glory" in their homecoming. Al Stephenson, a sergeant from the infantry, describes Boone as untouched by the war (26-27). The bomber Fred Derry, age 21 and "killer of a hundred men" (3), who is bored by civilian employment and knows a "Norden bombsight, [but] not much else" (205), asks throughout the narrative, "*how much bombing / Will they want in Boone?*" (133). And Homer Wermels, a physically disabled Navy veteran, displays his alienation prominently in the way he staggers instead of walks, slurs instead of talks, and in his inability to eat his meals decorously because of his shaking hands.

Recognizing the difficulties Kantor's veterans experience in Boone, *Glory for Me* is as ill fitting and traditionally ironic a title as Swift's "A Modest Proposal." But while "A Modest Proposal" aligns well into Fussell's explanation of irony as being "half-comic, half-tragic," Kantor's narration hardly touches on the first. Kantor's irony is pointed, not at the veterans, but rather at the civilians of Boone, and in extension, all of Kantor's contemporary readers unmarred by the war. The recently discharged servicemen wait for their ticket home at an airfield, anxious, but skeptical of their homecoming. Though inevitably drawn back to the communities they left, the veterans know to be wary. Kantor wrote,

What waited [they] did not know,
But they could guess.
Their guesses would be wrong.
They knew it well,
And so did many million other men.
They were afraid. They were resentful,
But they wanted Home. (10)

Conversely, the ignorance of Boone's citizens is exemplified in Stephenson's boss, who considers Stephenson's war experience as an infantryman as something akin to a travel tour. "The war has broadened you" (10), the boss asserts.

Kantor's depiction of warfare in *Glory for Me* is

not uncommon when compared to other major American World War II novels from the late 1940s. Like Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead* or Irwin Shaw's *The Young Lions*, World War II combat is unfiltered (Pinsker, 602). It includes some of the "noisome materials" Fussell guaranteed in his own work—dismembered corpses, pain and suffering, horrible wounds, affairs with WAAC women—but neglects others; Kantor has no deserters or looters, no weeping or scandal, no hints at sadism. And though Stephenson laments that the war was fought with youth, more specifically, of the stuff inside the youth: "The wet and greasy parts you never see / When any man strips down," (113-114) his service is never questioned. Stephenson may be disillusioned, but just like Kantor, his energy is spent critiquing the civilian sector. Stephenson never gains an ironic glint. It's all tragedy, no comedy.

Kantor's *Glory For Me* was released in 1945, the same year America tied up the loose ends of World War II with two atomic bombs called Fatman and Little Boy detonated over the predominantly civilian communities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan (Chafe 58). Veterans returned to a United States that was colloquially referring to World War II as "The Good War," indicating that attitudes rested far from the isolationist and pacifist ethos that trailed the First World War (Chafe 33). America was the triumphant power. It alone had access to the super weapon that brought Japan to its knees. America exited the war with its economy and infrastructure untouched, far removed from the devastation present in Axis and Allied countries alike (Chafe 68). America's 1945 GDP was greater than those of the United Kingdom, France, Italy, the USSR, Germany, Australia, and Japan combined (Zuljan, "Allied and Axis GDP"). Yet, if the American public was optimistic, it was a cautious optimism. Society appeared primed for domestic unrest. Minorities had begun demanding extended rights and liberties. Women sought to continue their position in the work force as America moved beyond the wartime production levels. And some feared that another Depression loomed with so many American veterans returning to the job markets (Chafe 108-110).

In September 1949, American scientists discovered a tangible reason for Americans to check their optimism. They had detected traces of radioactive material in the Earth's atmosphere, a clear sign that the Soviet Union had successfully constructed and tested Atomic Bombs of their own (Burr, "U.S. Intelligence and the Detection of the First Soviet Nuclear Test"). In a few

months, the two superpowers were locked in an arms race, both threatening the other with the potency and scope of their respective stockpiles. The two settled into the political rhetoric of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD), a tacit agreement of mutual destruction: if either super power used a weapon of mass destruction, it would end in the annihilation of both parties. In 1954, amid the developing tension of the Cold War, as bomb shelters became an American building trend ("Atomic Honeymooners"), a veteran of the Twelfth Air Force, Joseph Heller, began his first attempts at his debut novel.

In 1961, Simon & Schuster publishing company purchased Heller's manuscript and published the novel in October (Aldridge, "The Loony Horror of it All: 'Catch-22' Turns 25"). In *Catch-22*, Heller describes the plight of an American bomber grouping on a fictional island in the Mediterranean in 1944. Readers follow the anecdotes of Captain John Yossarian, a bombardier, encountering a story that is presented without any devotion to traditional plot structure and lacking any modesty towards repetition. The repetitive and nonlinear nature of *Catch-22* establishes the novel's scope in the rehashing of exaggerated routines, both comedic routine and the quotidian (*Deadalus* 158). Heller wrote of Yossarian's comic hospital routine, of his maddening combat routine, and of his paradoxical military bureaucratic routine. These routines are acted out by characters with descriptions and behavior that appear more akin to cartoons than human illustrations. Instead, Heller's puppets work like crash-test dummies with nonsense names, created in order to rattle around in a system defined by *Catch-22*, the famous phrase that describes a circumstance from which escape is futile because of mutually antagonistic conditions. The clearest explanation of *Catch-22* comes from a conversation between Yossarian and Doc Daneeka, the squadron's doctor, the one friendly entity in the war that appears to have the authority to send an officer home. Yossarian question the doctor if his fellow pilot, Orr, is suitable to be grounded:
Yossarian looked at him soberly and tried another approach. "Is Orr crazy?"
"He sure is," Doc Daneeka said.
"Can you ground him?"
"I sure can. But first he has to ask me to. That's part of the rule."
"Then why doesn't he ask you to?"
"Because he's crazy," Doc Daneeka said. "He has to be crazy to keep flying combat missions after all the close

calls he's had. Sure, I can ground Orr. But first he has to ask me to."

"That's all he has to do to be grounded?"

"That's all. Let him ask me."

"And then you can ground him?" Yossarian asked.

"No. Then I can't ground him."

"You mean there's a catch?" "Sure there's a catch," Doc Daneeka replied. "Catch-22. Anyone who wants to get out of combat duty isn't really crazy." (45)

Initially, the book garnered a mixed response from critics. The negative declarations that the book was "derivative, poorly edited, repetitive and overlong" (Shatzky 150), or as a *Deadalus* review put it more bluntly, "worthless" (156), were balanced with higher praise. Nelson Algren, writing in *The Nation*, called *Catch-22* "not merely the best American novel to come out of World War II; it is the best American novel to come out of anywhere in years" (qtd. in Aldridge, "The Loony Horror of it All). Whatever the mixture of adulation and lambaste, the novel did not chart on any best-seller list, and after a year, only 30,000 hardcover copies had sold. It wasn't until after *Catch-22* was released in paperback in 1962 that Heller's novel received vast public attention. It became a number one best seller and within a year, Americans had purchased over two million copies (Aldridge, "The Loony Horror of it All).

As the 1960s progressed, *Catch-22* quickly became the defining emblem of another war. Pinsker writes, "the absurdities that Heller so painstakingly chronicled seemed to be happening at the end of his reader's noses as they followed, for the first time on evening television, a war that was both unpopular and probably unwise" (602), Vietnam. The vast anger and disillusionment engendered from America's controversial involvement in Vietnam found its expression published a few years before, within the pages of Heller's *Catch-22*. As neoconservative writer Norman Podhoretz, in one of his many censures of the novel, asserts, "*Catch-22* was a product of a new climate, and so was even applauded for what a few years earlier would have been thought virtually blasphemous—showing up World War II as in effect no different from or better than World War I" (qtd. in Rosenbaum, "Seeing *Catch-22* Twice"). Yet even Yossarian would have something to say against Podhoretz's reading. As Major Danby confronts Yossarian over his stubborn refusal to fly more bombing missions, he, using Podhoretz's rational, says, "This is no World War One. You must never forget that we're at war with aggressors who would not let either one of us live if they won."

