Trustbusting and White Manhood in America, 1898-1914

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"I care more for the independence and manliness of the American citizen than for all the gold or silver in the world," declared the Progressive governor of Michigan in 1899.[1] Hazen Pingree thus concluded a speech denouncing the trusts, those huge corporations that seemed to be swallowing up individual enterprises at the turn-of-the-century. Indeed, Governor Pingree believed that those corporations were undermining the foundation of American manhood, and, in order to restore manliness, he was willing to sacrifice the greater wealth that giant enterprises might create. This essay returns to the Progressive-era debate over trusts and argues that, as Pingree's speech suggested, that debate was in part an argument over the shape that white manhood should take in the twentieth-century United States.

Historians often set responses to corporations at the heart of Progressivism, that early twentieth-century hodgepodge of "shifting coalitions" which ultimately produced such a range of reforms as Prohibition and women's suffrage, a graduated income tax and mothers' pensions, workmen's compensation and the direct election of senators.[2] Richard Hofstadter, for instance, insisted that "big business was the ultimate enemy of the Progressive."[3] In most analyses, this turn-of-the-century concern has been construed as an anxiety about how to preserve local autonomy, a competitive economic system with a fairly equal distribution of wealth, and ultimately a representative political system. Large corporations, according to many Progressives and their historians, swallowed up smaller enterprises, robbing men of the economic independence on which democracy

itself depended.[4] Other commentators both then and later also showed that organized capital corrupted the political process by buying off legislators and in that way, too, threatened representative government.[5] "The life of the Trusts or the life of the republic—which?" This was America's stark choice according to muckraking journalist Charles Edward Russell.[6]

Although perhaps no issue in United States history would seem mustier than Progressive-era trustbusting, I have revisited many of the speeches, editorials, books, and essays produced by the furor over big business and discovered two new and related aspects of it. The first is the degree to which the trust question was, in the early twentieth-century, a race and gender specific issue. My research suggests that the debate occurred almost exclusively within the community of white men. Black Progressives—men and women—and white women activists, volubly discussing other problems of the day, largely ignored this issue. Second, for at least some of the white men who participated in the struggle over the proper response to large corporations, the debate embodied a contest over the meaning of white manhood. This is not to argue that many other issues were not also at stake in the debate over corporations. Rather, this essay seeks simply to illuminate a previously undetected dimension of the controversy: for some, this debate was partly a battle over gender identities. For many of these men, of course, gender—or the particular shape that manhood would take—was integral to the fate of democracy. As Governor Pingree insisted: "A democratic republic cannot survive the disappearance of a democratic population," by which he meant "our independent and intelligent business men and artisans. . . ."[7]

Pingree's belief that particular forms of manhood were integral to particular forms of government coincides with the current claim that gender has always been a constitutive element of institutions.[8] Building on that insight, recent historians of the Progressive era have gone a long way toward understanding how gender (modified by rance and class) structured political cultures and legislative agendas. We have come to see, for instance, that women and men reformers often had different public values and employed different strategies for effecting change and that only by understanding the interplay of these gendered political cultures can we fully comprehend Progressive reform.[9] We have also begun to understand the ways that notions about proper manhood and womanhood shaped policies like mothers' pensions and workmen's compensation.[10] This essay carries the same project into a more unlikely area of Progressive agitation: the debate over the shape of economic institutions. It shows that gender structured even the debate over "trusts."

At the turn of the century, Americans staked out a variety of positions with regard to the emergence of huge corporate enterprises, often lumped together under the name "trusts." While conservatives believed that businesses should be left alone to grow as big as markets allowed them to, progressive reformers believed that the federal government should intervene. But reformers did not

agree on the goal of intervention. Some believed that the federal government should break up corporate combinations. "I favor complete and prompt annihilation of the trust," Pingree baldly put it.[11] Others insisted that the trusts were here to stay and that the federal obligation was to regulate them in the interest of workers and consumers. Representing this position, progressive mayor of Toledo, Samuel Jones, insisted: "our problem is not how to destroy them, but how to use them for the good of all."[12] Others, like Theodore Roosevelt during his presidency (1901-1909), supported both trustbusting and regulation as they came to believe that some trusts were good and others bad. Bad trusts had to be busted; good trusts had to be regulated to make sure that they honestly served the public.[13]

TRUSTBUSTERS

Trustbusters, those who advocated breaking up big businesses, believed that large corporations threatened free enterprise and representative government; they also sometimes argued explicitly that enormous corporations were destroying American manhood. According to those like Hazen Pingree, this destruction occurred because corporate combinations snatched away the possibility of economic independence, which these commentators construed as the most significant foundation of American manhood.

This perception was laid out in some detail, for instance, in a 1902 editorial in the weekly news magazine, the *Independent*.[14] Because of trusts like Standard Oil and U.S. Steel, the editor argued, "there are left to-day few opportunities for the man who would prefer economic independence to a life of service as a salaried employee." During the nineteenth century, he insisted, young men sought the economic independence offered by ownership of their own businesses, but, in the present day, corporate capitalism was reducing such aspiring businessmen to "industrial dependents, receiving fixed salaries and liable to dismissal without warning...."[15] The editor augured that if businesses continued to combine in ever larger corporate entities, then

> Every man who is not a multimillionaire will be a *millionaire's man*, dependent upon the good will of a superior for his daily bread. Could there be a more melancholy outcome of our great American attempt to build up a civilization in which every man might be independent and self-respecting?[16]

Within corporations, in other words, all employees were analogous to servants; they could not achieve the independence of mind and action that this writer believed had previously characterized white American men. "As the number of economic dependents increases," the author worried, *"Where will independent manhood be?"*[17]

Although such commentators exaggerated the degree to which their nineteenth-century predecessors actually achieved and maintained economic inde-

pendence, their ideas about the past embodied cultural meanings well established in the nineteenth century. A generation of historians have gathered evidence showing that Americans who wielded cultural and political power in the mid-nineteenth century associated "dependence" with women and black men, and "independence" with white men only. In fact, recent studies suggest that dependence became more exclusively associated with women in the nineteenth-century United States than it had been ever before. In early modern Europe, independence was ascribed only to the few men who owned property. "Dependence" had marked not only women but also the majority of men, who were peasants or retainers laboring on someone else's land or in someone else's household. Only in the late eighteenth-century United States, with its relatively widespread landownership and a political commitment to "independence" for all white men, did property ownership (usually ownership of a farm or business) become accepted as the norm for white men and thus a basis of white manhood itself.[18]

The emergence of industrial capitalism complicated this construction of white manhood. It began to create a working class in which few men could, even in the nineteenth century, hope to own a farm or business, the quintessential foundation of manly independence. As the pre-industrial organization of labor gave way to industrial production, journeymen in transformed industries lost hope of ever owning their own shop. They became permanent wage-earners in someone else's business.[19] Even so, because independence had become so crucial to white manhood itself, these workers refused to see themselves outside the realm of "independent" men. In order to satisfy the cultural imperative that real men be "independent," these workers, according to analysts Linda Gordon and Nancy Fraser, began to insist that "independence" rested less on property ownership than on earning a family wage, that is, on supporting a dependent wife and children.[20]

Thus, by the time of the trustbusting debate, "independence" was culturally connected with manhood for both working- and middle-class white men. For middle-class white men, this manly independence rested especially on ownership of a farm or business. For working-class white men, it rested especially on earning a family wage.

