AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Spencer Walker King for the Master of Arts

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Title:

To Protect the Home: How the Civil War Impacted Notions of Manhood in the North

Thesis Chair: Brian Craig Miller

Abstract approved:

The following thesis will attempt to explore the reconstruction of masculinity in the North during the Civil War through an examination of civilian interactions with guerrilla soldiers during Quantrill's Raid, an examination of the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry, and through an analysis of Walt Whitman's poetry written during the war. Because America had not encountered many large-scale military conflicts in its previous decades of existence, the Civil War caused the Union to reshape its notions of masculinity because of the implications of victory and the consequences of battle on such a large scale. Other scholars of the Civil War have implied that enlistment was simply another path to manhood, and that other paths to manhood remained open; I contradict them and instead assert that, at least for the duration of the Civil War, enlistment became the only way for men to assert their masculinity. Additionally, soldiers defined their masculinity through more than just their behavior; Union soldiers' bodies also became proof of their manhood as they sustained permanent disabilities after the war was over, distinguishing them from the rest of the civilian population and providing permanent

proof of their wartime experiences. Furthermore, the Civil War also gave African American men their first opportunity to claim their manhood by allowing them to enlist in the army, rescue their families from the war, and escape from slavery forever. Therefore, this thesis will argue that masculinity was shaped by more than just the behavior of the white soldiers who participated in the war; readers will come to understand how the body also became a marker of masculinity through an examination of Walt Whitman's poetry, and they will also come to understand how African American men asserted their masculinity for the first time in American history.

To Protect the Home:

How the Civil War Impacted Notions of Manhood in the North

A Thesis

Presented to

The Department of Social Sciences

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

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by

Spencer Walker King

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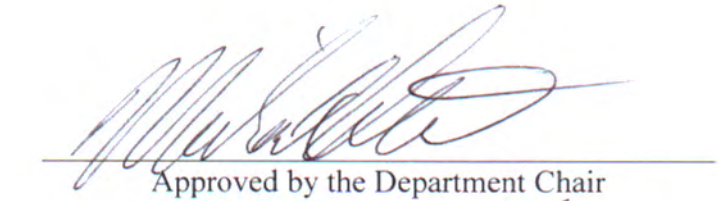

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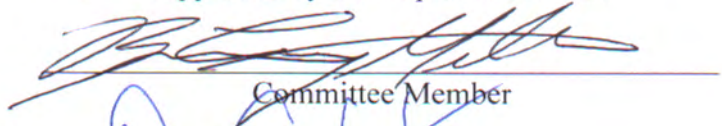

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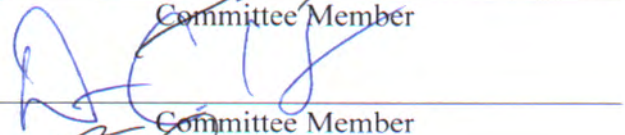

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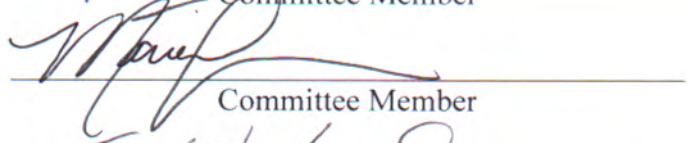

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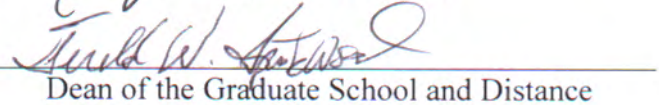

Dean of the Graduate School and Distance Education

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Introduction

In 1862, African American men were presented the opportunity to join the Civil War when Ethan Earle, the future commander of Company F of the 1st Kansas Colored Regiment, set out to recruit men to the cause. Earle saw a valuable source of soldiers in the Afriean American men he recruited, and because of the strained relationship between Kansas and Missouri during the Civil War, Kansas needed all of the help it could get. Kansas was still not protected enough, however, because on August 13th, 1863, William Quantrill's raiders attacked Lawrence's unprotected civilian population, burning the town down and killing any men they encountered. Though women and children were spared in this attack, many of Lawrence's citizens lost their sense of security, fearing another attack on the town as long as it remained without the protection of soldiers. Farther east, Walt Whitman volunteered as a nurse at the Armory Square hospital in Washington, D.C. from the end of 1862 until the war was over; during this time, he helped sick and wounded soldiers recover from their maladies or succumb to their injuries. Whitman's time in the hospital presented him with the opportunity to watch young men become seasoned veterans, reeonstruct the bodies of broken soldiers so they could wear their wounds as signs of their experiences and their manhood, and see the commemoration of dead soldiers as America's culture of death shifted to help people make sense of the war that tore the nation apart. Furthermore, Whitman's experienees as a volunteer nurse culminated into *Drum-Taps*, published in October of 1865, which provides literary representations of the struggles the soldiers faced.

None of these events are directly connected with one another, but they all share a common theme: they all show how northern notions of masculinity changed as a result of

the Civil War. The 1st Kansas Colored provided African American men their first opportunity to claim their manhood by fighting for the Union and rescuing their families and themselves from the bonds of slavery permanently. Though the Lawrence Massacre occurred without the protection of soldiers, Quantrill's raiders contradicted the North's new notions of manhood because of the way they dressed and the behavior they exhibited during the raid. Walt Whitman, unlike many other northerners during the Civil War, paid more attention to the physical transformations Union men went through in order to fit the new ideals of manhood.

Though other historians have examined masculinity during the Civil War, they primarily examine what soldiers thought of themselves during the war and examine civilians' reactions to soldiers for after the war when the soldiers returned home. Southerners were more exposed to destruction because the Civil War mostly took place in the South, but northerners were relatively safe from the destruction, with the exception of events such as the Lawrence Massacre. The historiography over Bleeding Kansas, military regiments, and popular authors such as Walt Whitman is extensive; however, examinations of masculinity are sparse because gender studies has largely been equated with women's studies until recently. Most of these studies have been examinations of the South, though more studies over the North have come into being. However, these studies often overlook how strongly the Civil War impacted notions of masculinity in the North; instead, they examine life as a soldier as an additional path to manhood.

There was a gap between 1910 and 1990 where no new studies of the Lawrence Massacre were produced, but the historiography of Bleeding Kansas and guerrilla warfare shed light on the political tensions and motivations of Quantrill's Raiders before they

attacked Lawrence. By examining guerrilla warfare throughout the country and as it happened along the Kansas-Missouri border specifically, historians have shown that soldiers often chose to participate in this form of warfare, especially in the South, because of the relative freedom they gained from it; they were able to move where they wanted when they wanted, and these soldiers often fought for revenge for dead family members and friends. These examinations also show how ideas of the conduct of war clashed between the North and South, as the family members of Confederate guerrillas would have normally condemned this form of battle outside of a war, but because of the nature of the Civil War, families condoned guerrilla warfare. Because they fought with relative freedom and were often motivated by revenge, they were not afraid to commit atrocities against their victims.[1]

Walt Whitman has experienced no shortage in biographies since his death in 1892, and as his literature rose in popularity over time, it has also come under examination by scholars of literature. Historians have looked at his life in its entirety and in pieces, and as a result, they have shown how his work as a volunteer nurse during the Civil War impacted him both physically and mentally, especially as his health declined into a downward spiral even after the war was over. While some biographers have looked

[1] Joseph M. Beilein, Jr., "The Guerrilla Shirt: A Labor of Love and the Style of Rebellion in Civil War Missouri," *Civil War History* 58, no. 2 (2012); Joan E. Cashin, "Torn Bonnets and Stolen Silks: Fashion, Gender, Race, and Danger in the Wartime South," *Civil War History* 61, no. 4 (2015); Michael Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri During the American Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); Thomas Goodrich, *Black Flag: Guerrilla Warfare on the Western Border, 1861-1865* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995); Matthew C. Hulbert, "How to Remember 'This Damnable Guerrilla Warfare': Four Vignettes from Civil War Missouri," *Civil War History* 59, no. 2 (2013); William C. Pollard, *Dark Friday: The Story of Quantrill's Raid* (Big Springs: Baranski Publishing Company, 1990); Daniel E. Sutherland, "Memories of a Rooted Sorrow: The Legacy of Guerrilla Warfare," *Civil War History* 61, no. 1 (2016); Daniel E. Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict: The Decisive Role of Guerrillas in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009); LeeAnn Whites, "Forty Shirts and a Wagonload of Wheat: Women, the Domestic Supply Line, and the Civil War on the Western Border," *The Journal of the Civil War Era* 1, no. 1 (2011).

at his life as a product of the culture he lived in, cultural studies have only recently opened up to examine his literature within this culture as well in order to see how the Civil War affected it. Furthermore, Whitman's work in *Drum-Taps* also shows how the culture of death changed in America during the Civil War as young men, who were previously safe after developing resistances to disease in their childhood, died in massive numbers because of their participation in the Civil War.[2]

Historians who have written about African American soldiers have until recently overlooked the 1st Kansas Colored, the actual first African American regiment to enter the Civil War.[3] However, examinations of other African American regiments or African American soldiers as a whole have been produced since the Civil Rights Movement in order to examine the struggles these soldiers faced in the army, such as dealing with hand-me-down equipment and the prejudiced attitudes of white regiments who did not want to fight alongside them, and they have examined the battles the African American soldiers fought in with more attention to the role these soldiers played. As a result, these

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[2] Roger Asselineau, *The Evolution of Walt Whitman: The Creation of a Book* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1962); Clara Barrus, *Whitman and Burroughs Comrades* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931); George R. Carpenter, *Walt Whitman* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1909); Walter H. Eitner, *Walt Whitman's Western Jaunt* (Lawrence: The Regents Press of Kansas, 1981); Drew G. Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008); Randall Fuller, *From Battlefields Rising: How the Civil War Transformed American Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Mark Maslan, *Whitman Possessed: Poetry, Sexuality, and Popular Authority* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001); Christian McWhirter, *Battle Hymns; The Power and Popularity of Music in the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012); Roy R. Morris, *The Better Angel: Walt Whitman in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); John R. Neff, *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemmoration and the Problem of Reconciliation* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005); David S. Reynolds, *Walt Whitman's America: A Cultural Biography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995); Mark S. Schantz, *Awaiting the Heavenly Country: The Civil War and America's Culture of Death* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

[3] Ian Michael Spurgeon, *Soldiers in the Army of Freedom: The 1st Kansas Colored, the Civil War's First African American Combat Unit* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014) is the first examination of the 1st Kansas Colored soldiers instead of the white officers. Richard M. Reid, *African Canadians in Union Blue: Volunteering for the Cause in the Civil War* (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 2014) still attributes the 54th Massachusetts as the first African American regiment of the Civil War.

examinations have shown how African American soldiers overcame obstacles that white soldiers did not have to deal with, and at the same time, they showed that they had the discipline necessary to fight for the Union in the Civil War in situations more dangerous than usual.[4]

Existing studies of masculinity and examinations of the Union soldier tell us what masculinity looked like before the Civil War and how the Civil War impacted how soldiers saw themselves, including how soldiers were supposed to look and how they were supposed to act in battle. By looking at examinations of masculinity, historians have shown that rural and urban boys had different transitions into manhood before the Civil War broke out. Before, the differences between rural and urban boys were more pronounced than the differences between North and South, though differences between the North and South existed. Rural boys transitioned into manhood through outdoor activities such as hunting, and though the purpose of hunting differed across class lines,

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[4] William W. Brown, *The Negro in the American Rebellion, His Heroism and His Fidelity* (Miami: Mnemosyne Publication Inc., 1969); Mark K. Christ, *"All cut to pieces and gone to hell": The Civil War, Race Relations, and the Battle of Poison Spring* (Little Rock: August House, 2003); Joseph T. Glatthar, *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers* (New York: The Free Press, 1990); Earl J. Hess, *Into the Crater: The Mine Attack at Petersburg* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2010); Margaret Humphreys, *Intensely Human: The Health of the Black Soldier in the American Civil War* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008); Kevin M. Levin, *Remembering the Battle of the Crater: War as Murder* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2012); James McPherson, *The Negro's Civil War: How American Negroes Felt and Acted during the War for the Union* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965); James Paradis, "Flexing the Sable Arm: Emancipation, Black Troops, and Hard War," in *Beyond Combat: Essays in Military History in Honor of Russell F. Weigley*, ed. Edward G. Longacre and Theodore J. Zeman (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2007); Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the Civil War* (New York: Russel & Russel, 1968); Richard Slotkin, *No Quarter: The Battle of the Crater, 1864* (New York: Random House, 2009); John D. Smith, *Lincoln and the U.S. Colored Troops* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2013); Chris Tabor, *The Skirmish at Island Mound, Missouri* (Butler: Bates County Historical Society, 2001); Thomas D. Thiessen, Steve J. Dasovich, and Douglas D. Scott, *"The Men Fought Like Tigers": The Skirmishes at Island Mound, Bates County, Missouri, October 27-29, 1862* (Lincoln: Heritage Investigation and Preservation Foundation, 2009); Noah A. Trudeau, *Like Men of War: Black Troops in the Civil War 1862-1865* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1998); Gregory J. W. Urwin, "'We cannot treat negroes…as prisoners of war': Racial Atrocities and Reprisals in Civil War Arkansas," *Civil War History* 42, no. 3 (1996); Charles H. Wesley and Patricia W. Romero, *Negro Americans in the Civil War: From Slavery to Citizenship* (New York: Publishers Company, Inc., 1967).

much of it had to do with providing for the family or showing outward displays of masculinity, especially in groups of other men; urban boys, on the other hand, transitioned into manhood more through their character, as they were expected to resist the temptations of city life, including drinking, gambling, and prostitution.[5] Historians have asserted that this was because America's character was reflected in America's youth in a time when the country was still forming its character. One common aspect of manhood displayed by both rural and urban boys in the Early Republic was that they were supposed to amass territory, power, and money in order to provide for their families.[6]

However, after the Civil War broke out, northern manhood became more centered on the soldier's life, highlighting characteristics such as defense of the home, honorable behavior, and discipline in battle, as well as mastering the fear they felt facing a battle.[7] Other historians have linked a soldier's identity to domesticity because their job became to protect their families and homes from the war, though they were expected to return at the end of it.[8] Therefore, when events such as the Lawrence Massacre brought the Civil War to the northern home, these violent instances violated the domestic sphere, where

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[5] Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982); Nicolas W. Proctor, *Bathed in Blood: Hunting and Mastery in the Old South* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2002); E. A. Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993).

[6] Stephen W. Berry II, *All That Makes a Man: Love and Ambition in the Civil War South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[7] Lorien Foote, *The Gentlemen and the Roughs: Violence, Honor, and Manhood in the Union Army* (New York: New York University, 2010); Earl J. Hess, *The Union Soldier in Battle: Enduring the Ordeal of Combat* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997); Bell I. Wiley, *The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1952).

[8] Reid Mitchell, *The Vacant Chair: The Northern Soldier Leaves Home* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

women were supposed to offer refuge to the community.[9] Furthermore, whereas southern historians have shown that injuries detracted from a soldier's manhood after the war because the Confederacy lost, northern soldiers did just the opposite, claiming their injuries as evidence of their manhood and showing that they had wartime experiences the general public lacked.[10]

Although previous historians have shown that the Union soldier was another way for the northern boy to become a man, I aim to show that the Civil War reshaped notions of manhood to such an extent that a soldier's life became the only way for northerners to become men, at least until the war came to an end. Union men, regardless of their age, had to affirm or reaffirm their identities as men by becoming the Union soldier in conduct and in body, and African American men claimed their manhood for the first time by emulating the behavior of white soldiers. Though amassing property, power, and wealth confirmed manhood in the days of the Early Republic, those were no longer enough to confirm manhood; instead, Union men had to be willing to fight for their nation, and in the process, they had to physically become the Union soldier, who was always war-worn, frequently injured, and sometimes killed in the process of maintaining this new identity.

This thesis begins with an examination of the Lawrence Massacre, the civilians who survived it, and the raiders who caused it. Events such as the Lawrence Massacre show changing ideas of manhood through the reactions of civilians. These reactions show that they believed Quantrill's Raiders' conduct was far away from masculine; guerrilla

[9] Nina Silber, *Daughters of the Union: Northern Women Fight the Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).
[10] Brian M. Jordan, *Marching Home: Union Veterans and Their Unending Civil War* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2014); Brian Craig Miller, *Empty Sleeves: Amputation in the Civil War South* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2015).

soldiers, dressed in civilians' clothing, stole items that had no military use, and went so far as to attack unarmed civilian populations and destroy their property as an act of revenge. They contradicted everything it was to be a man in northern eyes because men were supposed to enlist in formal armies and take on the identity of a soldier to protect their families from the war, and in that way they established their identities.

Next I move on to an examination of *Drum-Taps*, the collection of poetry Walt Whitman produced during his time as a volunteer nurse in the Armory Square hospital in Washington, D.C. Whitman's literature shows how a soldier's identity became linked with manhood through physical transformations. In his literature, he shows the physical rite of passage boys went through to claim their manhood: as they gained more experience during the Civil War, young soldiers became seasoned veterans who carried themselves differently and who looked worn by the battle. Furthermore, those soldiers who came away from battle with permanent disabilities had physical proof of their war experiences, and therefore they carried a permanent marker of their manhood. Finally, Whitman's literature shows how the culture of death shifted to reinforce soldiers as the new ideal of manhood; before the war death was unremarkable in American culture because it was a part of everyday life, but after the Civil War, death set Union soldiers apart from the rest of the population because they died for a cause, and the nation made sense of the carnage by remembering what these soldiers died doing.

The final chapter will focus on the 1st Kansas Colored. I chose this regiment specifically because they were the first African American regiment to form during the Civil War, and as such they helped pave the way for the other African American regiments that followed. While other historians have examined the struggles African

American soldiers faced, they have often overlooked the ways in which these men claimed their manhood for the very first time. As slaves, black men were robbed of their gender identities because they had no opportunity to help take care of the families they created while in captivity. However, when Kansas provided them the opportunity to enlist, African American men claimed the opportunity; joining the Union army allowed them to emulate white soldier behavior in that black soldiers had the chance to rescue their families from the chaos of the war. Furthermore, black soldiers had to overcome stereotypes against them as savages, and they fought against negative attitudes of other white soldiers, showing that they were capable of the same conduct in battle as their white counterparts.

Although the Civil War had distinct military and political consequences for the United States, it also had significant social consequences as well. The Civil War marks a drastic shift in masculine identity in American culture; although in following decades manhood redefined itself so that participation in the armed forces was no longer central to manhood, any time a military conflict arose in which the United States became involved, enlistment became a marker of masculine identity again. Furthermore, the Civil War provided African American men the opportunity to claim autonomy within their own stories. Although both African American men and women were property before the Civil War, women claimed their femininity through the tasks they were assigned on plantation households; men, on the other hand, were simply tools working the fields all day, unable to provide for any families they formed, unable to assert their masculinity in other ways. African American men did not only find a way to claim their masculinity in the Civil War; they demanded it. They did not wait for their identities to be handed to them, but

rather seized the opportunities themselves. Examining the social consequences of the Civil War reveals that warfare has a much larger impact on American culture than just the military and political consequences; warfare has the ability to shape identities as well.

Chapter 1: In Defense of the Home Front
How the Lawrence Massacre Impacted Northern Notions of Masculinity

The morning of August 21st, 1863, started out as a peaceful day in Lawrence, Kansas in the midst of the Civil War. At about 5:00 in the morning, the men and women who inhabited the town were preparing for their morning routines, but William Quantrill and his raiders disrupted them with an attack on the city, an attack that was later named the Lawrence Massacre, which left between 150 and 180 men dead and many other citizens wounded.[1] Though it lasted only a few hours, the Lawrence Massacre left a strong impact on the civilians who survived it; many of them used language in their accounts of the events that dehumanized the guerrilla soldiers and described the horrors of what they survived. This was partially because they were completely unprepared for the attack; the guerrilla soldiers attacked an unarmed civilian population, which was frowned upon even in a time of war. Furthermore, the civilians believed that Quantrill's Raiders, and all guerrilla soldiers, lacked masculinity because they were unwilling to enlist in a formal army in order to fight.