"I know that," Yossarian replied tersely, with a sudden surge of scowling annoyance. "Christ, Danby, I earned that medal I got, no matter what their reasons for giving it to me. I've flown seventy goddamn combat missions. Don't talk to me about fighting to save my country. I've been fighting all along to save my country. Now I'm going to fight a little to save myself. The country's not in danger any more, but I am." (445-446)

No matter the historical accuracy of Yossarian's claim that the United States was, by late 1944, out of harm's way, here Heller is attempting to distance himself from any questions concerning the consequences of victory or defeat. This is a protest novel, but one, as J. P. Stern wrote, "based on the premise that war is meaningless, or, to be exact, they portray war to the extent that it is meaningless" (207). Yet, a qualification should be added to augment Stern's commentary—meaningless *to the individual*. Questions of the war's motives, honorable or not, is hardly the concern of Heller's characters as they pursue lasting respite. Their driving focus is based in one thing only: getting out alive. Heller trims war of all its lofty prattle of sacrifice and protecting one's country. For the youth of draft age in 1965, those deeply angered by the Vietnam War, not particularly invested in the outcome, fearful to join the dead Americans in the Vietnam jungle, what better contemporary literary message to identify with?

What they read was a protest novel, a protest novel laced heavily with Heller's distinct blending of the tragic and the comedic. Snowden's death scene, considered among many critics as the moral heart of the novel, is a gruesome rendering of a young soldier's disembowelment devoid of any comic exaggeration. The echolalia that inspires most dialogue in *Catch-22* lacks all comedy as Snowden whimpers again and again, "I'm cold. I'm cold," and Yossarian, unable to do much else, responds repeatedly, "There, there" (439-440). It is a heartbreaking scene; presumably sacred enough for Heller to leave it untouched by comedy. But while Snowden's death scene lacks humor, the humor of *Catch-22* is defined by death.

The comedy within each absurd statement, each opportunity of veritable combat relief negated by a *Catch-22*, each contradiction and each frustration, is pinned to the reality encapsulated in Snowden's death and the secret written out in his blood, that, "Man was matter" (440). The grotesque is countered by the tragedy that those caught within the system are in fact not cartoon characters, but are men of matter. This is

Catch-22's double thread. This is *Cacth-22's* irony. What Heller is able to accomplish in his blending of both the tragic and comedic, is a text much closer to exemplifying Fussell's definition of ironic sentiment than Kantor's somber, *Glory for Me*. When mortals face the reality of their fragile insides, and thereby, acknowledge the real external dangers threatening their fragile insides, it's a safe bet that that awareness is the outcome of a rational, healthy mind. Yet, as the dialogue between Yossarian and Doc Daneeka shows, within Heller's microcosm, to express such sensible thinking would only ensure more missions. These are men, real humans with precious fluids, trapped within the absurdity of *Catch-22*.

At the end of the novel, the reader finds that death, the single previous result of living within *Catch-22*, is not the lone response. In a decision that elicited one critic to label Yossarian a malignant anarchist (Shatzky 150), Yossarian chooses to desert. But instead of depicting Yossarian's commitment to go AWOL as cowardly, Heller couples it with the noble human endeavor of perseverance. As Yossarian explains, "I'm not running away from my responsibilities. I'm running *to* them. There's nothing negative about running away to save my life" (451). Yossarian intends to join Orr, another deserter who has found successful refuge in Switzerland. All the while the squadron's Chaplain, a usually meek character, showing more energy and gumption than ever before, shouts, "It's a miracle of human perseverance" (449), in reference to Orr's success. The Chaplain declares that he will persevere within the bureaucracy that has alienated and even arrested him under false, outrageous charges. Yossarian jumps out of the hospital window with a new faith in the individual against an absurd, seemingly all-powerful system.

This final scene reveals Heller's vision as one that sees the absurdity of the war, and in extension of life itself, as a remediable and escapable fact. The irony of pointless caution, the comedy of paradox and Snowden's death, is only present within the context of *Catch-22*, a product of a meaningless war. Escape that context, possible through human perseverance, and sanity can be resorted in the individual. The protest can succeed.

Certainly, Heller's worldview coincides with the protest movements, be it along racial or economic, gender or sexual lines, occurring in America during the early 60s and into 1966. The millions of Americans that advocated against the absurdity of racial violence and

America's involvement in Vietnam, the absurdity of institutionalized economic disparity, the absurdity of ubiquitous cultural images defining gender roles, presumably believed that those societal injustices could be subverted and reformed, with human perseverance serving as no small part of the campaign. But by 1967, American culture had reached its fracturing point. For some segments of the activists, the incremental reform sought earlier in the decade became simply not enough, or in some cases, downright illusionary. As historian William Chafe explains in *The Unfinished Journey: America since World War II* (1986), "many activist gradually lost faith in the capacity of the American political system to reform itself" (379). The Black Power activists, radical student demonstrators, and radical feminists, all expressions of a growing extremism (341), are testament to this shift in perspective and goals. And then came 1968.

If the extremism on the left represented the initial fracturing of the protest movements, then the assigations and election ballots of 1968 sounded its death knell. Those, perhaps naïvely, who saw hope for change in the promises of antiwar candidates, Eugene McCarthy and especially Robert Kennedy, and in the racial and economic activism of Martin Luther King, found their hope dashed by June. Chafe doesn't refrain from a dramatic characterization: "The nation seemed to come apart as, one blow after another, it reeled from psychic and emotional wounds unprecedented in the modern era" (380). The political leaders who were considered *perhaps* capable of bringing change to America were dead by the '68 election. So instead, America got Richard Nixon.

The following year, a Boston independent publisher, Seymour Lawrence, published Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five: Or the Children's Crusade, a Duty Dance with Death*. With *Slaughterhouse-Five*, Vonnegut employed traditionally genre specific tropes of science fiction in his account of the life and wartime experience of WWII veteran Billy Pilgrim, creating an idiosyncratic mixture of time-travel narrative and complicated verisimilitude, as Vonnegut's own WWII campaign was near identical to Billy's. *Slaughterhouse-Five* became both a critical and popular success. Obituary authors at the time of the Vonnegut's death in 2007 considered the novel to be his breakthrough (Rigney 7-8), lifting Vonnegut from his previous status as a cult figure, marginalized to science fiction friendly college campuses (Harris 52), to an American literary icon. A review representative of much

of the critical reception can be found in Christopher Lehmann-Haupt's commentary for *The New York Times* in March 31, 1969. He wrote, *Slaughterhouse-Five* "sounds like a fantastic last-ditch effort to make sense of a lunatic universe. But there is so much more to this book. It is very tough and very funny; it is sad and delightful; and it works," but he concludes with the qualification, "it is also very Vonnegut, which means you'll either love it, or push it back to the science-fiction corner." As a rhetorical answer to Lehmann-Haupt, within the first year 800,000 copies of Vonnegut's novel were sold in the United States. The novel became a best seller, cementing Vonnegut's cultural significance and establishing *Slaughterhouse-Five* as his primary vehicle (Rigney 8).

Slaughterhouse-Five depicts the life and WWII experience of Billy Pilgrim, a passive, innocuous chaplain's assistant who appears, as a general rule, marginally enthusiastic about life. In WWII, after the Battle of the Bulge, Billy finds himself behind German lines, separated from his squadron. He promptly becomes 'unstuck in time.' First "swing[ing] grandly through the full arc of his life" (43), Billy then slips into a time before his birth, then to childhood swimming lessons, then to life events in '68, then '55, then '61, and finally, back again to WWII Germany. This moment is the first for Billy in what becomes a life-long occupation of time 'unsticking'. Back in 1944, Billy is captured by German troops and is shipped to Dresden, where he and other prisoners of war will work in a vitamin syrup factory. A few months later, Allied forces firebomb Dresden. Vonnegut reports the death toll at 135,000. Their housing, the titular concrete slaughterhouse, protects Billy and his fellow prisoners of war. The bombing itself is never described beyond the wailing of air raid sirens, but the aftermath, Vonnegut's vision of Dresden as "moonlike ruins" (194), is included. Billy emerges into the devastated city to help locate and dispose of the bodies of thousands of victims.

It isn't until Billy is abducted by an alien species called the Tralfamadorians that he can understand the implications of being "unstuck in time." The Tralfamadorians are able to see all time and everything at once. Humans to the Tralfamadorians appear as "great millipedes—'with babies' legs at one end and old people's legs at the other'" (87). They are witness to the full panorama of time, all historic, contemporary, and future events appear before them as if a mountain range. The Tralfamadorians never ask "Why?" questions, because the moment simply *is* (77). As a

Tralfamadorian explains to Billy: "All time is all time. It does not change. It does not lend itself to warnings or explanations" (86).

