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THE MILITARY-MASCULINITY COMPLEX: HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY AND THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES, 1940-1963

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THE MILITARY-MASCULINITY COMPLEX: HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY

AND THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES, 1940-1963

by

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THE MILITARY-MASCULINITY COMPLEX: HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY

AND THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES, 1940-1963

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University of Nebraska, 2013

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The military-industrial complex grew rapidly in the build up to the Second World War and continued to expand in the decades that followed. The military was not only much larger, but had also changed their relationship with American citizens, impacting their lives in new and complex ways. The defensive needs of World War Two and the Cold War made the military an imperative and prestigious institution in the United States, and the Selective Service Draft, beginning in 1940 and running continuously until 1973, gave the military unfettered access to the young men of the nation.

During the same time, government propaganda spread to new forms of media, and created more in-depth narratives than ever before. A deep analysis of these deeper texts, created and distributed for mass audiences, provides a glimpse into the ways the military represented itself, and the expectations it had for the nation. The military consistently depicted its men as white, straight, cissexual, physically well-built, and emblematic of white, middle class norms and values. This corpus of propaganda drew heavily upon hegemonic masculinity, and illustrated all four of the dimensions of masculinity as outlined by Deborah S. David and Robert Brannon, in *The Forty-Nine Percent Majority: The Male Sex Role*. By drawing so heavily and completely upon these dimensions, the US military created an unproblematized image of the military, and also solidified and

reified the existing masculine power dynamics.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The military builds men. The linkage between manhood and military service has existed for centuries, and has been present across cultures. In the United States, military and defense propaganda have expressed this concept for more than a century. This notion is not always explicitly described, but is nearly always present as a package of imagery and narration that clues the reader in to what the federal government and the military have in mind when they say they will "build" a man. Taking a more critical view of these sorts of expressions, one can flesh out some key concepts and definitions this powerful institution held in relation to gender and its utility in propaganda.

Notions of gender - most commonly understood as masculinity and femininity - are not innate to the male or female sex, but rather are socially constructed. Gender roles and representations are highly dynamic, and their definitions are always in flux. Cultural norms and definitions change in response to social, cultural, political, and economic pressures and vary across space. Idealized masculinity holds hegemonic power over other genders, though it faces constant contestation from those who represent themselves in ways outside the mainstream. I focus on the definitions of manhood put forth by the US military and the ways in which it sought to draw power from idealized masculinity, while simultaneously reifying and elevating it.

The Great Depression brought about a sudden shock to the standards of manhood, which were largely contingent upon the economic stability of the 'Self-Made Man,' and his ability to provide for himself and his family.[1] The expansion of the military-industrial complex, beginning at the start of the Second World War, brought about new catalysts, avenues, and definitions for manhood in America. The war brought with it a growing economy and an immense need for soldiers, facilitating possibilities for men to fill the masculine roles of breadwinner and soldier. In her book on Western masculinity, *Slow Motion: Changing Masculinities, Changing Men*, Lynne Segal wrote, "In short, there were at least two opposed faces of masculinity in the fifties. There was the new family man, content with house and garden. And there was the old wartime hero, who put 'freedom' before family and loved ones."[2] The former may exhibit a "softer" image of masculinity than the latter, but both fulfill cultural expectations for what roles men should fill. Throughout this project, I seek to study the discursive relationship built between ideal manhood and military service and expressed through popular media - primarily comic books and illustrated pamphlets.

While ideal gender roles and expectations of the era drew heavily upon very traditional definitions, they were also rigidly defined in an emerging nationalist ideology, often referred to as the "American Way." The American Way is a loose set of cultural norms and meanings that emerged in the face of economic struggles and the threat of

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[1] Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2011), 6.
[2] Lynne Segal, *Slow Motion: Changing Masculinities, Changing Men* (New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 20.

Fascism and Communism.[3] In his study of manhood and popular culture in the 1950s, James Gilbert wrote, "I believe the 1950s were unusual (though not unique) for their relentless and self-conscious preoccupation with masculinity, in part because the period followed wartime self-confidence based upon the sacrifice and heroism of ordinary men."[4] Although racial and class barriers to idyllic manhood still existed even after military service, the military service provided a broad avenue through which men could attain higher status through economic advantages and respect and admiration throughout society. According to the narrative of military service, which was broadcast through the federal government as well as popular culture, every American GI had put his country first, and had defended the nation bravely and honorably. The cultural imagery put forth by the United States military, which I study in depth throughout this project, creates a "military masculinity" that is highly idealized, and promotes a similarly idyllic masculinity for men not only during service, but also in the private sphere.

MILITARY MASCULINITY

Notions of masculinity were present throughout society and culture, and individuals were inundated with positive and negative examples of masculinity all the time. Though it was certainly not alone in communicating ideal masculinity, the military, with its broad reach and institutional power, had a significant, and growing, impact on the norms of the nation. The militarization of the nation had great influence in shaping the

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[3] Wendy L. Wall, *Inventing the "American Way": The Politics of Consensus from the New Deal to the Civil Rights Movement*, Reprint (Oxford University Press, USA, 2009), 4–10.
[4] James Gilbert, *Men in the Middle: Searching for Masculinity in the 1950s* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2005), 2.

masculine ideal of the WWII and Postwar Eras in a number of ways, including through training, GI benefits, shared experiences, and the reputation men would receive from service. I focus on the latter aspect, specifically on the creation of a valorous masculine culture ascribed to American servicemen.

The perceived vital role of men in pushing forth the American way in the face of Fascist and Communist threats was not limited to active service in the military or jobs in the defense industry. For a nation becoming increasingly militarized in the face of the specter of existential threats, the strength, courage, and intelligence of the men in an all-male military was essential to keeping freedom and liberty intact. The culture created by the military encouraged the importance of these men in all of their roles in society. Men who did not serve or had returned from service were understood as heads of their families and part of the capitalist system; which was engaged in its own ideological war with the Communist world. These dual roles of nationalistic manhood — often two stages in a man's post-adolescent life — would define men's role in society through the immediate postwar era and into the sixties. The military's vast production of cultural propaganda were steeped in ideals of hegemonic masculinity and helped set examples for soldiers to follow, while also broadcasting messages about soldiers to the general population.

The masculine ideal put forth in these defense materials were largely based upon very traditional, white, middle class masculinity that exuded aggression and strength, but also control and gentility. The American military was composed of men from all different races, classes, backgrounds, temperaments, and sexualities. However, imagery surrounding these men exhibited in film, advertisements, and federal productions, show a very narrow scope of men — white, middle class, well-built, straight, and cissexual. Men

who did not meet this ideal - people of color, the working class, homosexuals, and disabled - were not only excluded from the imagery put forth by the government, but were also often barred from service or denied the economic benefits of their service. Their exclusion from imagery associated with American manhood and heroism denied them mainstream idyllic masculinity, as put forth by the federal government. Masculine norms were challenged and contested, particularly from those men marginalized by these policies, but the narrative put forth by the federal government was devoid of these nuances and alternative masculinities. By injecting these white, male, middle class norms into the materials, the military stood to benefit in a number of ways. Primarily, it presented an idealized and unproblematic image of the military-industrial complex that cities could be proud of and comfortable with. It hid the ugliness of war and the contradictions men often faced throughout their service, and served as a barrier to criticism of policies and actions. The nation rallied their support behind a military that was defined through media as being an ideal hegemonic male, establishing and reifying an unattainable image of masculinity. By producing media material that put forth the American soldier as a hero, these military publications also put forth ideas about what was normative, and aligned, as Aaron Belkin argued, white-male-straight-man with American-military-empire.[5] Belkin found that the military's treatment of masculinity and heterosexuality was used as a tool to ease the ugliness of empire with 'purified' troops of unquestionable morality.[6] Secondarily, the communication of unattainable masculinity,

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[5] Aaron Belkin, *Bring Me Men: Military Masculinity and the Benign Façade of American Empire, 1898-2001* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 58.
[6] Ibid.

packed in the American white, straight, well-built American soldier fueled existing power dynamics that marginalized alternative cultures that could potentially cause disruptions in a society in crisis.

Hegemonic Masculinity and the Selective Service

The Selective Service Draft placed the Department of Defense intimately inside the lives of all young men, and granted the military a place of power, where they could determine which men would be accepted or rejected. This judgment, based in part upon a man's physical body and perceived sexuality, often subjected men to either benefits and respect or ridicule and doubts about his physical, psychological, or sexual well-being. Although the DoD was being pragmatic (even if they were greatly misled by their own ideas about sexuality and physical well-being), their decisions would have a major impact on the lives of the men they inspected and graded.

The honor of service and GI benefits, along with the conceptions of masculinity and the economic boosts that accompanied it, were not available to all men, however. Racial boundaries remained distinct and rules regarding the body types and sexuality of soldiers kept many men from succeeding along these lines or gaining the societal appreciation of other heterosexual, cissexual, white men. Racial minorities and men discharged for homosexual activity often received Blue Discharges, preventing them from receiving benefits from the Veterans Administration.

The characteristics and power dynamics of hegemonic males, though still remaining dominant decades later, were challenged and transformed in the 1960s by the sexual revolution, the African-American Civil Rights Movement, raised class

consciousness, the re-entry of women into the workplace, the gay rights movement, the counter-culture, and the falling mystique of the military during and after the Vietnam War. However, contestation from these groups existed well before the 1960s, and the repeated affirmation of white, male, middle-class norms speaks volumes for the efforts of powerful institutions to keep these voices marginalized. I argue that the military drew upon these dominant concepts of power not only to exert their own power, both globally and locally, but to solidify the domestic power of the hegemonic male. However, military service and the military's treatment of these groups, aided in organizing and fueling the pushback from many alternative identities and cultures in the years following the war.

About the Materials

The documents I examine are pulled from a wide range of sources and served a wide range of purposes. Though I was only able to peruse a small portion of the vast collection of government productions, I digitized every piece I came across that gave a strong gender representation amongst the male sex. The materials were created for a variety of purposes: some of the materials were only distributed to enlisted men, some were used for recruiting, and some were specifically targeted at women. These materials drew on emerging and popular media, including comic books and Hollywood-style films, and (often literally) paint a picture of the American soldier as an ideal male. Military comic books and other printed material with cartoon illustrations compose a large portion of my primary sources. Government comic books trace their roots back to the First World War, when propaganda creation was ramped up and these popular images became a key

component to maintain support and morale.[7] The Committee on Public Information (CPI) was established in 1917, and in 1918, a Bureau of Cartoons was established within the CPI.[8]

The federal government's interest in the power of cartoons to convey messages continued, and was amplified again when the nation once again went to war in Europe. In 1942, the Bureau of Intelligence (successor to the CPI) conducted analysis of newspaper cartoon strips for the OWI, and found that depictions of the enemy were too simplistic and could lead to overconfidence.[9] Graham wrote, "That the government believed in the persuasive power and mass appeal of comics is clear from the widespread use of the medium and its simultaneous suppression of the format."[10] Graham added that the commercial comics industry bowed to government pressure to limit violence and promote American values, and began self-regulating in the 1950s.[11] Across the government comics, Graham found, "The government had certain ideals in mind with regard to what American culture was and ought to be, and it recognized the mass appeal of comics and their potential for getting those cultural messages across."[12] These documents created the idea of what was to be expected of American GIs and shaped the way they were understood and framed within society. While I do not claim to know the motivations

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[7] Richard Graham, *Government Issue: Comics for the People, 1940s-2000s* (Abrams ComicArts, 2011), 15.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid., 16.
[10] Ibid., 12.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid., 13.

behind each of these artifacts, a critical analysis of them, along with a deep contextual understanding of the era, provide a useful examination of these propagandistic materials.