In addition to these cultural ideals, trustbusters were responding to material circumstances that dominated American life at the beginning of the twentieth century. Economic changes did indeed seem to be luring increasing numbers of men away from the kind of economic independence that early twentieth-century commentators believed American men had enjoyed earlier in the nineteenth century. According to historian Naomi Lamoreaux, for instance, "more than 1800 firms disappeared into consolidations" between 1895 and 1904. Nell Irvin Painter put it another way: between 1897 and 1904 "one-third of all companies disappeared through mergers."[21] Furthermore, farm owners accounted for a smaller and smaller proportion of gainfully employed Americans between 1900 and 1930.[22] In contrast, positions for salaried professionals, managers and clerks multiplied rapidly. This "new middle-class" of salaried employees constituted

the fastest growing sector of the labor market at the turn of the century, and, by 1910, the people in this new middle class actually outnumbered independent businessmen and professionals by 5,609,000 to 3,261,000.[23]

These numbers did not, of course, signal the disappearance of small business or demonstrate that men in large corporations did not enjoy any independence. Statistics show the contrary: that the absolute number of small firms actually increased in the 1890s and during the two subsequent decades as well.[24] Especially in sectors of the economy not dominated by capital-intensive mass production, smaller enterprises continued to rule the day.[25] Moreover, historian Olivier Zunz has shown that the first generation of salaried corporate managers exercised considerable autonomy in creating a new, rationalized work culture and bureaucratic organizations. Indeed, Zunz argues that, for some middle managers at least, the early years of building corporations offered wider ranging responsibilities and possibilities than ownership of a smaller business would have.[26]

Nevertheless, Zunz agrees with turn-of-the-century critics that such managers did indeed "relinquish individualism."[27] Furthermore, the implication of his argument is that managerial autonomy diminished with the passing of the first generation of managers, and the much larger and ever growing group of white-collar clerks never exercised such autonomy.[28] Finally, no one has denied that self-employment accounted for a continually decreasing proportion of the work force at the turn of the century.[29]

Thus, despite the persistence of small business and the relative autonomy enjoyed by the first generation of managers, antitrust agitators had material foundations for their claims. They had reason to believe that "bigness" was the inevitable trend if businesses were allowed to go their own way without government intervention. They were right to think that increasing numbers of American men would find employment only as the employees of someone else and that most such men would have less freedom of action than they would have had in their own enterprises.

Trustbusters continually lamented the demotion from independence to dependence that they believed was increasingly the fate of these men. As one commentator put it: "The middle class is becoming a salaried class and rapidly losing the economic and moral independence of former days."[30] In his condemnation of what he called the Tobacco Trust, the muckraker Charles Edward Russell wrote: "On a certain stretch of Broadway where ten years ago were thirty-six independent cigar stores are now but six; and the former proprietors of the other thirty are either salesmen for the Trust, servitors, dependent for their bread upon whim, fancy, and caprice . . . or they have sought other work; or they have died."[31]

That this loss of independence constituted a loss of manliness in the eyes of many turn-of-the-century commentators is further supported by the classic antitrust work, *The History of the Standard Oil Company*. In this analysis, Ida Tarbell narrated the struggles of Midwestern oil refiners and producers to remain independent in the face of unfair business practices by John Rockefeller during

the late nineteenth century. So, as long as those valiant businessmen fought against Rockefeller's attempts to reduce them to "industrial dependents," they in her words "struggled manfully."[32]

Tarbell's contemporary, Samuel Gompers, had much to say about manful struggle as well, but while Tarbell saw such struggle among small businessmen, Gompers located it in workingmen's determination to unionize in the face of corporate hostility. For example, in response to U.S. Steel's attempt to crush workers' organizations in 1910, Gompers reported that the men "did resist and are resisting manfully, grandly, heroically."[33]

Although Gompers and his American Federation of Labor urged the break-up of U.S. Steel, they were not wholesale trustbusters. They rather accepted large corporations as a permanent part of the American economy, advocating demolition only of corporations bent on destroying workers' collective efforts to affect working conditions and compensation. Given the expectation of wage-earning among these men, one might expect that they viewed themselves as "industrial dependents" and rested their manhood on some other foundation. This was not so. Workingmen in the AFL defined "independence" in a different way from middle-class men, and they continued to see this form of independence as crucial to their manly identities.

For organized labor in the early twentieth century, "independence" referred to a workers' ability to unite with other workers to gain some control over their working lives. One labor journalist wrote: "The methods of the trade unionists of America . . . free labor from a *slavish dependence* either upon the unstable philanthropy or the contemptuous labor trafficking which are features of today's multi-millionaires."[34] Another insisted that the goal of unionization was "to improve the standard of life, to uproot ignorance and foster education, to instill character, manhood, and independent spirit among our people. . . ." "If the workers are to be deprived of their opportunities for self-improvement and independence;" this last writer continued, "if they are to be held at the will of the employer . . . the industrial condition of our country would sink lower than that of slavery."[35]

Anti-union trusts, then, threatened workingmen's independence as well as that of middle-class men, and working-class men connected their manly identities with this independence. Gompers, for instance, argued that corporate attempts to break unions constituted an "effort to curb and crush American manhood and its spirit of sovereignty and independence."[36] Speaking of U.S. Steel, the AFL leader said, "The gigantic trust . . . has used and is using its great wealth and power in an effort to rob the toilers, not only of their livelihood, but of their rights of American manhood. . . ." He believed that the only hope for limiting the trusts' influence over American life lay in the "virile power" of organized labor. Finally, workers striking U.S. Steel needed support from fellow workers "to maintain themselves, their wives, and little ones . . . so that their independence, character, and American conception of manhood may be sustained. . . ."[37]

In the 1912 presidential election, Gompers supported Woodrow Wilson,

who agreed that trusts underminded American manhood. During the campaign, Wilson exaggerated the earlier analogy between a salaried man and a servant, invoking instead the metaphor of master and slave. Wilson represented his most powerful opponent's plan to regulate big business as a consummation of the partnership between monopolies and the federal government, which would create, in Wilson's words, "a master." "I don't care how benevolent the master is going to be," Wilson warned, "I will not live under a master. That is not what America was created for. . . . *Benevolence never developed a man* or a nation."[38]

Wilson's words and those of other trustbusters embodied the belief that economic independence—defined differently by middle-and working-class men—had been the foundation of American manhood. Acceptance of large corporations and government regulation, they thought, threatened that independence. Indeed, some Americans—perhaps the majority in 1912—could not imagine manliness without independence.

NONCOMBATANTS

As Wilson's analogy between a salaried man and a slave suggests, the manhood at issue in battles between trustbusters and their opponents was specifically *white* manhood. This was evidenced further by the fact that black Progressives rarely participated in the debate. For instance, the *Crisis*, journalistic organ of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and voice of many black progressives, did not devote one single article or editorial to government policy toward big business from 1911-1913, years when policy toward corporations was hotly debated in the white-dominated press. Indeed, only one column mentioned trusts at all, and it was a brief article on a black community in Alabama that was built on land somehow ceded by the state legislature to an interstate power company. The community was going to court to protest.[39]

Other sources, too, reveal the unimportance of the trust issue among black men. When the National Baptist Convention endorsed William Howard Taft for president in 1912, the body published its reasons for supporting the incumbent in a presidential contest especially focused on trusts and tariffs: the Convention did not mention economic policy at all.[40] Articles in the black-run newspaper, *The Bee*, even when they took up the high cost of living—usually a prelude to lambasting the trusts in white-dominated publications—never mentioned the conglomerates as a probable culprit.[41]