The Tralfamadorians' understanding of non-time informs Billy's sense of existence. Once Billy is brought into the Tralfamadorians' company, he is able to freely travel from one moment of life to another. Though never able to obliterate discrete events, Billy understands the illusion of chronology: "It is just an illusion we have here on Earth that one moment follows another one, like beads on a string, and that once a moment is gone it is gone forever" (23). After a Tralfamadorian informs Billy that the Universe will end because of a Tralfamadorian accident, (the accidental result of a test pilot pressing a button when experimenting with new flying saucer fuels,) Billy asks if there is a way the end can be prevented. The Tralfamadorian responds, "He has *always* pressed it, and he always *will*. We *always* let him and we always *will* let him. The moment is *structured* that way" (117). Billy gradually acknowledges that the efforts for change, to rid the world of war, of poverty, of suffering and cruelty, are empty. A Tralfamadorian advises Billy to "Ignore the awful times, and concentrate on the good ones." Billy responds with an, "uh" (117).

For Vonnegut, the bombing of Dresden, its horror and destruction, is undoubtedly an effective emblem of war's central reality. And Billy's passivity in the war effort, "powerless to harm the enemy or to help his friends," (30) appears to be Vonnegut's vision of an appropriate response to such a pitch-black reality. Dresden's destruction was inevitable, was "structured" to occur. Vonnegut quotes from David Irving's *The Destruction of Dresden*:

[The firebombing of Dresden] is one of those terrible things that sometimes happen in wartime, brought about by an unfortunate combination of circumstances. Those who approved it were neither wicked nor cruel, though it may well be that they were too removed from the harsh realities of war to understand fully the appalling destructive power of air bombardment in the spring of 1945. (187-188)
The bombing of Dresden is just that, the bombing of Dresden. Not an order executed in order to wreck German moral or cripple supply lines. Not an exercise in demonstrating firepower and bombing strength. It is only as it appears on the surface: the horrific bombing of Dresden that resulted in the death of 130,000 individuals. Billy, commenting on the act, neither complains nor declares anyone guilty. Instead he says, "It was alright Everything is alright, and everybody

has to do exactly what he does. I learned that on Tralfamadore" (198).

Slaughterhouse-Five reports the events of Billy's military career with the same low-level zest that Billy has. These traumatic events are described with the same nonjudgmental tone, the same resignation. If someone happens to die, then the narration includes, "So it goes," at the end of the paragraph, a sort of epitaph for the deceased. The novel's narration creates a dissonance between the cruelty and tragedy of Billy's experience and its voice. As Ann Rigney suggests, it is as if the entire novel is written in understatement (19). This is the novel's absolute irony.

If Kantor uses irony to help render WWII veteran's return more pointed, and if Heller relies on irony to reveal the absurdity of war, then Vonnegut's entire narration, sentence by sentence, is defined by irony. Considering Fussell's description of irony, as half-tragic, half-comedic, the reader quickly acknowledges that in Vonnegut's portrayal, the tragic is nearly the entire breadth of the content. Very seldom, does Vonnegut include an overtly good situation in which Billy could concentrate. And the humor? The humor in *Slaughterhouse-Five* is located within tragic juxtapositions and the ironic deaths. British Prisoners of Wars perform an energetic rendition of a Cinderella musical for their American and German guests using the candles manufactured with the fat of dead humans (10). Edward Derby, an infantryman, is executed for pinching a meager teapot after surviving captivity and the bombing of Dresden (5). Valencia Pilgrim, Billy's wife, collapses from carbon monoxide poisoning, brought upon by a car accident suffered in her urgency to reach her hospitalized husband (182-183). After reaching a certain limit, the tragic can only be translated into the comedic, and irony is the only balm left to sooth the wound.

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Separating the Boy's from the B'hoys: The Working Class Masculine Identity during the Mid-Nineteenth Century

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For the American man living during the nineteenth century, testing and proving ones "manhood" became a very significant process. Masculinity was the foremost concept behind the definition of a man. In order to gain respect, one needed to establish his own masculinity and demonstrate it amongst his peers. This was especially true in New York City, a standard of manhood was affecting the working class. A common understanding of appearance, attitude, and personality dominated the way working class men carried themselves. The thriving social atmosphere of New York's urban center obliged men to "prove" themselves. It was essential for them to socialize with their peers, demonstrating their manhood as they drank and danced through working class neighborhoods. The desire for male camaraderie brought men into volunteer fire departments, where their masculinity was reinforced on a daily basis. Men gathered in the streets after stressful hours of work as they felt the need to release the tension associated with being a working man. Throughout the nineteenth century a new "manly culture" evolved which ritualized violence amongst men. A sense of competition grew and men struggled to gain respect in society. They were forced to fight by whatever means necessary to protect their manhood. By 1845, the New York City Police Department was established bringing authority figures into the streets. Police officers were to stop the violent nature of the working class but the presence of authority figures only introduced another layer of violence to society. The archetypal man was one who had a manly appearance, socialized with his fellow fire laddies, was always prepared for an honorable fight, and stood up to authority figures. Masculinity dominated every part of a working class man's life forcing him to do whatever it took to uphold his reputation.

This essay focuses on four major aspects of masculinity found in working class men in mid-nineteenth century New York City. After studying the research of historians; Michael Kaplan, Richard Stott,

Elliot Gorn, Amy Greenberg, and James Richardson it was clear that there are many factors that formulate the definition of masculinity during this time period. Richard

Stott provides detailed analysis on working class culture which supplied valuable evidence used for the appearance section of this essay. Kaplan has done research about the importance of drinking establishments and alcohol on the definition of masculinity. This essay digs deeper into the meaning of masculinity and explains how the volunteer fire department of New York City played an enormous role in the lives of men. The works of Amy Greenberg and Alvin Harlow provided insight about firemen and their roles in society. It was originally believed that masculinity was as simple as analyzing violence between men. This essay started as an exploration of how the violent culture of the working class was the driving force behind their masculine attitudes using Elliot Gorn's specialization on the violent interactions between men and how fighting defined masculinity. By analyzing James Richardson's research about the New York City Police Department it was obvious that the presence of authority figures played an enormous role in working class male society. This essay has since evolved and has combined the ideas of these historians to discuss how masculinity is much more complex than one single topic. Without male socialization and the fire department, appearance would not be important. Without a standard of appearance the violence between men would have certainly declined. Each of these factors of masculinity are closely related and are extremely important to the bigger picture of mid-nineteenth century manhood.

Part I - Masculine Appearance

In mid-nineteenth century New York City, having a masculine appearance became essential for working class men. Not only the clothes they wore but also the way they carried themselves became important. Men wanted to separate themselves from the middle class and establish their own niche in society. By the mid-nineteenth century, a rivalry surfaced between the two classes. Members of the working class were content with their social standing and wanted everyone to know it. A man's clothing played a crucial role in the way they were seen by their peers. Members of the working class did not earn a large amount of money for their labor. Although clothing was expensive most workers dressed well, demonstrating that appearance was vital to one's reputation. Though the working class wore stylish clothing, it did not mean that they were modeling themselves after their middle class superiors. (Foster, 14)

By examining figure 1.1 and 1.2, many differences can be seen between the two styles of dress. Figure 1.1 shows three working class men on a street corner while figure 1.2 is an image of what two middle class gentlemen with the epitome of middle class style.

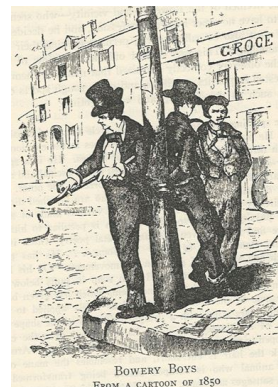


Figure 1.1 Source: Alvin F. Harlow, *Old*

Bowery Days: The Chronicles of a Famous Street (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1931), 194.

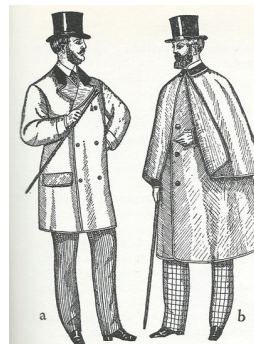


Figure 1.2 Source: Phillis Cunnington, *Costumes of the Nineteenth Century* (London: Faber and Faber, 1970) 17.