The Lawrence Massacre was an opportunity for some of Missouri's guerrilla soldiers to exact revenge for four of their female relatives who died in a prison collapse in Kansas City on August 13th of 1863 after they were arrested for manufacturing and providing goods for the Confederate guerrilla soldiers.[2] However, it is also a telling moment where historians can examine the North's shifting notions of masculinity and how it was tied to notions of femininity based on survivors' reactions to the damage

[1] Beilein, "Guerrilla," 166.
[2] Beilein, "Guerrilla," 165.

Quantrill's Raider did during the Lawrence Massacre.[3] Before the Civil War, men proved their manhood primarily through providing for their families; the military conflicts in the early nineteenth century were significantly smaller than the Civil War, so masculinity was less dependent on honorable behavior during battle, which included restricting attacks to other military units and accepting surrenders from soldiers; before the Civil War people universally deplored attacks on civilian populations. However, during the Civil War, maintaining masculinity became more dependent upon military participation. Because the conflict was much bigger than previous military engagements, victory became a major factor in masculinity. People also expected men to enlist in an organized army instead of finding ways to avoid enlisting in the military, including hiring substitutes, or fighting in other underhanded ways.[4] Events such as the Lawrence

[3] Mitchell shows that during the nineteenth century, similar to the South, the North believed that femininity aligned with domesticity. His study reveals that northerners believed that "Women were key to domesticity and its virtues, key to the homes and community which many soldiers thought their service defended" (74). Furthermore, because domesticity was essential to femininity, women were the nurturers in northern society. Though they involved themselves with the war effort, women usually did so as nurses who took familial roles with the soldiers, such as mothers and sisters; they were strongly discouraged from forming any romantic relationships with the soldiers and doctors, and some nurses, such as Dorothea Dix, actively sought out older, plainer women to hire as nurses in their hospitals to avoid the formation of romantic relationships. However, the Lawrence Massacre forced women to defy this role as the nurturer by placing them in a position to directly intervene with the destruction instead of helping the soldiers after they faced the chaos of war; Mitchell says that "The man was expected to venture forth into this heartless world, for such was his role, but he was expected to return to the domestic world for healing" (74). However, events such as the Lawrence Massacre brought the destruction to the domestic world, and when the men could not function as the protectors, women ventured forth into the destruction in their place in order to save them. For further information, read Mitchell, *Vacant*. In regards to masculinity, Lorien Foote says, "Northern men, to a greater extent than their southern counterparts, did not conform to a singular understanding of manhood or to a uniform ideal of what constituted manly behavior" (Foote 2010, 3). She explains that multiple ideals of manhood developed as a result of a more socially diverse population with new class structures (3). Because there was not a consistent idea of manhood, it is useful to define northern masculinity by what it was not. For more information, see Foote, *Gentlemen*. Also see Hess, *Union* for how soldiers handled their fears as they faced combat and Rotundo, *American* for how notions of masculinity changed over an extended period of time.

[4] Fellman, *Inside*, 142-143. Fellman's study shows that because many of the guerrilla soldiers in Missouri were young men, they "reassembled their personalities as independent young warriors within the war. They shared the relative openness and adaptability of the transitional period of young male adulthood, and they developed outside of a context in which the censorship of elders could have much effect" (Fellman 1989, 142). He also shows that guerrilla soldiers' family members condoned their actions under these

Massacre shaped peoples' views of masculinity because the combatants and their modes of attack deviated from the code of honor expected from the men who participated in war. From examining the accounts of survivors of the Lawrence Massacre, whether these were letters to family members written after the raid ended or personal accounts recorded decades later to flesh out the story of the massacre, it is apparent that this event impacted each individual that experienced and recorded their memory of it. The Lawrence Massacre shaped the North's views on masculinity because of the guerrilla soldiers' dishonorable mode of combat, their behavior during the massacre, and because for a short time after the massacre, it briefly reversed the North's gender roles by making women the protectors of the home; because the raiders only killed men, women hid their husbands, and they also extinguished the fires that the raiders set. Several survivors' accounts of the raid, particularly those written by women, reveal that after the attack ended, women watched outside from the windows and answered the doors, because any raiders that stayed behind or returned were unlikely to injure them because this was consistent with their initial attack.

One of the ways in which survivors of the Lawrence Massacre shaped the North's views of masculinity was through the survivors' use of the language to describe Quantrill's men and the raid itself. This language often dehumanized Quantrill's Raiders or made them sound like monsters. The language survivors used to describe Quantrill's men were related to their views of honor; many Northerners believed that guerrilla warfare was dishonorable because it did not provide the victims an adequate opportunity to defend themselves, and the guerrilla soldiers themselves were dishonorable and lacked

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circumstances, whereas they would have otherwise condemned the actions. For a deeper examination of the war's impact on young guerrilla soldiers, read Fellman, *Inside*.

masculinity because they lacked the bravery necessary to enlist in a formal army to fight. Although there were also guerrilla soldiers who fought for the Union, survivor accounts from the Lawrence Massacre argue the citizens of Lawrence did not condone guerrilla warfare, nor did the Jayhawkers use Lawrence as a meeting spot during this time.

This chapter will focus on how the survivors used Quantrill and his raiders' behavior to shape their views on gender because of the way that northern civilians' notions of masculinity conflicted with Missouri guerrilla notions of masculinity; although the Lawrence Massacre impacted the economy and the environment of Lawrence because of the fires set in homes and businesses, these factors are rarely discussed in terms of gender except in the rare instance where Lawrence is feminized, and therefore they do not contribute to the understanding of changing notions of gender significantly.[5] This is an examination of how a civilian population reacted to a group of guerrilla soldiers' attack on them, and how events such as the Lawrence Massacre inform historians about the victims' worldview. Therefore, the factors this chapter focuses on include the language survivors used to describe Quantrill's Raiders' actions, how the North used conceptions of guerrilla warfare and its own notions of honor to shape notions of masculinity, and the women in Lawrence who took up the role of protector during the attack and after it was finished.[6]

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[5] The evidence used in this examination is primarily composed of the letters left by survivors of the massacre, typically produced within a few months after the raid was over. Some sources, however, such as government reports, were produced several decades after the massacre, though these were typically used to clear the reputation of people who had been accused of working with Quantrill's Raiders.

[6] Matthew Hulbert says collective memories "are designed to comfort and explain the sometimes inexplicable," and they "unwittingly yield the inner workings of a process through which vulnerable human beings, made so by years of unprecedented suffering, produced and preserved meticulously detailed and intricate memories" (165). Therefore, individual memories, such as the ones used in the letters, provide a more intimate account of events, whereas collective memories can be warped to fit the perspective of an entire group. Though Hulbert's focus is on Missouri for the bulk of his article, he also considers the accounts of people who were near Lawrence when the massacre occurred; one of the persons mentioned in

Although the Lawrence Massacre was one of the most significant events in Kansas's history, there is not much historiography about it. There are plenty of sources available to study this incident, but no new studies were produced between 1910 and 1990. After an eighty-year gap, William C. Pollard wrote *Dark Friday: The Story of Quantrill's Raid*, in which he examines the underlying causes of the raid, the events of the raid, and how the North reacted to the attack and how Lawrence recovered from it.[7] A majority of studies that examine the Lawrence Massacre focus on several or all of the activities of Quantrill's Raiders, such as Edward E. Leslie's *The Devil Knows How to Ride: The True Story of William Clarke Quantrill and His Confederate Raiders* and William E. Connelley's *Quantrill and the Border Wars*, instead of examining the events in which Quantrill's Raiders were involved individually. However, the historiography of guerrilla soldiers is still useful in understanding how Confederate guerrillas perceived

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his article also recalls Sallie Young riding a horse toward Lawrence even though entering the town could endanger her life, which also shows that Case's account may not be the most accurate account – in his account, Case says that Young was taken to Lawrence by Quantrill's Raiders, whereas the account in Hulbert's study mentions her riding to Lawrence alone even though it could endanger her life. David Thelen says the questions we ask about memory "can illuminate how individuals, ethnic groups, political parties, and cultures shape and reshape their identities – as known to themselves and others" (1118). As a result, the questions "can explore how they establish their core identities, how much and what kind of variation they permit around that core, and what they rule out as unacceptable" (1118). Goodrich elaborates on the impact emotional scars from the Lawrence Massacre had on the survivors and their individual memories: he points out that the event was so stressful that one woman's hair went white overnight, whereas many others had vacant looks throughout the next day and night by their husbands' bodies. He explains, "The emotional scars of the massacre at Lawrence could not be neatly tabulated, nor could they simply be buried or rebuilt. They were forever" (94). Because of the scars the massacre left, individual accounts leave a much more clear record of the massacre than a collective account can. For more information, see Hulbert, "Remember," Thelen, "Memory," and Goodrich, *Black*.

[7] Pollard, *Dark*, ix. While Pollard focuses mostly on the actions of the guerrilla soldiers during the massacre, he also discusses the accounts of people who were near Lawrence when the massacre occurred. However, he tends to overlook the experiences of women during the Lawrence Massacre with the exceptions of two, Mrs. Fisher and Mrs. Read, who tried to douse house fires during the conflict (74-75). He also brings attention to two men who survived the attack because a pair of women dressed them in women's clothing; though he shows that raiders were skeptical of these disguises, the outfits served their purpose, and the lives of Mr. Winchell, disguised as Aunt Betsy after having his beard shaved, and Dr. Charles Reynolds were spared (77).

masculinity, especially in border states like Missouri, which allows historians to see how opposing notions of gender clashed during this time period.

Recent studies have branched out into other examinations of the Lawrence Massacre; for example, Katie H. Armitage's *Lawrence: Survivors of Quantrill's Raid* looks at how survivors rebuilt their lives after the raid was over. However, previous studies have not examined how this attack shaped the survivors' notions of masculinity and manhood during a chaotic time in American history from the romantic notions men were expected to live up to in the early nineteenth century to more realistic ideas that came about as a result of a large-scale conflict the Civil War; these shifting notions of gender were only a piece of American culture that the Civil War permanently altered as a result of bloodshed and the new implications of victory in battle. Michael Fellman argues that guerrilla warfare "both exaggerated and undermined fundamental cultural structure," reflecting the impact that the Civil War had on Missouri in the midst of its progress as a result of industrialization.[8] Other outside traditions also influenced Confederate guerrillas; for example, Daniel E. Sutherland shows how guerrilla soldiers took inspiration from Native American actions in combat as well as the Texas Ranger tradition, which originated when Texas was its own republic and needed these rangers for its own defense.[9]

Examinations such as Fellman and Sutherland's dig deeper than the people who inspired guerrilla soldiers and how they formed their values; these examinations also

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[8] Fellman, *Inside*, xvi.

[9] Sutherland, *Savage*, 47-51. In his article published in *Civil War History*, Sutherland also notes the economic, familial, and personal motives of the guerrilla soldiers who fought during the Civil War. He points out that many of these soldiers did not join the Confederate Army because guerrilla warfare was the best way they could get revenge for the violent actions taken against their friends and families. He also notes how these motivations continued to inspire violence after the war ended. For more information, see Sutherland, "Memories."

show the ways guerrilla soldiers perceived themselves and the ways the rest of the country saw them. Fellman's study discusses how guerrilla soldiers justified their actions: he shows that guerrilla soldiers were typically proud of what they did, that they did not regret their actions, and that they saw their own actions against Union soldiers as acts of vengeance for the harm Union soldiers brought to their family members, in particular their women.[10] Furthermore, many men who joined the ranks of guerrilla soldiers did so "because it offered an escape from the regimentation, discipline, and endless drill required in a conventional army. Romantic images of Revolutionary 'partizans' and Texas Rangers contrasted sharply with the dull routine of the uniformed ranks."[11] However, even with all of the effort that these guerrilla soldiers put forth to disrupt Union supply lines and destroy their ranks, the Confederacy as a whole did not view these soldiers with favor; Fellman's study shows the Confederacy viewed guerrilla soldiers as "a threat to humanity and Christian civilization," and tolerated them because they could not control them; utilizing the guerrilla soldiers during the Civil War was a better option than risking the potential backlash from trying to control them.[12]

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[10]Fellman, *Inside*, 132-133. Fellman's study also shows that a majority of the guerrilla soldiers in Missouri were young men who fought in irregular, temporary groups; furthermore, they fought with their own rules of war, and they were not above performing otherwise atrocious acts, including robbery, arson, and murder. Although people considered these actions acts of terror, the guerrilla soldiers justified their actions by suggesting that they were defending their women and children and avenging their brothers, comrades, and civilian supporters whom they had lost to Union soldiers. For more information about how Missouri guerrillas perceived themselves, see Fellman, *Inside*, 136.

[11]Sutherland, *Savage*, 52. Some men joined the ranks of guerrilla soldiers because of other appealing factors, including that these men had the ability to go where they wanted, when they wanted in order to fight the war instead of taking orders. Sutherland's study also reveals that some guerrilla soldiers perceived themselves as superior to regular soldiers because they believed they had special qualities, including "marksmanship, familiarity with knives and hatchets, experience as woodsmen, fit and rugged constitutions, and horsemanship," in addition to their willingness to take on any assignment, "'however hazardous' it might be" (52).

[12]Fellman, *Inside*, 97. In addition to viewing guerrilla soldiers as unchristian, Fellman also reveals that people perceived them as inhuman and savage. For more information, read Fellman, *Inside*, 104.

A number of accounts reveal little about personal reactions to the Lawrence Massacre, but they describe in detail the destruction reaped upon the town. H.M. Simpson, co-owner of the Banking House of Simpsons Brothers in Lawrence and a survivor of the massacre, says William Quantrill's band approached Lawrence from the southeast and immediately began attacking the men in the town. Charles E. Fisher, another survivor and chaplain, as well as a commissioned captain in the 5th Regiment Kansas Volunteers, says the raid lasted about four hours, estimating that it started at 5:00 a.m. and ended at 9:00 a.m.[13] An examination of Simpson's account also reveals that Quantrill's Raiders shot and killed the male citizens of Lawrence while their wives held them in their arms; the raiders even shot fathers desperately clinging to their children and infants. Quantrill's Raiders forced the wives to stand by and watch helplessly as their husbands' bodies were consumed by house fires, at least until the raiders stopped paying attention. In one instance Simpson says a Mr. Dix "purchased his life by paying $1000," but the raiders shot and killed him as soon as he handed over the money.[14] In addition to killing a number of Lawrence's men during their raid, Quantrill's band also burned down a number of businesses. According to Simpson's account, "Of the west portion of Mass. St. not a business house remains south of the old stone Hutchinson building, except that Miller building."[15] Additionally, Simpson points out approximately 120 houses were destroyed, and he estimates the total damage at $1,100,000; furthermore, he also believes

[13]Charles E. Fisher, "Personal Recollections of the Quantrell Massacre," 1913, Hugh Fisher Corr. #343, Box 1 Folders 1-11, Kansas Historical Society, **Kansas Memory**, www.kansasmemory.org.
[14] H.M. Simpson to Hiram Hill, September 7, 1863, Ms. Coll. Hiram Hill, Box 1, Correspondence and Business Papers, 1863., Kansas Historical Society, **Kansas Memory**, www.kansasmemory.org.
[15] Ibid.

that the Lawrence Massacre left the businessmen without any money.[16] Though women and children were victims of this massacre as a result of the destruction to the city, survivor accounts show that Quantrill's Raiders specifically targeted men with the intent to kill, sparing the lives of women and children.

When examining the Lawrence Massacre, one factor that reveals how northerners perceived masculinity is the language the survivors of the attack used to describe Quantrill's Raiders. One female survivor of the attack, Mary Savage, the wife of Joseph Savage, who moved to Kansas Territory in 1854, wrote to her mother and sister that they "could not begin to get an idea of it as those of us can who have seen its horrors and the fiendish pleasure they took in witnessing the death agonies of our best citizens."[17] She also says victims such as Mr. Fitch, to whom her family was close, were murdered in cold blood.[18] To provide her relatives the full impact of what she and her family experienced, Savage explains, "Mr. Fitch…walked down to [the raiders] and as he got to the bottom they shot him in the presence of his young wife and three children. They then set fire to the house, refusing to take out the body or to permit her to."[19] In the aftermath, when Lawrence's citizens prepared themselves for a second invasion, Savage says the guerrillas' "mode of warfare is so treacherous that we cannot have a fair fight."[20] Additionally, in describing the guerrillas' pilfering of money and wedding rings from the recently widowed women, Savage says that she "never thought it possible that we should

[16] Ibid. Oscar Learnard verifies this destruction in a letter written to his wife on September 3rd, 1863, as well. For more information, read Oscar Learnard, "'Death, Sudden and Most Unexpected'," in *Kansas's War: The Civil War in Documents*, ed. Pearl T. Ponce (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 249-250.
[17] Mary Savage to her mother and sister, October 10th, 1863, Misc., Mary Savage Box 1 Folder 24, Kansas Historical Society, **Kansas Memory**, www.kansasmemory.org.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid.

see such fiendish actions in this Christian land. hut I fear we have not seen the end."[21] She shows that the citizens of Lawrence feared an attack a month and a half after Quantrill's Raiders had left; furthermore, the attack on Lawrence was beyond anything she could imagine.

As can be seen from her language, Savage did not see the aftermath of Lawrence as the aftermath of a normal battle during a war; instead, she describes a massacre because of the fact that the population of Lawrence had absolutely no way to protect itself. Instead of implying or explicitly stating that the men of Lawrence fought back against the raiders or even had a chance to defend themselves, Savage makes it clear that civilians were murdered during the massacre with no opportunity for protection. She shows that when the guerrilla soldiers invaded Mr. Fitch's home, Quantrill's Raiders did not offer him the chance to surrender; instead, Quantrill's men killed him in front of his family, and they desecrated his body by burning the house down with his remains inside, forbidding Mrs. Fitch from retrieving his body. In addition to preventing Mrs. Fitch from retrieving her husband's body, Savage points out that the guerrilla soldiers also prevented Mrs. Fitch from retrieving any of her family's belongings so that she could take care of her newborn baby. In addition to killing her husband, the guerrilla soldiers prevented Mrs. Fitch from fulfilling her role as a mother. Savage also suggests that the guerrilla soldiers enjoyed the destruction they reaped throughout Lawrence instead of implying that Quantrill's men fought for their own best interest or the interest of the South. Joseph Beilein points out that many of Quantrill's Raiders attacked Lawrence for the women

[21] Ibid.

who died in the Kansas City prison collapse, so the raiders' primary motivation during this raid was revenge, not protection.[22]

Savage was not the only survivor of the Lawrence Massacre to describe the events as she did. H.M. Simpson also showed that the raiders started killing people immediately upon their entry into Lawrence, and his account also confirms Mrs. Fitch's inability to retrieve her husband's body. He also mentions that Mr. Dix, another of the raiders' victims, paid the raiders in an attempt to surrender, but his attackers killed him anyway. However, Simpson says, "These instances are not the worst that occurred but are given as a fair sample of what transpired."[23] Simpson takes his account a step farther than Savage's as well; he compares Quantrill's Raiders' activities to the activity of the Kansas guerrillas, the Jayhawkers; he says, "I understand that the Springfield Republicans claims that the sacking of Lawrence is no worse than things which the red-legs have done in Missouri. This is a mistake. I never learned that any body of free state men ever performed such fiendish acts as those which we witnessed on the 21st of August. Besides, Lawrence has never been the special haunt of red-legs, and no sympathizer with that clan of men were killed by the guerrillas. Those who were murdered would have been the last to encourage the red-legs."[24] Though Simpson does not condone the actions of the Jayhawkers in this statement, he also condemns Quantrill's Raiders by comparing their actions to one another.

Simpson uses similar language as Savage to describe the guerrilla activity during the Lawrence Massacre; additionally, he also acknowledges the activity of the Union's

[22] Beilein, "Guerrilla," 165.
[23] Simpson to Hill.
[24] Ibid.

guerrilla soldiers, the Jayhawkers. However, instead of condoning the actions of the Union raiders, Simpson distances Lawrence and its citizens from them in order to justify why the Lawrence Massacre was unnecessary in the first place; furthermore, he points out that the Confederate guerrillas' actions were worse than anything the Jayhawkers had done during the war. He shows that Lawrence was not a safe haven or hideout for these guerrilla soldiers; furthermore, none of the victims of the Lawrence Massacre sympathized with or assisted the Jayhawkers. By distancing Lawrence and its people from the Jayhawkers as he did, Simpson condemns Quantrill's Raiders even further because they killed innocent people instead of targeting the people who were responsible for the deaths in Kansas City, which was a dishonorable action because civilians did not play a role in the conflict for which the guerrilla soldiers sought revenge.