During World War Two, the Office of War Information (OWI) had a special media division for cartoons and comics, as did the individual branches of the military, and well-known artists, as well as enlistees, took part in producing cartoons conveying the federal government's messages and visions.[13] During WWII and the postwar years, the federal government developed an extensive research budget to understanding the psychology and effective techniques behind propaganda and other kinds of psychological warfare. These tactics were undoubtedly put to work in the production of comics that took aim at a influencing a broad audience and large readership. Richard L. Graham, in his study of government comic books, *Government Issue: Comics for the People, 1940-2000s*, wrote, "Postwar military publications moved beyond the pocket-sized manuals and booklets printed for soldiers. From the 1950s onward, the armed forces published full-color comic books, such as *Time of Decision* (1963), designed to engage the newly emerging 'youth culture.'"[14] These images were also distributed in nonmilitary culture, and became the normative imagery for the armed forces — promoting everything exclusively in positive light, with rampant heroism and flawless masculinity.

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[13] Ibid., 16.
[14] Ibid., 18.

Chapter 2: Hegemonic Masculinity

Masculinity

Masculinity is a gender process typically associated with the male sex that impacts gender relations and personal identities for individuals. Masculinity can by exhibited by any sex or gender, but men are most often held to — and judged by — his culture's current standards of masculinity. Numerous masculinities exist within every culture, and often vary according to class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and religion. Gendered expectations are etched into social relationships and institutions, and impact the way individuals understand each other and operate in society. Conceptions of masculinity are often perpetuated through culture and social institutions, and can change due to challenges and pressures from a number of sources, ranging from competing definitions of masculinity to environmental and economic forces. Social scientists examine masculinities largely in the context of their role in regulating gendered norms and interactions through have a structured hierarchy.

Hegemonic Masculinity

Hegemonic masculinity sits atop the gendered social hierarchy by embodying the culturally idealized definition of masculinity, which is constructed as both oppositional and superior to femininity. R.W. Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity sprung from her work with gender and class differences in Australian schools in the 1980s, and

her theory has become a central focus of Men's Studies in the decades since. In a 2005

review and revision of the concept, Connell and James W. Messerschmidt described the

hegemonic ideal as "...embod[ying] the currently most honored way of being a man, it

required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically

legitimated the global subordination of women to men."[15] This ascendancy is achieved

not by force, but through culture, institutional preference, and persuasion.[16] Individuals

who best represent culturally idealized masculine traits are given more respect and power

in society.[17]

Social ascendency through hegemony, drawn from Antonio Gramsci's work on

class relations, comes through social forces that determine outcomes in cultural, social,

and economic statuses.[18] Although many of the primary traits of hegemonic masculinity

facilitate physical domination, such as physical size and strength, assertiveness,

aggressiveness, and skills in warfare, hegemonic masculinity does not include the use of

force or violence, though those may be used to attain or maintain it. "Ascendancy of one

group of men over another achieved at the point of a gun, or by the threat of

unemployment, is not hegemony. Ascendancy which is embedded in religious doctrine

and practice, mass media content, wage structures, the design of housing,

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[15] R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," *Gender & Society* 19, no. 6 (December 2005): 832.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Traditionally, many women who exhibit masculine characteristics have been marginalized, although female embodiment of masculinity in some cultures can result in positive social status.

[18] Robert Connell, *Gender and Power: Society, the Person, and Sexual Politics* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987), 184.

welfare/taxation policies and so forth, is."[19] The idealization of masculinity influences individuals to embody and act out masculinity discursively through comparison and competition with peers, as well as through idealistic cultural manifestations of masculinity. Those who perform this gender best are often rewarded through institutions shaped to reward these specific values.

The hierarchical structure of hegemonic masculinity does not only grant men ascendancy over women, but also over men whose identities and characteristics do not align as well with the ideal. Hegemonic masculinity is part of a multi-layered and multi-structured hierarchy created in heteronormative, gendered, racial, and classist terms. Connell argued that subordinate male supported this hierarchy through what he terms as "complicit masculinity": "Men who received the benefits of patriarchy without enacting a strong version of masculine dominance could be regarded as showing a complicit masculinity. It was in relation to this group, and to compliance among heterosexual women, that the concept of hegemony was most powerful."[20] Connell uses the term to articulate the ways in which hegemonic masculinity retained power, but the term "complicit" does not properly convey the agency that women and subordinated masculinities had in challenging and altering hegemonic masculinity.

Hegemonic masculinity is always constructed in relation to subordinated masculinities as well as women, so its existence, traits, and place in society are dependent not only upon the complicity of the rest of the population, but also upon push-back and

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[19] Ibid.
[20] Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," 832.

shifting values from the non-hegemonic.[21] Because hegemonic masculinity is dynamic

discursive process, not just a static set of definitions, challenges — internal, external, and

environmental — can shape the masculine ideal. Demetrakis Demetriou argued that

hegemonic masculinity enacts dialectical pragmatism in relation to these subordinate

masculinities, and thus changes through the occurrence of "...[a] constant process of

negotiation, translation, and reconfiguration."[22] The interplay between different forms of

masculinity is an important part of how a patriarchal social order functions.[23] Demetriou

labeled this power as "internal hegemonic masculinity," using terminology drawn directly

from Gramsci's postulation of economic hegemony.[24] Gramsci stated that a "[dominant

class] leads the classes which are its allies, and dominates those which are its enemies."[25]

Demetriou argued that the existence of both internal and external hegemony was implicit

in Gramsci's understanding of the dual nature of class domination, as it is with masculine

domination.[26]

Ideals of Hegemonic Masculinity

There is no singular definition of hegemonic masculinity within a culture, but

there are a number of specific qualities that men can exhibit to meet the ideal. One of the

most widely used methods by which the actions and characteristics of hegemonic

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[21] Connell, *Gender and Power*, 183.
[22] Demetrakis Demetriou, "Connell's Concept of Hegemonic Masculinity: A Critique," *Theory and Society* 30, no. 3 (June 2001): 335.
[23] Connell, *Gender and Power*, 183.
[24] Demetriou, "Connell's Concept of Hegemonic Masculinity: A Critique," 344.
[25] Antonio Gramsci, Quintin Hoare, and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci;* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1971), 57.
[26] Demetriou, "Connell's Concept of Hegemonic Masculinity: A Critique," 344.

masculinity can be understood is derived from Deborah S. David and Robert Brannon's 1976 collection of essays, *Forty-Nine Percent Majority: The Male Sex Role*.[27] David and Brannon organized the collection around four dimensions of 'the male role,' which are described and examined in the first portion of the book. Their four dimensions, No Sissy Stuff, The Big Wheel, The Sturdy Oak, and Give 'Em Hell, are widely used in the field of Men's Studies and continue to guide modern scholars. Although David and Brannon typically speak of the antiquated 'male sex role,' a theory which approaches masculinity from distinct and separate biological differences, their examination acknowledges multiple roles that men may embody, and is much more nuanced than much of the male sex role literature. Their work also recognized the central tenant of hegemonic masculinity that the male role was an ideal not typically fulfilled by most men. This project uses these four dimensions to categorize and analyze the government resources created during this time period.

Hegemonic Masculinity and the United States Military

Definitions of idealized masculinity can be produced and circulated via day-to-day interactions with others, through institutional requirements and guidelines, and through gendered cultural depictions. The focus of my research is on idealized masculine iconography within cultural media, which takes on a larger meaning as it is created and distributed by a powerful and influential institution such as the United States military. The materials in this project represent a vast corpus of idealized examples and

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[27] Deborah S. David and Robert Brannon, *The Forty-Nine Percent Majority: The Male Sex Role* (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1976).

descriptions of men put forth by the US military, both by creating exaggerated icons and by endowing the everyday man with idealized masculinity. The Department of Defense materials can be understood as representing and perpetuating many different dimensions and characteristics of hegemonic masculinity. The materials published, whether for recruiting purposes, information dissemination to the troops, or news releases for the general public, always depicted the soldiers along a specific archetype, which extolled the values of the middle class white hegemonic male. Though one may expect to see soldiers endowed with courage, strength, and aggression, they are also shown as being unemotional, socially desirable, strong wage-earners, physically attractive, sexually desirable, and strong civic leaders. The message they gave off was not only about the value of soldiers as defenders of borders and freedoms, but as supreme *men*. These materials create the impression that men who entered the service were ideal in all dimensions of manhood, both through their service and through self-selection.

Hegemonic masculinity is a highly idealistic creation; it is not simply determined by the most popular or common aspects of males within a culture. The exemplars of extraordinary masculinity are especially notable, as the traits and behaviors they exhibit are much more pronounced and obvious than those of the men depicted who follow lock-step in slightly more realistic ways. These extraordinary examples are essential not only to the production and clarity of the ideals, but also to the power structures that form from the examples. These fictionalized or exaggerated ideals garners support from men and

sustain power for men closest to the ideal.[28] Connell wrote, "Indeed the winning of hegemony often involves the creation of models of masculinity which are quite specifically fantasy figures, such as the film characters played by Humphrey Bogart, John Wayne, and Sylvester Stallone. Or real models may be publicized who are so remote from everyday achievement that they have the effect of an unattainable ideal, like the Australian Rules footballer Ron Barassi or the Boxer Muhammad Ali."[29] Connell and Messerschmidt added in their 2005 revision, "[H]egemony works in part through the production of exemplars of masculinity (e.g., professional sports stars), symbols that have authority despite the fact that most men and boys do not fully live up to them."[30] The materials I examine in this project contribute to the exaggerated expectations of the hegemonic male.

The reinforcement of definitive masculinities and the placement of them within the discursively created ideal soldier — well-built, white, middle class men — provided a further boost to the already-dominant definitions of hegemonic masculinity. All of David and Brannon's characteristics are displayed in these cultural depictions of military men, and are created as part of the aura of the military man in America. This further enhanced the identities of hegemonic males, and elevated a cohort of young men that would set the image of manhood, service, and familial relations for the coming generations.