It seems as though they are wearing similar types of clothing but their appearances are clearly different. Although two classes wore the same pants, shirts, and jackets, it was how they wore it that mattered. The working class men stand in a rebellious way symbolizing a masculine attitude. Their hats are pointing down for an intimidating look. As Benjamin Baker, author of *A Glance at New York*, would write, they "held their cigar with an air of defiance." (Dorson, 288) The shirt collar was open and the tie loosely fit to the neck which seemed to expose their muscular chest which was the opposite of a tightly tied middle class man's tie. Everything about them screamed, "lets make a muss, I dare you." Figure 1.2 shows two men dressed properly with their coats buttoned up giving them a very refined look. Their hats and ties were straight and their bodies were completely covered. They used their canes as fashion accessories and took pride of their perfect posture. The differences between the men in the images are clear. Clothing was

the visual aspect of masculinity and the men shown in figure 1.1 assured everyone that they were proud to be members of the working class. (Gray, 139-143)

Surveying New York City District Attorney Indictment Records from the mid-nineteenth century provides a window into the masculine world of men like these found in figure 1.1. Looking at detailed witness testimonies from assault and battery cases clothing undoubtedly played a role in interactions between men. On November 5, 1840, Eli Kane got into a physical altercation with another man. (The People vs. Eli Kane) While Kane was choking the man, he proceeded to rip apart some of his clothing. It was obvious that Kane had the upper hand in the fight and had control over his opponent, so why did he rip up his clothes? For a man clothing was a symbol of masculinity. Therefore Kane was undermining his reputation, part of the facade of masculinity, by ripping his clothes. Four other cases; The trials of James Murphy, George Mcgee, Peter Schmidt, and Henry Hetchum report similar acts of men destroying their adversaries clothing. (The People vs. Henry Hetchum, The People vs. George Magee, The People vs. James Murphy) The trial of James Murphy provides excellent evidence confirming that clothing was essential to men. After Murphy pulled Josiah Landon from a rail car he struck him several times while he was on the ground. After being pulled from a rail car and struck in the face multiple times Landon was unable to protect himself. Murphy then, "kicked him and took his clothes." (The People vs. James Murphy) As a historian, the only way to interpret this witness report was that Murphy took Landon's clothes off his body for a reason. He was diminishing his masculinity by leaving him half naked in the street. For a working class man, dressed in the colors of his gang or fire department losing ones clothing would have been devastating. The trial of Henry Hetchum is another unique case because after he tore the clothing of Frederick Loss he proceeded to scratch his face, leaving him scarred. This brings up another correlation between masculinity and appearance. The study of witness reports from District Attorney Indictment Papers proves that when men fought they would try to inflict as much damage possible upon the appearance of their combatant.

By analyzing violent tests of manhood it is apparent that men would try to disfigure their opponent with any means necessary. On November 5, 1859 John Malohan got into a fist fight with John O'Connor. As the fight progressed and Malohan asserted his dominance and went on to bite off a portion of O'Connors ear. (The

People vs. John O'Connor) This would be an injury that O'Connor would be forced to live with for the rest of his life. It would be display it for all to see, thus being reminded that Malohan was a more competent man. The idea that deforming an opponent seemed to reinforce masculinity in the victor and challenge it within the victim. Examining the trial of Raphael Marks demonstrates how far men would go to change another appearance. On April 30, 1860, Marks knocked down Patrick Garvey with a club and proceeded to bite a portion of his lip off. (The People vs. Raphael Marks) Such an action demonstrates the tenacity in which men fought. Garvey was already beaten to the ground and the fight could have ended there. Instead Marks bent down and used his teeth to bite off part of Garvey's lip. In these trials of masculinity, as Richard Stott argues, "everything was allowed-wrestling, punching, choking, kicking, biting, even eye gouging-unless the combatants specifically agreed to prohibit them." (Stott, Jolly Fellows, 17) Evidence shows that during the nineteenth century, scars and wounds received in combat with another man represented weakness and incompetence. To provide further analysis of the importance of appearance, newspaper articles discussing court sessions put emphasis on how men looked when they went to trial. In the trial of Richard Robinson for the murder of Helen Jewett, two newspapers went into great detail about the appearance of Robinson while he committed the murder as well as during the trial itself. ("Trial of Richard Robinson," "The Murder Trial of Helen Jewett")

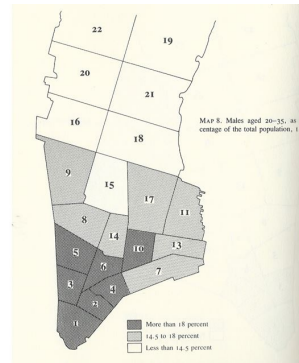
This notion of scarring an opponent to bolster ones own manhood became obvious when investigating assault and battery cases involving a knife. On June 10, 1860, William McDonald and George Decker engaged in a knife fight. McDonald, a twenty-one year old man won the fight and went on to pierce the right cheek of George Decker with his dagger. Witness reports from John Riley of 239 East Nineteenth Street indicate that McDonald held the knife in his right hand. (The People vs. William McDonald) If in fact the men had been standing face to face, it would have been difficult for McDonald, a right handed man, to stab Deckers right cheek unless he was purposely trying to maim him. Altercations incorporating weapons such as knives usually resulted in serious injury. On August 31, 1840, Alexander Grespach took his knife and cut the forehead of Henry Schaffer. (The People vs. Alexander Grespach) Schaffer would be forced to live with a noticeable scar on his forehead, therefore, constantly reminding his peers that his

masculinity had once been questioned. Men would often go to extremes to ruin their enemies appearance. On October 12, 1840 Robert Percy tried to pull Abraham Morse's eye out of his head with his fingers. When he was unsuccessful he went on to bite off part of his nose. (The People vs. Robert Percy) It is obvious that Percy's only intention was to leave Morse with permanent physical damage. The study of some of the most extreme cases of violence show that men would go to great lengths to make a lasting impact against their opponents appearance. Using fists and weapons men would disfigure their enemies in order to assert that they successfully defended their own masculinity and compromised the masculinity of another man.

Clothing and appearance was a definition of the man. It was essential for a man to dress and act a certain way. They were constantly being judged by their peers and always had to uphold their masculine reputation. Masculinity was the driving force behind the way working class men separated themselves from their superiors and defended themselves against their rivals. As clothing became the way men associated themselves with each other, it became a prime target in physical altercations. When destroying ones clothing was not enough, men turned towards the gruesome act of disfigurement to prove that they were a man.

Part II - Male Socialization

In mid-nineteenth century New York City a man was not considered masculine unless he socialized with his peers during his leisure time. In 1850 the city was home to 515,547 people and 35 percent of the male population was between ages fifteen and thirty. (Stott, Jolly Fellows, 99) At this time working class neighborhoods in lower wards such as The Bowery and Five Points surfaced as centers for entertainment. Figure 2.1 illustrates how most of New York City's men lived in the lower wards which brought forth strong ties between men and their community. (Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 206)



Source of Figure 2.1: Richard B. Stott *Workers in the Metropolis: Class, Ethnicity, and Youth in Antebellum New York City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990) 208.

Men gathered at drinking establishments, theaters, and dance halls to fulfill their need for male camaraderie. (Blumin, 11)

Throughout the working class neighborhoods of New York City, drinking establishments proved to be centers for social life. The tavern, modeled after the English pub, began to transform into the saloon by the 1840s. Soon the saloon became known as the "American" drinking house. Drinking establishments had many social benefits because they promoted working-class political communication and provided information on jobs and public events-or public disturbances." (Kaplan, *New York City Tavern Violence and the Creation of a Working-Class Male Identity*, 599) Americanized public houses featured a straight bar and a room without tables and chairs giving men ample room to interact in larger groups. Men felt as though the alcohol-serving saloon was a haven from the harsh conditions of the working class world.