In addition to the use of language in describing Quantrill's Raiders and their activity, the North's perceptions of honorable warfare also influenced their notions of masculinity during the Civil War. According to Joseph M. Beilein, author of "The Guerrilla Shirt; A Labor of Love and the Style of Rebellion in Civil War Missouri," clothing was a factor in defining a soldier's honor, masculinity, and manhood because enlisted soldiers had a formal uniform that marked them as members of an organized army. Beilein says, "Conventional uniforms quite literally established a sense of uniformity, creating a highly visible bond between a man and the men to his right and left, men who may have been strangers before they found themselves together in the army. This male-male bond, then, served as the social underpinning of the conventional army."[25] Beilein, however, explains why the Union placed so much importance on their

[25] Beilein, "Guerrilla," 156. Beilein's article reveals that the only articles of clothing that guerrilla soldiers had in common with one another were the shirts that their female relatives made for them – however, even

soldiers' uniforms beyond the capability to identify each other in battle: "Union officers read uniforms to be an outward expression of a man's natural identity. In the culture of the conventional army, friends wore uniforms of a particular cut and color, enemies wore uniforms of a different color, and noncombatant men and women wore nonmilitary clothing."[26] The uniform was more than just an article of clothing to the Union soldiers; it was a part of who they were.

The contrasts Beilein mentions signaled to both the North and the South that the guerrilla soldiers were dishonorable because they had not enlisted in a formal army, so their method of fighting was not proper combat. Northerners believed that in order for a soldier to have honor, it was necessary for him to enlist in an organized army because it was a symbol of national pride; guerrilla soldiers did not enlist in these armies, so they lacked both the honor and the national pride enlisted soldiers had. This is connected to notions of masculinity during the war as well because guerrilla soldiers lacked a formal uniform, and therefore it was impossible for them to outwardly express their manhood, masculinity, and honor. This is further solidified because although the guerrilla soldiers

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the shirts were not entirely the same; they were often made with different fabrics, and the women who made them were not all at the same skill level with sewing. Even though the shirts had some differences, LeeAnn Whites points out that the shirts all had a distinctive style, which was evident because Union soldiers arrested a group of women for outfitting guerrilla soldiers when they discovered the stolen cloth for which the soldiers were searching had been used to create shirts for the guerrilla soldiers. Furthermore, because sewing was seen as a feminine activity by both the Union and Confederacy, supplying food and clothing was one of the few ways women could be implicated with guerrilla soldiers; these same women were found with arms, but because guns were perceived as masculine, this was not enough evidence that the women supplied guerrilla soldiers – the shirts were necessary pieces of evidence. For more information, see Whites, "Forty."

[26] Beilein, "Guerrilla," 171. Because outward appearance was a reflection of a man's identity, Beilein suggests that the chaotic outfits of the guerilla soldiers meant that they "were wearing, modeling, and performing the instabilities of their theater of wear" (172). Furthermore, Joan Cashin shows that Confederate soldiers who deserted the army often changed their clothing in order to escape, often stealing women's clothing to use as a disguise. For more information, read Cashin, "Torn." This not only established these soldiers as noncombatants because they wore civilians' clothing, but it also feminized them because they took on the outward appearance of a woman in order to escape battle. Regular Confederate uniforms, on the other hand, reflected the stability of these soldiers because of their uniformity.

had one article of clothing in common, the guerrilla shirts that their wives, daughters, and mothers made, Beilein points out that the variation in the appearance of these shirts was significant because the guerrilla soldiers' wives and sisters did not use the same types of fabric, and these women did not operate at the same skill level when they sewed the shirts. Despite the lack of consistency in their uniforms, guerrilla soldiers still fought with a common cause, as Quantrill's Raiders did to avenge their family members, but this was not enough for people to consider them legitimate soldiers. Guerrilla soldiers' attire labeled them as non-combatants because the shirts were not formal military garments, which suggested that they had no place participating in a battle or military engagement of any sort.

Although the guerrilla soldiers lacked formal military uniforms, both primary and secondary sources say these soldiers occasionally stole the uniforms of the Union soldiers whom they killed in skirmishes.[27] Guerrilla soldiers then used these uniforms as disguises in order to trick other Union soldiers into not attacking them and lowering their guards, which was one of the methods guerrilla soldiers used to mount surprise attacks. In these moments guerrilla soldiers donned uniforms to establish themselves as combatants, but the form of combat was still dishonorable because it relied on deceit, similar to their typical method of warfare; as a result, even though they mimicked a soldier's appearance, guerrilla soldiers who relied on this tactic still lacked true manhood. However, in these situations the guerrillas' enemies were more prepared to defend themselves because they

[27] In his "Personal Recollections," Fisher mentions that farmers were unable to tell that guerrilla soldiers approached Lawrence because they carried the Union flag (3). In "The Guerrilla Shirt," Beilein points out that guerrilla soldiers stole the coats and jackets from their victims and from other dead Union soldiers (168). Fellman mentions in *Inside War* that Union soldiers often did not know who they were attacking or who was attacking them because guerrilla soldiers used Union uniforms as a disguise, and sometimes guerrilla soldiers did not know who was attacking them because Union soldiers would pose as guerrilla soldiers in disguise if they broke from their command structure for free-lance skirmishing (xv).

were armed even though they were caught off-guard. Beilein says that the uniform "aspect of formal army culture ran so strong that even when they knew what the guerrillas were doing, union officers still could not alter their way of seeing; they remained attached to the conventional uniform as an indicator of identity."[28] Therefore, stealing the Union uniform from a dead soldier offered the guerrilla soldiers an added level of protection when they used these stolen garments in order to attack Union soldiers; though the Union soldiers were armed, Confederate guerrillas still easily caught Union soldiers and officers off-guard because of how ingrained the uniform was into their identities as soldiers.

The citizens of Lawrence found other reasons to believe that guerrilla soldiers fought without honor as well; for instance, Mary Savage discusses her family's escape from their home, wherein guerrilla soldiers demanded that she give them money that she did not have, in her correspondence to her mother and sister on November 29th of 1863. In her account, Savage states that

> They threatened me in hopes to get money but I assured them I had none, and told them to examine my pocket, at which they were quite indignant, telling me that they would make me give it to them. I then stood up and told them to examine the buggy if they did not believe me. They did so and talking [sic] Joseph's new silver horn, which I had taken to save it, and carried it off with them. They also took a halter from one of my horses and bidding my go on started for the next house. They found the horn too large to carry so they smashed it on the fense and left it there and we recovered it and sent it back to Boston to be made over.[29]

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[28] Beilein, "Guerrilla," 171.

[29] Mary Savage to her mother and sister, November 29th, 1863, Misc., Mary Savage Box 1 Folder 24, Kansas Historical Society, **Kansas Memory**, www.kansasmemory.org. The language utilized in Mary Savage's letter and other primary sources produced shortly after the massacre describe the guerrilla soldiers as more villainous than those sources produced decades after. This could be because the experience of the massacre was still fresh in the survivors' minds, especially as Mary Savage recounts the fires that were set and the lengths women had to go in order to protect their families, whereas sources produced decades later were utilized to discuss and clear the names of individuals instead of describing the events of the massacre itself.

In addition to robbing Savage and her family as they tried to escape, Savage also says the men "fired after me and cursing told me to come back."[30] When she returned to them, "they said they were not killing women and children (Daphne was with me) but that they were going to kill the man (our hired man) who was with us."[31] Although they decided to spare the man whom Savage hired, this was only because Savage told them that he was ill.[32] Still, this was more mercy than Quantrill's Raiders showed any of the other men in Lawrence.

Savage escaped the guerrilla soldiers without injury, but she still saw plenty of destruction on her way out of town. Furthermore, the guerrillas shot at her in order to get her buggy to stop, and then they threatened to kill her hired help in front of her. After threatening her hired companion, they took some of the valuables that she brought with her. Up to this point in the war most of the goods that the armies took or destroyed were those that soldiers could use as they traveled, primarily food, clothing, and weapons; the guerrilla soldiers violated this unwritten code in addition to their previous offenses, however, when they not only took Joseph Savage's silver horn, but they smashed it on the fence because it was too large for them to keep. Because this item only held monetary value and the guerrilla soldiers did not believe it could function as a tool for survival in or out of battle, there was no need for the guerrilla soldiers to take it. Stealing the horse halter, on the other hand, was not dishonorable because it was an item that soldiers could

[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.

utilize because military units, both Union and Confederate, used horses to transport their goods and weapons while they traveled.

John Stillman Brown, too, mentions the atrocities Quantrill's Raiders inflicted upon the citizens of Lawrence and to the town itself in his letter to John L. Rupur. Brown starts this letter with a list of men who the raiders killed and with his view of events from up on a hill outside of Lawrence. After the guerrilla soldiers left, Brown traveled to the town and then returned home; he says that the guerrillas "came to kill and plunder at first they shot indiscremanately every man that was seen – their object at first seemed at first to inspire terror – to let no men get together for concuted action – they took I judge in money not lep than 150,000 dollars and destroyed in property perhaps 1,500,000 – it may be more – then again it may be less."[33] Furthermore, Brown confirms the number of people who were killed during the Lawrence Massacre, estimating it at about two hundred. He also describes the ways that the men were killed in his letter, saying they were "generally shot through the head, one, tow [sic], three, four, five balls in each some were killed under circumstances of greatest atrocity – many were burned to death."[34] Furthermore, Brown also shows that this attack scared the citizens of Lawrence enough that they feared another raid was headed for them a few days later because rumors spread that guerrilla soldiers planned to attack the nearby town of Eudora.[35] Though Brown's account does not provide the level of detail as others who were in town when the raiders attacked because he was not present in the town during the massacre, his perspective is invaluable because he provides descriptions of the damage to the town and people from

[33] John Stillman Brown to John L. Rupur, September 1st, 1863, 2-3, John Stillman Brown Coll. #300 Box 2 Correspondence 1863, Kansas Historical Society, **Kansas Memory**, www.kansasmemory.org.
[34] Brown to Rupur, 3.
[35] Ibid.

the perspective of somebody who was relatively safe during the massacre. Although Brown was not in the middle of the raid like Mary Savage, his account confirms the atrocities that occurred from an outside perspective – he saw the aftermath of the raid with a clearer head than somebody who was in the middle of the destruction.

George Edwin Young, who had taken a mowing job in Lecompton, was passing through Lawrence the day of the massacre, and he wrote an account of the events to his father, who was in Massachusetts at the time. In his account, Young points out that he came close to being killed, and notes that "it wase [sic] not ten minutes before [the raiders] had full possesion of the town, in fact the place wase taken by surprise and they had every thing there [sic] own way...."[36] He also corroborates the other statements that say the raiders shot every man they encountered during the massacre, adding that the raiders "then put a guard over the Hotel, and a great many private Houses, at same time robbing the stores, banks of all money *and* goods that they could take away with them and then sett fire to all the stores on Massachesets [sic] St, and killing every man that came out of the burning buildings."[37] Though the other accounts show the extreme violence the raiders inflicted upon Lawrence during their massacre, Young's account shows how quickly the events occurred; though the raid lasted four hours, Young's letter shows that the raiders overtook the town quickly, leaving several hours to wreak havoc upon it with little resistance. Young also shows that he only survived the raid because he fled from the raiders and covered himself with two bodies he found in a cellar drain just

[36] George Edwin Young, "The Lawrence Massacre," in *Kansas's War: The Civil War in Documents*, ed. Pearl T. Ponce (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 240.
[37] Ibid.

large enough for him to fit in.[38] Though this escape method was far from ideal, it shows the desperate measures men had to take in order to protect themselves when nobody else could.

Other than the fact that guerrilla soldiers did not have formal uniforms like enlisted Union and Confederate soldiers and that they stole goods that the Union and Confederate armies left alone, survivors also invoked language in their accounts of the raid to feminize Lawrence when the raiders attacked it. Charles Fisher uses this language twice in his personal recollection: once when he describes Lawrence's recovery from the raid and again when he provides input as to why Lawrence was attacked in the first place. He describes the reason for the attack as follows:

> The crime that Lawrence had committed lay in the fact that she was a Free State city, the home of the abolition sentiment of the Territory prior to statehood, that she would not tolerate unwarrented liberties with her maidens by Quantrell [sic] at the beginning of the War when a teacher in her schools, and that she was the home of Jim Lane, Chaplain Fisher and other Free State men whose lives had been consecrated to the service of the Union. For this was she pillaged and destroyed. For this were her splendid men shot down like dogs, in their doorways upon that bright summer morning as they responded unsuspectingly to the calls of the murderers without.[39]

In describing Lawrence's recovery from the massacre, Fisher says, "Phoenix-like, Lawrence speedily rose from her ashes. And from out that awful morning in August firty [sic] years ago there has risen the beautiful gem which is today the pride of the State."[40] Furthermore, the guerrilla soldiers entered Lawrence using another form of deceit: Fisher points out Quantrill's Raiders entered Lawrence while flying the Union flag, which led

[38] Ibid, 241. Young says that the only reason the raiders did not burn down the building in which he hid was because they could not; the lumber used to build it was still too green, so it did not burn fast enough.
[39] Fisher, "Personal," 3.
[40] Ibid.

nearby farmers to believe that this band was a unit of Union recruits.[41] After the guerrilla soldiers completed the massacre, Fisher describes the desecration of the Union flag as well, a valued symbol to northern soldiers: "Leaving after their murder, arson and pillage the honorable emblem had been torn into shreds and was tied in bits to their horses tails."[42] Not only did Quantrill's Raiders attack an unprotected civilian population, but they also desecrated a symbol of the Union, one that was usually captured and preserved as a sign of victory.

In providing his personal recollection of the Lawrence Massacre, Fisher uses language to convey multiple messages: he invokes language that feminizes Lawrence, and he also uses language to vilify Quantrill's guerrilla soldiers like many of the other survivors of the raid. The language used to feminize Lawrence makes Quantrill's Raiders appear less honorable because the guerrilla soldiers actively avoided attacking and killing women and children; the survivors could not use assaults on women and children as a way to attack the image of the guerrilla soldiers, but they could attempt to achieve the same effect by feminizing Lawrence itself, making the town as a whole seem defenseless. By turning Lawrence into a safe haven for abolitionists, instead making it a military stronghold, the survivors of the raid further demeaned the guerrilla soldiers for attacking an area that was unprepared to defend itself in the same way that many of the survivors described the civilians of the town before the attack. Furthermore, the guerrillas had to sneak into town under the guise of Union protection instead of attacking it under the Confederate Flag like an enlisted Confederate regiment would do. Fisher further attacks Quantrill's Raiders' honor, by describing their desecration of the Union flag. Normally in

[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid.

battles, the Union and the Confederacy captured each other's flags as symbols of victory and honor; if an army destroyed a flag, the army destroyed its own flag in order to prevent the enemy from successfully capturing it. Quantrill's Raiders reversed this action, however, when they desecrated the enemy's symbol instead of preventing the capture of their own symbol.

Although witnessing the raiders' activities and the destruction they caused shows how the Civil War impacted northerners' notions of masculinity because of their perceptions of how soldiers should not act, the Lawrence Massacre also reversed gender roles in Lawrence for a short time after the raid was over.[43] This happened because Quantrill's Raiders specifically attacked the men in Lawrence; the raiders avoided bringing physical harm to any women or children, although they often forced women and children to watch their men die. As a result of this, the men of Lawrence were unable to protect their homes because the raiders would mercilessly kill them; children were unable to protect their homes because of their age, so mothers took up this role instead. Not only did the women of Lawrence take up the role as the protector of their homes during the chaos of the Lawrence Massacre, but they were defiant of the guerrilla soldiers in this role, shown when they put out fires under the threat of death by Quantrill's Raiders.

[43] Nina Silber notes that in the North, "few institutions were as hallowed and celebrated as the middle-class home" because of the peaceful refuge it offered" (87). This was because "It revealed the loving and wholesome influence of virtuous mothers. It was the source of upright moral virtues and molded the character of its own inhabitants, as well as the less fortunate in the community" (87). However, the Lawrence Massacre violated this domesticity and forced women into a position where they had to face the violence of combat. Silber also notes that "With her home as her base, a virtuous Northern woman could extend her influence beyond her own domestic sphere, reaching out to orphaned children, poor families, or 'fallen' women" (87). Though women were engaged in a violent situation during the massacre, they extended their domestic work by helping those in need during the attack. For more information, see Silber, *Daughters*.

Evidence of this is present in several accounts of the raid, Mary Savage's and Alex Case's amongst them. When Savage writes to her family about the raiders who tried to rob her, she also mentions that they intended to kill her hired help; however, she saved his life by ensuring the raiders that he had not served in the Union militia and by pointing out the hired help was ill. Savage also discusses the actions that some other women took to defend their husbands and homes. She says that the raiders "set fire to nearly every house in town and on their rodd [sic] as they left for miles was on [sic] continuous line of fire and smoke. The houses in town that were saved were put out by the women, many of whom were very heroic drawing water and putting out fires with those fiends threatening to kill them if they did. And many of the men owe their lives to the coolness and exertions of their wives who concealed them in the houses and then kept them from burning."[44] Furthermore, Savage says that she entered a burning home during the raid and used water from a nearby well in order to put out the fires that were set on the straw beds inside.[45] Because women were supposed to be nurturers according to Union notions of femininity, actively confronting the chaos of war pushed these women outside of their prescribed gender roles; while they could have embraced their expected behavior and complied with the guerrilla soldiers in order to save their own lives, these women actively confronted the chaos of war in order to protect their families as soldiers were expected to. Though they did not arm themselves and fight the guerrilla soldiers, these women intentionally put themselves in danger in other ways to prevent damage to their homes and other people.

[44] Savage to her mother, November 29th, 1863.
[45] Ibid.

Other survivor accounts tell of the other ways that the women of Lawrence defended the town, including Alex E. Case's account of the events, recorded decades after the attack on January 1st of 1915, in which he describes Sallie Young's role in the conflict. Sallie Young was accused of assisting the raiders because of her brothers' pro-slavery sentiments and affiliation with the Democratic Party, but Case refutes this claim.[46] He shows this through descriptions of the instances in which Sallie Young saved men from the raiders who would try to kill them:

> She said she was out riding with a Lieut. of the U.S. army one day and when some distance from town, Lawrence, they saw coming a large company of horsemen, They stooped their horses and sat and watched them until they became satisfied they were Confederates and they wondered what they had best do. She said she thought the matter over hurriedly and made up her mind they would not hurt a woman and told the Lieut. For him to leave her and save himself, that they would not harm a woman, that she would not attempt to flee from them.[47]

Although the Lieutenant refused to honor Young's request at first, she convinced him to leave her by pointing out that the raiders "will kill you and be more likely to kill me than if I am alone."[48] Finally the Lieutenant left her, and although Quantrill's Raiders captured Sallie Young, Case's account shows that she was unharmed; the raiders took Young to Lawrence and forced her to watch the destruction they wrought upon the town.

Case says that the raiders forced Young to watch them burn down a hotel while they shot the people who tried to escape; however, two men ran out of the hotel who immediately approached Sallie for protection, calling her by her name – when asked by

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[46] Case, Alex E., "Did Sallie Young Pilot Quantrill into Lawrence at the Time of His Famous Raid on the Town in 1863?", January 1, 1915, Manuscripts Collection Miscellaneous, Carr – Cat, Kansas Historical Society, **Kansas Memory**, www.kansasmemory.org.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.

Quantrill's Raiders who these men were, Sallie claimed that they were her brothers, and the guerrilla soldiers spared their lives.[49]After the raiders left, Case says they left Young and both of the men she protected alone; although the raiders forced Young to stay where she was while they burned down the hotel, she still managed to save the lives of her brothers.

Because Case recorded his account almost fifty years after the massacre occurred, it is important to take into consideration the construction of memories about Quantrill's Raid and guerrilla warfare between Kansas and Missouri in general, particularly because of how individual accounts differ from collective accounts. Where collective memories are not always reliable because of the bias they hold in regards to the entire group of people, individual memories preserve the entire experience of a single person, providing a more intimate image of the experience, which is less likely to show the bias of an entire culture as a result.[50] Furthermore, because the Lawrence Massacre was not a formal battle, the typical Civil War story about the valor of soldiers is absent from the memories of this event; it was less important that Case be remembered as a hero because he was not a soldier in a battle – rather, this was a situation in which he was in more danger than Sallie Young.[51]

Though Case recorded his account of the Lawrence Massacre decades after the event had occurred, his memory still shows the reality of the situation: his life was in danger, whereas Sallie Young was more likely to survive the raid, and her brothers' association with pro-slavery groups gave her the power to save their lives during the

[49] Ibid.
[50] Hulbert, "'How,'" 150.
[51] Ibid.