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[28] Connell, *Gender and Power*, 185.
[29] Ibid., 184–185.
[30] Connell and Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," 846.

In these materials, masculine qualities were not granted exclusively to men. Advertisements aimed at women during this period did give them an amount of strength and power. However, while these women were granted this power by being endowed with masculinity, most obviously through, the famous imagery surrounding Rosie the Riveter. While these materials granted women masculinity, they were only understood as having temporary masculinity, while underwriting the supposed inferiority of women. There was an understanding that women could serve the country in a number of 'masculine' ways, including enlistment and employment, but materials also came infused with the message that these roles and qualities were temporary, and that women were best off at home once the men returned.[31]

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[31] The concept of temporary masculinity for women is more fully examined in the Antifemininity section.

Chapter 3: American Manhood

National Unity and The American Way

Americans often refer to the 1950s as the *Age of Consensus* or the *Golden Age* for families, the economy, and American identity. This concept of a shared and cohesive American identity is the product of the concerted effort of a number of forces putting forth a narrative of unity and tranquility. Although some regional and ethnic divisions were reduced, postwar America experienced emerging pressures from women, African Americans, and homosexuals.[32] Wendy Wall argued that the *American Way* was a political project formulated in the 1930s to celebrate the American economic system as a counter to the New Deal and rising Fascism and Communism abroad.[33] The *American Way* as a cohesive identity had to be created to bridge American identities that were divided based on regional, racial, religious, and ethnic differences. Although a number of competing institutions, including private corporations, civil rights organizations, and governmental institutions, contributed to the discourse, Wall argues that the American value system that triumphed encouraged individuals to align with the white Protestant way of life.[34] The free enterprise economic system was a central component of the American Way, both as a celebration of individuals' freedoms, as well as a direct

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[32] These groups drew much of their growing resistance from the experiences of the war and immediate postwar period. Working women were pushed out of the workforce when the GIs returned, African Americans had fought bravely for a 'Double Victory,' only to return to continue fighting inequality and discrimination, and homosexuals began to form a more cohesive identity through increased interaction, as well as direct and explicit discrimination through Blue Discharges and the Lavender Scare.

[33] Wall, *Inventing the "American Way,"* 279–280.

[34] Ibid., 7.

opposition to the Communist threat. The 'Self-Made Man,' the central component of late nineteenth and early twentieth century masculinity, was revived and adapted to fit the new economic and familial atmosphere that prized teamwork.[35] New definitions of manhood, primarily though military service or breadwinning for the family, created acceptable motives to submit to centralized authority and work for advancement through established bureaucracies. White collar work, once considered a threat to manhood, was now an avenue for men to provide security for their family and engage in a larger ideological war. Only through a man's success in the unique American free enterprise system could the United States protect itself from hardship or the evils of competing economic systems like Communism and Fascism.[36]

American involvement in WWII, and the Cold War soon after, was intended to provide protection from the perceived threats that had been lingering since the early 1930s - economic hardship, Fascism, and Communism. Involvement in WWII jumpstarted the economy and put American men back into the workplace, as well as front lines in Europe and the Pacific. The Cold War was fought through the global consumer economy, "hard" diplomacy, and through limited military conflict. The military brought about social and demographic shifts during the 1940s and 1950s that contributed to the unity and alignment of the American way with white middle class males. Prior to the Second World War, American culture was fraught with divisions, with lines being drawn between different regions, races, ethnicities, religions, and classes. Although these

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[35] Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 9–15.
[36] Wall, *Inventing the "American Way,"* 279–280.

divisions lasted well beyond this period, dividing lines became more porous and flexible. War drew many rural Americans to cities, pulled defense workers and GIs to different regions, and mixed together men of different regions and classes in the same military units. The military continued to introduce GIs to fellow Americans from all different backgrounds in the years following WWII, and Harry S. Truman's signing of Executive Order 9981 in 1948 fostered racial integration in the armed forces.

The middle class expanded rapidly in the postwar years, fueled by GI Bill-funded higher education and the Veteran's Administration's home loan programs. The suburban home, headed by a breadwinning male and homemaking wife became synonymous with Postwar America. Nuclear families were understood to be the bedrock of American society and, in popular conceptions, these families were all headed by breadwinning men, who fit all of the stereotypes about leadership, strength, intelligence, and earning potential. The growing suburban middle class began loosening many of the pre-conceived notions of region, class, ethnicity, and religion behind the broader definition of middle class America.[37] Suburbs became, "...a meeting place for people of rural and urban backgrounds, for people of different class origins newly re-classed into the expanding middle...for people of different ethnic origins newly recast as 'white.'"[38] The new "American culture" became defined as the white, middle class, nuclear family, with a male breadwinner as head of household.

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[37] Beth L. Bailey and David Farber, *The First Strange Place: Race and Sex in World War II Hawaii* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 17–21.
[38] Ibid., 19.

The realignment of the white middle class behind common goals and identities hardly meant that divisions no longer existed. Bailey and Farber found that outside of the white, middle class suburbs, significant differences remained between the identities of individuals, and these individuals remained marginalized by the middle class and federal institutions, which held increasingly important roles in society.[39] Additionally, Bailey and Farber found that, "As claims of class and ethnicity and region were attenuated, the always crucial categories of race and genders seemed more fundamental than ever."[40] This distinction between genders had been brought into sharp contrast with the war, Bailey and Farber argue, and a gulf developed between men and women because men were expected to fight and women were not.[41]

Diversity and the American Way

The relationship between high-level officials in the military and enlisted people of color was complex and strained throughout this time period. Military officials understood that African Americans composed a substantial and valuable portion of the military, and that positive relationships between races were important to the success of the nation. A number of pieces of propaganda from the federal government showed white and African Americans working together under the slogan of unity and a united cause. The issue of racial harmony was important to the creation of national unity and a unified effort, but these sentiments were little more than empty propaganda. The military tempered depictions of black masculinity, and did little to update progressive racial policies.

[39] Ibid., 213.
[40] Ibid., 19.
[41] Ibid., 21.

Despite calls for unity and coexistence, American troops remained segregated throughout World War II. Thomas Borstelmann found that during WWII, U.S. military authorities expanded segregation in determining policies for facilities being build outside the South.[42] In Europe, anti-miscegenation policies were officially implemented, intended to "protect" European women from African American men.[43] Even after Executive Order 9981 ended official segregation in the military in 1948, troops often remained segregated de facto, and minority men were relegated to lower positions.

In hindsight, the "Double V" campaign and the service and dedication of African American servicemen catalyzed progression towards racial equality, but change did not come quickly or without continued efforts. Many Americans acknowledged the contribution of non-whites to the effort, and the policies and brutal practices of Nazi Germany moved many Americans to protest racism.[44] However, many African American servicemen returned to the same poor conditions and mistreatment they had left, and many were targets of violence and harassment. Men of color were often denied the benefits of the GI Bill, and returned home to racism and redlining.

The military's muted and limited messages of unity were launched into a complex American public composed not only of African Americans and anti-racists, but also racists and segregationists. Borstelmann traces this pragmatic ambivalence throughout the

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[42] Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 32, http://site.ebrary.com/id/10315837.
[43] Ibid., 33.
[44] Ibid., 31.

middle part of the twentieth century in *The Cold War and the Color Line*. Regarding WWII, Borstelmann wrote, "When greater racial justice dovetailed with the needs of the war, it was pursued; when it did not, it was allowed to slide."[45] These complications continued throughout the Cold War, as the nation balanced domestic unrest with racist and imperialist foreign allies.

Federal anti-racist propaganda was very simplistic in comparison to its other works – often a single poster illustrating African American men serving the nation in uniform or in the workplace.[46] The US military was aware of its multiracial composition and sought to benefit from it, but did not take the multiculturalism into consideration when constructing an American identity. The rhetoric of the American Way, though ostensibly inclusive and pluralistic, was strongly tilted towards the identities and values of the white middle class. Wendy L. Wall examined the creation of the "American Way" – the collective American identity put forth by the federal government, private business, and cultural institutions – and found, "An America pictured as a 'nation of immigrants' implicitly left out both American Indians and blacks. Even those who advocated the broader 'nation of nations' formulation often failed to recognize the unique history and challenges confronted by black Americans."[47]

Although officials began to welcome and integrate people of color into the military and Americans' attitudes and policies slowly evolved, the military still drew

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[45] Ibid., 36.
[46] I was unable to locate any lengthy stories or pieces that illustrated African American service in any greater depth, though a few may exist.
[47] Wall, *Inventing the "American Way,"* 67.

overwhelmingly upon white men and white middle class values and norms to define itself and the nation. Black masculinity remained a threat in the eyes of many white Americans, and depictions of strong black masculinity in ways that did not directly serve the needs of the nation contrasted with the military's pragmatic ambivalence toward racial progress. Thus, depictions of black men heroically engaging in battle or using service for upward mobility in the same manner as their white counterparts are absent in these materials.

Manhood and Domesticity

The emphasis on the capitalist system and the military-industrial complex raised the status of the American male in popular and intellectual discourse. Both of these archetypes were central figures in the understanding of American culture, as put forth by popular culture, the media, and other influential institutions. Many of these messages came from the US military itself, and the military's position of power and authority reified its messages about manhood and military masculinity. With the stress of global warfare and the threat of nuclear war, the federal government sought to unite all Americans behind a cohesive American identity during WWII and the Cold War. This identity relied heavily upon the image of the middle class, straight, white American man, who served in the military defending the nation and returned home to support and lead his family. This alignment of idealized masculinity, the military, and Americanism raised the profile of American men and made American discourse even more male-centric. The power and idealism of the hegemonic male was deeply intertwined throughout three 'battlegrounds' between Western capitalism and Eastern Communism.

Laura Belmonte, in her book, *Selling the American Way*, examined the State

Department's creation and promotion of the "American Way."[48] Belmonte found some

very distinct differences in terms of family and gender roles in the State Department's

depictions of Americans and Soviets. Communism, the State Department releases argued,

masculinized women and put them to work, destroying the family. American women, in

contrast, were seen as fair and gentle, and dedicated to their families. One of Belmonte's

sources noted that 19 million American women worked outside the home, but that most

women only worked until they were married. "Homemaking," one text stated, "is still the

goal of most American girls."[49] It is clear that these releases and materials were part of

the ideological battle between Capitalism and Communism, Belmonte added:

> "Nonetheless, we cannot dismiss the propagandists' defense of American families as mere
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> rhetoric. In linking individual lives and international relations, US information experts recognized
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> that Man's longing and aspirations fuel political movements. In espousing their views on family
>
> life and gender, they articulated deeply held beliefs and political values. While their visions of
>
> America may not have adequately encompassed the socioeconomic diversity of the nation, they
>
> provide important insights into why US policy-makers took the fight against communism so
>
> seriously - and so personally."[50]

The nuclear family, consisting of a working man and a homemaking woman,

drew upon notions of traditional gender roles and the separate spheres of the workplace

and home. This return to traditionalism, or at least the popular notion of traditionalism,

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[48] Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War*
(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).
[49] Ibid., 154.
[50] Ibid., 158.

smoothed over many of the anxieties and troubles for middle class Americans. Belmonte wrote, "In this era, many Americans embraced domesticity and traditional gender roles as an antidote to anxieties unleashed by atomic weapons and political instability. Sharing similar elite backgrounds, most U.S. political leaders extolled the nuclear family as the embodiment of democratic values."[51] Hegemonic males were placed at the top of the social hierarchy, and benefitted greatly from the reinforcement of their position at the top of the American social hierarchy. Thus political, social, and cultural elites were putting their weight behind the power and perceived superiority of the white middle class male - as patriarch of the nuclear family and as masters of the American free enterprise system. Wall argues that American involvement in World War II was a boon to this ideology, and the language of *The American Way* became an essential part of American culture, as messages of unity and freedom contrasted against with Fascism and Communism.[52] Following World War II, the Cold War had the nation more steeped in the power and righteousness of the American Way than ever before, as all facets of culture were engaged in the global power struggle.