Alcohol accompanied almost every activity in the male recreational world. Historian Anthony Rotundo, focused on alcohol and its impact on working class, and argues that men emphasized liquor as the universal solvent of "male play". (Rotundo, 201) Once groups of men gathered and began consuming alcohol they drank to get drunk and their masculine tendencies quickly surfaced. After 1850 the adult per capita consumption of beer rose from two gallons per year to thirty. (Kingsdale, 473) Drinking large amounts of alcohol resulted in irrational decision making, disorientation, and even loss of consciousness. The New York City District Attorney Indictment Records illustrate that alcohol played a key role in assault and battery cases concerning the questions of masculinity between men. Saloons encouraged arguments, fighting, and the playing of pranks. Cliques of men gathered and created a sense of identity with their favorite saloon. Here the saloon

keeper “promoted various recreations, including dogfights, rat-baiting contests, and boxing matches, partly to sell more liquor and arrange profitable betting pools.” (Gorn, *The Manly Art*, 133) The atmosphere of saloon’s offered a place where men could let their masculine feelings overwhelm them. This led to violence which often spilled out into the street. The social underworld of New York City that was created by the abundance of drinking establishments stimulated the concept of masculinity. (Kaplan, *The World of the B’hoys*, 17) Historian Elliott Gorn argues that, “with alcohol lowering inhibitions, men affirmed their right to drink together or, alternatively, to cast aspersions that only blood could redeem.” (Gorn, *The Manly Art*, 143) At this time in New York City distilled spirits was the drink of choice for the working class because it was much cheaper than beer. Historian Michael Kaplan explains, “disturbances in taverns often revealed the day-to-day stresses generated in these communities by urban growth and disorder.” (Kaplan, *New York City Tavern Violence and the Creation of a Working-Class Male Identity*, 592)

Men saw drinking alcohol as a defining part of their life. The act of drinking and even purchasing another man a drink was significant. In one instance famed New York City butcher, Bill Poole offered James Turner a drink and he refused it. Poole took his refusal as an insult and glared at Turner and his friends until one of them exclaimed, “What are you staring at, you black muzzled son of a bitch.” Poole, already insulted from Turners refusal, gave the bartender one hundred dollars’ worth of gold as a wager and proclaimed he would “whip” any man in the room. (Gorn, *Good-Bye Boys, I Die a True American*, 389) The simple act of refusing an alcoholic drink could lead to a violent altercation between men.

It was common for men to return to their favorite saloon and drink with similar company. An incident happened on the night of September 20, 1859 when John Linder and Louis Obenhoffer began arguing with John McIntire at a saloon on Fifth Avenue. The origin of the argument is unknown but the men’s presence in a saloon during late hours of the night indicates the involvement of alcohol. The argument between the three men quickly escalated when Louis Obenhoffer cut McIntire in the back of the head with a knife while John Linder beat him with a club. McIntire was then thrown down the stairs of the saloon and onto the street. This demonstrates the territorial feeling men had with their favorite place to drink. Space was a quintessential part

of a man’s persona. Obenhoffer and Linder could have beat McIntire in the saloon and left once he was incapable of fighting back, instead they forcibly removed him. It was their space, not his and even though he had been humiliated he had to leave.

When men were not conversing in drinking establishments they could be found dancing in the numerous dance halls throughout the lower wards of the city. The majority can be found throughout the sixth and seventh wards, especially in Five Points, on the Bowery, and along the side streets near the Bowery. The dance halls of the mid-nineteenth century were located in the basements of shops during the night. These rooms were about, “twelve feet wide by thirty long...the ceiling was so low that taller customers had to duck to avoid hitting the floor joists.” (Anbinder, 197) There was barely any room for musicians to sit and play and the crowd usually forced them to stand. Dancing proved to be another way to exemplify a mans masculinity. Contests were held to see which man was the best dancer. When other men were not dancing they would be betting on which was best. Because men gambled on dance contests, dancers became symbols of victory and manhood. An ad in the *Herald* describes the nature of one of the more public contests, “GREAT PUBLIC CONTEST Between the two most renowned Dancers in the world, the Original JOHN DIAMOND, and the Colored Boy JUBA, for a Wager of \$300...at the BOWERY AMPHITHEATER.” (*Dancing Across the Color Line*, 4) Not all contests were so widely published; many took place in the heat of the moment when two men felt the need to control the dance floor. Historian Tyler Anbinder explains that Walt Whitman once noted that when butchers in their market stalls “have nothing else to do, they amuse themselves with a jig, or a break down...there was more muscle expended in one shuffle than in a whole evening of [dance at] a fashionable party.” (Anbinder, 173) Figure 2.2 demonstrates what these contests would have looked like, showing men watching, dancing, and gambling.



Source of Figure 2.2: “Dancing for Eels Explained.” PBS.

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/roadshow/fts/washingtondc_201006A44.html (accessed December 8, 2012).

The men are in a public market, demonstrating how these events were public spectacles. In order to assert ones masculinity he had to be prepared to accept any challenges, regardless of his surroundings. Dancing was a perfect way for men to socialize, they could drink, test their masculinity, and converse with friends whether in a dance hall, street corner, or saloon. (Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 220; Weber, 83)

The new masculine culture of New York City also became centered around the local theaters of the working class neighborhoods. During this time the Bowery and surrounding streets continued to develop as a center for working class social life. (Baranski, 609) A number of theaters were opened offering a wide variety of entertainment. Shakespeare, Restoration comedies, and Minstrel shows occurred nightly along the Bowery. A working class theater culture was born in these neighborhoods which simultaneously created a new rowdy definition of American nightlife.

The working class saw the entertainment in the lower wards of New York City as a chance to rival the uptown theatergoers of the social elite. In comparison to the fancy black attire worn by the middle class, patrons of Bowery theaters dressed in colorful attire of their fire company or gang. Figure 2.3 demonstrates how the working class felt about their middle class counterparts.



Source of Figure 2.3: Peter Buckley, *To the Opera House: Culture and Society in New York City, 1820-1860*. (Michigan: Proquest Company, 1984), 200.

The illustration is a cartoon making fun of how the aristocracy would have looked going to a show at the theater. The “Codfish aristocracy” is wearing all black, a coat that reaches down to his knees, and a monocle which are all symbols of wealth. An image like this proves that the working class was not trying to imitate how their superiors dressed, they would make fun of them and dress how they wanted to. The significance of the working class dress is that it shows how the working class was content with their place on the class

spectrum. It represents a workers desire to be unique and separate themselves from the elite, rather than attempting to impersonate them. The Bowery area included many boardinghouses where single men and women lived leaving an abundance of people in the surrounding neighborhood searching for entertainment. The Bowery offered a sense of life and excitement for men and was an escape from the dull and harsh conditions of a workers routine. The plays being shown in these theaters seemed to progress along with the new masculine culture. (Buckley, 201-202)

Plays in the mid-nineteenth century were written with subliminal meanings for the purpose of rousing different feelings throughout the audience. Similar to how minstrel shows allowed whites to feel superior, new “American-style” plays emerged to bring awareness to the middle class about working class life; a world which unknown to them. This was Benjamin Baker’s original intention when he wrote *A Glance at New York* in 1848. Instead of educating the middle class about the jarring life of a working class New Yorker, Baker’s play gave birth to the legendary character of Mose. Baker’s character put a face to the concept of masculinity. Mose was the typical Bowery b’hoys, he dressed, talked, and acted the part. Actor, Frank Chanfrau played the part of Mose in the plays first productions. (See figure 2.4)



Source of Figure 2.4: “Bowery B’hoys.” Patell and Waterman’s *History of New York*. <http://www.ahistoryofnewyork.com/tag/bowery-bhoys/> (accessed December 7, 2012).

Upon taking center stage he exclaimed, “I ain’t a goin’ to run with dat mercheen no more,” (referring to his volunteer fire engine) the audience exploded in cheer. (Rinear, 201) The working class man instantly discovered his hero. Mose physically championed every man that challenged him and was the protector of the weak. He coined statements such as, “If I don’t have a muss soon, I’ll spile,” (Baker, 15) representing the violent lifestyle working class gang members and firemen lived. His red fireman’s jacket, tight trousers,

and shiny top hat combined with his use of typical “Bowery” slang spoken in a hefty tone meant, “the city’s young male workers had found themselves on stage.” (Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 223) Although Mose was described as a New York native he signified a new definition of an urban worker. He embodied the virtues of the working class and glorified them on stage. They viewed Mose as one of their own. Stories emerged that Mose, “charged into battle against the New York gangs, he carried an uprooted lamppost in one hand and a butcher’s cleaver in the other...For sport he drank drayloads of beer at a sitting.” (Dorson, 298) *A Glance at New York* became immortalized as one of the popular plays that defined New York City and was featured in a number of different theaters. Men would go to theaters to watch working class heroes on stage at the very moment that the working class was being overwhelmed and destroyed by the immigrant population.