Moreover, in one of his editorials several months after Woodrow Wilson took office in 1913, W.E.B. Du Bois, the country's leading black male progressive, explicitly stated the relative unimportance to black people of the issues that had dominated the campaign of 1912, among them the issues connected with big business. "Of course, the real trouble is," he insisted, "that President Wilson . . . may continue to think that the Tariff and Corporate control and China are the only pressing questions in National politics." DuBois wanted to set the record straight:

"The *Crisis* is here to emphasize the fact that Lynching, Disfranchisement, Peonage and Discrimination in Civil Rights are just as large and in many respects larger questions. . . ."[42]

Indeed, it was precisely in these abrogations of civil and political rights that black men saw assaults on their manhood. In Mississippi, for instance, black leaders called disfranchisement a "policy of crushing out the manhood of the Negro citizen."[43] In an early issue of the *Crisis*, Du Bois resolved "to be satisfied with no treatment which ignores my manhood," which required him "to be ready at all times and in all places to bear witness with pen, voice, money and deed against the . . . wrong of disfranchisement. . . ."[44] Reverend I.N. Ross, pastor of the Metropolitan A.M.E. Church in Washington, D.C., insisted "The man who asks me or my people to vote the Democratic ticket [in 1912] . . . places a low estimate upon the manhood of a people who have been sold in bondage by the sponsors of Democracy. . . ." "As long as the jim-crow car, disfranchisement, lynching, and segregation remain as the ruling principle of the Democratic party," Ross wrote, "it is absolutely impossible for any self-respecting Negro to vote for its candidates."[45]

Historian Neil McMillan has shown that the modifications that Southern whites forced on race relations in the 1890s also required a return to rigid rituals of social deference from black people toward whites.[46] This, too, black men experienced as an attack on their manhood. Du Bois insisted that "playing the man" included a resolve "to stand straight, look the world squarely in the eye, and walk to my work with no shuffle or slouch . . . to refuse to cringe in body or in soul, to resent deliberate insult, and assert my just rights in the face of wanton aggression."[47] Richard Wright would later call the requirement of deference the denial of "manly self-assertion on the part of the Negro."[48] A Mississippi mother discouraged her Northern-educated son from returning to his home state, arguing that the deference required of him "would make him much less than the man we would have him be."[49]

Black men, then, at the turn-of-the-century, did not see huge corporations as the threat to their manliness that some white men did. This was not only because of fiercer assaults from elsewhere (as outlined above) but also because black men were not swept up in the corporate mergers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to the degree that white men were. The overwhelming number of black men continued to live in rural communities in the South, and many continued to strive for the kind of independence that a family farm might provide.[50] Racial discrimination prevented black men from finding employment among the ranks of managers in ever-growing, white-dominated corporations, and especially before World War I, African-American men even had trouble getting employment as waged workers in many industries.[51]

The popularity of the economic self-help movement among African Americans opens another window on issues of black manhood. It suggests first of all just how unaffected by corporate mergers African Americans were: Booker T. Washington and his colleagues were not preaching a return to or preservation of

individual proprietorships but the *initial* development of small business enter-
prises serving local African American communities. Second, the goal of the
National Negro Business League and similar organizations was the achievement
of the same economic independence cherished by white trustbusters, and some
black commentators explicitly connected this independence to black manhood.
R.L. Smith, for instance, founder of the Farmers' Improvement Society of Texas,
believed his organization would "bring about a self-reliant manhood. . . ."[52]

But, finally, for African American men, building a small business or buying
a farm was not made difficult by competition from larger businesses. It was made
difficult by racist financial institutions and lending practices; by wages so low and
sharecropping so unlucrative that saving for the creation of a business was nearly
impossible; by racist white consumers who often refused to purchase goods or
services from black businessmen; and by the poverty of black communities,
which could not support many entrepreneurs. Thus, although Washington's
gospel of self-help promoted an understanding of manhood similar to that
advocated by white trustbusters, the very different relations of black and white
men to corporate combinations meant that this shared notion of manhood did not
bring black and white men together in the movement against the trusts.[53]

Just as black men showed little concern over the trusts so American women,
black and white, mostly ignored this "problem." While the debate between
busters and regulators raged in such periodicals as the *Independent*, *Nation*,
Outlook, and *Harper's Weekly* as well as in academic social science journals,
women's magazines virtually ignored the issue. Among the 246 articles that the
Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature listed under the topic of trusts between
1910 and 1914, only 2 appeared in women's magazines, both published in *The
Ladies Home Journal*, and both of them condescending to women and written by
men.[54] In fact, of the 72 articles written by authors whose gender is known, all
were written by men. This includes the many articles that appeared in social
science periodicals where women were debating other issues of the day but
remained silent on the issue of the trusts. Even the *Woman's Journal*, a more
politically engaged women's periodical than those indexed in the *Readers'
Guide*, did not in the years between 1905-1908 or 1911-13 take up the issue of
corporate control.[55] Indeed, the only woman who wrote substantially about the
trusts was Ida Tarbell, whose exposes on Standard Oil early in the century made
her a name as a muckraking journalist.[56]

The problem of trusts also did not show up on the agenda of organized
women. One place where progressive black women gathered regularly was in the
national conventions of the National Association of Colored Women. Organized
in 1896 and growing throughout the Progressive era, the NACW studied and took
action on lynching, jim crow, women's suffrage, juvenile justice, and many other
issues of the day. But again, while the white-dominated press was vigorously
debating government policy toward corporations, the issue never appeared on a
national program of the NACW from 1896 through 1918.[57] Neither did the issue

of corporate combinations appear on a program of the General Federation of Women's Clubs in this period despite the participation of those clubs in numerous other progressive causes.[58]

In fact, progressive women routinely discussed many other economic/industrial issues, including some that were raised by the emergence of giant corporations. In civic organizations, white women wrestled with municipal ownership of utilities, urban transportation systems, homework, and factory inspection.[59] Moreover, although women's magazines almost never touched the *general* issue of government policy toward big business, they did report on and educate their readers as to the effects of specific governmental regulations on women's lives as consumers and domestic managers.[60] These articles and discussions made the lack of interest in trusts all the more meaningful.

Occasionally, women campaigning for the Progressive party in 1912 mentioned the problem of large corporations. In a meeting of progressives in October 1912, for instance, Jane Addams insisted "we must have concentration in our industries just as we have concentration in our cities. We need control of business, however, and that is what the Progressive Party is seeking."[61] Another activist, Kate Robinson from Tennessee, listed ten reasons that she was a Progressive party member and included "the Progressives are the only body of men and women who understand what to do with 'the trust.'"[62]

Such references to big business were the very rare exception, however, even among female activists in this political party devoted to regulating big business. Its position on the trusts was the tenth out of ten reasons that Kate Robinson was a Progressive, and Jane Addams in her speech acknowledged that the issue of trusts was "not generally regarded as a woman's subject."[63] When women organized state level progressive groups that in every other way mirrored the organization of the national party, they nevertheless omitted committees on trusts.[64]

This lack of interest makes sense insofar as the growth of huge corporations did not rob women of some previous foundation for womanhood. The kind of economic independence offered to American men in the nineteenth century had never been generally available to women, and, if anything, the growth of corporations opened new opportunities for some white women to achieve greater economic independence than before. Employment as secretaries and clerks, sometimes accountants and bookkeepers, within corporate enterprises made possible a degree of independence from individual male relatives previously rare for women, but, because women hardly ever moved into managerial positions or sat on boards of directors, they for the most part remained subordinate to men within corporate structures themselves.[65] Within the context of corporations, then, the accepted gender hierarchy remained intact. Moreover, the new job possibilities held out for middle-class women by corporate growth did not block them from earlier gender identities as seemed to be the case for men; it merely created new options for those who wanted them.