The essentialism of proper masculinity to American well-being expanded throughout American culture, fueled by the reinforcement of the institutions and archetypical roles of the nuclear family and the military. Nationalism became heavily infused with military masculinity, and foreign policy and political discourse were overtaken by masculinized terminology and imagery. In political discourse, men came to

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[51] Ibid., 137.
[52] Wall, *Inventing the "American Way,"* 275.

represent the nation on a higher level than they had previously, and the conflation of positive/male/strong in opposition to negative/female/weak became stronger and more prominent. This gendered polarization of terms and imagery also contributed to a masculine crisis, resulting in a backlash against 'momism' and homosexuality.

American Manhood in Politics

Masculinity and Political Discourse

Politics are an essential landscape through which a group can strengthen its forces of power and domination in a society. When a demographic or group can attain social ascendancy, their position of power can be buttressed and formalized through the attainment of political office. Hegemonic power can be reified and institutionalized through the shaping of federal policies and bureaucracies. Although women's groups have been behind a number of important political reforms, most notably during the Progressive Era, political office and elite federal appointments were dominated by men up to and throughout the middle twentieth century. Women were were first elected to the House of Representatives in 1917 and the Senate in 1931, but composed a very small number of the seats. For politicians and upper-level bureaucrats, masculinized discourse and masculine traits became important pieces of political capital, which then doubled down on the influence of masculine principles on the federal government. Historians have documented a very strong surge of masculinized political discourse throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s. Language describing politicians, and especially surrounding their foreign policy attitudes, began to take on overtly masculine platitudes.

In an influential 1955 essay, Harvard sociologist Daniel Bell cited an increasing polarized discourse between the "hard" and "soft" line in political discourse.[53] K.A. Cuordileone traced this hard-soft dichotomy and its masculine underpinnings to the 1930s, when Americans were faced with the immediate threat of economic hardship and the looming threat of Fascism and Communism.[54] Cuordileone found that this polarized gendered language and imagery expanded rapidly as the "hardness" of one's line toward Communism became a primary political litmus test. Looking beyond the military posturing of the Cold War, Cuordileone found, "...a politics that relied on a complex of sexually-charged dualisms; for cultural as well as political reasons, those dualisms imprisoned the discourse of the era and as a result impoverished its politics."[55] The masculine litmus test became so powerful that it began to apply not only to the foreign policy and ideologies of a male politician, but also to his personal lives and past experiences.

Masculine Politics

The link between liberal policies and weakness and effeminacy began to gain traction in criticisms of the New Deal. The reliance on government assistance ran contrary to the "Self-Made Man," a long-running staple of American masculinity. The Self-Made Man ideology was built upon the physical and intellectual strength of men to support themselves and their families without the help of other individuals or institutions.

[53] K. A. Cuordileone, *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War* (New York: Routledge, 2004), vii.
[54] Ibid., 514–515.
[55] Ibid., 516.

David K. Johnson argued that these bureaucracies and assistance programs were seen by many as emasculating and feminizing trends, and then men who enacted them were likewise effeminate and weak.[56] K.A. Cuordileone found the link between masculine attributes like simplicity, independence, and virtue and their oppositional effete characteristics of idleness, love of luxury, and self-indulgence to be more fundamental, going back to early American history.[57] Cuordileone argued that reform had long been associated with women placing rules upon men, so liberal reformers were aligned with effete characteristics, which triggered a connection with much-maligned feminine control. Right-wing rhetoric recast the term "liberalism" as "...feminine in principle, effeminate in embodiment, and emasculating in effect."[58]

Building upon this linkage between liberalism and effeminacy (perhaps best understood in this context as "failed masculinity") as well as a larger cultural turn against homosexual and effete men, politicians began a venomous campaign against homosexuals in the federal government. The argument, according to conservative politicians, was that homosexuals, by nature, were immoral, and could be targets for blackmail or subversive activities. Underwriting this was the popular understanding of a strong link between straight hegemonic men and political leadership in America. The subversion of masculinity by homosexuals brought critics to question their likelihood to

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[56] David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (University Of Chicago Press, 2006).
[57] Cuordileone, *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War*, 21.
[58] Ibid., 49.

subvert other essential pillars of American life.[59] Congress, the Pentagon, and the State

Department became filled with vitriolic and aggressive witch-hunts to rid the federal

government of homosexuals, in what has come to be known as "The Lavender Scare."

Although the Lavender Scare is often associated with McCarthy, as his accusations

brought about political showmanship, Johnson argued that concerns began in 1947, were

institutionalized, and existed for decades to come.[60]

The link between the New Deal and effeminacy was not limited to its policies.

David K. Johnson, in his book *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays

and Lesbians in the Federal Government*, examined the gay subculture that grew in

Washington DC as a result of the increasing size of Roosevelt's federal government.[61] He

argued that the growing gay subculture, the result of a growing city and a slowly

coalescing gay identity throughout the nation, made it easy to link homosexuality (and, in

turn, a subversion of masculinity) with Roosevelt's policies, advisors, and State

Department employees.[62] Following the Roosevelt administration, liberalism continued to

be linked with the "softness" of effete characteristics and a weak front towards

Communism and other foreign threats.

Anti-effete and antifeminist feelings were legitimated in the minds of many

conservatives in the wake of Alfred Kinsey's groundbreaking (and best-selling) research

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[59] Robert D Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 65.
[60] Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 4–5.
[61] Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*.
[62] Ibid.

on male sexuality. *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*. Kinsey's book, released in 1948, sent shockwaves through the United States, as many Americans realized that premarital sex and homosexuality were much more widespread than previously thought. In the minds of many Americans, Kinsey's study granted some credibility, to the accusations that effete federal officials were "homosexual perverts." Physical traits and mannerisms became a focus for venomous attacks from political opponents. These attacks created a new focus on the bodies and characteristics of politicians and public servants. Public officials with medical conditions attempted to cover up their issues, or created fictitious or exaggerated accounts of combat or athletic issues to glorify their visible defects.[63]

Masculine Politicians

Robert Dean, in his study of masculine political discourse in the Cold War era, *Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy*, found a patronage system for elite federal bureaucrats and politicians that leaned heavily upon a system of male-only organizations. These organizations, from boarding schools to fraternities and military service, shaped the way these men thought, and served as important passages for these men to achieve professional stature and proper manhood. The experiences and credentials earned though these institutions, which were highly valued by the elite "brotherhood" carried great weight when it came to appointments of political office. Dean argued that military service in WWII, became an essential part of this masculine identity, and slightly shifted and opened the patronage system and the

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[63] Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 7.

discourse surrounding it. Placement in military service, especially in elite or accomplished squadrons, opened paths for upward mobility for many lower class men to establish themselves as capable and deserving of a position in political aristocracy.[64] According to Dean, the patronage system that filled many national security positions played into the hands of men who saw themselves as "aristocratic warrior-intellectuals"[65]

The emphasis on bodily masculinity during the Cold War, combined with the increased status of military patronage, led to politicians emphasizing their military service to assuage any potential doubts about their masculinity. Military service was practically a requirement for high office, and many privileged young men went to great lengths to see combat, especially in elite forces.[66] Political candidates and elite government officials paraded their service as a qualifier for public office, and often exaggerated their own experiences and credentials.

The liberal response to these criticisms was also heavily anchored in notions of masculinity. The discourse that the New Deal was feminizing was contested through imagery that touted the revival of the workforce and the masculine qualities of labor. The federal government, as well as labor unions, touted New Deal policies as an opportunity for men to return to work and reestablish themselves as successful providers for their families. In the post-war years, the conservative charges won out, and liberals sought new

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[64] Ibid., 35.
[65] Ibid., 13.
[66] Robert Dean highlighted the story of the Aslop brothers, who used family connections with elite men in the military to gain waivers for hereditary conditions that made then otherwise ineligible. The brothers then made further efforts to gain actual fighting experience, as they felt social and familial pressure to engage in battle.

avenues to establish their masculinity. Cuordileone's *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War* focused on the masculinity present in the works of two of the most prominent American liberals, Arthur Schlesigner Jr. and John Kennedy. Kennedy's elite family history lender itself to narratives of privileged softness and "eggheadism," a criticism launched at liberal intellectuals. Kennedy's backstory was bolstered by tales of courage and heroism, centered around his experiences on PT boat patrols during World War Two. According to Dean, the valor and action of Kennedy's actual experiences on PT boats were generally mundane, and the boats were a very small part of the Pacific fighting force.[67] Much of the Kennedy mythology was formed around his leadership and courage aboard PT 109, combined with the notion that he was commanding an elite fighting force, and this narrative assuaged any doubts about his 'soft' upper class upbringing and elite education.

On the intellectual and ideological side, Kennedy also produced a body of work to showcase his strength and hard diplomacy. The dismissal of timidity and appeasement, and the courage to step forth and put an end to it prior to pre-WWII were central concepts in Kennedy's *Why England Slept* and *Profiles in Courage*. Schlesinger's work focused on assigning masculinity and strength to liberal ideology. Schlesinger's *Vital Center*, according to Dean, attempted to alter the current discourse on liberals and recast them as hard-nosed cold warriors and move away from their depictions as effete intellectuals.[68] Schlesinger went so far as to say that the American tradition of radical democracy was

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[67] Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 43–47.
[68] Ibid., 36.

threatened by "soft," "dough-face progressives."[69] "The sentimentalists, the utopians, the

wailers" undermined the "hard" liberalism he sought to put forth during the Cold War.[70]

Schlesinger's "hard liberal" was then created in opposition to the masculine criticism

waged at New Dealers and effete liberals.