Working class men needed to socialize. The pressures of their lives drove them into drinking establishments, dance halls, and theaters. These retreats from the harsh realities of New York City provided men with a home away from home. Gangs and fire companies formed amongst men with similar interests. “Mose” could be found drinking and dancing on every street in the working class neighborhoods surrounding the Bowery and Five Points. The working class had separated themselves from the rest of the city and played by their own boisterous rules and only the coppers got in their way.

Part III - Volunteer Firemen

A volunteer fireman was one of the most masculine figures in working class society. The historian, Amy Greenberg explains that, “Volunteer fire companies offered a chance for real heroics, rough masculine camaraderie and colorful display.” (A. Greenberg, 66) Men would pride themselves on their bravery and willingness to fight fires throughout New York City. In the mid-nineteenth century most of the city buildings stood close together and were constructed with wood. A fire was the most destructive thing that could happen and was feared by all, especially members of the working class. If they lost their homes they would be cast out into the streets with almost no hope of getting back on their feet. Without firemen, the working class would not have been able to survive, therefore, firemen were champions of the people. Men would join volunteer fire companies to feel the

camaraderie between members and to serve their communities. Volunteer fire companies would act as gangs, often getting violent with other rival companies resulting in firemen living the epitome of a masculine lifestyle.

In 1842, New York City recognized fifty engine companies, thirty-eight hose companies, three hydrant companies, and ten hook and ladder companies located throughout the city. (Costello, 106) By 1854 there were over 4,000 official volunteer firemen and thousands more “runners” unofficially associated with the numerous companies. Historian Richard Stott argues that, “the fire companies reflected the youthful energy of city workers.” (Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 230) The fire company was the closest thing to a fraternity amongst the mid-nineteenth century working class. It provided men with a cohesive social network where individuals formed bonds with deep feelings of brotherhood. Once men were strong enough to work the pumps and brave enough to run into burning buildings they were expected to join their local company. Benjamin Baker’s Mose from *A Glance At New York* is the perfect description of how firemen looked and acted. A fireman wore the traditional red flannel shirt with the number of his engine company embroidered on his chest, tight black pants, and calfskin boots with high heels. (Harlow, 196) Men were always in uniform because at any moment the fire alarm could sound. It was important for firemen to represent ones fire company with pride and always act with a masculine attitude.

The volunteer fire companies promoted masculinity within men. Amy Greenberg writes, “the volunteer fire department was a mediating figure between sometimes contradictory forces at work...it reconciled the physical virtues with moral powers, and it offered a vision of the mass as a harmonious concert of individuals.” (A. Greenberg, 15) It gave men something to do, and helped give order to a violent society. Historian Alvin Harlow explains a story about a volunteer firemen, “It has even been told that a volunteer fireman standing before the altar to be married, dropped his loved one’s hand at the climax of the ceremony and dashed from the church as the ominous tolling of the alarm bell sounded across the city.” (Harlow, 109) This story verifies that men took their jobs seriously, no matter what was happening if the fire bell rang, they would be ready. Fire companies would often interact with their neighborhoods. A newspaper article from the *Evening Post* on March 11, 1835, advertises a Firemen’s Ball for the community, an opportunity for the

neighborhood to congregate and socialize together. (Firemen's Ball) All of the proceeds from the ball went to the Fire Department Fund, a fundraiser for the widows and orphans of deceased firemen. These actions brought men into close ties with the community and instilled a sense of honor amongst members of the working class. Neighborhoods honored firemen by having parades to display the strength of their heroes. (A. Greenberg, 53) Being a fireman was demanding but extremely rewarding for working class men.

Typically when working class men got together they would generate a competitive atmosphere. Rivalries emerged and fire companies would stage public contests to prove which company had stronger men. These tests of masculinity would include trying to pump water farther or higher than the competition or racing to the fire. (A. Greenberg, 65) When the alarm would ring every volunteer fireman that heard it would be rushing to their engine in hopes to get the glory of putting out the fire. Sometimes fire companies would ring the alarm on purpose solely to cause a race for the neighborhood to see and to bolster the reputation of the winning engine. It was very common for different companies to fight forming massive riots. Companies would establish "turf" and crowds of people would come out and support their favorite company by cheering them on. (Stott, *Workers in the Metropolis*, 231) An article from the *Commercial Advertiser* describes a fireman's fight September 12, 1843. Around two o'clock in the morning two fire companies got into a brawl, "several of them were nearly killed, and two or three watchmen were severely beaten." (Firemen's Fight) Historian Amy Greenberg argues, "urban firefighters posed a serious threat to public order and that firemen stood outside the law, answerable to no power greater than their own." (Firemen's Fight) Masculine feelings dominated the lives of firemen as they did not have any regard for anything other than themselves. A similar report of a fireman's fight from the *Evening Post* on January 31, 1844, explains that the firemen "behaved more like tigers than human beings." (Another Firemen's fight)

Sometimes fights between companies would occur immediately after they worked together to extinguish a fire. Men knew enough to carry out their duties as a firemen but once they were no longer needed, they were ready to fight. An article in the *Commercial Advertiser* reports that firemen threw down their brick-bats and wielded the handles of the engine and branch pipe and began to fight. The men did not

even stop the engine from pumping water before they fought, "water was squirted with most terrific fierceness." (Firemen's Fight) Firemen fought to preserve their own personal masculinity and to defend the masculine reputation of their company. One of the worst reports of firemen's fights occurred on August 16, 1857. One fire company saw their bitter rival's engine sitting at a halt on the street corner and began to push their engine as fast as they could in order to ram their enemy. Before they could reach the rival engine their enemies charged and a huge brawl happened. The men fought with pipes, bricks, stones, and guns. One man even took another in a headlock and proceeded to bite the front of his nose off. This was done to disfigure him and undermine his masculinity (Discussed in Part I). The fight was only to be broken up by an entire posse of policemen. (Firemen's Fight Last Night) Violence was an essential part of masculinity. Firemen emulated themselves after heroes like Mose, therefore, it was necessary for them to brutally fight each other in order to prove their strength.

Firemen were believed to be the strongest and bravest members of working class. In order to become the strongest, they had to prove themselves. Their masculinity was tested in nearly every part of their lives; having a manly appearance, fighting fires, and brawling with rival companies. As heroes of society firemen had a certain standard that they had to live by which included being available whenever the fire bell rang. The camaraderie associated with the fire department was something that could not be found elsewhere. They worked together to save the city, singing songs together as they battled back the flames that threatened their beloved neighborhoods. (Harlow, 203)

Part IV - Defending Masculinity

For the American man living during the nineteenth century, testing and proving one's manhood became a very significant experience. A new "manly culture" was born in New York City that ritualized violence amongst men. The perception that the only courageous way to settle a question of masculinity was through the physical risks associated with fighting. Men fought by whatever means necessary to protect their manhood. The obsession with masculinity through the working class of the city prompted men to violently assault each other in order to maintain their reputations.

During the nineteenth century two distinct forms of self defense dominated the world of combat. One method of fighting was the test of sheer strength and

skill with ones fists in either a street fight or through the modern art of boxing. (Austin, 447-452; *The Punching Bags of Pugilism*) The other method was engaging in battle using a weapon such as a knife or club. Both styles of fighting were viable and accepted under the condition that both parties had an equal opportunity. Part of the definition of masculinity required that men fight fairly in an established trail of courage. (Kim, 43; Barton-Wright, 1-5) Though in the nineteenth century the reasons for fighting had changed, "the ethic of honor had roots in the Old World, but it continued to thrive where individuals were concerned less with morality or piety, more with flaunting their status among peers through acts of masculine prowess." (Gorn, *The Manly Art*, 143) There will always be the element of honor behind the defense of manhood - but by this period the younger American generation decreased the worth of honor. (Haag, 447) Men's rank in society was based upon arrogance and appearance rather than the underlying honor that should be the foundation. This, in turn, led to the transformation of street fighting into the sport of boxing.