This debate, then, sometimes represented as the vital center of Progressivism, was very race- and gender-specific.

PROPONENTS OF BIG BUSINESS

In opposition to trustbusters, a range of white men believed that big businesses were best for America: laissez-faire Republicans, socialists, and those progressive reformers who supported governmental regulation of business. All of these advocates had to respond to accusations that huge corporate combinations destroyed American manhood. I read these responses as evidence that the trustbusting debate was indeed in part about the meaning of white manhood and offer some examples of those responses here.

Some advocates of big business simply asserted that competition remained so important within corporate life that independent thought and action—supposedly elements of nineteenth-century manhood—continued to be fostered there. One writer for *Harper's Weekly*, noted that "the great indictment" against the corporations "has been that in the development of so huge a machine the value of the individual has been lost, his personal qualifications as well as his *identity merged in the mass*, opportunity for distinction and field for personal accomplishment abolished."[66] In response to that indictment, *Harper's* surveyed the largest American industries and not surprisingly found that corporate executives insisted: "Individuality counts for more to-day than ever before."[67] The same claim was made by James Dill, a corporate lawyer, who, at the commencement ceremonies of Williams College in 1900, responded to fears that college men would not enjoy the same opportunities as their fathers: "Individualism is not dead."[68]

But in both cases, speakers for corporate enterprise were on the defensive, trying to convince their audiences that the manly qualities admired in the nineteenth century would continue to be rewarded in an entirely new economic context. Nevertheless, everything that these apologists described about life in a large corporation suggested that only a very few men could be rewarded by advancement to creative levels of authority and that the primary goal of all men in a corporation was to learn the system already in place and dutifully follow the routines established for efficient operation of their departments. Nothing that these advocates described confirmed their conclusion that individualism or independence were qualities generally nurtured by large corporate concerns.[69]

Less defensive were those who named alternative sources for American manhood. For example, Rev. Henry A. Stimson, argued in 1901 that "there has been no more important agency for the production of character than the responsibility of managing an individual business." Consequently, it was frightening that "individual business is disappearing." He went on to say that corporations could not, however, hope to survive "with men in whom manhood in its finer forms is not both stimulated and rewarded." The only institution left, Stimson

argued, that could create "that type of manhood" was the church.[70] Unlike those who simply asserted without evidence that an earlier form of manhood would continue to be created by the new corporations, Stimson believed that they could not. But, rather than taking this to mean that the corporations must be destroyed, he identified the church as an alternative source of traditional manly qualities.

A completely different kind of case for big business—under government regulation and possibly government ownership—was made by the socialist and naturalist Jack London. London turned on its head the assumption that individual enterprise allowed men to be free while salaried employees were forced to be yes-men to their superiors. London argued that the "nineteenth century business man . . . is the *slave* of his desk, the genie of the dollar." Because every man has, in a competitive economic system, to worry about nothing else except making a living, "individuality is repressed, forced to manifest itself in acquisitiveness and selfishness." London argued that there "should be no one type of man." But, a competitive economy created only one sort of man—"from the factory hand to the millionaire there will be the one stamp of material acquisitiveness." Only after Americans achieved the wealth and security promised by big business operating under government regulation could varieties of men, that is, true individuality, flourish.[71]

London not only shrewdly re-envisioned competition among individual enterprises as the creator of slaves but he also articulated the belief that manhood was created not inborn. In one section of his essay, he argued, for instance, that Renaissance Spain "had lost the greater part of the variety which was hers in former times." This was, he insisted, not "due to an innate degeneracy of her people, but to her social, political and religious structures." His closing line was: "government should make men by giving them the freedom to make themselves."[72]

London was not the only regulator who believed it possible deliberately to build a new kind of manhood. Another supporter of governmental regulation explicitly stated the same belief in the plasticity of identity: "We cannot change human nature? Oh, yes, we can." He argued that the institutions that could change men's nature were legislatures, churches, homes, and schools, all of which could "give to ambition and to acquisitiveness a new meaning and a new direction."[73] Interestingly, this social critic argued that some big businesses were good and that the distinguishing feature of good businesses was that they "received their fortunes in return for the service which they have rendered to the community." He was trying to define good businessmen as servants of the community: "The ambition for service is the merchant's ambition." Bad businessmen were rather "gamblers" filled only with the "ambition for gain." Legislation, he suggested, could send to jail those whose only goal was private gain and could reward those whose goal was service to the community. In contrast to Woodrow Wilson or the *Independent*, this writer construed servanthood as a worthy position for American men. But his form of servanthood was voluntary and rendered to a community

of peers rather than involuntary and rendered to superiors within a corporate hierarchy.[74]

The most popular proponent of big business under governmental regulation was eventually Theodore Roosevelt. By 1912, when he was the presidential candidate of the Progressive party, Roosevelt became the spokesperson for federal regulation of big business rather than trustbusting, which he left to his major opponent, Woodrow Wilson. I believe that Roosevelt could with political impunity accept enormous corporations precisely because he offered clear alternative bases for American manhood to the basis of economic self-suffi-ciency. Indeed, when Woodrow Wilson compared the relationship between a monopoly-regulating government and American men to the master/slave rela-tionship, he was on to something important in Roosevelt's scheme: Roosevelt's new foundations for American manhood in many ways recalled those of white antebellum Southern manhood. White manhood in the antebellum South had rested more on violence, honor, and control of other people than had the manhood of the North.[75]

In Roosevelt's scheme, well-known through recent historical analyses, a new white manhood would rest especially on three pillars: violence—played out on football fields, battlefields, and in boxing rings; on honor, about which he railed incessantly in his discussions of foreign policy; and on ruling races he considered inferior, a stand that had won the day in America's decision to rule the Philippines rather than to grant it independence.[76]

Every student of American history is familiar with Roosevelt's rambunctiousness, safaris, and love of the West. We know that the twenty-sixth president cheered for college football, boxed, rode, roped, camped, hunted and cherished the company of men who met those challenges more gracefully than he. Rough sports, in fact, Roosevelt offered as one of the foundations of American manhood.[77]

We also know Roosevelt as a proponent of a new American militarism and imperialism. In Roosevelt's mind, these initiatives provided further foundations for American manhood. Beginning in the late 1890s, in fact, he questioned the manliness of those who did not support a naval build-up and who argued against the United States's rule of the Philippines. In "The Strenuous Life," his famous speech before a Chicago men's club in 1899, he insisted: "We do not admire the man of timid peace. We admire the man who embodies victorious effort; . . . who has those virile qualities necessary to win in the stern strife of actual life."[78] He went on to argue that Americans must accept the new responsibilities incurred through victory in the Spanish-American War. With regard to the Philippines in particular, he argued that the United States must not allow the islands to rule themselves but rather must govern them. Otherwise, Roosevelt warned, "Some stronger, manlier power would have to step in and do the work, and we would have shown ourselves weaklings. . . ."[79] Later in his speech, he reiterated that if the United States shirked governing the Philippines, then that rule would be instituted "by some stronger and more manful race."[80]

Finally, Roosevelt waved away the concerns of those who believed it undemocratic for the United States to engage in imperial rule. He expressed only contempt for those "who cant about 'liberty' and the 'consent of the governed,' in order to excuse themselves for their unwillingness to play the part of men."[81]

For Roosevelt, real men ruled other men, especially men of races he considered inferior. The racial component of his definition of manhood was clear in his Chicago speech. There, he reasoned that those who worried about extending liberty and consent of the governed to Filipinos, "would make it incumbent on us to leave the Apaches of Arizona to work out their own salvation, and to decline to interfere in a single Indian reservation."[82] In another memorable passage, Roosevelt cautioned his audience that if they did not accept the responsibilities of imperial rule, then they could expect "to play the part of China, and be content to rot by inches in ignoble ease within our borders. . . ." The United States could then expect to discover in itself "what China has already found," which was that it had "lost the manly and adventurous qualities."[83]

These were themes that Theodore Roosevelt would play out routinely until his death: American manhood required participation in rough sports, outdoor life, military adventures, and imperial rule.[84] This combination of themes often went together among white progressive men who believed that the big corporations were here to stay. Albert Shaw, for instance, in a series of college commencement speeches delivered in the early twentieth century, insisted that capitalistic combinations were permanent and that, as a result, the U.S. was heading into a new, more "cooperative age."