Lawrence Massacre. However, Case's account is not consistent with a different memory of Sallie Young; according to the account in Hulbert's study, Young approached Lawrence alone, not while held captive by any guerrilla soldiers.[52] If Young broke away from the guerrilla soldiers, it is possible that she was accused of piloting raiders into Lawrence because they followed her to the town.

Savage's defense of her hired help and Sallie Young's efforts to protect a lieutenant in addition to two other men shows that women had to take on more masculine roles as a result of the Lawrence Massacre. They adopted these roles because the men were unable to defend anybody as a result of the raiders' ruthlessness toward them. Even if men answered their doors at home in an effort to protect their families, the raiders would shoot them on the spot. Many raiders killed men in front of their families. The raiders would not, however, shoot women who answered the doors. Whereas Quantrill's Raiders shot at Mary Savage, they missed her intentionally; instead, they wanted to kill her hired help. She convinced them to spare him, however, and she became his protector, and she did this again later when the same raiders set a house on fire. Although the raiders reset any fires that the women put out, many of the women in Lawrence continued to risk their lives to keep houses from burning in order to protect both their own families and other families in Lawrence.

In addition to intervening with the raiders directly by suppressing fires or protecting men, Savage also shows that many women took measures to preemptively protect their husbands by hiding them within their households and ensuring that the raiders did not set these houses on fire, or by guaranteeing that the men inside were not

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[52] Hulbert, "'How,'" 154.

incinerated with the rest of the house. Even though Quantrill's Raiders threatened the women as they put out the fires, this did not deter them from their work; the women of Lawrence continued to defy guerrilla soldiers under the threat of death. Alex Case even shows that because gender roles were swapped during this period of time and for a short time after the raid was over, Sallie Young successfully protected a Union Lieutenant, when under normal circumstances it was the Lieutenant's job to protect Young; Young also pointed out to the Lieutenant that if he had stayed behind, Quantrill's Raiders were more likely to kill them both instead of sparing either of their lives. Overall, Savage and Case's accounts show that during a time when men were unable to protect themselves, women stepped out of their roles as nurturers and faced the chaos of the Civil War and guerrilla warfare in their husbands' places.

In the immediate aftermath of the Lawrence Massacre, the civilians lost their sense of security. Although the women protected the men in the midst of the raid, the massacre shook up the people of Lawrence, especially the merchants who wanted to do business there. One such merchant, Henry Newman, wrote to Governor Thomas Carney in order to request additional protection for the town; in it, he mentions that he, along with many other citizens of Lawrence, "always felt that our town was peculiarly liable to guerrilla attacks; the 'Border Ruffians of '56' who have done this deed (and are in face answerable for all invasions of Kansas) have, it is well known, a peculiar spite against us and owe us an especial grudge."[53] Though women defied their gender roles during the attack, Newman's correspondence shows that this shift was not permanent; he does not comment on the actions the women took that night, but rather points out that "the farmers

[53] Henry Newman to Thomas Carney, August 25th, 1863, Governor's papers, Carney Box 2.1 Folder 18, Kansas Historical Society, **Kansas Memory**, www.kansasmemory.org.

around the town do not feel able to leave their farms and keep up a constant guard in town at their own expense; and all experience has them, especially in the last instance, that where there is sufficient property to tempt guerrillas its only safety is in a body of men constantly under arms."[54] He makes it clear in his letter that Lawrence needs a force of trained soldiers for its own defense; though the farmers provided some protection, it was not sufficient for what the town actually needed, especially if another group of guerrilla soldiers entered the town under the guise of Union troops. Furthermore, the attack against Lawrence caused so much damage to merchants that they became less willing to continue their business in the town.[55] However, should the government send the soldiers that Lawrence needed for protection, merchants would resume their business with confidence, and the town would continue to be the safe haven that it was before the Lawrence Massacre.

Isadora Augusta Johnson Allison, who was widowed during the massacre, left an account of the aftermath years later that also shows how vulnerable the people of Lawrence felt. In her account, Allison tells of the mass funeral that was held for all of the deceased the Sunday after the massacre and how the survivors fled to nearby cornfields to remain safe. As Allison escaped with her friends and her baby, she notes, "we could see in the starlight, men, women and children flitting in every direction carrying bundles of clothing and valuables."[56] Allison also says, "It is, perhaps, easy to be courageous in battle, with soldiers all around you, guns and ammunition to use but, alone, in darkness with a rusty old rifle that would not 'go off' if fired or, if it did, might go the wrong way,

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[54] Newman to Carney, 2.
[55] Newman to Carney, 3.
[56] Isadora Augusta Johnson Allison, "'A Night of Terror'," in *Kansas's War: The Civil War in Documents*, ed. Pearl T. Ponce (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 245.

is quite a different thing."[57] She praises the bravery of those who enlisted in the war to fight, but she also shows how vulnerable the civilians were who were not armed with weapons that worked properly. Though a weapon created the illusion that civilians could defend themselves, the civilians were mostly defenseless because of the potential for malfunction. However, the corn fields were a reliable defense because "The corn was of the tallest of Kansas growth and was tall above the head of the tallest man," so it completely disguised the civilians who hid inside.[58] Though they remained safe throughout the entire night, the massacre unhinged Allison enough that she left Lawrence after surviving the massacre; toward the end of her account, when she returns to her home, she says, "I got the door open and was into the empty house, which was never to he my home again."[59] Even though she survived, Allison no longer felt secure in the house in which she had lived, so she had to move away.

Because the Civil War was such a massive conflict, it reshaped American culture significantly, especially in regards to notions of masculinity as it related to victory in battle and proper soldierly conduct. Events such as the Lawrence Massacre were essential in reshaping Union notions of gender because they influenced northern ideas about how soldiers should fight and what actions they should take in order to maintain their honor; in some cases, attacks like the Lawrence Massacre reversed gender roles because of the people whom the raiders targeted. The North used Quantrill's Raiders to reshape its ideas

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[57] Ibid, 246.
[58] Ibid, 247.
[59] Ibid, 248. Learnard writes to his wife that a number of people left Lawrence for good after the massacre, so Allison's departure was a part of a pattern. However, some women refused to be driven from Lawrence even after surviving the massacre, such as Jennie and Elizabeth S. C. Earl. For more information, see Learnard, "'Death'," 251 and Elizabeth S. C. Earl, "'I Shall Not Leave Lawrence Untill It Is Destroyed the Third Time'," in *Kansas's War: The Civil War in Documents*, ed. Pearl T. Ponce (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 260-262.

about masculinity because the guerrilla soldiers attacked a population that was unable to defend itself; normally, in instances of war, soldiers were expected to only attack those groups who were capable of defending themselves. Therefore, attacking other military units was acceptable because they were armed and ready, but civilian populations were off-limits. As a result of the Lawrence Massacre, citizens demonized and vilified Quantrill's Raiders because of the actions they took; civilians' reactions show that they saw the atrocities at the Lawrence Massacre as an unnecessary massacre, not an attack in the defense of the guerrilla soldiers' families.

Furthermore, the North believed Quantrill's Raiders lacked honor because of their lack of formal military garb and because the raiders, as well as all other guerrilla soldiers, did not enlist in a formal military unit. Because they did not conform to honorable standards of warfare, these men had neither honor nor national pride; this attitude was also influenced by the fact that Quantrill's Raiders used trickery to accomplish their goals. They sometimes used Union military uniforms and other items, such as Union flags, to deceive people into believing that the raiders were legitimate units of Union soldiers, and because of these disguises, they convinced both Union military units and civilian populations to let their guards down.

Finally, the Lawrence Massacre briefly reversed gender roles after the conflict was over by forcing women to step out of their roles as nurturers and take on the roles of the protectors who faced the chaos of war. Quantrill's Raiders only attacked the men of Lawrence, and therefore the men were unable to protect their homes or their families. Children were too young to defend their homes, so women had to up the role of defender in place of their husbands. They accomplished this by defending their families, Union

military members, and other men, such as hired help, as shown by Mary Savage and Alex Case's story of Sallie Young's actions. Savage also shows that women hid their men in their homes and put out the fires that the raiders ignited. Furthermore, Case also shows that Sallie Young offered protection to her brothers, whom Quantrill's Raiders would have killed had she not claimed them and told the guerrilla soldiers to leave them alone.

Chapter 2: Masculinity in Literature:
Walt Whitman's Portrayal of Union Soldiers in *Drum-Taps*

On February 2nd, 1864, Walt Whitman sat by a young soldier's bed in the Armory Square hospital in Washington, D.C., writing a letter to his mother. In this letter, he describes to his mother the soldier's recovery process. He says, "The amputation is healing up good, & he does not suffer any thing like as much as he did. I see him every day."[1] This soldier was one of many whom Whitman helped recover from their injuries. He helped those soldiers who sustained wounds in battle, but he also tells his mother about the many soldiers who were "mere wrecks, though young men," noting that "(sickness is worse in some respects than wounds)…."[2] These were the soldiers who inspired Whitman's poetry collection *Drum-Taps*, as he saw them change from young men to veteran soldiers, recover from wounds and sickness, and witnessed a number of Civil War deaths when the damage to the soldier's body was too severe.

When examining gender, historians tend to put a large focus on the behavior of people, whether they examine feminine behaviors of women or masculine behaviors of men. While behavior is undeniably linked to peoples' conceptions of gender roles in society, regardless of the time period, people often overlook the role the body plays in this interpretation of gender. During the Civil War, Walt Whitman was not one of these people. While it is easy to attribute his attention to the male form to his potential homosexuality or bisexuality, this erases the role Whitman played during the Civil War, that of a volunteer nurse, responsible for helping soldiers recover from their injuries. During his three years of service, Whitman witnessed young men become seasoned

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[1] Walt Whitman, *The Correspondence*, ed. Edwin Haviland Miller (New York: New York University Press, 1961), 194.
[2] Ibid.

veterans of the war, he saw soldiers recover from terrible injuries in order to return to their lives or what they could salvage of their lives at the end of the war, and he saw countless men sacrifice themselves for the sake of the Union cause, many of whom were buried in mass graves with other soldiers until their deaths were commemorated after the war was over.

Walt Whitman was already an accomplished poet by the time he volunteered as a nurse during the Civil War, but nobody expected that he would be the one who chronicled the war. However, though Whitman never enlisted in the Union Army and never saw a battle, his time as a volunteer nurse exposed him to the horrors of the aftermath because of the injuries he saw in Washington, D.C. Roy Morris, Jr., one of Whitman's biographers and author of *The Better Angel: Walt Whitman in the Civil War*, says despite his identities as "a poet, a philosopher, a freethinker, a bohemian, a mystic, a near Quaker, and a homosexual" who was in his early forties, Whitman's "intimate involvement with the aftermath of battles – the bruised and broken young men who filled the military hospitals, the convalescent camps, and the cemeteries – ensured his importance as a wartime witness."[3] Whitman was closer to the battlefield than many Union civilians; as a result, the body of work that he produced as a result of his time as a volunteer nurse, the poetry collections *Drum-Taps* and *Sequel to Drum-Taps*, relayed wartime experiences to the civilians whom the soldiers were protecting from the horrors of battle in addition to showing how soldiers' identities were shaped as they reconciled their individuality with their role in the collective unit.[4] Without work such as

[3] Morris. *Better*, 4.
[4] The collection used in this chapter, *Drum Taps: The Complete Civil War Poems*, contains the work from both *Drum-Taps* and *Sequel to Drum-Taps*.

Whitman's, the only other information civilians had access to during the Civil War were private letters and correspondences from soldiers, which were not generally shared with the public, and newspaper articles that provided general updates of the war.[5]

Whereas other cultural historians examine multiple authors and their work, I focus specifically on Walt Whitman's work produced between 1862 and 1865, which was compiled into *Drum-Taps* and its sequel. Furthermore, Walt Whitman's correspondence with some of his family members are utilized to examine his life during the Civil War years, but the bulk of this chapter will focus on the poems themselves in order to analyze Walt Whitman's perceptions of masculinity and the struggle between individual identity and collective identity; because Whitman spent so much time around Civil War soldiers, his perspective informs us of how the Civil War shaped the lives of the men who fought in it and how they thought of their comrades. Though many of the soldiers were young men when they joined the war effort, Whitman's poetry shows enlistment as a rite of passage into manhood for the young men who joined the army; at the same time, Whitman's work also shows how enlistment collapsed soldiers' individual identities into a collective identity, erasing who these men were before they fought in the Civil War. His poetry also reinforces the idea that soldiers faced the horrors of war so their families did

[5] Whitman notes in a letter to his mother that some of the information the *New York Times* reported was inaccurate; as a result, although his work was creative in nature rather than journalism, Whitman would be able to provide a more realistic account of the aftermath of battles. For more information, see Whitman, *Correspondence*, 220. In regards to how well-read Whitman was, David S. Reynolds notes that Whitman "was largely unread by those vibrant American masses whose concerns, attitudes, and language had provided the basis for some of his greatest poems," though by the end of his life he had achieved world-wide fame; Reynolds notes that he received a number of visits by celebrities, letters from strangers, and he had received financial support from Andrew Carnegie (5-6). Furthermore, Reynolds also notes that Whitman "had effected real change in the realm of literature" by "freeing the poetic line to follow the organic rhythms of feeling and voice" and by introducing "a new democratic inclusiveness, absorbing images from virtually every aspect of social and cultural life," so even though Whitman's writing was not read widely by the masses, it still strongly reflected the culture in which it was written. For more information, see Reynolds, *Walt*.

not have to, particularly in those poems that focus upon hospital work, as Whitman describes the broken bodies of the soldiers in a feminized state, and in poems where Whitman describes the aftermath of battles.[6]

One of the ways in which Whitman presents images of Union men is through the rite of passage of enlistment: Whitman's poetry explicitly discusses enlistment as a rite of passage into manhood, whereas before the Civil War rural and urban boys experienced rites of passage in different ways. Furthermore, as boys underwent their transition into manhood, Whitman notes the physical changes that occurred between new soldiers and veteran soldiers in order to display their experience and their newly claimed manhood. Whitman also presents injuries sustained in battle as markers of manhood; though hospitalization removed soldiers from battle, often permanently, the injuries the soldiers sustained permanently showcased their wartime experiences, experiences which separated them from the general public. Finally, Whitman shows how the culture of death shifted in America as a result of the Civil War by presenting images of soldiers, both young and old, who died as a result of battle; whereas death was more commonplace in America before the Civil War, the Civil War produced a larger amount of death amongst young men than Americans had ever seen in the past.

Cultural studies are a fairly new realm of exploration, but some historians have already taken it upon themselves to analyze authors' lives and their work within historical context in order to examine the culture in which creative works were produced. For example, in *From Battlefields Rising: How the Civil War Transformed American Literature*, Randall Fuller examines how the Civil War impacted the lives of authors such

[6] For more information on soldiers' familial motivations to enter the war, see Mitchell, *Vacant*, 74.

as Walt Whitman, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Herman Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Emily Dickinson, and Frederick Douglass, and in turn, how the war impacted their work, affecting their writing styles as America's literature began the shift from Romanticism to Realism.[7] Whereas many of these authors successfully survived such a drastic transformation in literary movements, the change was more difficult on authors such as Nathaniel Hawthorne, who never quite adjusted to the change before his death.

Other cultural historians have taken different approaches, such as Christian McWhirter, author of *Battle Hymns: The Power and Popularity of Music in the Civil War*. In his book, instead of examining literature like Fuller, McWhirter examines how the Civil War impacted music in popular culture. In his examination, McWhirter argues that music was "More than mere entertainment" because "it provided a valuable way for Americans to express their thoughts and feelings about the conflict."[8] Furthermore, McWhirter also suggests that "Conversely, songs influenced the thoughts and feelings of civilians, soldiers, and slaves – shaping how they viewed the war."[9] Therefore, in addition to showing how the Civil War shaped music during the 1860s, McWhirter also shows his readers how the changes in music influenced how people saw the war.[10]

In addition to the cultural studies that have examined how the Civil War impacted American literature and music, other authors have examined the Union soldier in order to

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[7] Fuller, *Battlefields*, 8-9. Fuller also argues that new literature produced during the Sectional Crisis helped inflame the Civil War because it "demanded moral transformation from society" (9).
[8] McWhirter, *Battle*, 1.
[9] Ibid.
[10] McWhirter notes that he "exposed some of the ways that Civil War society and culture functioned" because he examined "how and why certain songs became popular," showing that songs usually became popular amongst a single group before being shared amongst others for political purposes (2). As a result of this, the more a song was shared, the more it was interpreted by different people, and therefore "the content and meaning of these pieces changed as they became more widely known" (2). Therefore, the Civil War changed music starting with the single group, and then the music changed peoples' perspectives because it was shared amongst other groups. For more information, see McWhirter, *Battle*.

determine how he defined himself and how he was defined by American culture. Lorien Foote suggests that there was no single ideal of manhood or manly behavior in the North, unlike in the South, because the population in the North was significantly more socially diverse.[11] Reid Mitchell, as noted in the previous chapter, links Union soldier identity with domesticity because all of the soldiers were expected to protect their homes from the cruel world and the chaos of war; society expected the Union soldier, however, to return to the domestic world for healing.[12] Earl J. Hess, on the other hand, examines a different factor in masculine behavior than Mitchell: he examines how soldiers mastered themselves in battle. In particular, Hess looks at "the mechanisms whereby the Northern soldier was able to emotionally face the shock of battle, master his reactions to it, and continue to effectively serve the cause."[13] Finally, Bell Irvin Wiley begins his examination with how patriotism spread throughout the Union at the beginning of the Civil War, eventually breaking his examination down to the different ways men and women supported the Union. He notes that "women were the most spirited of the patriots" because "their activities consisted of displaying flags, singing martial songs, raising funds and making clothing for the volunteers," and "For males the order of the day was volunteering, and the fever extended to all ages and classes."[14] However, these

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[11] Foote, *Gentleman*, 3.
[12] Mitchell, *Vacant*, 74.
[13] Hess, *Union*, ix. Hess notes that he does not "ignore the significant minority of men who failed to some degree to master their fears," but primarily examines "the great majority of soldiers who obeyed orders, stayed in line, and somehow found the resolve to endure battle after battle" (ix).
[14] Wiley, *Life*, 18. Wiley also examines how patriotism spread throughout college campuses as well, particularly in regards to how people encouraged or discouraged volunteerism on campuses; he notes that "In most cases college authorities seem to have admonished their students against hasty enlistment," instead bringing drillmasters to campuses in order to conduct military exercises, but there were also situations in which the college authorities took charge and encouraged enlistment (19). He also notes that people encouraged men to volunteer through mass meetings in which "leading citizens joined prospective officers in regaling audiences with oratorical outbursts full of allusions to country and flag and breathing defiance at slaveholders and traitors" (21). These meetings occasionally featured veterans of previous wars as well, and volunteers were also given special recognition at public events in order to encourage other men

examinations focus mostly upon the conduct and behavior of soldiers, even if there was not a consistent ideal of manhood throughout the North; they overlook how the physical body played into perceptions of manhood throughout the North.