By the mid-nineteenth century fencing had disappeared in New York City and unprovoked attacks with fists ruled the realm of combat. Bare-knuckle fighting was a transitional phenomenon between the fighting styles of old and the new modern styles. Men began to take boxing lessons that allowed him to, "support his dignity, repel insult, resist attack, and defend his rights from aggression." (Gorn, *The Manly Art*, 53) As men trained, the practice of prize fighting emerged on the scene as a form of entertainment as well as a method of defending masculinity. (Monkkonen, 544-552)

The effective defense of masculinity through the use of ones fists can be seen in the case *The People v. Patrick Tannan*, January 23, 1860. On the afternoon of December 2, 1860, Patrick Honeyman entered a liquor store on the corner of Twenty-Eighth Street and First Avenue. While paying the store clerk, a fellow patron in the store Patrick Tannan, exclaimed that Honeyman was using "queer money." Honeyman denied this accusation which provoked an argument between the two men. After an exchange of words, Tannan struck Honeyman with his fists in attempt to force him out of the store. Feeling as though he was unable to contest with Tannan (a much larger man) Honeyman drew his knife. The crowd of people recognized the weapon as an unfair advantage and separated the men. This clearly shows how the concept of honoring a fair fight was universal.

After the incident was broken up by other patrons of the store, the two men parted. Upon reliving the incident the following day, Honeyman came to the understanding that his masculinity had be disgraced and decided to go to Tannan's house and challenge him to a fight. This represents how important the concept of manhood was to a nineteenth century man. A whole day later Patrick Honeyman had concluded that it was his responsibility to defend his reputation even though Patrick Tannan, the larger man, would surely win the fight. Once Honeyman arrived at the house of Tannan the two men agreed to fight in a vacant lot on the corner of Twenty-Eighth Street and First Avenue, located four blocks from Tannan's residence. The men showed composure on the walk to the lot which symbolized their mutual respect for one other. Upon arriving at the lot the men removed their shirts to signify an official fight. As predicted the stronger man, Tannan, took command of the fight. After each round Honeyman was given the opportunity to forfeit but did not in order to demonstrate his courage. This proves how ritualized fighting had become. Even in a street fight both parties agreed to specific rounds with a given time. They would then stop and take a break before continuing. Even the crowd watching the fight expected there to be rounds. The brawl continued and ended once Honeyman could no longer stand. He was beaten so badly that he died before the following day. (*The People vs. Patrick Tannan*) This situation epitomizes masculinity. At the store, Patrick Tannan originally believed that Honeyman was acting in a dishonorable way and brought it to attention. Feeling threatened Honeyman wielded his knife in self-defense. Reflecting on Tannan's and his own actions he understood he had no choice but to defend his manhood. Even though defeat was imminent, Honeyman fought and died like a man. Every part of this altercation was honorable. The death of Patrick Honeyman proves how important the concept of manhood and reputation was to an honorable man. The new style of fighting was efficient and a suitable test for ones' manhood.

When examining cases from the New York City District Attorney from 1860 there are other cases involving the assault of one man from another man's fists. In the separate cases of *The People vs. Edward Long* (1860) and *The People vs. William Cotten* (1860), both men punched their opponents in the face. (*The People vs. Edward Long*) By landing such a blow there is a likely chance of inflicting a contusion. If bruised, the recipient of the punch would have to live with a swollen

face for days, a constant reminder to himself and his peers of his inability to defend himself.

The weapons used by men in these trials of masculinity were almost always small pocket knives or tools that were readily available such as an ax, hammer or club. The men who fought were predominantly members of the working class that typically wielded weapons related to their profession. For example, butchers fought with knives and cleavers while carpenters fought with hammers and axes. Historian Eric Monkkonen explains, "sharp tools were essential to running all households," signifying that men had constant access to weaponry. (Monkkonen, 29) Small pocket knives were sold throughout the city to be used for whittling wood or eating oysters. Knives prevailed as the primary weapon because of how easily they could be concealed. One could quickly hide his knife if police officers were approaching. An examination of an altercation that led to the fatal stabbing of Timothy Mulcahy at a liquor store provides a better understanding of the use of knives.

On November 24, 1859 Timothy Mulcahy and Henry Laughran were having a drink together at Campbell's liquor store on Tenth Avenue. The two men started to argue and Mulcahy tackled Laughran to the floor. The barkeeper at the liquor store, John Gleeson, stated that once he saw the men fighting on the floor, worried about them breaking his liquor bottles, he ran around the bar to stop the fight. In this amount of time Henry Laughran was able to take out his knife and stab Mulcahy in the abdomen without anyone knowing. After pulling the body of Mulcahy off Laughran a store patron exclaimed "he's been stabbed." A New York Times article explains, "the prisoner [Laughran] then turned over so that his face was down upon the floor; somebody said [the] deceased was stabbed; prisoner had his hands between his knees trying to conceal something." (Law Reports, New York Times) Although Laughran was caught with the knife, his tactic of swiftly stabbing and then concealing a knife was common.

Through understanding the way in which men fought, there is a clear reasoning of why they fought. If a man felt his masculinity was being questioned, it was his responsibility to defend it. The emerging American culture embraced trials of combat, further encouraging violence between men. As methods of fighting evolved it changed the way in which men defined masculinity.

Part V—Authority and its Impact on Masculinity

In 1845, the modern New York City Police

Department was established. The force served the city with one night watch, one hundred marshals, thirty one constables, and fifty one municipal officers. (Lankevich, 84) The increase of the city's population during the mid-nineteenth century required and increase of officers patrolling the streets. Working class men saw the growing police presence as an invasion into their world dominated by masculinity. These new Police officers infiltrated working class neighborhoods. They were charged with destroying the violent atmosphere which surrounded the lower wards of the city. For a working class man, these authority figures represented a threat to their masculinity. A deep hatred came forth towards any type of police officer. Throughout neighborhoods near the Bowery and Five Points, men routinely attacked officers with hopes to reclaim their manhood. Violent attacks against police officers undermined their authority which threatened offer's sense of manhood, forcing them to defend themselves. (Johnson, 20) Once attacks against police increased, officers felt the need to demonstrate their own masculinity by exercising and often abusing their authority. The strife between the working class and the police added another layer of violence that enhanced an already violent society.

By 1845, there were only 800 officers patrolling the streets and through the next decade the number of police would only increase to about 1,200 men. With eighty percent of the city's population living south of 14th Street, the police force was spread too thin. In working class neighborhoods there were too few officers to fight crime efficiently. There were no professional standards for recruitment, training, or performance. (Richardson, 51-54) During the mid-nineteenth century Policemen were required to live in the wards in which they served. Working class men saw an infiltration of their world by men who used to be their peers, but now personified middle class morals. Policemen used their newfound sense of authority and tried to radically change the streets by cracking down on intoxication and gang fights. This was a change that working class men were not willing to accept. To make matters worse policemen continued to act as though they still belonged to the working class while they tried to reform the very streets that had previously defined them. Historian James Richardson explains, "Policemen on duty smoked cigars, spat tobacco juice in all directions, and kept their hands in their pockets." (Richardson, 95) Rather than protecting the streets, citizens felt that officers were standing around doing nothing, only using their authority to harass the working class. By chewing tobacco and

smoking cigars they continued to act as if they belonged in working class society. This angered men because police officers were seen as a product of the middle class elite and banished from working class society. While policemen continued to act as if they were part of the working man's world, tensions were elevated between workers and authority figures.