Ultimate Meaning of Masculinized Politics and the Lavender Scare

Although the Lavender Scare caused great harm to homosexuals across the nation,

David K. Johnson found that the purge was as much about partisan politics as it was

about any real concerns over national security.[71] John D'Emilio referred to the purge as

"the entanglement of homosexuality in the politics of anticommunism."[72] There was

never any strong evidence of homosexual security risks, and no homosexual federal

employees were ever prosecuted for divulging secrets. Sexuality and masculinity were

only used as tools to smear opponents and undermine policies. The success of this

campaign, however, speaks volumes for the amount of distrust and hatred for homosexual

and effeminate men. Johnson wrote, "Originating as a partisan political weapon in the

halls of Congress, it sparked a moral panic within mainstream American culture and

became the basis for a federal government policy that lasted nearly twenty-five years and

affected innumerable people's lives."[73] The ultimate long-term effect of the Lavender

Scare, according to D'Emilio and Johnson, was to aid the development of gay rights

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[69] Ibid., 69.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*.
[72] John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1983), 40–43.
[73] Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 9.

organizations and create a politically active community that pushed back against these injustices in the following decades.[74] The Lavender Scare, the nadir of masculinized political fear-mongering, illustrates that the enforcement of hegemonic masculinity was strong enough to subvert entire political ideologies and ruin the careers and lives of thousands of individuals.

American Manhood and the Breadwinner

The Breadwinner Ethic in American Society

The *American Way* was built on very distinct and separate gender identities, with distinctive roles and expectations for each gender. The nuclear family, headed by a "breadwinner" male, was understood as foundational to the American democracy, and was seen as the central location through which values and civics were transmitted. The male breadwinner archetype was also deeply embedded within understandings of masculinity, as it was positioned at the intersection of two of the essential components of the American Way - labor market and the family. The breadwinner archetype was understood as having great importance to the nation, because success in the workplace and proper fatherhood and child-rearing were both seen as essential to American stability and American power during the Cold War.

The twin crises of the Great Depression and World War Two set the stage for a return to conservative family ideology through the long fifties. Robert Griswold

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[74] D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities*, 173–174; Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 209–215.

examined the war's role in this, and argued; "By emphasizing the contributions of fathers to social order, democracy, middle-class capitalism, eugenic trends, personality development, and psychological health, family researchers, politicians, and ideologues reemphasized the importance of fatherhood after its decline in the 1930s. But they did so without challenging a sex-based division of labor that relegated women to the home and left men in control of political, economic, and social affairs."[75] The postwar years restored and increased all of the factors that pulled breadwinners from their children in the first decades of the twentieth century - work outside the home, non-familial institutions, activities for children outside the home, and an emphasis on consumption and family income. According to Courdileone, ideals of the nuclear family and the divided gender roles within families were "...promoted after decades of social disruption brought on by depression and war, and were sanctioned by professional experts, politicians, and religious leaders and expressed in popular culture through magazines, film, television, and advertising."[76] The family was understood as the most fundamental component of American society, and by becoming functional and proficient fathers, men were proving not only proving their status as heterosexual, healthy men, but were also actively contributing to the fight for the economic and ideological American Way.

Although successful breadwinners were a central pillar of American prosperity in the "American Way" narrative, not every employed man with children fit the bill or was celebrated. Potential breadwinners were aplenty - couples were getting married and

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[75] Robert L. Griswold, *Fatherhood in America: a History* (New York: BasicBooks, 1993), 183–184.
[76] Cuordileone, *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War*, xx.

having children at higher rates and lower ages than every before. Griswold argued that a

new family model and definitions of fatherhood arose near the end of the nineteenth

century, amid changing class, residential, and economic factors, and also occupied a key

space in what he terms "compulsive heterosexuality."[77] The rising influence of

psychologist and sociologists, combined with the struggles of the Great Depression

brought about a great deal of concern over a father's role in the home and their ability to

provide a role model for their children.[78] This conversation centered upon conflicting

notions of manhood and concerns over a lack of masculine influence on children fortified

the importance of men in families. Throughout the long fifties, sociologists,

psychologists, and popular writers became increasingly concerned with the direction

society was going, including proper sex role identity and juvenile delinquency, and

placed the blame on a lack of a proper male guidance in families.[79] The role of the

breadwinner in a social and economic system that demanded they be active fathers and

financially provide for the entire family was rife with conflict. If men were expected to

earn money to support their families in a consumer society, they would often have to

work long hours outside of the home. Although this could strain a breadwinner's time

commitment, Jessica Weiss, in her research on Institute of Human Development (IHD)

longitudinal family studies, found that most men throughout the 50s, when forced to

choose between breadwinning and fathering, chose breadwinning.[80] In addition, non

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[77] Griswold, *Fatherhood in America*, 88–89.
[78] Ibid., 93–94.
[79] Ibid., 207–210.
[80] Jessica Weiss, *To Have and to Hold: Marriage, the Baby Boom, and Social Change* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2000), 93.

familial institutions were beginning to fill many of the needs previously filled by the family, and children were spending more time outside of the home. Griswold wrote that in the 1920s, popular cultural critics believed that new institutions that grew as part of urbanization and industrialization - namely schools, factories, hospitals, welfare agencies, and juvenile courts - put public authority over realms that were previously internal to the family.[81] Griswold went on to argue that, for middle class men, economic success often brought more goods and institutions that caused children to spend more time away from home, such as prolonged schooling, increased mobility via automobiles, and teen dating.[82]

Men who were not ideal breadwinners came under great scrutiny and criticism. The absence of men during WWII brought a new focus on the role of men in families, and cultural critics and intellectuals, ranging from anthropologist Margaret Mead to pediatrician Benjamin Spock, urged fathers to take a more active role and spend more time with their children.[83] Weiss found that even though many men felt comfortable focusing on employment because their wives were with the children full time, men in the IHD study did feel an obligation to spend time with their children, and many expressed that they wanted to spend more time with their children.[84] There were also a number of ways in which the breadwinner role could otherwise harm a man's masculinity. Even as fatherhood became included in definitions of manhood, there remained fears that the soft,

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[81] Griswold, *Fatherhood in America*, 93–94.
[82] Ibid., 141.
[83] Weiss, *To Have and to Hold*, 85–92.
[84] Ibid., 93–95.

care-giving tasks could derail a man from his more traditional role.[85] Other possible

pitfalls of the postwar middle class male included conformity, emasculation, and

"momism."

Thus the stakes of breadwinning were raised -- if a man could attain a proper

breadwinner status and fulfill all of the family's financial needs while also being a proper

male role model for their children, he was an invaluable participant in the ideological

battle of the Cold War. If he failed to properly fulfill either of those roles, he failed

himself, his family and - potentially - the nation. A number of negative theories and

archetypes swirled around American men in the postwar era. Cuordileone wrote, "The

plight of the American male - trapped, manipulated, struggling against forces that robbed

him of his freedom, his individuality, his will, his sexual potency, and his soul - became a

central theme for many postwar cultural critics, novelists, and filmmakers."[86] "Look"

Magazine even featured a series in 1958 entitled, "The Decline of the American Male,"

which centered on momsim and the control exhibited by overbearing mothers.[87]

Another prominent understanding of the cultural zeitgeist was that of David

Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character*.[88] The

understanding of *The Lonely Crowd* was that conformity was a direct result of modernity,

and can also be drawn from the enlargement of the middle class and the push for new

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[85] Ibid., 90–91.
[86] Cuordileone, *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War*, 134.
[87] Ibid., 124.
[88] David Riesman, *The Lonley Crowd; a Study of the Changing American Character* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950).

groups to place themselves into the singular American identity. These concerns were a direct result of a changing economy and the growth of large corporations, which cast doubt on classic ideas about masculinity and male independence. Riesman's work on the "other directed man," whose definitive quality was his need to gain the approval of others, largely through consumer spending, served as a warning against the transitioning from the so-called Self-Made Man to a manhood less embedded in an entrepreneurial economy.[89]

The single breadwinner ethic, though largely touted through military documents and cultural depictions as being the principle formulation of the family, was not always the preferred or realistic family organization. The arrangement of an equitable division of labor such that the male earned a living for the family, and the female stayed home to tend to the children and home was not the case in many households, especially those outside white, middle class suburbia. The nuclear family "...represented the ideal toward which upwardly mobile Americans strove and reflected the standard against which nonconforming individuals were judged."[90] Even after the majority of women were forced out of the workforce to make way for men from war, there were more women in the workplace than before the war, and more married women were working in 1952 than at the peak of wartime production.[91] Stephanie Coontz wrote, "…[a] full 25 percent of Americans, forty to fifty million people, were poor in the mid-1950s, and in the absence

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[89] Cuordileone, *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War*, 105.
[90] Elaine May, *Homeward Bound : American Families in the Cold War Era*, Fully rev. and updated 20th anniversary ed. / (New York NY: Basic Books, 2008), 15.
[91] Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families And The Nostalgia Trap* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 31.

of food stamps and housing programs, this poverty was searing. Even at the end of the 1950s, a third of American children were poor."[92] Coontz added, "The June Cleaver or Donna Stone homemaker role was not available to the more than 40 percent of black women with small children who worked outside the home. Twenty-five percent of these women headed their own households, but even minorities who conformed to the dominant family form faced conditions quite unlike those portrayed on television."[93] The single breadwinner family was promoted as the ideal family form, so men who were not able to earn enough to support their entire families were seen as insufficient and as disappointments. Additionally, by touting these rigid gendered divisions, men and women who sought nontraditional roles were stifled, maligned, and denied access to ideal citizenship.

Although the nuclear family was a part of the 'American Way' narrative, Elaine Tyler May argued that it attained high social value and relative popularity through more organic means. According to May, affluent, white families saw the Cold War-era ideology of containment to be the path for security in both the diplomatic and domestic realms. This ideology of containment, May argued, placed the focus of public policy, personal behavior, and political values on the home.[94] In the home, one could buffer themselves against social upheaval, challenges to the status quo, or diverging ideologies. Idealistic gender roles hearken back to idealized images of the middle-class Victorian era, but differed in some important areas. Middle-class Victorian homes often depended upon

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[92] Ibid., 29.
[93] Ibid., 30.
[94] May, *Homeward Bound*, 16.

domestic labor for childcare and housework, but housewives of the 1950s spent more time with housework and childcare than women of the prior decades.[95] The focus on the home extended to consumerism, and Americans sought happiness and status symbols within the home. The suburban home, the automobile and expensive appliances, symbolized economic security and domestic tranquility. As a result, purchases of household furnishings and appliances grew 240 percent the five years after World War Two.[96] The most notable example of this emphasis on domestic good as a representative of the American Way is perhaps Richard Nixon's "kitchen debate" with Nikita Khrushchev in 1959. Kitchen appliances were held up as a central success of the capitalist system, its innovations, and its focus on making women's lives easier.