Whitman assisted the Union Army by working as a volunteer nurse between 1862 and 1865. Morris points out that during his time as a volunteer nurse, Whitman "personally visited tens of thousands of hurt, lonely, and scared young men in the hospitals in and around Washington, bringing them the ineffable but not inconsiderable gift of his magnetic, consoling presence."[15] Though these visits took their toll on Whitman's long-term health, spiraling it into a permanent decline, Morris says Whitman never regretted his work.[16] During each of his visits to the hospitals, Whitman brought gifts to the soldiers, such as candy, clothing, tobacco, hooks, and writing supplies; many of the soldiers whom he visited were in their teenage years, and they always awaited his

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to join the Union Army, in addition to the extra attention those who volunteered quickly received from girls (21). These efforts showed young men a path to manhood through life as a soldier by showing them a path to social prominence through enlistment early on in the war. However, rites of passage into manhood for rural and urban boys were not necessarily the same before the Civil War provided a common experience. Karen Halttunen argues urban boys' rite of passage involved resisting the seduction of the Confidence Man, who would draw them into a world of drinking, gambling, and prostitution (2). Halttunen says this was the rite of passage because Americans became increasingly concerned about the character of the nation, which was reflected in the country's youth; therefore, boys had to take control of their own "moral destiny by forming [their] own character from within" (25). Therefore, the rite of passage for urban boys in the early nineteenth century was to become the self-made man because "by exercising self-possession, self-government, and, above all, self-reliance, he placed himself beyond evil influenced and became a law unto himself" (25). This also involved the cultivation of one's own principals because this "placed him beyond the need to seek guidance from those around him," thereby ensuring he would not be seduced by a Confidence Man (25-26). Rural boys, on the other hand, grew into their roles as men through rituals with stronger connections to the patriarchy, such as hunting. Nicolas Proctor points out that the products of the hunt, the meat, hides, and furs, "reinforced hunters' claims to the patriarchal authority as providers for their households" (1). Furthermore, Proctor also states, "As a definitively masculine pursuit, hunting made an effective stage for increasingly elaborate exhibitions of masculinity and power. In the woods and fields, in the company of other men, these hunters could demonstrate their masculinity with unparalleled clarity" (1). Though conventions of hunting varied along economic and racial lines, hunting was universally a way for rural boys to claim their manhood whether it be for sport or to provide goods for the family. For more information on urban rites of passage, see Halttunen, *Confidence*. For more information on rural rites of passage, see Proctor, *Bathed*.

[15] Morris, *Better*, 5.

[16] Ibid.

next visit.[17] Furthermore, whereas many people used their visits to the soldiers to preach to them, hand out tracts, or pray over the dying, Whitman's time at the hospitals was mostly spent listening to the soldiers – something Morris suggests they needed more than the prayers, and something which Whitman instinctively knew with each visit.[18]

Whitman quickly became acquainted with the grievous injuries soldiers sustained during the conflict as well as the other hardships they faced due to the nature of his work. In a letter he wrote to his mother on December 29, 1862, Whitman reports that one of the first things he saw in the 51st New York's camp "was a heap of feet, arms, legs, &c. under a tree in front of a hospital, the Lacy House," and in this same letter he also notes that in the camps soldiers lived five in a tent of about twelve square feet.[19] Furthermore, in a letter to his sister a few days later, Whitman reports that soldiers left the hospital in order to receive their pay, but the paymasters did not have the money to pay the men for their service.[20] Though there were some ill soldiers healthy enough to walk around camp, Whitman also noticed that there were those soldiers who were bedridden, and who had been overlooked by the doctors in camp; he says when he walked through the camp's hospital to talk to the sick soldiers, "One young man was very much prostrated, and groaning with pain. I stopt and tried to comfort him. He was very sick. I found he had not had any medical attention since he was brought there –among so many he had been overlooked."[21] Though the Union government tried to provide resources for all of the soldiers, its capabilities were limited; furthermore, limited medical knowledge at the time

[17] Ibid.
[18] Morris, *Better*, 6.
[19] Whitman, *Correspondence*, 58-60.
[20] Ibid, 62-63.
[21] Ibid, 63.

meant doctors frequently misdiagnosed health problems as other illnesses, and the shortage of doctors further increased the issues with mid-century medical care because the soldiers did not receive the kind of medical attention they required. However, despite the lack of effective medical care, soldiers left with permanent injuries were also left with permanent marks of their masculinity due to their service in the Civil War.

Whitman's later letters show that conditions worsened as the conflict continued, though sometimes as a result of the Confederacy's actions rather than the Union government's shortcomings. The Confederacy imprisoned some Union soldiers, and those who survived were worse for wear, often malnourished as a result of the neglect they experienced. Whitman wrote to his mother on June 9th, 1863, about John Barker, a soldier in the 2nd Tennessee Union regiment who was in a southern prison for ten months before he

> came up from Richmond paroled about ten weeks ago, & has been in hospital here sick until lately –he suffered everything but death, he is the one they hung up by the heels, head downwards, & indeed worse than death, but stuck to his convictions like a hero – John Barker, a real manly fellow, I saw much of him & heard much of that country that can be relied on. He is now gone home to his reg't.[22]

Even though Whitman saw Barker in a feminized state due to his extensive injuries, the poet complimented Barker's manliness and bravery because he survived the southern prison. Later in this letter Whitman also says, "Well, mother, the war still goes on, & every thing as much in a fog as ever - & the battles as bloody, & the wounded & sick getting worse & plentier all the time."[23] He also reveals the soldiers to be left in a

[22] Ibid, 107.
[23] Ibid, 108.

feminized state when he notes that some of the soldiers are helpless to take care of themselves because of their injuries or illnesses; however, because nobody else will help take care of these soldiers, Whitman does much of this work himself, even if it simply involves providing the soldiers company.[24] Whitman's remarks on Barker's body after his sustained captivity also show that his broken body did not diminish his manhood, at least not permanently. Because he survived captivity and torture at the hands of the Confederacy, Barker deserved more respect for his state of being, not less; his broken body told people that he had undergone experiences most people had not and probably never would.

Many people saw the Civil War as a rite of passage for young men to enter adulthood, but Whitman believed that some of the soldiers were still too young to participate in battle.[25] In a letter to his mother on June 30, 1863, he notes that in the hospital in Armory Square he took care of two soldiers, both under the age of 19; in his letter he describes these soldiers as children, suggesting they had not fully undergone their rite of passage into manhood.[26] It was not uncommon for Union soldiers to enlist in

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[24] Ibid, 109. Brian Matthew Jordan recounts the experience of Jonathan McKinley Allison, a soldier with a right arm amputation, writing an essay for a public exhibition of manuscripts written exclusively by right arm amputees after the end of the Civil War; in this essay, Allison recounts how, as a result of his injury, many civilians suggested that he and other people with similar injuries were only fit for saloon work (107). At the same time, toward the end of his essay, Allison asserts that he and all other Civil War amputees "'are the *living monuments* of the late cruel and bloody Rebellion. We now retire from fields of blood and carnage to prepare to act another part in the great 'drama' of life'" [Emphasis his] (107-108). It is also important to note that the competition for which Allison wrote was intended to "'induce men to become skillful penmen, in order to fit themselves for lucrative and honorable positions" (107). Jordan also notes that "Allison recognized that by losing a limb he had gained an unusual 'authority' over the war's history. His wounds lent realism and authenticity to his experiences, something that other veterans seeking to explain the brutality of the war could only hope to approximate" (108). Therefore, although civilians did not always view amputees in a kind manner as a result of their disabilities, the soldiers who sustained these injuries knew that their disabilities were physical proof of their experiences, and as a result, these injuries added to their identities as men instead of detracting from their masculinity. For more information, see Jordan, *Marching*.

[25] See Mitchell, *Vacant*, 4 for more information on enlistment as a coming-of-age ceremony.

[26] Whitman, *Correspondence*, 112.

their late teens, but Whitman still saw these soldiers as boys instead of men. However, despite caring for injured young soldiers, Whitman also saw some young veteran soldiers while he stayed in Washington. He writes to his mother that about an hour after Lincoln passed through D.C., "we had a large cavalry regiment pass, with blankets, arms, &c, on the war march over the same track – the reg't was very full, over a thousand, indeed thirteen or fourteen hundred – it was an old reg't, veterans, *old fighters*, young as they were," describing the soldiers as "handsome American young men, (I make no acc't of any other) – rude uniforms, well worn, but good cattle, prancing – all good riders, full of the devil, nobody shaved, all very sunburnt."[27] Furthermore, he notes that both the black and white regiments he saw pass through "had the look of *real war* – noble looking fellows – a man looks & feels so proud on a good horse, & armed…."[28] While he spends a significant portion of his time around sick Union soldiers, he also notes the healthy soldiers as he sees them and points out that the veterans looked like they had seen battle, and yet maintained a level of decorum at the same time, effectively establishing themselves as men who had seen battle.

Whitman spent much of his time during the Civil War at the Armory Square Hospital in Washington, D.C., but he occasionally ventured outside of this area in order to see the conditions in Union camps. He made one such trip in February of 1864, and in a letter to his mother, he notes the differences in conditions between the Armory Square Hospital and the camp hospitals. He points out that at camp hospitals, "there are not many men sick here, & no wounded – they now send them on to Washington," and he

[27] Ibid, 114.
[28] Ibid. Whitman also notes a significant increase in the number of black soldiers in the last paragraph of this letter.

also informs her of how he intends to return to Washington "in a few days, as I am very clear that the real need of one's services is there after all – there the worst cases concentrate, & probably will, while the war lasts…."[29] He shows here that he was exposed to the worst of the post-battle injuries frequently because soldiers were transported to hospitals away from the battlefield in order to recover. As a result, Whitman saw some of the most gruesome injuries one could see without approaching the battlefield. These injuries also made a significant impact on the people who saw them, whereas mild injuries and frequent sicknesses, such as diarrhea, were less likely to make an impact because they were so common. Whereas Whitman glorified veteran soldiers and men who sustained permanent markers of their service in battle, he, along with many other nineteenth century Americans, believed that real men did not die of dysentery.

Like the soldiers who saw battle, Whitman experienced a hardening process that numbed him to the tragedies of the war. On June 22nd, 1863, in a letter to his mother in which he informs her of an upcoming battle, he notes, "I am getting so callous that it hardly arouses me at all – I fancy I should take it very quietly if I found myself in the midst of a desperate conflict here in Washington."[30] Six months into his participation in hospitals, Whitman's descriptions of the injured soldiers also become less vivid. He writes to his mother that he has "nothing particular to write about – I see & hear nothing but new & old cases of my poor suffering boys in Hospitals, & I dare say you have had enough of such things…."[31] Furthermore, in the letter in which he describes the noble-looking soldiers who pass through D.C., his tone loses the hopeful tone; here he wonders

[29] Ibid, 197.
[30] Ibid, 110.
[31] Ibid.

"how many of these healthy handsome rollicking young men will lie cold in death, before the apples ripe in the orchards."[32] Whitman's account shows that people did not have to witness the battles in order to become numb to the effects of war – he became numb to them simply because he saw the aftermath so frequently. Though he remained sympathetic to the soldiers throughout the war, lesser injuries and diseases became less remarkable to him – they became so commonplace that they did not contribute to a soldier's manhood.

In the days of the Early Republic, rural and urban boys experienced separate rites of passage into manhood, but the Civil War created a single rite of passage for Union boys regardless of where they came from. Whitman shows the variety of places soldiers came from in "Eighteen Sixty-One," and he simultaneously shows how enlistment collapsed the identities of new soldiers into a single Union man. As a result, "Eighteen Sixty-One" shows the transition from individuality into the soldier collective as these boys transition into manhood. In this poem, the narrator describes the soldier as

> a strong man erect, clothed in blue clothes, advancing, carrying a rifle on your shoulder;
> With well-gristled body and sunburnt face and hands, with a knife in the belt at your side,
> As I heard you shouting loud, your sonorous voice ringing across the continent,
> Your masculine voice O year, as rising amid the great cities....[33]

Though this sounds like the description of a single soldier, the narrator proceeds to describe the different men this one soldiers could be:

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[32] Ibid, 114.
[33] Walt Whitman, "Eighteen Sixty-One," *Drum-Taps: The Complete Civil War Poems* (Kennebunkport: Appleseed Press Book Publishers LLC, 2015), 38.

> Amid the men of Manhattan I saw you as one of the workmen, the dwellers in Manhattan,
> Or with large steps crossing the prairies out of Illinois and Indiana,
> Rapidly crossing the West with springy gait and descending the Alleghanies,
> Or down from the great lakes or in Pennsylvania, or on deck along the Ohio river,
> Or southward along the Tennessee or Cumberland rivers, or at Chattanooga on the mountain top,
> Saw I your gait and saw I your sinewy limbs clothed in blue, bearing weapons, robust year,
> Heard your determin'd voice launch'd forth again and again....[34]

By describing the Union soldier in this manner, the narrator collapses the identities of any number of people into a single entity. This soldier is simultaneously a laborer from Manhattan, a man from the plains of the Midwest, and a Unionist from the South; however, by enlisting, these men erased the individual aspects of their identities in order to become the Union soldier.

After new soldiers enlisted in the army, they often received help from veteran soldiers in order to continue their transition into manhood. In "First O Songs for a Prelude," originally titled "Drum-Taps," the narrator describes the new soldiers who enlist in the army as seasoned soldiers help them adjust to their new lives. He says,

> Squads gather everywhere by common consent and arm
> The new recruits, even boys, the old men show them how to wear their accoutrements, they buckle the straps carefully
> Outdoors arming, indoors arming, the flash of the musket barrels....[35]

Later in this poem, the narrator describes a young soldier departing from his mother:

> The tearful parting, the mother kisses her son, the son kisses his mother,
> (Loth is the mother to part, yet not a word does she speak to detain him....)[36]

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[34] Ibid.
[35] Whitman, "First O Songs for a Prelude," *Drum-Taps*, 36.
[36] Ibid.

Though the departure is a sad moment for the family, the mother does not prevent her son from performing his newfound duty, allowing him to go through his own rite of passage with a number of other young men.

Whitman also shows how participation in the war changed the appearance of soldiers in this poem, revealing the physical transition into manhood that accompanied enlistment as the Civil War continued. He points out that

> Arm'd regiments arrive every day, pass through the city, and embark from the wharves,
> (How good they look as they tramp down to the river, sweaty, with their guns on their shoulders!
> How I love them! how I could hug them, with their brown faces and their clothes and knapsacks cover'd with dust!)[37]

The soldiers who traveled more became physically distinguishable from newer soldiers; the soldiers who had traveled were tanner, and their clothes more worn and covered in dust. Whitman shows these as signs of soldiers who have transformed from boys into men because they have become seasoned soldiers. He also notes the soldiers' masculinity more explicitly later in the poem with the lines

> Mannahatta a-march – and it's O to sing it well!
> It's O for a manly life in the camp.[38]

Here Whitman directly associates a soldier's life with masculinity because of the way the soldiers must live in the camps.

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[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid, 37.

Whitman also shows the transition to adulthood of young men who joined the Union Army experienced in "Song of the Banner at Day-Break," in which a father tries to persuade his son to stay at home as a pennant beckons to him; while the pennant beckons the son, a poet describes the war to the child in terms that display the ways participation in the war support the country.[39] In his first stanzas, the child asks,

> Father what is that in the sky beckoning to me with long finger?
> And what does it say to me all the while?[40]

In response, the father says,

> Nothing my babe you see in the sky,
> And nothing at all to you it says – but look you my babe,
> Look at these dazzling things in the houses, and see you the money-shops opening,
> And see you the vehicles preparing to crawl along the streets with goods....[41]

The father tries to convince his son to ignore the beckoning of the flag and pennant. However, after the poet describes what he foresees from the end of the war, the child says to his father,

> O my father, I like not the houses;
> They will never to me be anything – nor do I like money;
> But to mount up there I would like, O father dear – that banner I like;
> That pennant I would be, and must be.[42]

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[39] Whitman, "Song of the Banner at Day-Break," *Drum-Taps*, 46-48. The poet's first two stanzas are a conversation with the Flag and Pennant, excluding the father and child.
[40] Ibid, 46.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid, 49.

Though the father fears what might happen to his son if he joins the war, the son's stanza shows that the boys who join the army see the good they can do for their country by fighting. They join the army so that they can serve their country, and in the process they complete their transition into manhood. This also shows how the rite of passage shifted between the years of the Early Republic, when military enlistment was not an essential part of manhood, to the Civil War, when enlistment became the most essential.[43]

Whitman notes this transformation again in "Give Me the Splendid Silent Sun," in which he describes how America changed from a rural country to a more urbanized country, reflecting the direction America's young northern men were heading toward as they themselves moved to urban areas.[44] In the second part of the poem, when the narrator demands a more urban life in New York where he had previously demanded a rural life, he says,

> Give me Broadway, with the soldiers marching – give me the sound of the trumpets and drums!
> (The soldiers in companies or regiments – some starting away, flush'd and reckless,
> Some, their time up, returning with thinn'd ranks, young, yet very old, worn, marching, noticing nothing....)[45]

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[43] Stephen Berry argues that before the Civil War, southern men defined their masculinity through ambition and conquest, whether these conquests included acquisition of political power, building a family, or even carving out territory in order to support the family; most importantly, he was supposed to be able to provide for his family (18-19). Though the North urbanized much more quickly than the South, I argue northern men in the Early Republic defined themselves as men similarly, mostly in that they had to be able to take care of their families. Furthermore, the father in Whitman's poem encourages his son to define his manhood through similar processes, mostly in that the son should acquire property and money to take care of a family. For more information on how Southern men defined masculinity before and during the Civil War, see Berry, *All*.

[44] Halttunen notes that many of the boys who went through the trial of resisting the Confidence Man were rural boys entering the city for the first time to start their new lives; this was another point at which rites of passage into manhood shifted as those rural boys who entered the city underwent a different rite of passage than the rural boys who stayed in the country (1). Whitman's poem reflects this transition into a more urban America as people continued moving to bigger cities during the nineteenth century. For more information, see Halttunen, *Confidence*.

[45] Whitman, "Give Me the Splendid Silent Sun," *Drum-Taps*, 109.

Though they were not in the war for an extended period of time, the narrator notes that the soldiers look much older returning than when they initially left for the war, showing the rapidity of the physical change young soldiers experienced as a result of their experiences. Those soldiers who survived went through the hardening process throughout the war, and in the process they came out of the fight looking much older than before they entered. Furthermore, because people were more clustered together in urban areas, these were the best locations to display the transition the men went through as they marched through cities because more people saw the physical effects of the war on their youth.

Other poems in *Drum-Taps* show the collapsing of identities more explicitly than those that show enlistment as a rite of passage. One of those poems is "First O Songs for a Prelude," in which Whitman showcases the variety of men who left their jobs in order to enlist in the war effort. In the fourth stanza of the poem, Whitman writes,

> To the drum-taps prompt,
> The young men falling in and arming;
> The mechanics arming, (the trowel, the jack-plane, the blacksmith's hammer, tost aside with precipitation,)
> The lawyer leaving his office, and arming, the judge leaving the court,
> The driver deserting his wagon in the street, jumping down, throwing the reins abruptly down on the horses' backs,
> The salesman leaving the store, the boss, book-keeper, porter, all leaving;[46]

In this stanza Whitman shows that the men who enlisted in the Civil War did not come from a single social class or even from a single career; rather, the men who left home to fight came from a variety of social groups, from laborers such as blacksmiths to less

[46] Walt Whitman, "First," *Drum-Taps*, 36.

labor-intensive jobs like lawyers and judges. Furthermore, many of these men were not youth who were just finding their way through the world; rather, they were grown men who had to leave their jobs in order to reassert their masculinity by taking on a new identity. Though these men gathered to fight alongside one another, this shows why each soldier experienced tension between maintaining individual and group identity: while it was essential to conform to the army in order to maintain one's masculinity, it was impossible for these men to completely conform to one another because their backgrounds were so varied. Furthermore, they also had to maintain the same standards now in order to maintain their masculinity, where previous social differences allowed them to maintain their masculinity in different ways. Because they all became soldiers, Union men were expected to remain with their units in order to protect their families, so acts of cowardice such as desertion were universally feminizing because it meant a man was unwilling to uphold his new duties. However, this also allowed Union men to claim their injuries as universally masculinizing because everybody who sustained permanent injuries had physical displays of their war service that those who did not participate could not imitate.