Shaw identified the problem posed for middle-class American men as others had: "we have been so gravely and so incessantly warned about the crushing out of opportunities for young men through the growth of capitalistic combinations, that many of us find it hard to believe that we are not in some danger of being folded, stifled, and crushed within the tentacles of the octopus."[85] He admitted that, if he had his druthers, he would prefer the older option of going into business or a profession in a small town where men of the nineteenth century had to "elbow their way to the front in law practice and in politics as persons of at least local importance."[86] But, he insisted, those days were over: "a greatly increased proportion of young men must expect to work on salaries in large organizations."[87] The conditions of America's "pioneering period," which created "a wonderful spirit of individuality, independence, and self-direction in the average man," were gone. They had "ended with the Spanish War."[88] And now, America was in transition to "the intelligent, cooperative man of the future, as against the competitive man of the past."[89] It was a manhood that, according to Shaw, would flourish not only within big corporations, but also in the military and among rulers of colonies. In his speeches to graduating college men, Shaw advocated a big navy and America's rule of the Philippines.[90]

Critics of this new manhood agreed on its origins. In one scathing and satirical article titled "The Military Idea of Manliness," Ernest Howard Crosby—poet, reformer, and muckraker—explained: "As a nation of mere tradesmen and

farmers we have never assimilated the ideals of honor, manliness and glory which distinguish the military peoples." Those ideals, he insisted, included picking on people weaker than oneself, a practice embodied in all of military/imperial life from hazing at West Point to the habit of imperial powers to move against the weakest states rather than against each other. Furthermore, he argued, this military/imperial manhood required "[a]bsolute obedience, readiness to obey orders. . . ." These Crosby insisted, "are necessary military qualities." They composed "the new manliness," belief in which required that American men say good-bye "to the ancient belief in freedom and independence which prevailed before the recent repeal of the Declaration [embodied in the decision to rule the Philippines]."[91]

Crosby thus castigated those who supported a Rooseveltian attempt to set American manhood on a new footing that ordered men within a hierarchy where the strong seemed to prey on the weak and the higher ups demanded deference. To some turn-of-the-century observers, that was precisely what corporate and military life shared: an acceptance of men as dependents within a hierarchy in which only a few could move up and the rest must be satisfied to learn the rules and obey them. They construed this as an enormous shift from nineteenth-century manhood, resting as it had on independence of thought and action.

Roosevelt's laying out alternatives to Victorian manhood made it possible for him to achieve tremendous popularity while *supporting* governmental regulation of big business. In fact, William Allen White, a renowned Progressive, also understood the centrality of manliness in the election of 1912. In a letter to losing presidential candidate, Theodore Roosevelt, the Kansas newspaperman explained that many of Roosevelt's votes were "votes of men who had confidence in you personally without having any particular intelligent reason to give why; except that you were a masculine sort of a person with extremely masculine virtues and palpably masculine faults for which they loved you."[92]

CONCLUSION

This essay has argued that race-specific gender structured the trustbusting debate in two ways. First, it identified who participated in the debate. Sometimes represented as the crux of Progressivism, the battle over big business was largely confined to the community of white men. While such issues as women's suffrage and juvenile justice animated discussions among men and women, black and white, the issue of trusts was overwhelmingly a white man's issue. In view of this, we need to find a way to represent it in textbooks and other general considerations of the early twentieth century as the sharply race- and gender-specific issue that it was. Otherwise, we misunderstand Progressivism by misidentifying its central themes and causes, and we obscure the experience of African Americans and women by presenting the concerns of white men as those of reformers as a whole.

Another aspect of Progressivism revealed in the trustbusting debate was the belief that manhood and womanhood were created rather than natural. Some

turn-of-the-century commentators believed that historically changing institutions and beliefs imbued men and women with the particular qualities associated with each sex in a given era. If, therefore, they wanted to create particular kinds of women and men, they believed they had to build particular kinds of institutions and popularize particular beliefs. These writers assumed that politics and public policy touched areas so intimate as personal identity: in the battle over the trusts, they self-consciously struggled over the form that white manhood should take in the twentieth century.

And this was the second way in which gender structured the debate over trusts: the controversy was in part *about* the form that white American manhood would take in the twentieth century. Gender, in this case, the meaning of white manhood, wove through arguments about the appropriate response to corporate capitalism at the turn of the century. Many Americans believed that the decision to break up the trusts or to regulate them had implications for the form that white American manhood would take in the decades to come, and they sometimes formed their arguments for busting or regulating explicitly in terms of the effect on manliness. Thus, we have come to see another previously unrecognized element of the trustbusting debate.

According to many middle-class thinkers at the turn of the century, American manhood had, during the nineteenth century, rested in large part on the independence presumably afforded a man by owning his own farm, business, or professional practice. American men's citizenship was premised on precisely that independence, which was supposed to give each man the freedom to vote his own mind. The emergence of corporate capitalism seemed to these commentators to mean that increasing percentages of American men would never achieve the requisite independence. They would instead spend all of the their working lives as employees of someone else—as workers, managers, or salesmen for large corporations. Trustbusting seemed to recuperate the possibility of a nineteenth-century form of economic self-sufficiency while regulation seemed to surrender that foundation of manhood.

Unlike middle-class trustbusters, working-class white men did not look nostalgically to the nineteenth century for their ideal of independent manhood. Leaders of organized labor redefined independence to mean the ability of male workers to unite and through unity to gain some control over the conditions of their labor and levels of compensation. Though different from the middle-class version, this notion of independence was very much tied to manhood for commentators of the working class, and they, too, saw some trusts as a threat to their independence and thus to American manhood.

The debate over trusts was in part, then, a debate between those who welcomed the "cooperative man of the future" and those who championed "the competitive man of the past." But "cooperative man" took more than one form in the imaginations of these debaters. In the minds of some, the American manhood implicitly promoted by corporate combinations regulated by governmental agencies was economically dependent insofar as he was not his own boss but an

employee; not an autonomous decision-maker but one of many woven into decision-making bodies, be they boards of directors, governmental commissions, or committees of managers; embedded in various hierarchies within individual companies, within larger corporate structures, and between business and government. At his best, "the cooperative man of the future" was an unselfish and competent team player satisfied to play his small part in the economic life of the country; at his worst, he was a bureaucratic drudge.[93]

For other thinkers, however, big business—if regulated—promised increased wealth and comfort for everyone; it might usher in the day of men truly free and devoted to community rather than competition. In the minds of those like Jack London, finer kinds of men might finally materialize when men no longer had to dedicate all of their energies to brute survival in a cut-throat economic system. Genuine equality, democracy, and individuality might be the result of increased economic cooperation.