Even within the middle class suburban home, the separated roles of the nuclear family were not always so distinct, static, or blissful. Women, especially minorities and working class whites, held jobs outside the home at a higher rate than they had in the interwar era.[97] In contrast to the narrative's rigid gender roles and division of labor, the actual experiences of women were much more fluid, and the domestic homemaker role was often only part of a brief stage of a woman's life. According to Weiss, many homemakers of the 1950s had worked outside the home prior to childrearing, and returned to the workplace as their children got older and left the home.[98] Weiss drew upon a study conducted by the Institute of Human Development at the University of

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[95] Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, 27.
[96] Ibid., 25.
[97] May, *Homeward Bound*, 16.
[98] Weiss, *To Have and to Hold*, 16–18.

California at Berkeley, which followed one hundred white, middle-class families from the 1950s through the 1980s. Though Weiss used a small sample, her work challenges the traditionalism and rigid norms that dominate the common narrative of middle-class Americans in the 1950s.

Americans who challenged the ideals of the nuclear family of the white middle class, especially when they did so vocally and aggressively, were labeled as outcasts and were marginalized.[99] However, most of the discontent with and rebellion against the nuclear family ethos was done silently, and remained non-confrontational. May wrote, "If [American men and women] felt frustrated with their lot, the women were more likely to turn to tranquilizers, and the men to *Playboy* magazine, for escape. But few were willing to give up the rewards of conforming for the risks of resisting the domestic path."[100] Families in the 1950s could not always foster the security and tranquility they were assumed to provide in the 1950s. Coontz noted that child and spousal abuse went largely unreported and untreated, and nearly half of all couples reported that their marriages were unhappy or of 'medium happiness.'[101] Women also drank at a higher rate, and physicians began prescribing tranquilizers to women to treat anxiety, frustration, and boredom.[102] The hegemony of the American family, and the societal expectations levied against individuals were immense, and thus carved a path for "The American Way."

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[99] May, *Homeward Bound*, 16.
[100] Ibid., 17.
[101] Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, 36.
[102] Ibid., 35–37.

As American society further idealized the nuclear family and the breadwinning male, the pressure to conform was raised. A surging economy and increased access to higher education for men made nineteenth century notions of middle-class femininity - women free to focus on the home and family, and "free" from the burdens of education or work - more accessible, though they existed in a completely different economy. This put a great amount of strain on men, as expectations for their performance were increasingly raised, and the ability to achieve the idealized middle-class lifestyle that was only achieved by a small portion of the population. Furthermore, this middle-class lifestyle was often less fulfilling than expected, especially for women. However, the hegemonic power of this idealized imagery kept many men struggling in futility to achieve the promises of the new era of American success.

American Manhood and Military Masculinity

Military Masculinity

The prominence of the military during World War Two and the early Cold War gave great national importance to the nation's enlisted men. The Selective Service draft began in 1940 in response to war abroad, and didn't end until 1973. Throughout this time, hundreds of thousands of young men's lives were altered by conscription, many of whom had their futures (and reputations) determined by the federal inspection of their physical and mental well-being. Warfare and conscription put the male body in the spotlight, as the body was the tool through which democracy, freedom, and the American Way fought for survival. The federal government wielded great power on men's lives through the selective service, and their ability to control mens futures based on their role in society

and the subjective judgement of their physical and mental fitness. The results of the Selective Service inspections launched a national conversation about the physical and mental well-being of the nation's men. Christina Jarvis argued that these screenings served to classify, categorize, and sexualize men's bodies, and turned bodies into symbols of both American strength and sacrifice.[103] In linking the welfare of the nation to the health of its men, soldiers received ascendancy through military masculinity and the security and military triumph associated with it.

Masculinity remained an object of focus in the Postwar Era, but was broadened and reshaped by the new role that men took in society. Rather than defending the nation with force, as they had during wartime, American soldiers represented potential force. The United States military's pragmatic emphasis on masculinity and the male body during WWII turned to a war of words, threats, and imagery centered upon the American defensive arsenal. Although physical force was again highlighted and utilized during the Korean War, the power of American men in the postwar era predominantly came from the threat of aggression and the ingenuity of their defense weaponry. The wartime nation now had an even larger dependence upon its men through the military. The discourse of a "hard line" toward Communism and aggressive diplomacy were dominant foreign policy objectives, and the strength and abilities of the American military were understood as essential to containing aggressors.

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[103] Christina S. Jarvis, *The Male Body at War: American Masculinity During World War II* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010), 5–8.

American soldiers came to represent the nation through this age of wars, both hot and cold, and thus military masculinity became the prism through which many understood manhood. Although the breadth and depth of American militarism was rapidly expanding, the alignment of gender, masculinity, warfare, and nationalism was not exclusive to the WWII and Postwar Era. Militarism has long been understood as an extension of the male body, and when nations rely upon their militaries to defend themselves, a strong link builds between the military, soldiers, and the nation.[104] Belkin argued that this occurs:

> ...[W]hen the normativity of the soldier, military, state, and empire are lined up such that the cleansing of the troops purifies the other entities simultaneously. [...] Accordingly, constructions of the soldier's toughness, masculinity, dominance, heterosexuality, and stoicism can conjure images of military strength, state, legitimacy, and imperial righteousness, while depictions of the soldier's flaws can implicate notions of military weakness and state and imperial illegitimacy.[105]

Gendered ideals of militarism, both implicitly and explicitly communicated, connected nationalism with a masculinized definition of citizenship. The supremacy of the idealized male citizen, imbued with the characteristics of hegemonic masculinity, reify and substantiate the ideals that compose it. This process made the military-industrial complex and the changing relationship of the military and the American citizens less problematic in the minds of many, and harnessed the power of hegemonic masculinity to add pressure on citizens to support the military's goals. Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor

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[104] Belkin, *Bring Me Men*, 11–414; Joshua S. Goldstein, *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
[105] Belkin, *Bring Me Men*, 58.

Suny wrote, in their introduction to a collection of essays on nationalism, "If politics is the ground upon which the category of the nation was first proposed, culture was the terrain where it was elaborated."[106] The hegemonic male as ideal citizen was largely created through the structures of the draft and political system, but was further articulated through the creation of imagery and cultural messages. The US military, along with private media's depictions of men in the military, created an idealized male that embodied all of the qualities of the hegemonic male, and made it a national hero, giving further meaning and importance to men who imbue those qualities. By doing so, these qualities tightened their hold on definitions of manhood and gender relations inside and outside of the military. Tamar Mayer wrote in the introduction to her collection of essays, *Gender Ironies of Nationalism*: "Nationalism becomes the language through which sexual control and repression (specifically, but not exclusively, of women and homosexuals) is justified, and masculine prowess is expressed and exercised."[107] If these binaries are supported through the government and other respected institutions in the name of security and national well-being, they gain strength. Furthermore, these militarized constructions of citizenship, the models from which individuals learn to be good Americans and fulfill their specified roles, were ubiquitous from federal as well as private cultural productions.

In *War and Gender*, political scientist Joshua Goldstein examined cultures over a wide range of space and time, finding, with few exceptions, that manhood and warrior

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[106] Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny, eds., *Becoming National: A Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 1996), 4.

[107] Tamar Mayer, ed., *Gender Ironies of Nationalism: Sexing the Nation* (London: Routledge, 1999), 1.

culture were tied together and have been defined in much the same way.[108] Qualities such

as stoicism, aggression, and courage have long been seen as essential to the success of

military forces, and have thus been instilled as part of superior manhood. Stephen Wicks

wrote, "'The warrior, foremost among male archetypes...has been the epitome of

masculinity in many societies.' A man learns to 'deny all that is 'feminine' and soft in

himself'"[109] Goldstein found that the act of military service forced men to "enact rites of

passage (practice) into artificial manhood (ideal)."[110]

Aaron Belkin focused on this process throughout twentieth century America in his

book, *Bring Me Men*. Belkin argued that gender (and especially masculinity) were

essential to US imperialism and military culture in the US beginning at the very end of

the nineteenth century. Military masculinity, by assigning ideally masculine traits to

enlisted men, provided the means to smooth over conflicts and hypocrisies implicit in

service.[111] By appealing to ideal images of masculine power and control, the military

created an unproblematized image of military service and warfare, winning the hearts and

minds of Americans, and encouraging men to willfully and enthusiastically participate.

According to Belkin, a significant shift took place around the turn of the twentieth

century, when militarism spread through society, and this type of military masculinity

became a model of normative citizenship for men to emulate.[112] "Even though soldiers

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[108] Goldstein, *War and Gender*.
[109] Stephen Wicks, *Warriors and Wildmen: Men, Masculinity, and Gender* (Praeger, 1996), 29;
Goldstein, *War and Gender*, 266.
[110] Goldstein, *War and Gender*, 266.
[111] Belkin, *Bring Me Men*, 25.
[112] Ibid., 11–12.

and veterans achieved heroic status before the late-nineteenth century, civilian men who had never served in uniform did not, in general, lay claim to power or authority by appealing to military values or ideas, and proving one's manliness did not require demonstrating an affirmative relationship with the military. After the Spanish-American War, civilians and men in uniform would claim significant authority by aligning themselves with military institutions and ideas."[113] This rise coincided with the growth of the American military empire, and the corpus of heavily gendered texts stands as evidence for the need to imbue this expansive standing military with culturally accepted and honored notions of hegemonic masculinity.

Not only did this military masculinity imbue soldiers with a superior sense of manhood, but also discursively separated the masculinity of soldiers from non-soldiers. Belkin described the creation of a Foucauldian docile population through terming the non-normative as deviant.[114] This stigmatized the non-normative men by labeling them with a 4-F rating or a Blue Discharge, making it apparent that they were deemed to have an insufficient body or mind, homosexual, or otherwise unworthy of being a part of the military. These 4-F ratings and Blue Discharges served as a mark on people's records that would prompt questions about them from the population, and lead others to question their manhood. Through this process of marking normativity, Belkin argued, military masculinity began to have more authority over normalized behavior and attitudes, and

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[113] Ibid., 12.
[114] Ibid., 24–25.

military service was seen "...less as one among many normative masculinities than as the paradigmatic embodiment of normativity."[115]

Because the military, as an institution, was rapidly growing throughout the time of my focus and was granted a great deal of power and authority within society, its policies and decisions had an immense domestic impact on the American people. This meant that military proclamations on proper gender roles and sufficient masculinity carried great weight. By placing a strong national spotlight on the masculine qualities of its men — specifically its young men who served in the armed forces — the nation was engaging in a conversation about what proper manhood was and how it strengthened and served the nation. Throughout the era, there was an implication that enlisted men and veterans had steeled themselves through military training and service, as was illustrated through many of the recruiting materials of the time period. Furthermore, the additional functions of the military, both in weeding out men who were not mentally or physically capable and then training those who were, the military could serve as an institution through which men's masculinity could be proven simply through their inclusion. By both directly and discursively linking the state of the nation with the state of manhood, manhood and the qualities that compose it, were granted more power and prestige.