In addition to showing the transition into manhood and how soldiers reconciled their individual identities with their collective identities, Whitman's poetry also shows the dangers these men faced by describing the injuries they sustained. Though injury was temporarily feminizing because it removed men from battle, the soldiers left with permanent scars were also left with permanent markers of their wartime experiences. For example, in "A March in the Ranks Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown," the narrator, a

soldier, encounters a church in a wooded area as his unit retreats from a battle. The narrator says,

> We come to an open space in the woods, and halt by the dim-lighted building
> 'Tis a large old church at the crossing roads, now an impromptu hospital....[47]

Upon entering the church, the narrator notes that the church is dimly lit by candles, lanterns, and a torch, with people near the flames, some of them injured soldiers. He walks into the church and describes what he sees:

> At my feet more distinctly a soldier, a mere lad, in danger of bleeding to death,
> (he is shot in the abdomen,)
> I staunch the blood temporarily, (the youngster's face is white as a lily,)
> Then before I depart I sweep my eyes o'er the scene fain to absorb it all,
> Faces, varieties, postures beyond description, most in obscurity, some of them dead,
> Surgeons operating, attendants holding lights, the smell of ether, the odor of blood,
> The crowd, O the crowd of the bloody forms, the yard outside also fill'd,
> Some on the bare ground, some on planks or stretchers, some in the death-spasm sweating,
> An occasional scream or cry, the doctor's shouted orders or calls,
> The glisten of the little steel instruments catching the glint of the torches....[48]

After the injured soldier whom the narrator sees upon entry closes his eyes, the narrator leaves the church. Though surgeons operate on some of the soldiers in the church, the narrator points out that the crowd of bloody bodies is large, and that the yard outside of the church has filled with bodies, probably those of the soldiers whom the surgeons were unable to save. Furthermore, the narrator points out that there are soldiers on the church floor who are very close to death as well, whether these soldiers are beyond saving or

[47] Walt Whitman, "A March in the Rank Hard-Prest, and the Road Unknown," *Drum-Taps*, 87.
[48] Ibid, 87-88.

whether the surgeons have already tried to save them and could not. Even though a number of these soldiers died as a result of their injuries or were left permanently disabled because of their wounds, these were the injuries that left soldiers with permanent markers of their experiences, which contributed to their own conceptions of masculinity after the war was over.[49]

Whitman describes some of the wounds he treated more vividly in "The Wound-Dresser." In the third section of the poem, the narrator, the wound-dresser, says,

> The crush'd head I dress, (poor crazed hand tear not the bandage away,)
> The neck of the cavalry-man with the bullet through and through I examine,
> Hard the breathing rattles, quite glazed already the eye, yet life struggles hard....[50]

The wound-dresser also describes a number of injuries of varying severity he helps treat. He begins with an amputation:

> From the stump of the arm, the amputated hand,
> I undo the clotted lint, remove the slough, wash off the matter and blood,
> Back on his pillow the soldier bends with curv'd neck and side-falling head....[51]

After the amputation, the narrator moves on to a side wound:

> I dress a wound in the side, deep, deep,
> But a day or two more, for see the frame all wasted and sinking,
> And the yellow-blue countenance see....[52]

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[49] Jordan explores the tension between civilian and soldier conceptions of masculinity in *Marching* where he discusses Allison's experience after the war as he wrote a manuscript to submit to the exhibition (107). Though it seems civilians did not view injuries the same way as soldiers after the war was over, Whitman's poetry sides with the soldiers, masculinizing the injuries soldiers received as permanent markers of manhood after the war was over. For more information, see Jordan, *Marching*.
[50] Whitman, "The Wound-Dresser," *Drum-Taps*, 101.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.

Next the wound-dresser describes the treatment of two bullet wounds, one of which has become infected:

> I dress the perforated shoulder, the foot with the bullet-wound,
> Cleanse the one with a gnawing and putrid gangrene, so sickening, so offensive....[53]

Then he moves onto the last three wounds, one a thigh wound, one a knee wound, and one a wound to the abdomen:

> The fractur'd thigh, the knee, the wound in the abdomen,
> These and more I dress with impassive hand, (yet deep in my breast a fire, a burning flame.)[54]

All of these injuries left soldiers in a feminized state because they were unable to care for themselves. Instead they were bed-ridden, forced to rely on other people for assistance, and removed from the battlefield, where they should be fighting in order to defend the Union. The longer a soldier stayed in bed, the longer they were removed from their duty of protecting their families from the chaos of the war. Like the wound-dresser in the poem, Whitman's job as a nurse is to tend to these soldiers through the recovery process in order to help them reclaim their masculinity. Though they are temporarily in a feminized state, it was expected of men to return to the domestic world to recover, in this case the hospital, so that they could return to the task at hand. Even those left with permanent disabilities could return to the world after the nurses helped them recover,

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[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.

only these soldiers had more prominent physical markers of their masculinity to display to the general public.[55]

In addition to showing the physical injuries soldiers sustained during battles, Whitman also shows the mentally un-rattling effect the war had on soldiers as well. In "Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night," a soldier reflects on the evening immediately following the day his son, another soldier, died next to him. The soldier says,

> Vigil strange I kept on the field one night;
> When you my son and my comrade dropt at my side that day,
> One look I but gave which your dear eyes return'd with a look I shall never forget,
> One touch of your hand to mine O boy, reach'd up as you lay on the ground....[56]

After the soldier returned from the battle, he reflects on finding his son's body again:

> Till late in the night reliev'd to the place at last again I made my way,
> Found you in death so cold dear comrade, found your body son of responding kisses (never again on earth responding,)
> Bared your face in the starlight, curious the scene, cool blew the moderate night-wind,
> Long there and then in vigil I stood, dimly around me the battle-field spreading....[57]

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[55] Brian Craig Miller notes that the relationship that developed "between the disabled patient and his nurse prepared a Confederate man for the alteration in gender roles that would usually continue when they returned home" (95). While this is true of injured soldiers in the South, I argue instead that northern nurses such as Whitman were the first in line to help Union soldiers reclaim their masculinity on the road to recovery regardless of whether the soldier underwent an amputation or was recovering from a different malady. This is largely because of the attitudes Union soldiers had about themselves because they viewed their injuries as marks of their wartime experience. Furthermore, as Reid Mitchell argues, it was routine for Union soldiers to return to the domestic world for healing, and in the case of those recovering in the middle of the war, recovery would allow them to return to their daily lives or reconstruct their daily lives as necessary. For more information on attitudes toward amputation and its impact on masculinity in the South, see Miller, *Empty*.

[56] Walt Whitman, "Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night," *Drum-Taps*, 83.

[57] Ibid.

The soldier notes that he did not cry, but he remained by his son's body until the next day, when it was buried. Though this scene reflects the hardening process, as shown by the narrator's lack of external emotional response, he describes the strangeness of the night throughout the poem, and he also says,

> (I could not save you, swift was your death....[58]

The narrator also says he will never forget the night; although he remained calm throughout the night, even charging into battle when his son initially died, the narrator's recollection of the events shows the lasting impact they had on him. Though both the father and son completed their duties as soldiers by fighting or dying for the Union cause, the experience left the father with a devastating psychological wound because he could not protect his son; however, because psychological wounds leave no physical marks, the soldier's father had nothing to show for his experience, and therefore psychological wounds were not masculinizing. Though the son died a soldier's death, the father lives with the regret that he was unable to protect his family.

Because of the number of deaths during the Civil War, many soldiers were not given proper burials because there was not enough time. Even soldiers who died as they traveled were often given quick burials near the site where they died. In "As Toilsome I Wander'd Virginia's Woods," Whitman describes one such grave. In this poem the narrator travels through Virginia's woods, where he marks a soldier's grave. The narrator says,

> Mortally wounded he and buried on the retreat, (easily all could I understand,)
> The half of a mid-day hour, when up! no time to lose – yet this sign left,

[58] Ibid, 84.

On a tablet scrawl'd and nail'd on the tree by the grave,
Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.[59]

Although the soldier receives only a quick burial and a grave marker that does not preserve his identity, Whitman takes this opportunity to once again praise the bravery of the soldiers, this time those who were brave enough to die in battle. Furthermore, he is forever marked as the comrade of the soldiers as well. Though the soldier's individual identity becomes unimportant because of his enlistment in the Civil War, this does not detract from his identity as a man; on the contrary, soldiers who died protecting the Union were remembered for their bravery in commemoration rituals after the war was over.[60] Though America had a death-embracing culture before the Civil War because of a high rate of infant mortality, the Civil War shifted this culture because of the number of young men, a group of people who were previously expected to live well, died in massive

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[59] Walt Whitman, "As Toilsome I Wander'd Virginia's Woods," *Drum-Taps*, 92.

[60] Mark S. Schantz argues that "Americans came to fight the Civil War in the midst of a wider cultural world that sent them messages about death that made it easier to kill and to be killed" (2). As a result, the soldiers who died in battle "knew that their heroic achievements would be cherished forever by posterity," and they also "saw how notions of full citizenship were predicated on the willingness of men to lay down their lives" (2). Because nineteenth century America embraced death, soldiers saw no shame in dying for their cause; rather, death in battle was more honorable than death on a bed due to illness because of the sacrifice involved in battle, whereas before the Civil War Death was "a great social equalizer," coming after people regardless of race, gender, or social class (8). Drew Gilpin Faust points out that the early nineteenth century experienced a high infant mortality rate, but "most individuals who reached young adulthood would survive at least into middle age," whereas the Civil War "took young, healthy men and rapidly, often instantly, destroyed them with disease or injury" (xii). Young adults, specifically those who participated in the Civil War, were no longer safe from death as they were just a few years earlier; instead, they became the most vulnerable age group. John R. Neff discusses the role of commemoration in remembering the Civil War dead. He says, "For the national government and all American citizens following the war, the commemoration of the war's dead provided the quintessential forum for engaging – and, most important, expressing – the war's meaning" (1). Because death happened on such a large scale during the Civil War, Neff suggests that "those who had survived the conflict sought to understand loss by attributing to it a greater purpose," whereas this was not necessary before the Civil War (2). Neff also suggests that because death happened on such a large scale during the Civil War, the living felt indebted to the dead for their survival, and therefore "The impulse to commemorate often arose out of this sense of obligation to those who had died for a shared cause or for one's sake" (2). Death shifted from a social equalizer as it had once been to a common phenomenon amongst young adults in the Civil War, and as a result, commemoration of the dead became an important process of understanding their deaths and giving meaning to their sacrifice. For more information, see Schantz, *Awaiting*; Neff, *Honoring*; and Faust, *Republic*.

numbers fighting for their cause. The Civil War turned death amongst soldiers into an event meriting commemoration, forever leaving a legacy of their bravery in battle as they performed their masculine duties, whereas death was previously an unremarkable event in American culture.

Another example can be found in "A Sight in Camp in the Daybreak Gray and Dim." In this poem, the narrator emerges from his tent and notices three covered stretchers, all of which have bodies on them; out of curiosity, the narrator approaches the stretchers and uncovers them one by one. As he uncovers the first stretcher, he says,

> Who are you elderly man so gaunt and grim, with well gray'd hair, and flesh all sunken about the eyes?
> Who are you my dear comrade?[61]

He then approaches the second stretcher, and, upon uncovering it, questions,

> who are you my child and darling?
> Who are you sweet boy with cheeks yet blooming?[62]

Finally, the narrator moves onto the third stretcher, noting

> a face nor child nor old, very calm, as of beautiful yellow-white ivory;
> Young man I think I know you – I think this face is the face of the Christ himself,
> Dead and divine and brother of all, and here again he lies.[63]

Though these soldiers differ in age, they all left behind lives in order to join the Union army, which the narrator sees as establishing a brother-like bond between each of the men because they joined the collective identity. While one of these men was elderly, the

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[61] Walt Whitman, "A Sight in Camp in the Daybreak Gray and Dim," *Drum-Taps*, 91.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.

other two were significantly younger, and yet all of them died as a result of the war, which reflects why the culture of death shifted in America during the Civil War. Before the Civil War the second and third men had a longer life expectancy because people in their age group tended to have better health than the older and younger portions of the population; however, the Civil War put young men at a significantly higher risk of death because of their experiences on the battlefield. As a result, the deaths of these men became more noteworthy because they were directly tied with the Union cause and their identities as soldiers.

Although Whitman shows how enlistment reduces a man's identity to that of a soldier, some of his poetry preserves soldiers' identities as individuals. In "Dirge for Two Veterans," Whitman describes a funeral procession for two soldiers as it passes through a town. In this poem, the narrator describes the procession as it passes by and says,

> For the son is brought with the father,
> (In the foremost ranks of the fierce assault they fell,
> Two veterans son and father dropt together,
> And the double grave awaits them.)[64]

Whereas the soldiers who died away from cities were stripped of their identities, like the soldier whose grave marker simply read "Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade," Whitman humanizes these soldiers by reminding the reader that they had families before they enlisted in the war.[65] This is also an example of one of the ways in which the public remembered the soldiers who fought for their cause. Instead of burying the soldiers quietly, they receive a public display to mark them as soldiers and to show that they died

[64] Walt Whitman, "Dirge for Two Veterans," *Drum-Taps*, 111.
[65] Whitman, "Toilsome," *Drum-Taps*, 92

performing their duty to their country and to their families, confirming their identities as men. Though soldiers blended in with each other in order to take on their new masculine personas, they stood out from the general public in death in order to reaffirm their manhood.

During Whitman's time as a volunteer nurse during the Civil War, he saw a number of injured soldiers in the Armory Square Hospital in Washington, D.C. Though this gave Whitman the chance to see these men in a feminized state, they inspired poetry about their masculine endeavors during the war. Whitman's time as a volunteer nurse provided him with the opportunity to watch boys turn into men after they enlisted in the war and saw battle, and where many people saw transitions in the attitudes of these young men, Whitman saw a more intimate picture of them, instead focusing upon the physical transformations the soldiers experienced. Witnessing this transformation amongst the Union soldiers also gave Whitman insight into how their individual identities collapsed into the single soldier collective, which further confirmed their manhood as they conformed to this new standard. Furthermore, this single rite of passage presented a new way for Union boys to become men, whereas before the Civil War rural and urban boys underwent different rites of passages because of the different circumstances, and effectively the different cultures, in which they lived.

In addition to witnessing how enlistment confirmed soldiers' identities as men, Whitman also notes how injury played a role in northern perceptions of gender. Though hospitalization was feminizing for soldiers because it took them out of the line of duty, this was often a temporary circumstance, as either the soldiers recovered and returned to the war, were left permanently disabled with a physical marker of their wartime

experiences, and therefore a marker of their identity as men, or left them dead as a result of the war, but with their masculine duty completed because they died fighting for the Union. Though civilians did not necessarily view permanent injuries in the same way as the soldiers, believing that they were less capable of taking care of their families, Union soldiers in particular claimed their permanent injuries as physical marks of their manhood because these injuries became proof of their wartime experiences and their participation in the Union's victory, which civilians could not share with them.

Finally, Whitman's poetry showcases how the culture of death changed in America as a result of the Civil War. Though death was commonplace throughout America in the nineteenth century, this was mostly amongst the very young or very old because these two groups were most vulnerable to disease; after a child entered young adulthood, they were expected to live much longer. However, the Civil War altered this by placing young men in a dangerous position as they faced the battlefield. Because the culture of death changed, those people who died during the Civil War were publicly commemorated more often, whether this was through a public march or through the construction of monuments later on. Though soldiers died in massive numbers and were buried in mass graves throughout the war, their deaths became more noteworthy than those of regular civilians because they died performing a duty for their country; therefore, commemoration efforts confirmed the manhood of those soldiers who died during the Civil War. Even though soldiers entered a collective identity by enlisting in the Union army, death made them stand out from the general public again.

Chapter 3: Claiming Their Masculine Identities
Ethan Earle's Account of the 1st Kansas Colored during the Civil War

On July 17th of 1863, the Union and Confederate armies took arms against each other at the Battle of Honey Springs in the present-day counties of Muskogee and McIntosh in Oklahoma. This was one of the first major engagements in which the 1st Kansas Colored participated, though white regiments were less than thrilled to be fighting alongside black soldiers. A newspaper report reveals that the 1st Kansas Colored had discipline issues when it initially formed; one of the officers said the soldiers were "'hard to handle and keep back, and they had to be held with a tight rein, like a pair of young, well fed horses, anxious to go....'"[1] However, in the ensuing battle at Honey Springs, the 1st Kansas Colored proved to be disciplined, following orders as they were given and keeping their line in-tact even when they were outnumbered.[2] Because the 1st Kansas Colored held their ground and showed they were competent soldiers, they changed the opinions of some of the white regiments whom they fought alongside, including the 2nd Colorado. The *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel* says though the soldiers were unhappy before the battle, "'the man is yet to be found, since this fight, who does not speak in the highest terms of this regiment.'"[3] Because of early successes like the Battle of Honey Springs, the 1st Kansas Colored showed the Union they deserved the chance to fight for their freedom.

Examining the 1st Kansas Colored from the perspective of an officer such as Ethan Earle provides the opportunity to observe black soldiers within the context of the

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[1] "Fight between a Kansas Colored Regiment and Guerrillas." *Liberator* (Boston, Massachusetts) 14 Nov. 1862.
[2] *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Volume XXII, Part I, 450-451.
[3] "The Battle of Honey Springs," *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel* (Milwaukee, WI), 12 Aug. 1863.

cultural norms of the 1860s. Although this regiment was the first African American regiment in the Civil War, many others followed after the federal government sanctioned their formation in 1863. Because of the example the 1st Kansas Colored set in the years before, however, officers knew their African American soldiers were as capable as white soldiers. Though some people wanted to use African American soldiers as scapegoats, officer reports reveal that these attitudes were not universal.[4] Though officers acknowledge that their troops were inexperienced, reports also show that the leadership was to blame for some of the chaos and confusion in defeat.

By using Ethan Earle's account and other officer reports, this chapter argues that despite its early challenges, the 1st Kansas Colored immediately showed its officers that it lived up to the standards they had set out for white soldiers. Furthermore, because the standards set out for white soldiers correlated with their masculinity, the African American soldiers of this regiment used their service in order to establish their own masculine identities by showing that they fought for the protection of their families; many of these men were escaped slaves who had to leave their families behind, and the Civil War was their best chance at rescuing them. The final point this chapter makes is that the example that the 1st Kansas Colored set created a positive example for future African American regiments, such as the United States Colored Troops (USCT) at the Battle of the Crater; the 1st Kansas Colored showed that African American soldiers were competent in battle, and that they were not solely responsible for defeats during the Civil War.

[4] Levin, *Remembering*, 23.

Ethan Earle began his history of the 1st Kansas Colored in July of 1862. Earle's history covers each of the battles and skirmishes his regiment encountered from its first skirmish in 1862 through the end of the Camden Campaign in 1864. Because a majority of the soldiers were illiterate, the most informative sources are officer reports and the occasional newspaper.[5] An examination of the regiment through officer reports shows how the black soldiers measured up to officer expectations, especially in regards to what was expected of white soldiers. By framing the details of reports about the 1st Kansas Colored within the expectations of manhood for white men during this time period, it is possible to see how African American men claimed their masculinity at the same time.[6]

Ethan Earle's history and the few articles about its success are especially important because of the attitudes of the people who could not see the regiment in action. Because Earle was a company commander, however, he had a stake in the soldiers' success.[7] Though Earle is more likely to make his company look better in his account, it

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[5] Spurgeon, *Soldiers*, 61.

[6] Mitchell, *Vacant*, outlines that northern masculinity was linked to domesticity, particularly because of the ways that home and family shaped the ways in which they experienced the Civil War (xiii). Soldiers were expected to face the chaos of war in order to protect their families (xiv). Though African American soldiers came from a different version of home, Earle's report shows that African American men were still motivated to fight in the war because of their families, only to rescue them from the chaos of war instead of protect them from the beginning; they do not fit conventionally into the definition that Mitchell lays out in his study, but they do fit within it nonetheless. Furthermore, Mitchell also discusses enlistment as a coming-of-age ceremony; African American men claimed their masculinity by enlisting, so this is another unconventional way they fit the mold Mitchell establishes (4).

[7] Joseph T. Glatthaar points out that "Both Northern and Southern whites scrutinized the performance of the United States Colored Troops through tinted glasses, more to reaffirm their convictions about black inferiority than to see if the black race had the character to merit freedom and equality," so white officers who chose to command black regiments faced discrimination and abuse themselves because of this choice (x). At the same time, some of the black men who insisted on the opportunity to fight in the Civil War suggested "the use of 'efficient and accomplished' or 'competent' white officers" in order to encourage the federal government to allow the formation of African American regiments (3). Glatthaar also says, "For the white men who eventually commanded black soldiers, the experience of fighting in state volunteer units during the first few years of bloodshed compelled them to make some subtle yet critical adjustments in their attitudes toward blacks" (11). Extended time serving beside black soldiers in the Union Army forced them to rethink their prejudices, especially as Northern society adjusted to keep essential values at the cost of previously-cherished values (11). Glatthaar says the commission process for USTC officers was selective because of racial prejudices against African Americans; people "believed that blacks were inferior

is possible to balance his version of events against those that make African American soldiers look ineffective, such as Confederate accounts of the events at Poison Spring.