NOTES

1. Hazen S. Pingree's speech to the Chicago Conference on Trusts, September 1899, reprinted in *Progressivism The Critical Issues*, ed. David Kennedy (Boston, 1971), 16.

2. Peter G. Filene provided the image of "shifting coalitions" in "An Obituary for 'The Progressive Movement,'" *American Quarterly*, 22 (Spring 1970): 20-34, esp. 33.

3. Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform From Bryan to F.D.R* (New York, 1955), 257.

4. Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York, 1967), esp. 44-75; Alan Dawley, *Struggles for Justice: Social Responsibility and the Liberal State* (Cambridge, Mass., 1991), 142-150; Hofstadter, *Age of Reform*, 227-256.

5. See, for instance, Ernest Crosby, "The House of Dollars," and David Graham Phillips, "The Treason of the Senate," both originally published in *Cosmopolitan* (March 1906) and partially reprinted in *Years of Conscience: The Muckrakers*, ed. Harvey Swados (Cleveland, 1962), 66-76. For later historians, see Richard L. McCormick, "The Discovery that Business Corrupts Politics: A Reappraisal of the Origins of Progressivism," *American Historical Review*, 86 (April 1981): 247-274.

6. Charles Edward Russell, *The Greatest Trust in the World* (New York, 1905), 241.

7. Pingree reprinted in *Progressivism The Critical Issues*, ed., Kennedy, 16, 15.

8. Joan Scott, "Gender—A Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review*, 91 (December 1986): 1053-1075.

9. See, for example, Kathryn Kish Sklar, "The Historical Foundations of Women's Power in the Creation of the American Welfare State, 1830-1930," *Mothers of a New World: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States*, ed. Seth Koven and Sonya Michel (New York, 1993), 43-93; Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992); Paula Baker, *The Moral Frameworks of Public Life: Gender, Politics, and the State in Rural New York, 1870-1930* (New York, 1991); and Noralee Frankel and Nancy Shrom Dye, eds., *Gender, Class, Race, and Reform in the Progressive Era* (Lexington, Kentucky, 1991).

10. See especially Barbara Nelson, "The Origins of the Two-Channel Welfare State: Workmen's Compensation and Mothers' Aid," and other essays in *Women, the State, and Welfare*, ed. Linda Gordon (Madison, 1990).

11. Pingree reprinted in *Progressivism The Critical Issues*, ed., Kennedy, 16.

12. Samuel Jones's speech to the Chicago Conference on Trusts, September 1899, reprinted in *Progressivism The Critical Issues*, ed., Kennedy, 17.

13. See, for instance, Roosevelt's "Wise and Unwise Methods for Remedying Trust Evils," delivered in 1902 and published in *The Roosevelt Policy: Speeches, Letters, and State Papers*, ed. William Griffith (New York, 1919), I: 49-56. In keeping with this analysis, Roosevelt ordered the Department of Justice to take bad trusts to court under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act (1890)—which it did most dramatically in a 1904 case against J.P. Morgan's Northern Securities Company—and simultaneously urged passage of legislation to regulate good industries. 1906 was a banner year for such legislation as it ushered in the Pure Food and Drug Act, the Meat Inspection Act, and a program aimed to regulate railroads more effectively.

This approach to the problem of large corporate enterprises left the solution ambiguous. No one was sure what differentiated a good trust from a bad one, and the lack of clarifying legislation left the courts in charge of interpreting the very vague Sherman Anti-Trust Act. So, the debate about the appropriate federal response to the corporations continued and gained especial prominence in the presidential campaign of 1912.

14. The *Independent*, originally published in New York City as an antislavery magazine, was by the early twentieth century a progressive, issue-oriented periodical under the editorship of Hamilton Holt. For more on Holt and the *Independent*, see Werner Sollors's introduction to *The Life of Undistinguished Americans* (1906; New York, 1990).

15. "The Menace to Economic Independence," *The Independent*, 54 (December 4, 1902): 2908-10; esp. 2909.

16. "Menace to Economic Independence," 2910. [emphasis added].

17. *Ibid.*, [emphasis added].

18. During the mid-nineteenth century, sermons, laws, etiquette books, and women's magazines defined middle-class *women* as dependent—economically, legally, and politically. See, for instance, Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860," *American Quarterly*, 18 (Summer 1966): 151-174; Nancy Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: 'Woman's Sphere' in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven, 1977). According to white men in power—for instance, northern white men who wrote state constitutions between 1820 and 1870—black men, too, fell into the category of dependents, unfit for political participation by their association with slavery and servanthood. Rowland Berthoff, "Conventional Mentality: Free Blacks, Women, and Business Corporations as Unequal Persons, 1820-1870," *Journal of American History*, 76 (December 1989): 753-784. On the promise of independence in middle-class men's work in the mid-nineteenth century, see Angel Kwolek-Folland, *Engendering Business: Men and Women in the Corporate Office, 1870-1930* (Baltimore, 1994), 43-44. On the increasing femininity associated with "dependency" in the nineteenth century, see Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon, "A Genealogy of Dependency: Tracing a Keyword of the U.S. Welfare State," *Signs*, 19 (Winter 1994): 309-336, esp. 314-315. They explain, too, how wage-earning men claimed "independence" in the nineteenth century despite their employment by someone else. Cindy Aron confirms that many male clerks in the federal bureaucracy of the late nineteenth century feared a loss of middle-class status when they surrendered the independence of competitive, individual enterprise. She shows that the experience of this small group of men prefigured in many ways the struggles of white-collar workers in private enterprise at the turn of the century. Cindy Sondik Aron, *Ladies and Gentlemen of the Civil Service: Middle-Class Workers in Victorian American* (New York, 1987), esp. 144. See also Eileen Boris, "Gender and the Arts and Crafts Movement," *The Ideal Home 1900-1920: The History of Twentieth Century American Craft*, ed. Janet Kardon (New York, 1993), 32-45, which argues that America's craft movement emerged partially as a response to a perception of lost manhood in white collar work. On the persistence of the *ideal* of independence through ownership of businesses, see Rowland Berthoff, "Independence and Enterprise: Small Business in the American Dream," *Small Business in American Life*, ed. Stuart W. Bruchey (New York, 1980), 28-48.

19. See, for instance, Alan Dawley, *Class and Community: The Industrial Revolution in Lynn* (Cambridge, Mass., 1976).

20. Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon, "A Genealogy of Dependency: Tracing a Keyword of the U.S. Welfare State," *Signs*, 19 (Winter 1994): 309-336.

21. Naomi R. Lamoreaux, *The Great Merger Movement in American Business, 1895-1904* (New York, 1985), 1-2. Nell Irvin Painter, *Standing at Armageddon: The United States, 1877-1919* (New York, 1987), 207, 177.

22. Dawley, *Struggles for Justice*, 72.

23. Hofstadter, *Age of Reform*, 217-18.

The proclamation of the closing of the frontier seemed further to limit the possibility of independence among American men, and, of course, historian Frederick Jackson Turner declared that door shut in the 1890s. This decreasing possibility for economic independence in the 1890s was at the heart of what some historians have called a "masculinity crisis" in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Joe L Dubbert, "Progressivism and the Masculinity Crisis," first published in *The Psychoanalytic Review*, 61 (Fall 1974) and reprinted in Elizabeth and Joseph Pleck, eds., *The*

American Man (Englewood Cliffs, 1980): 303-320. For other analyses of changing ideals of and opportunities for middle-class white manliness in this period, see John Higham, "The Reorientation of American Culture in the 1890s," *Writing American History* (Bloomington, 1970), 73-102; James R. McGovern, "David Graham Phillips and the Virility Impulse," *The New England Quarterly*, 39 (September 1966): 334-355; Gail Bederman, "The Men and Religion Forward Movement of 1911-12 and the Masculinization of Middle-Class Protestantism," *American Quarterly*, 41 (September 1989): 432-465; Margaret Marsh, "Suburban Men and Masculine Domesticity, 1870-1915," *American Quarterly*, 40 (July 1988): 165-186; Peter Filene, *Him/Her/Self: Sex Roles in Modern America*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore, 1986), 69-93; Clyde Griffen, "Reconstructing Masculinity from the Evangelical Revival to the Waning of Progressivism: A Speculative Synthesis," in *Meanings for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America*, eds., Mark C. Carnes and Clyde Griffen (Chicago, 1990), 183-204. E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York, 1993), esp. 222-246.