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[115] Ibid., 12.

Chapter 4: Adventurousness and Aggressiveness

Brannon and David argue that masculinity is characterized by a willingness to take physical risks and become violent if it is deemed necessary.[116] This category, taken in its most broad definition, is ubiquitous to the DoD materials. Military service inherently involves adventurousness and aggression, and one should expect depictions of service to reflect that. Brannon and David's definition places these traits in a more specific context, and require that they be used to certain ends. They argue that aggression (defined as an offensive action or procedure) and violence (defined as the exertion of any physical force to injure or abuse) stem, in part, from the need to win at any cost.[117] Brannon also importantly points out that the *aura* [emphasis added] of aggression and violence increases one's masculinity, even if one is never actually aggressive.[118] Joshua Goldstein, in his broad study of the intersections of gender and war across cultures, found that "…those parts of masculinity that are found most widely across cultures and time are not arbitrary but shaped but he war system."[119] The cultural works produced by the military display daring and aggressiveness from American soldiers in a manner that is very much infused with conceptions of honor and valor, thus raising the infusing positive masculinity with military masculinity. At the same time, they produced examples of

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[116] David and Brannon, *The Forty-Nine Percent Majority*, 199.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Goldstein, *War and Gender*, 266.

similar behavior from enemies that was strongly discouraged, and were very critical of the enemy soldiers performing essentially the same behaviors. Some documents also depicted American soldiers engaging in risky activities that did not advance the military's purposes. These men were depicted in a negative light, and in some cases were expressly criticized and demeaned for their behavior. In sum, these pieces of media celebrated and encouraged acts of daring that benefitted the United States military, while discouraging and even demonizing acts that went counter to the military's purposes.

Good Aggression

Physical Superiority and Heroic Acts

The DoD materials attempt to carefully cultivate an honorable and productive aggression that best serves the nation. Courageous and honorable aggression were depicted, as men fought against long odds and risked their lives. These acts were encouraged, and were highly honored and glamorized in the media. These narratives ascribed culturally cherished notions of sacrifice for one's nation, and courage in the face of adversity. They also inflated the idea that men in the military were of superior physical and moral strength.

It should be no surprise that depictions of battles in US publications would focus on American successes, and would portray soldiers in a positive light. However, these narratives fostered a mystique of superiority, and explicitly credited American soldiers with better fighting skills and a more impressive physical prowess. One such explicit example is the Navy comic *Li'l Abner Joins the Navy!*. The comic twice shows a small group of unimposing men assaulting and subduing larger groups of burly men. The

central character is Drawin'-Board McEasel, an artist with small stature, oversized bow

tie, and glasses who is introduced as "…not much to look at…"[120] When Drawin'-Board

and a Navy recruiter are confronted with The Screwballs, a band of three burly criminals

who are pillaging the town, the recruiter deputizes Drawin'-Board into the Navy, and the

two quickly subdue the band of criminals.[121] The Screwballs are left laying on the

ground, dazed and bruised, saying "Th' yewnited states navy shore packs a wallop

(groan!)" and "Ow! (sob!) must be a torpedo bashed may jaw!…" giving the Navy credit

for the recruiter and Drawin'-Board's ability to fight them off.[122]

Soon after, the Screwballs join up with two new associates and attempt to steal plans for

a new Navy vehicle. The recruiter recognizes them, and with the help of Drawin'-Board

and a white haired sailor named Salty McAnchor (who claims to have salt water on both

knees), the three catch and subdue the would-be traitors, despite the physical and

numerical disadvantage.[123] Their status as sailors is seemingly the only advantage they

have, but it is enough to physically overpower them again. These events grant an unseen

physical prowess to the sailors, one that can seemingly be attained by simply being

deputized. This unseen advantage is, however, reinforced by the possibility of a physical

advantage gained from joining the Navy. When Drawin'-Board is subduing the criminals,

the recruiter imagines him as a unformed sailor, and the image he conjures is distinctly

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[120] Al Capp, *Li'l Abner Joins the Navy!* (New York, N.Y.: Toby Press, 1950), 4,
http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/108/rec/6.
[121] Ibid., 14.
[122] Ibid., 16.
[123] Ibid., 20–30.

different from Drawin'-Board as he currently exists.[124] An enlisted Drawin'-Board is barrel-chested and standing proud, in contrast to the effete images that opened the story.

Beyond being physically superior, male soldiers were also shown as having an unflinching willingness to put their lives and well-being on the line for their nation. This not only encouraged men to act with the nation's well-being ahead of their own, not simply self-preservation, and fostered the themes of honor and valor amongst soldiers and veterans. *The United States Marines* comic books were often loaded with short narratives of military battles where men came within inches of death and persevered against extremely long odds.

The comic "Tarawa," in *The United States Marines No. 3* is infused with positive depictions of men willingly risking their lives to take control of Tarawa in the Pacific. One panel shows two Marines charging over a hill, bayonets attached, conjuring notions of daring and aggressiveness.[125] The caption reads, "Everywhere the Marines were eager to advance faster than was believed safe…"[126] While one Marine behind them is cautious, shouting, "Stay down, you guys!" another looks on, adding admiringly, "They go anywhere, those Marines!"[127] Here the author explicitly states that Marines willingly threw caution to the wind. They were *eager* to go at an unsafe speed and put their own well-being on the line. Near the end of the story, the Marines' daring on this mission was

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[124] Ibid., 14.
[125] Mart Bailey, "Tarawa," in *United States Marines No. 3, The* (New York NY: New York: Magazine Enterprises, c1944), 6, http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/174/rec/2.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid.

again reinforced. A panel reads, "And so, seventy-six hours after the invasion began, Tarawa fell. The conquest was completed so quickly, as one observer said, because the Marines were willing to die unflinchingly."[128] The willingness of the Marines to die is again credited with the speed of success, this time much more explicitly. Risky behavior and a lack of concern over one's own well being is honored and celebrated. These two examples explicitly support and credit this quality, which is underwritten in nearly every depiction of battle.

Proper Use of Aggression

Conceptions of aggression and courage through endangerment in white, middle-class masculinity were countered and balanced against conceptions of control and restraint. Aaron Belkin wrote, "The new code of middle-class masculinity that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century was structured by two, competing visions — primitive and civilized — which emphasized ruggedness and virility on one hand and order and control on the other."[129] The order and control were largely the result of an emphasis on the rhetoric of civilization, which distinguished whites from racial and ethnic minorities, and reinforced racial discrimination and mistreatment.[130] In order to draw upon proper manhood and justify the use of violence and aggression, notions of control and constraint were infused into narratives.

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[128] Ibid., 9.
[129] Belkin, *Bring Me Men*.
[130] Ibid., 11–14.

The materials do not depict Americans being over-aggressive or brutal, and acts of cowardice are always redeemed later on. The materials fostered a popular conception of American soldiers as functioning within culturally acceptable lines of violence and warfare. This aura of controlled and proper aggression and violence was proscribed to all of the soldiers through this media, regardless of one's actions – whether they saw action abroad or acted in ways deemed non-aggressive or cowardly. In reality, these limits were sometimes crossed, especially in the Pacific theater during World War II. American GIs sometimes mutilate corpses, took trophies, urinated or rape enemy combatants.[131] However, these materials contributed to the imagery of a just and honorable fighting force, and proscribed these traits to the population of those who served.

The aggression as put forth by the military during this time is one of restraint and control, and is only used when provoked. The comic *Lil Abner Joins the Navy* emphasizes the role of Navy men to be protectors of others, especially those seen as weaker or more innocent. The criminals, known as The Screwballs, knew that all the able-bodied men would be chased away by the women on Sadie Hawkins Day, so they came to steal everything from the old men and women left in town.[132] When Drawin'-Board and the recruiter fight back, they exclaim that they are taking the fight to the Screwballs' "backyard."[133] They even go so far as exclaiming "Remember Pearl Harbor!" when they attack the screwballs, recalling the ability of the US to respond to aggression

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[131] Gerald F. Linderman, *The World Within War: America's Combat Experience in World War II.* (New York: Free Press, 1999).
[132] Capp, *Li'l Abner Joins the Navy!*, 13.
[133] Ibid., 14.

when first attacked.[134] This concept is taken to the national level later on when the

publication informs readers that, "The Navy is our best insurance to discourage a country

from picking a fight with us...and if war does come, a strong Navy keeps destruction

from our shores by carrying the battle to the enemy in his backyard!"[135] This echoes

conceptions about middle class white masculinity, who prided themselves on restraint

and non-aggression when unwarranted every bit as much as on paternalistic protection

and aggressive capabilities.

Homer McCoy, the protagonist of "A'feudin' and a'fightin'," illustrated this

restraint as well, although he serves as a comedic foil. A moonshiner from the Ozark

Mountains, McCoy excitedly joined the Marines to fight in the war, but became reluctant

to fight once he learned that American involvement in Korea was not a war, but a "police

action."[136] After this realization, he reluctantly follows orders from the "revenooers"

(drawing a connection between federal tax agents and this police action), but refuses to

actively participate. is mindset drastically changes, however, when a grenade destroys his

still. He exclaims, "Them Reds! Now I know *who* they are - they're *Hatfields!* If'n there's

anybody a McCoy hates *wors'n* the *revenooers* — it's them *Hatfields* [emphasis

original]."[137] McCoy then "...fell on the Reds with the savage ferocity of a feuding

mountaineer…" and charged the enemy, brutally killing two with his bayonet while

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[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid., 32.

[136] "A'feudin' and A'fightin'," in *United States Marines No. 8, The*, vol. 1, 8 (United States
Marine Corps/Magazine Enterprises; New York, c1952), 5,
http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/175/rec/5.

[137] Ibid., 9.

screaming, "Varmits! Hatfields! Only scum like you would blow up a man's still when he was pure dyin' of thirst!"[138] McCoy felt he had no issue with the Communist army until he thinks they destroyed his whiskey still, causing him to relentlessly attack them.[139] Although McCoy was a rube presented for comedic relief, he demonstrated extreme masculinity, both in his unwillingness to attack without provocation, as well as in his unrelenting aggression.

Bad Aggression

When acts of endangerment or aggression could potentially cause harm to the US armed forces, they were discouraged, mocked, and demeaned. These actions were also discursively detached from their masculine meanings. The two primary avenues for depictions of men illustrating aggression and adventurousness in ways that did not benefit the military came through servicemen injuring themselves outside of the battlefield, or instances of enemy heroism.

Reckless Endangerment

In attempts to foment and celebrate risky behavior for the men when it benefitted the nation, the Department of Defense went away from this masculine dimension in its purest form and criticized this adventurousness and risk when it could potentially harm the nation.

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[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid.