Because these soldiers did not leave a large number of sources, this chapter will be a case study over the 1st Kansas Colored in order to get a complete picture of how the soldiers helped shift attitudes toward black soldiers over time. The early successes of the 1st Kansas Colored were essential for this; they were the first piece of evidence that African American men were as effective in battle as white men. This provided more African American men the opportunity to show that they deserved the chance to fight. Furthermore, because the 1st Kansas Colored proved capable early on, losses such as Poison Spring did not dampen the commanders' views of how the black soldiers fought.

Unfortunately the historiography of the 1st Kansas Colored is minimal; it is still not universally known that the 1st Kansas Colored was the first African American regiment to muster in during the Civil War.[8] As a result, the historiography about the African American soldiers is thin. The records of the 1st Kansas Colored that exist normally focus upon the white officers of the regiment or other white figures who were important in the enlistment and military service of African American soldiers. For instance, Robert W. Lull wrote *Civil War General and Indian Fighter James M.*

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humans, more akin to savages, and therefore would be extremely difficult to control once in a killing frenzy," so the government wanted the best white officers for the units in order to teach these soldiers discipline (35). Despite previous success in the military, people did not believe African Americans would make effective soldiers because of the perception of black men as savages; if they could not exhibit self-control, then they could not live up to the ideals of manhood set out for white men, including honorable behavior in battle, of which discipline was an essential part. Furthermore, many of the men who accepted commissions to black units genuinely wanted to help African American men uplift themselves; Glatthaar says, "The Federals must uplift the black race as well, to insure that in the postwar years blacks were able to look after themselves" (40). Therefore, accepting these commissions was often a form of philanthropy with good intentions, not just an easy way for soldiers to get promotions. For more information, read Joseph T. Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers* (New York: The Free Press, 1990).

[8] Reid, *African*, still lists the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry as "the first black regiment raised in a Northern state during the Civil War" (3).

Williams: Leader of the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry and the 8th U.S. Cavalry in 2013, which biographies the life of James Monroe Williams from the events of Bleeding Kansas through his military service in the Indian Wars after the Civil War ended. Though Lull acknowledges the work that Williams' African American troops put forth in order to change public views of African American men as soldiers, the bulk of the book focuses on Williams himself. *Lincoln and the U.S. Colored Troops*, written by John David Smith, explores how Lincoln's military emancipation project was created and implemented, and explores how African American soldiers were recruited and deployed throughout the war. This offers what otherwise might be an important overlooked political study of the enlistment of African American troops.

One of the accounts of the 1st Kansas Colored that focuses upon the experiences of the African American soldiers is Ian Michael Spurgeon's *Soldiers in the Army of Freedom: The 1st Kansas Colored, the Civil War's First African American Combat Unit.* In this study, Spurgeon seeks to correct the record to acknowledge the 1st Kansas Colored as the legitimate first African American combat unit; at the same time, he explores the role of Bleeding Kansas in making Kansas the ideal state to form this regiment. He explores the regiment's beginning in 1862 through the end of the Camden Expedition in 1864, keeping his lens as much on the African American soldiers as possible in order to explore the challenges they faced, ranging from fighting with outdated equipment and lacking sufficient rations to never getting paid for its first year of service and the struggles the soldiers faced in seeking pensions after the war was over. However, Spurgeon's study does not focus on the topic of gender; he fails to explore how African American men forged their own masculine identities when they broke from the bondage

of slavery, and he does not explore in-depth the officers' opinions of their soldiers to see how African American men lived up to white men's standards of masculinity.

Even though the 1st Kansas Colored has not been studied in-depth, African American soldiers as a whole have been examined since the early twentieth century. In 1953, Benjamin Quarles published *The Negro in the Civil War*, in which he argues that "the Negro's tale [during the Civil War] was not merely a passive one; he did not tarry in the wings, hands folded. He was an active member of the cast, prominent in the dramatis personae. To him freedom was a two-way street; indeed he gave prior to receiving."[9] Quarles argues this happened essentially through symbolic role reversal between African Americans and white Americans; he says, "The quarter of a million Negroes north of the Mason-Dixon line…acted as a whip and spur to the Lincoln administration," so essentially black men drove white men into action this time instead of the other way around.[10] Instead of focusing simply on the military aspects of the Civil War, Quarles also discusses the political aspects of African American participation, and he discusses how black women took up jobs as nurses in order to assist the war effort.

The centennial of the end of the war also expanded scholarship on African Americans in the Civil War, no doubt because it coincided with the Civil Rights Movement. In *The Negro's Civil War: How American Negroes Felt and Acted during the War for the Union*, James McPherson argues that African American men were vital to the Union war effort because of the number of them who joined the war, either as laborers, as soldiers, or as one and then the other.[11] Like Quarles, McPherson argues that African

[9] Quarles, *Negro*, xi.
[10] Ibid.
[11] McPherson, *Negro's*, ix-x.

Americans were not passive agents within their own stories during the Civil War; he shows that black "orators and writers provided leadership in the struggle for emancipation and equal rights," highlighting the political participation of African Americans early on in the book like Quarles, but focusing more on military participation later. Just two years after McPherson's book, Charles Wesley and Patricia Romero wrote *Negro Americans in the Civil War: From Slavery to Citizenship*, in which they argue,

> It was not the Emancipation Proclamation alone, or the Thirteenth Amendment, or the triumph of the faith of the abolitionists – as important as they were – which changed Negroes from property into free persons. It was the united efforts of a people who sought freedom through participation in the War and on the home front by joining their fellow Americans in the cause of peace.[12]

Like the historians who came before them, Wesley and Romero focus primarily on the political aspects of African American participation in the Civil War, but they also go into more detail about the aftermath of the Civil War, particularly the Black Codes that surfaced as a backlash against emancipation.

Although each of these sources has made the effort to insert African Americans as active agents within their stories of the Civil War, Noah Trudeau examines various battles of the Civil War through the lens of sources produced by the black soldiers themselves in order to ascertain a more complete truth of the events.[13] He recognizes that

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[12] Wesley and Romero, *Negro*, xi.

[13] Trudeau, *Men*, xx. Because the black soldiers who were in the 1st Kansas Colored were primarily escaped slaves, they were uneducated and could not produce their own accounts of their experiences. As a result, it is essential to rely on the reports of officers such as Ethan Earle to examine this particular regiment, and consequently, it is essential to consider the vested interest the officers have in the success of the regiments. According to Trudeau's theory, the officers of the 1st Kansas Colored would have utilized their accounts to build up the successes of the black soldiers; unfortunately, in this situation, there are no accounts produced by black soldiers to balance out the bias present in the officer accounts. On the other hand, this also portrays the black soldiers in a more masculine manner because of the officers' desires to highlight the positive aspects of their conduct, especially their bravery and discipline in combat, despite the discipline issues present shortly after the regiment was unofficially mustered in during 1862.

the accounts left by Union and Confederate white men had their own agendas – Union soldiers to build up the performance of African American men, Confederates to tear them down – and that the only way to really ascertain what happened at battles in which black soldiers were involved was to utilize sources produced by these black soldiers themselves to balance out the bias of the other sources.[14] Therefore, Trudeau produced a study starting with the Skirmish at Island Mound and ending with an examination of the period from 1865 to 1938 which sought to eliminate the bias present in the studies that came before him.

Margaret Humphreys expanded the range of the study of African American men during the Civil War in *Intensely Human: The Health of the Black Soldier in the American Civil War* not only by studying African American soldiers through a medical lens, but also by inserting gender analysis into her examination. In her study, Humphreys looks at the contradictions between animalistic stereotypes of African American men and their lack of endurance during the Civil War because of the poor medical care they experienced.[15] Because of her intense focus on medical aspects of the war, Humphreys also includes environmental factors in her examination as they relate to the spread of disease and other problems caused by exposure to the elements. Furthermore, her research also examines how the vulnerability of African Americans led to other racial stereotypes in the postwar period as a result of the neglect of these soldiers during the Civil War. While Humphreys examines biological constructions of masculinity, she and the other scholars fail to examine the intersection of masculinity and military history, particularly in regards to how African American men used their status as soldiers to claim

[14] Ibid., xix.
[15] Humphreys, *Intensely*, xi.

their masculinity. As a result, looking at the history of the 1st Kansas Colored allows us the opportunity to examine how black soldiers' motivations for joining the war link to their struggle to claim their manhood.

Ethan Earle's history of Company F of the 1st Kansas Colored starts in 1862, when he and other Union officials, including Senator James H. Lane, sought to recruit soldiers to form the regiment. In the beginning of the recruitment process for Earle and Lane, it was still illegal for African American men to enlist in the army; however, because of Kansas's location near slave territory as a free state itself, it became a safe haven for many escaped slaves. Earle saw untapped potential in these men; he says in his report that he saw the potential for these men to become great soldiers in spite of the fact that the federal government had not yet sanctioned this.[16] However, some opposed the idea of allowing African American men into the Union Army. In his report, Earle says that many of the soldiers reacted "with the utmost contempt, and violent opposition; declaring, that if the Union had sunk so low that 'niggers' would be made soldiers to save it, it was not worth saving...."[17] This was not the end of their complaints, however; they felt black men joining their ranks was reason enough for them to leave the army as well because they believed allowing African American men to wear their uniforms and use their weapons degraded the Union army and disgraced the Union.[18] Even though employing African American soldiers was a necessity in Kansas because of its proximity to Missouri, Arkansas, and Indian Territory, soldiers deplored the idea of working with

[16] Ethan Earle, "Memo," 1, 1st Kansas Colored Vol. Reg't, 1863-1865. MSS C4911.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.

African American soldiers so much that losing the war to the Confederacy was preferable.

However, these negative attitudes were not enough to prevent James Lane from trying to change the minds of the white Union soldiers. In response to the soldiers' comments about degrading the Union by allowing black men to enlist, Lane said, "'every white soldier in the army shall have a colored man as a servant; hence forth, the policy of the government is to be, that the white men shall do the big things, and the colored men the labor."[19] Instead of using the idea of enlisting African Americans into the Union army in order to turn them into soldiers, Lane tried to keep the peace and maintain the social order by promising white men that black men were still subservient to them; the black men were free from their masters because they lived on free soil and they worked for the Union, but Lane's proposal left black soldiers in the same position they were when these men were slaves.[20] Furthermore, this plan prevented black men from showing that they were as effective on the battlefield as white soldiers because it denied them the opportunity to fight, and as a result, it left them in an emasculated position because they remained property instead of people. It also kept them from completing the rite of passage they sought out by entering battle; if officers employed African Americans as

[19] Earle, "Memo," 2.

[20] Glatthaar shows that before former slaves were allowed to join the Union Army, the Union established confiscation acts, such as the Confiscation Act of 1861, to utilize former slaves for other tasks. This started when a Confederate officer came to Brigadier General Benjamin Butler in order to retrieve runaway slaves, but Butler refused to return them because "slaves as used by the Confederacy were no different from cotton or machinery that contributed to the Confederate war effort and were therefore subject to confiscation" (4). Lane's plan was essentially an extension of this ideology spread to the treatment of all black men who sought to help the Union Army, including those who were not escaped slaves. Though they were initially treated as property when they worked as laborers, the sheer number of slaves whom escaped to Union lines as a result of the confiscation policy assisted the decision to enlist black soldiers as the duration of the war extended (6). For more information, see Glatthaar, *Forged*, 1-10.

laborers instead of soldiers, then they were denied the opportunity to fight for their families.

Ethan Earle was not happy with this plan of action; in response to Senator Lane's suggestion, Earle says none of the soldiers believed what Senator Lane said, and he increased the negative atmosphere amongst the regiment.[21] Even though Senator Lane had good intentions, he increased the ill will toward the idea of enlisting black soldiers; even though many of the white soldiers did not fight to free the slaves, they did not necessarily want to encourage the institution of slavery in any of its forms.

Although white soldiers were not in favor of enlisting black soldiers into the ranks, as shown by those Ethan Earle mentions in his account, and despite the fact that Senator Lane made the environment for enacting this plan worse, eventually the need to enlist black soldiers arose.[22] This occurred in the spring of 1862 when General James Blunt sent 2000 white soldiers into Indian Territory in order to defend Kansas from a unit of Confederate Soldiers that were en route. When this problem came about, Earle says General Blunt became anxious as a result of this news.[23] As a result, Earle saw this as the perfect opportunity to breach the topic of enlisting African Americans into the Union Army again.

Earle offered Blunt an outfit of black soldiers, and Blunt responded, "'Yes, I would as willingly have them as any other troops.' I said, will you take them and use them as soldiers?, he said yes, and I will fight with them side by side of my white [troops]; git up this Regiment as soon as you can."[24] However, to ensure that this plan

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[21] Earle, "Memo," 2.
[22] Earle, "Memo," 1.
[23] Earle, "Memo," 3.
[24] Ibid.

was met with approval and in order to avoid any negative consequences for their actions, Earle reports that General Blunt contacted the War Department about his need of new soldiers, even if it meant enlisting African American men; General Blunt claimed the War Department acknowledged his need of soldiers and did not object to his request for black soldiers.[25] With the blessing of the War Department and the reassurance that any black men he recruited were to be utilized as soldiers, Ethan Earle began his recruitment efforts to form the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantry.

Though the 1st Kansas Colored officially mustered in at Fort Scott, most of Earle's recruitment efforts occurred in Leavenworth, KS. It was here he met William D. Matthews, whom Earle says is "a colored man from Maryland [who] came to Leavenworth early in its settlement...."[26] Earle further describes Matthews as "an earnest, energetic business man, and had the entire confidence of the colored population, and his influence with them was more than that of all others."[27] Matthews played an essential role in helping Ethan Earle form the 1st Kansas Colored because of the influence he held amongst black men in Leavenworth; while Earle's recruitment efforts had potential, Matthews ensured that they succeeded, and his participation moved the recruitment process forward more smoothly. Because of all of the help Matthews provided, Earle wanted to give him something in return; in his report, Earle says, "It was understood, that, if we could raise a Regiment I was to command it, and Mr. Matthews

[25] Ibid. Earle's report claims the War Department responded to General Blunt, but there is no record of this in the *Official Records*.
[26] Earle, "Memo," 4.
[27] Ibid.

was to command a company in the Regiment."[28] Had this plan succeeded, Matthews would have been the first African American officer in the entire Union army.

However, once again, Earle's plan ran into a road block after Senator Lane arrived at Fort Leavenworth. Earle says Lane delivered the news that the 1st Kansas Colored received approval to form, but Matthews was not allowed to hold an officer position "as no colored man could have a command in the Regiment" despite the fact that "without the aid and influence of Mr. Matthews, he could not get the colored men to enlist in Leavenworth."[29] As a result, the work and effort that Matthews put into the formation of the 1st Kansas Colored lay unrecognized against Earle's wishes; although the regiment formed and the African American men became Union soldiers, Lane was clear that none of them were allowed to have leadership positions – instead, they worked under white officers during their early involvement in the war. Ethan Earle was also denied command of the regiment; instead, he became the Captain of Company F when the regiment was complete, and 51 of the men whom he recruited at Leavenworth joined him out of a total of 112 men.[30] Though he was not in command of the entire regiment, Earle's position as a leader allowed him to vouch for the conduct of African American soldiers in battle.

Throughout his recruitment efforts in Leavenworth, William Matthews was not the only African American man to stand out to Earle; in one of his side notes, Earle also mentions meeting "a tall well-dressed colored man" who "came into my store, he had the

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[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Kansas Adjutant General's Office, "Roster, Seventy-Ninth Regiment, united States Colored Infantry, Formerly the First Kansas Colored Infantry, Volume 4," Microfilm: AR 117, item 4, Kansas Historical Society, **Kansas Memory**, www.kansasmemory.org.

manners of a gentleman – Clement Johnson."[31] Clement Johnson had not been in Leavenworth as long as Matthews had, though; Earle reports that Johnson was a slave whose wife and daughter were slaves in Tennessee. He wanted to enlist in the regiment in hopes that it would travel south so he could rescue his family from the Confederacy.[32] Earle, with an established streak of helping the men he recruited, promised Johnson the first position in his company, and said if the regiment traveled to Tennessee while it was under Union occupation, he would make an effort to find Johnson's family.[33] Although the 1st Kansas Colored never traveled to Tennessee before it was disbanded and re-mustered, Earle's interaction with Johnson reveals one of several reasons African American men joined the Union Army: while many of them escaped from slavery, they left their families behind, or the internal slave trade throughout the South separated them from their families. Therefore, joining the Union Army provided many black men the opportunity to reunite with their families when the North won the war, and also gave them the chance to escape permanently from the institution.[34]

Though Earle's recruitment efforts were successful, they came with risks, even before the soldiers were trained. Because of the proximity of both Leavenworth and Fort Scott to the Missouri Border and the guerrilla activity that happened between Missouri and Kansas before and during the Civil War, soldiers had to travel between locations with extreme caution. According to Earle's report,

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[31] Earle, "Memo," 5.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Though not in the position to defend domesticity as Mitchell argues white soldiers did, the desire to rescue their families from the Confederacy aligns with white soldiers' desires to protect their families from the chaos of war. The biggest difference in this comparison is that white families in the north never had to approach the battles, whereas the families of escaped slaves were often very near to battlefields, if not caught in the middle of them as many southern households were.

> From the first entrance into Camp at Leavenworth about the first of August, 1862 we had to be as strict in discipline and watchfulness as if we were in an enemies country, in fact we were So, for our whole march South was, for more than two hundred miles, on the border of Missouri, which was the headquarters of all the ruffians and guerillas in Missouri, and we were at all times liable to be attacked by them, and were prepared for it.[35]

Although they had only just joined the Union army, these soldiers found it necessary to remain disciplined in order to survive. Furthermore, even when they returned to base at Fort Scott, they had to be prepared at a moment's notice in case any of Missouri's guerrilla soldiers attacked them. Where other white soldiers during the Civil War had opportunities for training in the form of schools or training before they entered battle, all of the black soldiers at Fort Scott had to be prepared to fight at a moment's notice because the battle was just as close to them.

When these soldiers prepared to enter battle, the 1st Kansas Colored took no time at all in showing their officers they were capable soldiers ready for the task at hand. They set a positive example for what future African American regiments were capable of; they showed that they had the same level of discipline as white regiments during the Civil War, and consequently, their actions showed them deserving of the masculine identities for which they fought. Though not all of the battles the men of the 1st Kansas Colored experienced were successful, they experienced a number of early victories, victories which showed that black soldiers were as disciplined and brave as white soldiers, and that they were as prepared to face the chaos of war. The first engagement that the 1st Kansas Colored encountered was not a full-fledged battle, but was rather the Skirmish at Island Mound.

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[35] Earle, "Memo," 7.

Because Island Mound was the 1st Kansas Colored's first military encounter, the soldiers had to perform well in order to prove their worth, especially because no other regiment participated. According to Major Richard G. Ward, the officers of the regiment were pleased with how the black soldiers fought. In this record, Ward reports that

> Captain Armstrong found a force of the enemy some two miles from camp, and immediately threw ont [sic] his skirmishers, under command of Orderly Sergeant Smithers, of Company B, who immediately moved forward to attack and drove the enemy from position to position until they had been driven some four miles from camp....We succeeded in placing seven men *hors de combat*, with no loss on our side, and the boys felt highly elated on their return at their success.[36]

However, this was not the end of the battle; Ward's report shows that the enemy soldiers attacked the 1st Kansas Colored again from the south. During this charge, Ward says the enemy tried to convince the African American soldiers to surrender, but they refused; he states, "I have witnessed some hard fights, but I never saw a braver sight than that handful of brave men fighting 117 men who were all around and in amongst them. Not one surrendered or gave up a weapon."[37] This early in the war, the consequences of loss for an Afriean American regiment were not clear; unaware of the fatal consequences of surrender, the African American soldiers fought with the bravery expected of all Union men during the Civil War.

In addition to the bravery Ward mentions during the battle, he has more positive observations about the men of the 1st Kansas Colored. Toward the end of his report he says, "It is hard to make distinctions where every man did his whole duty, and I hereby return my thanks to every man and officer of the expedition for their splendid

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[36] *O.R.*, Volume LIII, 456.
[37] *O.R.*, Volume LIII, 457.

behavior."[38] He also attaches a list of the killed and wounded, declaring them all heroes "who deserve the lasting gratitude of all the friends of the cause and race."[39] By complimenting the bravery of his soldiers, Ward also shows that the 1st Kansas Colored fit in with the ideals of masculinity expected of white soldiers. Not only did the African American soldiers conform by enlisting in the Union army, but they also lived up to the standard of bravery necessary to preserve their manhood.