24. Harold Vatter, "The Position of Small Business in the Structure of American Manufacturing, 1870-1970," *Small Business in American Life*, 142-168, esp. 148; Mansel Blackford, "Small Business in America: A Historiographic Survey," *Business History Review*, 65 (Spring 1991): 1-26, esp. 5.

25. Lamoreaux, *The Great Merger Movement*, 14-45.

26. Olivier Zunz, *Making America Corporate, 1870-1920* (Chicago, 1990), 9, 39-64.

27. *Ibid.*, 49.

28. *Ibid.*, 126-148.

29. Stanley Lebergott, "The Pattern of Employment Since 1800," *American Economic History*, ed. Seymour E. Harris (New York, 1961), 281-310, esp 281-292.

30. Quoted in Eileen Boris, "Crossing Boundaries: The Gendered Meaning of the Arts and Crafts," in *The Ideal Home 1900-1920 The History of Twentieth-Century American Craft*, ed. Janet Kardon (New York, 1993), p. 35.

31. Charles Edward Russell, *Lawless Wealth,* orig. pub. in 1908; excerpted in *Years Of Conscience*, ed., Swados, 98-103, esp. 102-3.

32. Ida M. Tarbell, "The History of Standard Oil," *McClure's* (November and December 1902) published in book form as *The History of the Standard Oil Company*, (2 vols. 1904; New York, 1925), II: 290.

33. Samuel Gompers, "Labor and the Steel Trust," *American Federationist*, 17 (January 1910), 35.

34. "Labor's Resistance to the Steel Trust," *American Federationist*, 17 (February 1910), 115. [emphasis added.]

35. Samuel Gompers, "The Hatters' Case. The Sherman Law—Amend It or End It." *American Federationist*, 17 (March 1910), 201.

36. Samuel Gompers, "Judicial Invasion of Guaranteed Rights," *American Federationist*, 17 (April 1910), 298.

37. Gompers, "Labor and the Steel Trust," 35-36.

38. Wilson in *Progressivism The Critical Issues*, ed., Kennedy, 63, 58, 62. [emphasis added] The metaphor of slavery was used in this context by others as well. Progressive historian Benjamin DeWitt insisted, for example, that men had been forced by economic necessity to work for corporations and thus "became economic slaves." Benjamin P. Dewitt, *The Progressive Movement* (New York, 1915), 14.

39. *Crisis*, 5 (April 1913), 300. In addition to reading every issue of the *Crisis* published between 1911 and 1913, I have checked the index to the *Crisis* and found no other articles addressing the issue of trusts, corporations, corporate combinations, or big business.

40. "Baptists for Taft," *The Bee*, October 5, 1912, 4.

41. See, for example, "14 Out of 15 Food Prices Rise," *The Bee*, September 28, 1912, 7.

42. W.E.B. Du Bois, "Editorial: The Democrats," *Crisis*, 6 (June 1913), 79.

43. Quoted in Neil McMillan, *Dark Journey: Black Mississippians in the Age of Jim Crow* (Chicago, 1989), 53.

44. W.E.B. Du Bois, "I Am Resolved," 3 (January 1912): 113 reprinted in *The Crisis Writings*, ed. Daniel Walden (Greenwich, Conn., 1972), 57.

45. "The Negro Is Loyal," *The Bee* (November 2, 1912), 1.

46. McMillen, *Dark Journey*, 23-26.

47. Du Bois, "I Am Resolved," *The Crisis Writings*, 57.

48. Quoted in McMillen, *Dark Journey*, 25.

49. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 27.

50. One speaker at the American Economics Association in 1912, for instance, reported that the number of black farm owners had increased nearly 90 percent between 1890 and 1910. *Crisis* 3 (February 1912), 139.

51. Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family From Slavery to the Present* (1985; New York, 1986), 166.

52. On self-help, see Walter B. Weare, *Black Business in the New South: A Social History of the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company* (Urbana, 1973), 22-26; August Meier, *Negro Thought in America, 1880-1915* (Ann Arbor, 1963), esp. Part IV; Smith is quoted by Meier, *Negro Thought*, 124.

53. This essay is not the place for a full-blown consideration of the various definitions of manhood competing in America's black community at the turn of the century, but I might say briefly that Washington's version of manhood, based as it was on individual proprietorship, was in conflict with Du Bois's notion of manhood, which did not require ownership of a farm or business and did require the exercise of political and civil rights.

54. Dr. Henry Leffman, "Who is to Blame for the High Prices? Why the Trusts are to Blame," *Ladies Home Journal*, 27 (November 1, 1910), 21, 70-71. "Why is a Trust a Bad Thing," *Ladies Homes Journal*, 29 (March 1912), 23, 61. Interestingly, both articles accept the huge corporations; both seem to support government regulation of giant industries.

55. Thanks to Jane Armstrong for her research on this issue and to Kristin Hoganson for suggesting it. We searched the *Woman's Journal* for the years during which the debate over trusts was raging in the male-dominated press. There was not one mention of the trust issue.

56. Ida M. Tarbell, "The History of Standard Oil," *McClure's* (November and December 1902) published in book form as *The History of the Standard Oil Company*, (2 vols; New York, 1904).

57. Programs for the national conventions of the NACW, 1897, 1899, 1901, 1906, 1908, 1912, 1918, Mary Church Terrell Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., microfilmed edition, reels 16-17, frames 587-88, 589-591, 603-04, 625-629, 618-622, 309-337. National programs are summarized in Elizabeth Davis, *Lifting As We Climb* (Washington, D.C., 1933), 1-69.

58. Thanks to Joanne Jackson, who searched the programs and publications of the General Federation of Women's Clubs on this point. Papers of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, Headquarters of the General Federation, Washington, D.C.

59. See, for example, Maureen A. Flanagan, "Gender and Urban Political Reform: The City Club and the Woman's City Club of Chicago in the Progressive Era," *American Historical Review*, 95 (October 1990): 1032-1050. On homework, see Eileen Boris, *Home to Work: Motherhood and the Politics of Industrial Homework in the United States* (New York, 1994); on factory inspection, see especially, Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Florence Kelley and the Nation's Work: The Rise of Women's Political Culture, 1830-1900* (New Haven, 1995), chapters 9, 10.

60. See, for instance, Barton Wood Currie, "Pure Food Labels," *Good Housekeeping*, 48 (February 1909): 228-33; Richard Hooker, "President Roosevelt and Pure Food," *Good Housekeeping*, 48 (April 1909): 431-34. F.N. Barrett, "The American Food Supply," *Good Housekeeping*, 49 (September 1909): 326-29.

61. Reported in the *New York Times*, October 13, 1912, p. 6 and cited in Melanie Gustafson, "Partisan Women: Gender, Politics, and the Progressive Party of 1912," Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1993, 256.