Working class men were determined to fight back against the concept of authority. Street fights between men and police became common. Richardson asserts, the working class saw the police force as "an alien force imposed upon the city by a 'hayseed' legislature in Albany." (Richardson, 110) They viewed the police as another attempt for the middle class to control the only thing the working class had left; their social world. As the police attempted to stop street violence and public intoxication, men responded with force in hopes of warding police officers away through physical intimidation. Attacks against the police were prominent in areas with high crime rates such as the Bowery, Five Points, and near the lower east side docks. These attacks were often brutal and sometimes resulted in death. One such incident occurred on July 14, 1851, early in the morning on Oliver Street. While on patrol, Officer Gillespie observed a group of men disturbing the peace. Intending to restore order, he approached the crowd. Gillespie engaged the crowd, when two men identified as Thomas Brown and John Brown attacked him. Using a cart-rung, one of the men landed a forceful blow to the officer's head. Six hours later Gillespie was pronounced dead in the city hospital. There is no account of an argument or altercation between the Gillespie and the group of men. When the crowd saw an officer approaching, they would rather beat him instead of being told to disperse. Underlying feelings of hatred towards law enforcement is apparent in cases where officers are immediately attacked. On top of the two men who contributed to the beating, six others were arrested for being present. (Death of a Police Officer)

Group violence towards police was very common. The combination of the rowdy nature of working class gangs with the need for men to prove themselves to their peers resulted in numerous cases of gang violence towards authority figures. It was common for working class people to enter the streets to protest the harsh working conditions of businesses or the actions of local government. Police officers would be summoned to restore order to the neighborhood which often promoted violent actions from the strikers. Feeling

their masculinity being questioned, working class men would start to riot. One such riot occurred on July 21, 1857, discussed in an article in The New York Herald, titled "The Seventeenth Ward Riots." Police were needed to separate a large crowd gathered on the sidewalk in the Seventeenth Ward. Officers gave orders to disperse which only fueled the angry crowd. Young men shouted "hurrah" in the face of officers to assert their masculinity. Witnesses observed men standing on roofs. The officers were surrounded from all sides. Feeling threatened, police officers attempted to restore order by firing a few shots from their colt revolvers in hopes of dispersing the crowd. Tensions were so high that the warning shots had no effect. Men threw rocks at officers forcing them to retaliate with even more shots. Reinforcements were needed and the riot was stopped once a large group of officers used their clubs and pistols to scatter the crowd. Small riots similar to the Seventeenth Ward Riot were common during the mid-nineteenth century. Once authorities tried to disperse crowds of working class men they would stop their protest and focus on harassing officers. (The Seventeenth Ward Riot)

By 1850, Police officers were becoming targets for violence. This violence against officers was so prevalent that by the early 1850s policemen strenuously opposed the introduction of a uniform. During this time, uniforms were only worn by servants. Officers wanted to retain their self-respect and blend into society. Figure 5.1 illustrates these flamboyant early uniforms. Blue uniforms stood out and brought much unwanted attention to a lone police officer with limited back up. The appearance of uniforms can be compared to the proper dress of the middle class which would further promote attacks against officers. Policemen would dress in mufti with hopes of staying out of sight from rowdy groups of working class men. At first policemen were only issued clubs but many took to carrying their own revolvers for increased protection. Officers hoped that pistols would act as a deterrent for the outright beating of police officers and by 1857; they were authorized to carry them. (Richardson, 113)

An example of gang violence against the police and one that illustrates the importance of the pistol can be seen in the beating of Officer John McArthur on December 22, 1859. On that day, Michael Daly, James Coulo, James Fletcher, James Cassidy, and John Burns attacked officer McArthur on Broad Street during the late hours of the night. As the five men approached McArthur, Mike Daly outstretched his hand in order to

greet him. Instead of shaking his hand Daly pushed McArthur's hand away and the remaining four men surrounded him. This action can be seen as Daly trying to make a mockery of the police officer's role in the community. At first Daly extended a hand symbolizing respect for authority, only to trick the officer to put emphasis on how hated the police were. Daly proceeded to knock McArthur down. McArthur, believing they could not recognize his uniform in the dark, shouted, "I am an officer!" McArthur chose to identify his position of authority as a representation of his masculinity. In response, the men laughed and one man said, "An officer hey? You son of a bitch!" At this point someone struck McArthur in the back of the head while others repeatedly kicked his body. Not until McArthur jumped up and unholstered his pistol did the gang disperse. (The People vs. Mike Daly) This was an outright crime against a figure of authority. The only explanation for the actions of the five men is by challenging the officer's masculinity they were reinforcing their own manhood.

These violent altercations between New York City Police Officers and working class men changed the way officers viewed society. Social class was the primary reason for their problems. The negative relationship between the two groups increased violence on the city streets. Policemen were cast out of the working class society due to their enforcement of middle class ideals and appearance. While banished from working class society, officers were unable to move up to the middle class, only earning \$600 a year in 1850. (Richardson, 66) With no social mobility and continued abuse from citizens, police officers developed a sense of animosity towards working class men.

Policemen saw the young working class men as threats to their safety and realized they needed to act. Primarily wielding clubs, police officers were soon abusing their authority and unjustly beating any suspects they encountered. Historian Marilyn Johnson explains, "Revolutionary traditions of antiauthoritarianism and individual liberty had made Americans less responsive to police authority to begin with...As citizens flagrantly defied police authority, officers attempted to command respect through the use of coercion or force." (Johnson, 15) As officers felt they were being denied the respect they deserved, they used their position of power as an excuse to take it. By violently beating a rebellious man officers asserted their own type of masculinity.

To add to the notion of police brutality, officers

felt that the judicial and penitentiary systems were flawed during the mid-nineteenth century. The number of magistrates had not been changed since 1845, and by the mid-1850s New York City had seen enormous population growth. (Richardson, 74) Criminal courts were overburdened. Officers believed the justice system was ill suited to handle certain criminals and executed their own style of justice which came at the end of their club. Policemen took punishment into their own hands and arbitrarily doled out "curbside justice." Historian Eric Monkkonen argues, "given the arrested felon's likelihood of acquittal, one can see why Police officers justify violence during an arrest as a substitute for the punishment an offender may not receive." (Monkkonen, 166) Although morally questionable, the corruption of police is understandable because as men, they had a need to protect their masculinity which was being challenged by the violent actions of the working class.

An examination of the trial of officers John Hurley and William Foster provides further understanding of this concept. On April 30, 1859 officers Hurley and Foster entered the store of George Ely on Sixth Avenue. The officers stated that they were checking Ely's paperwork to make sure he had paid his fees to the city. Ely states that the officers were acting very harsh and upon satisfying them by presenting his documents he nicely asked them to leave. Taking this as an insult to their authority, the officers walked to the rear of the store and took fifteen dollars from his money drawer for their "troubles." In a fit of rage, Ely put his hands on Officer Foster and tried to stop him. The officers responded with force. Although the shop owner had no intentions of beating the officers, the underlying feelings of animosity within the officers surfaced and they responded with aggression. Ely was thrown violently out of his store and onto the curb and was later placed under arrest. After Ely asked to be allowed to walk on his own free will and explained he would give them his full cooperation, the officers denied his request and dragged him through the street. As the officers brought him to the magistrate, Officer Foster struck him violently three times in the face drawing blood from his lip and eye. (The People vs. John Hurley and William Foster) Ultimately the two officers were brought to justice for their actions but many incidents of police brutality went unnoticed. The events which took place throughout this altercation displays the attitude police officers had towards working class citizens of the city. The use of the club can be seen as a reminder of a policeman's authority and masculinity.

The introduction of a police force encouraged men to display their masculinity in many violent ways. Men had their own views about how their neighborhood should be run. They settled disputes in their own ways and felt entitled to treat the streets as their playground. It became common for men to challenge police officers in order to assert their own masculinity. Attacks against police were carried out in order to defend the unwritten rules of working class neighborhoods. Policemen felt that once their authority was questioned, their masculinity was being undermined. Efforts by officers to reclaim their masculinity combined with the flawed justice system created an aggressive attitude carried amongst police. They asserted their authority and protected themselves with police brutality. The class separation between the working class and police officers ultimately led to increased violence in the streets. Masculinity was the driving force behind malicious attacks against officer and the brutal use of clubs by the police against suspected criminals. The end result was a cycle of violence between men which led to death on both sides of the class spectrum.

As the nineteenth century progressed the American man revolutionized the concept of masculinity. The new definition created an unwritten code for men to live by. The value of reputation had reached an all-time high. In order to be considered a man one would have to prove themselves to the community in which they lived. The unique social qualities of New York City created a manly culture that impacted men throughout the city. Men had to drink and dance with their peers, while modeling themselves after working class heroes such as Mose. The types of clothes men wore and the way they acted dominated the physical aspects of their reputations. If a man wanted to feel a sense of brotherhood with his neighbors he would be compelled to join a volunteer fire company. Firemen's masculinity was challenged as they battled fires and brawled with rival companies to determine which engine had the toughest members. An abundance of weapons coupled with new methods of combat promoted violence amongst men. By the mid-nineteenth century the new presence of authority figures created a new layer of violence to an already violent society. The meaning of honor had transformed and men had become self-absorbed with the masculine traditions of the working class.

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