In addition to the compliments the 1st Kansas Colored received in Earl's account and the *Official Records*, newspapers published the occasional letter to the editor or news report about the 1st Kansas Colored. One such letter to the editor written by someone who simply signed "S." was published in *Freedom's Champion* out of Atchison, KS, following the Skirmish at Island Mound. In this letter, "S." felt it necessary to acknowledge the work that some of the officers from the 1st Kansas Colored performed that they thought went unnoticed; in it, the author says,

> While honorable mention is made of men who did not participate in the engagement at all, those who were in the hardest of the fight are left unnoticed. Now while I do not wish to detract from the credit and bravery of any, tried or untried, I do feel anxious to reward the soldierlike conduct of such true men as Lieuts. Huddleston, Dickinson, and Thrasher, whose coolness and bravery surely entitle them to as much consideration as those who only reached the battle field the day after the fight, when the enemy was probably twenty-five miles distant, but who are receiving most flattering praise and notice for their bravery.[40]

"S." ends this letter suggesting that had the three men mentioned not been at the battle, "the enemy would most probably have given other men a chance to have merited the

[38] *O.R.*, Volume LIII, 457-458.
[39] Ibid.
[40] S. "The Colored Soldiers," *Freedom's Champion* (Atchison, Kansas), 29 Nov. 1862.

praise which they have so prematurely received."[41] The three men "S." names were absent in the report of Major Ward, though he exemplified the behavior of all three soldiers. Even though Ward thought all of the soldiers deserved praise, somebody thought Huddleston, Dickinson, and Thrasher deserved extra praise, showing that some of the African American soldiers outperformed others, which also challenges the bias present in sources produced exclusively by white officers.

The Skirmish at Island Mound was only the first of several battle victories the 1st Kansas Colored achieved during the Civil War. The Battle of Honey Springs on July 17th, 1863 was the second battle in which the 1st Kansas Colored fought after becoming an officially sanctioned regiment by the Union government, and it was also the battle in which the African American soldiers silenced complains from other Union regiments.

According to Earle, the 1st Kansas Colored and 2nd Colorado fought alongside one another during the Battle of Honey Springs.[42] Earle's report also shows that the 1st Kansas Colored experienced very few casualties during this battle, another marker of their skill in the heat of the moment.[43] Because the Union Army had fewer troops and the 1st Kansas Colored had worse arms than their Confederate opponents during this engagement, the low number of casualties displays the level of discipline the black soldiers achieved, another trait essential for Union soldiers to succeed and claim their identities as men. Furthermore, at this point in time the African American soldiers also knew the consequences of surrender: Earle says that at this battle, the Confederate

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[41] Ibid.

[42] Earle, "Memo," 19. This also explains the change in attitude of the 2nd Colorado toward working with African American soldiers mentioned in the *Liberator*. Because of their direct participation with one another, the 2nd Colorado had the opportunity to observe the 1st Kansas Colored instead of hearing about their actions from afar. For more information, see "Fight between a Kansas Colored Regiment...," *Liberator*.

[43] Earle, "Memo," 20. Specific numbers are reported in the *Official Records* reports, which I discuss later.

regiments started saying, "'if we are going into a fight, give us the niggers.'"[44] Though the Confederacy respected the surrenders of soldiers in white Union regiments, they viewed all African American soldiers as fugitive slaves. As a result, they treated any African American soldiers who were left at battle sites as slaves responsible for insurrections, which the Confederacy deemed punishable by execution. Despite the dire consequences, the African American soldiers exhibited the discipline necessary to succeed in a battle while under that kind of pressure.

Major General Henry Halleck offers additional insight into Honey Springs. According to his report of the operations in the trans-Mississippi theater from November 25th, 1862 to November 15th, 1863, written on November 25th, 1863, the number of Union losses at Honey Springs was 17 killed and 60 wounded with no prisoners taken; Confederate losses, on the other hand, were 150 killed, 400 wounded, and 77 prisoners taken, in addition to the capture of one piece of artillery, 200 stands of arms, and 15 wagons.[45] As his report shows, the Union regiments inflicted nearly ten times the number of casualties and over six times the number of injuries on the Confederate regiments.

Furthermore, in his report of the battle from July 26th, 1863, Major General James G. Blunt says the 1st Kansas Colored fought like experienced soldiers; he also states that "they fought like veterans, and preserved their line unbroken throughout the engagement. Their coolness and bravery I have never seen surpassed; they were in the hottest of the fight, and opposed to Texas troops twice their number, whom they completely routed."[46] Furthermore, he shows one of the Texas regiments entered the battle with 300 soldiers

[44] Ibid.
[45] *O.R.*, Volume XXII, Part I, 10, 448.
[46] *O.R.*, Volume XXII, Part I, 448.

and left it with only 60.[47] Because he believes the soldiers fought so well, he suggests it would be a disservice to point out the work of any one soldier.[48]

Lieutenant Colonel John Bowles of the 1st Kansas Colored makes similar comments in his own report from July 20, 1863, adding that the troops fought nobly and on the same skill level as one another.[49] Not only did the entirety of the Union forces at this battle fight Confederate forces twice their size, but the 1st Kansas Colored faced a number of troops twice their size as well. Furthermore, since all of the soldiers fought on the same skill level, none of them had to carry additional weight for others who underperformed. By the time the 1st Kansas Colored reached Honey Springs, they were experienced in battle, and their conduct in battle proved this to their officers. As with the Skirmish at Island Mound, the African American soldiers proved they could live up to the standards of masculinity set out for white men; however, unlike Island Mound, the 1st Kansas Colored was under significantly more pressure this time, reinforcing that they were brave enough to face the tougher engagements during the war.

Though several newspaper articles discuss the Battle of Honey Springs, a number of these articles only mention the 1st Kansas Colored in passing or do not mention the regiment at all.[50] In one article, titled "Bravery of the Negro" in *Freedom's Champion*, General Blunt notes how African American soldiers perform in battle and makes an argument for how the Union as a whole should view them. He says, "The question that negroes will fight is settled; besides, they make better soldiers in every respect, than any

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[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] *O.R.*, Volume XXII, Part 1, 450-451.
[50] "Interesting from Kansas," *The New York Herald* (New York, New York), 7 Aug. 1863, "Latest News," *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin), 28 July 1863, "Our Leavenworth Correspondence," *The New York Herald* (New York, New York), 9 Aug. 1863.

troops I have ever had under my command."[51] Though it is important to consider the Union bias mentioned in Trudeau's study, Blunt still gives the African American soldiers high praise for their performance in battle, announcing that these soldiers deserved to he recognized as the men they were. Though the newspaper recorded this quote after African American regiments received nation-wide approval, Blunt continues to show his support of utilizing these troops in battle, and he utilizes newspapers in order to spread this support to the masses.

Though the 1st Kansas Colored experienced victories in their early battles, their winning streak ended on April 18th, 1864, at the Battle of Poison Spring in Arkansas during the Camden Expedition. Unfortunately, this was also when the 1st Kansas Colored first experienced the severe consequences of losing to the Confederacy first-hand. Despite the loss, Earle's "Memo" shows that even when they were losing, the soldiers in this regiment continued to fight the enemy instead of accepting defeat. Even though the Union lost, the soldiers in the 1st Kansas Colored already established their competence in battle over the last two years; as a result, the sources left behind about this engagement do not blame the African American soldiers for this loss, but instead praise their bravery and discipline even at a low point.

The Battle of Poison Spring began as a foraging mission in order for the soldiers to retrieve corn to supplement their low rations, but Confederate soldiers spotted and attacked the Union soldiers as they gathered their food. According to Colonel James M. Williams, at least 100 of his men were unfit for duty due to fatigue from traveling and because of the regiment's lack of rations, and his troops were also divided into two

[51] "Bravery of the Negro," *Freedom's Champion* (Atchison, Kansas), 8 Aug. 1863.

groups before the battle began.[52] Earle points out that during the Battle of Poison Spring, the 1st Kansas Colored repulsed three charges by the Confederacy, but despite their efforts, eventually the Confederacy broke the Union line.[53] Furthermore, Earle shows that some of the soldiers of the 1st Kansas Colored continued to fight the Confederacy after their officers allowed them to flee.[54] Though this was a brave choice on the soldiers' part, it was also a fatal decision. Because the Confederacy treated all of the black soldiers like fugitive slaves, Earle shows that "All the colored men in our Regiment wounded and left on the field, were killed by the Rebels!"[55] Instead of fleeing from the battlefield, the African American soldiers at this battle chose to sacrifice themselves while they fought the Confederacy. Even though the soldiers were at a disadvantage, they faced their loss bravely and salvaged their masculinity instead of risking accusations of cowardice by fleeing.

Even though his troops lost the battle, Colonel Williams gives the soldiers credit for their actions; he says the behavior of all of his officers and soldiers "was characterized by true soldierly bearing, and in no case was a line broken except when assaulted by an overwhelming force, and then falling back only when so ordered. The gallant dead, officers and men, all evinced the most heroic spirit, and died the death of true soldiers."[56] He acknowledges that the Confederate forces overwhelmed the Union from the beginning of the fight, establishing that the soldiers were outnumbered, not that they performed poorly. Furthermore, he shows his regiment's level of discipline by

[52] *O.R.*, Volume XXXIV, Part I, 743-744.
[53] Earle, "Memo," 25.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Earle, "Memo," 24.
[56] Ibid.

showing that none of the men of the 1st Kansas Colored fled the fight until they were given the order to fall back. Because of their discipline and conduct in battle, those who fell during the Battle of Poison Spring died honorable deaths instead of the deaths of cowards. Even in defeat, the African American soldiers maintained the standard of honor their officers expected of white soldiers.

Reports beyond that of Colonel Williams' compliment the conduct of the troops at Poison Spring. Major Richard G. Ward of the 1st Kansas Colored also praises their behavior in battle in his report written on April 20th, 1864. He provides the typical comment that singling out any soldiers is unfair because they all performed their duty "coolly, nobly, and bravely," and he also points out that "We were obliged to bring our wounded away the best we could. as the rebels were seen shooting those that fell into their hands."[57] Furthermore, Lieutenant William C. Gibbons of the 1st Kansas Colored also says all of his men deserve credit for their conduct in battle because of "the coolness, bravery, and promptness with which they obeyed and executed orders."[58] The three major reports left about the soldiers of the 1st Kansas Colored deliver praise of the soldiers for their honorable behavior in battle, showing that even though they lost the Battle of Poison Spring, they had already established their competence in battle, and therefore they lost tbe battle as a result of other factors. Fatigue, lack of rations, and separation of the forces all contributed to the Union defeat, but when the Confederacy surprised the Union forces with an attack, the African American soldiers rose to the occasion and fought to the death.

[57] *O.R.*, Volume XXXIV, Part I, 753-754.
[58] *O.R.*, Volume XXXIV, Part I, 756.

The 1st Kansas Colored was only one of many African American regiments to muster in during the Civil War. They were followed by a number of other regiments mustered in as state regiments, although eventually some of these regiments disbanded in order to form United States Colored Troops (USCT) regiments.[59] Several regiments of the USCT were a part of the IX Corps, one of three corps of the Army of the Potomac that participated in the Battle of the Crater on July 30th, 1864, during the Siege of Petersburg, which started on June 9th, 1864, and finished near the end of the war on March 25th, 1865. The Battle of the Crater has not gone unnoticed by historians, nor has the massacre of the African American soldiers who fought in this engagement.[60] However, while these accounts have taken into consideration the experiences of the African American soldiers who fought in this devastating battle, they do not explore how the reaction of Union officers to the African American soldiers was influenced by earlier examples of African American soldiers during the Civil War.

When examining disasters such as the Battle of the Crater, particularly the reaction to black soldiers in the aftermath of these battles, it is important to consider the example that the 1st Kansas Colored set in the two years before these events. Both Ethan Earle's "Memo" and reports from *The Official Records* show that the 1st Kansas Colored, after mustering in at a location where attacks could occur at any moment, were capable of the discipline that was necessary during a war, and they lived up to the standards of honor expected of them, which also correlated with white standards of masculinity. While early

[59] The 1st Kansas Colored was one such unit, eventually becoming the 79th United States Colored Troops.
[60] Hess, *Crater*, is the first definitive study over the battle and utilizes a narrative structure in order to tell the story of the battle. Furthermore, Hess takes both Union and Confederate perspectives into account for his study. Richard Slotkin, *Quarter*, explores the roles of leadership, political infighting, and racial violence in the Battle of the Crater. Levin, *Remembering*, also explores the racial violence that occurred during and after the Battle of the Crater, but Levin's study also explores the USCT in the memory of this battle, how they disappeared from it, and how they later returned to it.

victories undoubtedly contributed to this positive outlook of African American soldiers, it was essential that this outlook last through battles where the Union experienced defeat, such as the Battle of Poison Spring. Fortunately, because the African American soldiers lived up to the expectations and other factors were responsible for the loss, African American soldiers maintained the favor of their officers after these defeats. An examination of the reports after the Battle of the Crater shows that the example the 1st Kansas Colored set for African American soldiers was widespread throughout the Civil War; even though the Union failed to execute its plan at the Battle of the Crater as expected and the African American troops of the 43rd USCT were inexperienced, reports of this regiment's conduct in battle were still favorable.

According to the Fifth Epoch in *The Official Records*, the 43rd USCT was poorly formed and confused at the beginning of this battle as the soldiers tried to enter the crater; however, the Fifth Epoch also shows that the officers were responsible for this disorganization, not the soldiers themselves.[61] The author of the Fifth Epoch says, "It was certainly an inexcusable blunder to make the assault with the green troops of the colored division, and yet, from all accounts, they would have done well had they been properly put in and led."[62] Therefore, although the author of this report believes putting inexperienced soldiers in this battle was a poor plan, he also believes with the proper leadership these soldiers could have succeeded; they lacked the guidance, not potential, discipline, or honor.

In his own report of the battle, written on July 31st, 1864, Colonel Joshua Sigfried, who was in charge of four regiments of the USCT at the Crater, reports that neither the

[61] *O.R.*, Volume XL, Part I, 324.
[62] Ibid.

officers nor the soldiers can be awarded enough praise; he says the officers "fearlessly led" while the soldiers "as fearlessly followed through a fire hot enough to cause the oldest of troops to falter."[63] Sigfried gives credit to specific officers, but he also says that the rest of the soldiers performed their expected duty. Another Colonel in charge of four more USCT regiments, Henry Thomas, also compliments the conduct of the officers of his regiments during this battle.[64] Both men point out that their regiments of African American soldiers charged into the crater as they were ordered to, and they stayed in the crater to continue the fight even though they were easy targets for the Confederate soldiers in Petersburg.[65] Neither Sigfried nor Thomas have complaints about the conduct of any of their soldiers. Despite their inexperience, the African American soldiers fought with bravery and discipline, which was impressive considering the level of chaos during the Battle of the Crater.

Newspaper articles provide further insight from an outside perspective on events such as the Battle of the Crater. In an article published by the *Daily National Intelligencer* out of Washington, D.C., the author reports that the African American soldiers' "splendid discipline could not be but observed, and in the early part of the contest no soldiers behaved more gallantly."[66] Because the African American soldiers were easy scapegoats for white soldiers, public accounts such as this one balance out the bias present in some official reports. This account preserved the reputation of African American soldiers that they created for themselves up to that point in the war; if the proper conduct of African American soldiers was acknowledged nation-wide during a

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[63] *O.R.*, Volume XL, Part I, 597.
[64] *O.R.*, Volume XL, Part I, 599.
[65] *O.R.*, Volume XL, Part I, 596-599.
[66] "Account of the Battle," *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington, D.C.), 3 Aug. 1864.

Union failure like the Battle of the Crater, people were more likely to recognize that African American men rose to the standards set out for them. Examining these officer reports and newspaper articles shows that although the Battle of the Crater was a disaster, the white officers in charge did not view their African American soldiers any differently than the officers of the 1st Kansas Colored viewed their own soldiers; positive opinions of African American soldiers were not restricted to one theater of the war or another, but were shared amongst officers through both Union successes and Union failures.

When the 1st Kansas Colored formed, many of the African American men who joined this regiment were escaped slaves. As a result of this, they were mostly illiterate and unable to leave behind their own records of their military service; furthermore, slavery left them in a state of emasculation because of their inability to care for their families. However, officers of African American regiments left their own records of these soldiers' conduct in battle; Ethan Earle's "Memo" details a history of the 1st Kansas Colored from its creation to the end of the Camden Expedition in 1864. Earle's "Memo" shows that African American men wanted to fight for the Union when they were given the chance, even though the federal government had not yet legally sanctioned the formation of any African American regiments. His report also shows these soldiers' motivations for joining the war: while encouraged to fight for their freedom, some of these men hoped to travel farther east in order to free their families from slavery as well.

The 1st Kansas Colored had several challenges in front of it, though; this regiment was underequipped for war, and people were initially pessimistic about their performance in battle. They were initially recruited in desperation because of the lack of Union troops in Kansas and because of the border war between Kansas and Missouri, but the soldiers

of the 1st Kansas Colored quickly showed their competence in battle at the Skirmish at Island Mound. Though Earle was not present at this battle because his company was not involved, other sources from *The Official Records* show that the officers who were present were impressed by the African American soldiers in the heat of battle; they remained disciplined, and they showed bravery in battle. They fought two groups of Confederate soldiers in quick succession and won both skirmishes. The African American soldiers' winning streak would continue through the Battle of Honey Springs, where even the 2nd Colorado's complaints were silenced when they witnessed the African American soldiers in battle. The soldiers of the 1st Kansas Colored lived up to all of the standards their officers expected of other white soldiers; the African American men enlisted in the formal army as a first step to access the rite of passage into manhood, and they continually proved their bravery and honor in battle with their refusal to flee from the enemy and fight for the Union and their families.

The winning streak did not last forever, though; at the Battle of Poison Spring, Confederate troops attacked the Union forces while they were separated and killed any African American soldiers who were left at the battle site wounded. They accepted no surrenders, showed no quarter to the soldiers they saw not as combatants in a battle, but as fugitive slaves inciting insurrection against their former masters. Even in these instances, however, officer reports show that African American soldiers lived up to the standards that were set for them. Even on the losing end, white officers admitted that the African American soldiers fought until they were ordered to flee; they only broke their line when they were overwhelmed by the enemy; and they died a hero's death.

The work that the 1st Kansas Colored performed was only one of several factors which encouraged the Union government to legally sanction the formation of other regiments of African American soldiers, but they were the solid proof that African American men had what it took to fight in a war. Even at the Battle of the Crater, the officers of the USCT were impressed with the conduct of their soldiers in the heat of battle; though charging into the Crater was a fatal choice for those who followed their orders, the African American troops did not hesitate to fight alongside their fellow men. Even though these troops were inexperienced at the time of this battle, reports show that the leadership of these regiments was at fault for the chaos and confusion that occurred in the crater. Overall the officer reports of the 1st Kansas Colored show that these African American men lived up to the standards of their white officers. They faced the chaos of war in order to fight for their families, they fought with bravery and discipline, and they claimed their identities as men in the process, freeing themselves from the bondage in which they were trapped.

Joining the Union army provided African American men their first opportunity in American history to claim their identities as men. After slavery emasculated them by taking away their ability to care for the families they built, enlistment provided them the opportunity to rescue their families from slavery, similar to how white soldiers protected their families from the dangers of the war, but it also gave the black soldiers the opportunity to free themselves from slavery permanently by dealing a devastating blow to the institution. Although they had to fight against strong racial prejudices, African American soldiers proved to their officers and to the nation that they were capable of living up to the standards of manhood excepted of white men by displaying honorable

behavior and discipline in battle. Because the 1st Kansas Colored showed their officers what they were capable of early on in the war, the federal government opened enlistment to black soldiers throughout the Union and allowed them to fight for the freedom they deserved.

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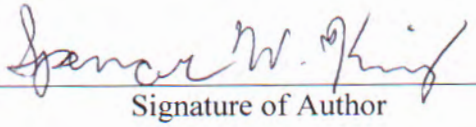

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