62. "Mrs. Robinson Is Honored Will Sit In Executive Council Of The National Progressive Party," newspaper clipping from an unidentified Tennessee newspaper, probably December 1913, Box 333, Benjamin Lindsey Papers, Library of Congress.

63. *New York Times*, October 13, 1912 as cited in Gustafson, "Partisan Women," 256.

64. See, for instance, the plan of organization of progressive women in Massachusetts in Mrs. Elizabeth Towne to Benjamin Lindsey, March 5, 1914 Box 45, Benjamin Lindsey Papers, Library of Congress.

65. Although new opportunities existed for both African American and European American women, they did not exist in the same degree for both groups. Retail sales and clerical positions in white-owned businesses went almost exclusively to white women until the 1940s; only in black-owned businesses—a much smaller and more precarious segment of the economy—could African American women find such employment at the turn of the century. In the North, factory jobs remained mostly an opportunity for European immigrants or European Americans before World War II, and even in the South, only a small portion of jobs in industry welcomed black women. Like European American women, African American women gained access to higher education and from there to some professions, especially school teaching. But, again, the opportunities were less lucrative, reliable, and plentiful than for white women. Black women taught mostly in black-only schools in the South, where they often had to raise funds themselves to keep their schools open a few months a year. Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow*, esp. 178-181.

66. John Kimberly Mumford, "This Land of Opportunity: The Man and the Job," *Harper's Weekly*, 52 (July 25, 1908): 24-25. [emphasis added.]

67. *Ibid.* [emphasis added.]

68. James B. Dill, "The College Man and the Corporate Proposition," *Munsey's Magazine*, 24 (October 1900): 148-152.

69. On the ways that the insurance industry tried to lure men into sales by representing the work as close to owning one's own business, see Kwolek-Folland, *Engendering Business*, 83.

70. Henry A. Stimson, "Corporations and Character Once More," *Independent*, 53 (June 20, 1901): 1426-27. See also Henry A. Stimson, "The Small Business as a School of Manhood," *Atlantic*

Monthly, 93 (1904): 337-40 as cited in William Roy, "American Corporations and the Spirit of Capitalism," presented at the Social Science History Association conference, Atlanta, Georgia, October 15, 1994.

71. Jack London, "What Communities Lose by the Competitive System," *The Cosmopolitan*, 30 (November 1900): 58-64.

72. *Ibid.*, 64.

73. Lyman Abbott, "Big Business and Bad Business," *Outlook*, 101 (June 15, 1912): 355-58, esp. 357.

74. Abbott, "Big Business and Bad Business," 357.

75. Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (New York, 1982); Stephanie McCurry, "The Two Faces of Republicanism: Gender and Proslavery Politics in Antebellum South Carolina," *Journal of American History*, 78 (March 1992): 1245-1264, esp. 1251.

76. On the centrality of sports to Roosevelt's ideal, see his "Value of Athletic Training," *Harper's Weekly*, 37 (December 23, 1893): 1236. His acceptance of a Southern manhood has also been noted by Nina Silber, who argued that the new patriotism of the turn-of-the-century looked to an earlier Southern manhood for its inspiration. Nina Silber, "The Romance of Reunion: Northern Conciliation with the South and the Metaphor of Gender," presented at the Eighth Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, Douglass College, New Brunswick, NJ, June 10, 1990. Gail Bederman has argued that imperialism, with its "subduing of primitives" was part of true manliness in the view of Theodore Roosevelt—and not Roosevelt alone in the early twentieth century. See Gail Bederman, "Racial Pedagogy or the Big Stick: G. Stanley Hall, Theodore Roosevelt, and the Manly Quest to Civilize the Primitive," presented at the annual convention of the Organization of American Historians, Chicago, IL, April 3, 1992. For an extended analysis of Roosevelt's connection between male dominance and white supremacy, see also Bederman's brilliant *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago, 1995), 170-215.

Roosevelt's set of values is revealed in most any selection taken from his collection of essays, *The Strenuous Life* (New York, 1901).

77. That sports would offer an important arena for the creation of American manhood was part of reformer Albert Shaw's belief as well. Shaw, who gave much thought to the problem of creating American men in the twentieth century, insisted in his book, *The Outlook for the Average Man*, that "individuality and self-ownership," which had been expressed in competitive economic activity in the nineteenth century, would be expressed in leisure activities in the twentieth. Albert Shaw, *The Outlook for the Average Man* (NY, 1907), 33-34.

78. Theodore Roosevelt, "The Strenuous Life," in *The Strenuous Life*, 2.

79. *Ibid.*, 9.

80. *Ibid.*, 17.

81. *Ibid.*, 18.

82. *Ibid.*, 18.

83. *Ibid.*, 6.

84 . For a good collection of later speeches that revealed the continuation of these themes, see Roosevelt, *The New Nationalism* (New York, 1911), perhaps especially "World Feats" and "The Good Citizen."

Roosevelt's vision of American manhood did not encompass only public life, it also insisted that good men be hands-on fathers, especially with their sons. Even as he was spewing venom toward lazy isolationists and praising military men, Roosevelt claimed that every man's first obligation was to his own family. And, his letters to his own children reveal him as a father deeply involved in his children's—especially his sons'—lives. While he was fighting in Cuba, traveling as president, or hunting in Africa, he wrote his children regularly, advised them, and taught them. Even while living in the White House, he took his boys on camp outs in Rock Creek Park, read to his kids at night, and had a good romp with the little boys most nights before dinner. See, for instance, *Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children*, ed., Joseph Bishop (New York, 1929).

Historian Margaret Marsh has identified a trend around the turn of the century that she has called "masculine domesticity." She believes that masculine domesticity emerged parallel with Roosevelt's cult of strenuosity and constituted an alternative to Roosevelt's version of manhood. I would argue rather that masculine domesticity was of a piece with Roosevelt's version of manhood because one of the central characteristics of the former was a new emphasis on the role of father, i.e. masculine domesticity involved fathers more directly in rearing their children—especially sons—than they had been in the generation before. I see the move to recapture authority over parts of domestic life as a part of redefining manhood, as a part of pouring a new foundation for manhood that was in no way inconsistent with the strenuous life. Marsh, "Masculine Domesticity," 165-66.

85. Shaw, *Outlook for the Average Man*, 12.

86. *Ibid.*, 22.

87. *Ibid.*, 28.

88. *Ibid.*, 97, 112, 115.

89. *Ibid.*, 27.

90. *Ibid.*, 216-217.

91. Ernest Howard Crosby, "The Military Idea of Manliness," *Independent*, 53 (April 18, 1901): 873-75.

92. Quoted in John Gable, *The Bull Moose Years: Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressive Party* (Port Washington, New York, 1978), 181. In agreement with my assessment here is Arnaldo Testi, "The Gender of Reform Politics: Theodore Roosevelt and the Culture of Masculinity," *Journal of American History*, 81 (March 1995): 1509-1533, esp. 1530.

93. This conclusion falls in line with those of historian E. Anthony Rotundo. He recently argued that the growth of corporations among other trends encouraged American men in the final decade of the nineteenth century to demote independence and autonomy on the list of requirements for manhood and to add to the list a certain sort of "submissiveness." Rotundo, *American Manhood*, 249. Within corporate organizations, on sports teams, certainly within the military, American men were required to take orders from superiors rather than to operate as autonomous decisionmakers. The trend, according to Rotundo, gnawed at older men, but younger men did not mind at all: for them, independence was simply less central to manliness than it had been for their fathers. *Ibid.*, 236-238.