The 1944 Army pamphlet, *Pvt. Droop has Missed the War!*, warns soldiers of the risky behavior they must avoid in order to remain a part of the US military.[140] The pamphlet opens with Pvt. Droop in a hospital bed, and the line "When he gets out, he won't be Pvt. Droop any more. He'll be *Mr.* Droop - the army can't use a man with a permanently wrecked leg."[141] The statement is unfriendly toward his current status, and is condemning of his military status following his injury. The pamphlet goes on to say, "Did he fall on the field of battle on some far-off front? Was he trying to save a buddy under raking machine-gun fire? Nope! Pvt. Droop was hit by a truck while he was crossing a street in the middle of the block."[142] The passages shames him for being hurt off the field of battle, and honors the ways in which soldiers could end up similarly disabled. They further shame him by adding, "He has missed the war — the war he wanted to fight. He has deserted, not from lack of patriotism, but from thought-lessness."[143] The pamphlet went on to discourage numerous dangerous activities in which men may participate. These dangerous activities, the pamphlet conveyed, could result in a servicemen's emasculation, or even a desertion of a man's responsibilities.

Brainwashed Enemy Combatants

Acts of over-the-top aggression, when performed by the enemy, were not depicted in the same heroic, masculine ways as those performed by Americans. In those situations,

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[140] *Pvt. Droop Has Missed the War!* (United States War Dept. National Safety Council/Washington, D.C.: U.S. G.P.O., 1944), http://digitalcollections.smu.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/hgp/id/420/rec/1.
[141] Ibid., 1.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid.

the enemy is shown as delusional or suicidal. This is a twofold blow to their masculinity, as honor and courage are removed, along with their agency. They are simply being controlled and manipulated by an outside entity, rather than defending their country by their own free will, as Americans are depicted.

In the publication *The United States Marines, No. 4*, the same serial that repeatedly touted Americans' disregard for their own well-being, Japanese soldiers are mocked and demeaned for refusing to back down. In chronicling a successful US island invasion, the comic "Saipan!" wrote, "Many civilians on Saipan heeded the pleas of the Marines to surrender, but others, held by Jap fanaticism, committed hari-kiri [sic] or were killed by other Japs."[144] On the following page, a panel shows a Japanese soldier rushing into a storm of enemy fire, screaming, "**BANZAI!** Death to Molines!" with a Marine responding, "You got your facts twisted, Jappie."[145]

These acts of resistance, ranging from civilians defending their homeland from foreign invaders to an enemy soldier disregarding his own well-being for the sake of his cause, would have been celebrated to no end if performed by an American. The latter situation, especially, is essentially the same story as those used to support American military aggression.[146] Additionally, the Japanese practice of hari-kari was just as courageous and honorable in Japanese culture as anything American soldiers did, but the

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[144] Tony Di Preta, "Saipan!," in *United States Marines No. 4, The*, vol. 1, 4 (United States Marine Corps/Life's Romances Publishing Company; Chicago, n.d.), 19, http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/173/rec/4.
[145] Ibid., 20.
[146] "A'feudin' and A'fightin'" and "Flight into Fury" are the most notable examples of this.

practice was reframed as cowardly, and proof of this alleged fanaticism. Rather than

recognizing and appreciating the heroism of these Japanese men, they are dismissed as

being brainwashed by "Jap fanaticism." Here they have no agency, but are simply being

manipulated into losing their lives.

Aggressiveness - Vanguard of Doom

The photojournalism piece "Vanguard of Doom," included in the publication *The

United States Marines No. 4*, focused on the brutal campaign for Saipan. The foreboding

title is accompanied by a series of pictures of Marines trudging through rubble, with fires

blazing in the background.

The photos attest to the tenacity of the battle, but rather than framing the fighting

as a hard-fought battle between two dedicated and heroic sides, the captions repeatedly

frame Japanese defenses as fanatic, stubborn, and cowardly. Alongside a photo of a

Marine throwing a grenade into a cave, the piece reads, "Stubborn Nips, as usual, held

out to their bitter end on Saipan, and the Marines had to pry and blast the tenacious little

fanatics from countless holes and crannies."[147] This caption acknowledged the tenacity of

the Japanese, while ultimately stealing any credit or honor by calling them "little

fanatics" rather than gallant or heroic, as Americans in similar situations were often

labeled.[148] The fanaticism label completely turns the situation on its head, taking any

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[147] "Vanguard of Doom," in *United States Marines No. 4, The*, vol. 1, 4 (United States Marine Corps/Life's Romances Publishing Company; Chicago, n.d.), 45, http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/173/rec/4.

[148] American soldiers in "A'feudin' and a'fightin'" and "Flight into Fury", among others, are celebrated for having a lack of concern for their own well-being.

independence away from the Japanese men, making them mindless followers, non-heroically sacrificing themselves.

Aggressiveness - The Fighting Redhead

"The Fighting Redhead," featured in *The United States Marines, No. 4*, was among the most extreme and over-the-top examples of fearlessness and aggression in the face of danger. The comic's protagonist was PFC "Red" Shelton, a Marine who was unwilling to stop fighting. The introductory panel shows Red, looking rugged with a thick red beard, running into a Japanese gunner nest, shooting several Japanese and leaving the others cowering in fear.[149] The story unfolds with a Marine landing, where soldiers are raving about Red's reputation as a tireless fighter, and Red is the first to depart the boat, despite warnings of heavy fire from the Japanese defense force.[150] After securing communications on the island, Red disobeys order to teak a break, and heads out go "Jap hunting."[151] After capturing a prisoner and dispensing of several gun nests, Red is hit by a sniper's bullet, but continues to take the lead and saves a man's life by helping him to the first aid station.[152] Although the Marines are "badly outnumbered," the Marines forge on, led by Red, who destroys another nest of snipers while incurring second wound.[153] Following this, Red is seen taking out another "Jap nest" that was stalling the advance. The summary narration at the end goes on to say, "This gallant but

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[149] "The Fighting Redhead," in *United States Marines No. 4, The*, vol. 1, 4 (United States Marine Corps/Life's Romances Publishing Company; Chicago, n.d.), 22, http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/173/rec/4.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid., 23.
[152] Ibid., 24.
[153] Ibid., 25.

unsung Marine hero was wounded four times before being put out of action," and adds

that he is back in the Pacific "killing Japs."[154]

The comic hints that heroic efforts are rather common, or are at least not limited

to those who are formally decorated and widely celebrated. The introduction to the story

reads, "Not all the heroes wind up with honors and decorations. In the heat of battle,

some are overlooked. So it was in the case of PFC "Red" Shelton..."[155] This extreme

example of aggression and selflessness, depicted in a valorous manner, thus set a

precedent for action not only for Marines, but all men. It forwarded the notion that

Marines commonly acted in such a manner, increasing the expectations for men

everywhere.

Aggressiveness - Tarawa

The comic "Tarawa," which opens *The United States Marines No. 3*, details the

ability of the US Marine Corps to take Tarawa, a heavily fortified collection of islets,

with impressive speed. Throughout the comic, the Marines were credited with

fearlessness, courage and aggression. One panel shows two Marines charging over a hill,

bayonets attached.[156] This imagery by itself conjures notions of heroism and

aggressiveness, but the comic adds more to this understanding of aggressiveness. The

caption reads, "Everywhere the Marines were eager to advance faster than was believed

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[154] Ibid.
[155] Ibid., 22.
[156] Bailey, "Tarawa," 6.

safe…"[157] While one Marine behind them is cautious, shouting, "Stay down, you guys!" another looks on, adding admiringly, "They go anywhere, those Marines!"[158] Here it is not enough to simply state that Marines swept through the islands quickly; the author explicitly states that Marines willingly threw caution to the wind. They were *eager* to go at an unsafe speed, and were hailed as heroes for it.

The comic again expressed this daring sentiment following the Marine successes at Tarawa. One of the comic's closing panels reads, "And so, seventy-six hours after the invasion began, Tarawa fell. The conquest was completed so quickly, as one observer said, because the Marines were willing to die unflinchingly."[159] The willingness of the Marines to die is again credited with the speed of success, this time much more explicitly. Risky behavior and a lack of concern over one's own well being is honored and celebrated.

Aggressiveness - Saipan

When demonstrated by enemy forces, behaviors like aggression, selflessness, and daring were never seen as positive actions; they were always twisted so as to depict the enemy as unintelligent, brainwashed, or dishonorable.

The comic, "Saipan!" featured in *The United States Marines, No. 4*, tells the story of the Marine siege of Saipan, where, "…United States Marines cornered to death on Saipan…between 20,000 and 30,000 of its twentieth century robbers - the bandits from

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[157] Ibid.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Ibid., 9.

the land of the rising sun…"[160] The story intermixes similar racist and dehumanizing rhetoric towards the Japanese people with Marine attempts to communicate with the Japanese people and battle anti-American propaganda. One narrative adds, "Many civilians on Saipan heeded the pleas of the Marines to surrender, but others, held by Jap fanaticism, committed hari-kiri [sic] or were killed by other Japs."[161] On the following page, a panel shows a Japanese soldier rushing into a storm of enemy fire, screaming, "**BANZAI!** Death to Molines!" with a Marine responding, "You got your facts twisted, Jappie."[162]

These acts of resistance, including civilians defending their homeland from foreign invaders and an enemy soldier disregarding his own well-being for the sake of his cause, would have been celebrated to no end if performed by an American. The latter situation, especially, is essentially the same story as those used to support American military aggression.[163] The Japanese practice of hari-kari was just as courageous and honorable in their culture as anything American soldiers did, but the practice was reframed as cowardly, and held as proof of this alleged fanaticism. Rather than recognizing and appreciating the heroism of these Japanese men, they are dismissed as being brainwashed by "Jap fanaticism." These Japanese men have no agency according to this narrative; are simply being manipulated into losing their lives. This narrative thus depicts a superior American masculinity and diminishes the actions of the enemy troops.

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[160] Di Preta, "Saipan!," 15.
[161] Ibid., 19.
[162] Ibid., 20.
[163] "A'feudin' and a'fightin'" and "Flight into Fury" are the most notable of these.

Adventurousness Aggressiveness - Pvt. Droop

Despite the fact that the United States military celebrated daring and risky behavior for the men when it benefitted the nation, it discouraged this masculine dimension in contexts that did not directly benefit the nation. The 1944 Army pamphlet, *Pvt. Droop has Missed the War!* warns soldiers of the risky behavior they must avoid in order to remain a part of the US military.[164] Pvt. Droop, the protagonist of the pamphlet, is depicted as child-like, with a large head and a small, undeveloped body. The cover and first page show him looking disappointed and confused, with stars circling his head. The name "Droop" is also loaded, and signifies a lacking virility and physical presence.[165]

The pamphlet opens with Pvt. Droop in a hospital bed, with the text, "When he gets out, he won't be Pvt. Droop any more. He'll be *Mr.* Droop - the army can't use a man with a permanently wrecked leg."[166] The statement is unfriendly toward his current status, and is condemning of his military status following his injury. The pamphlet goes on to say, "Did he fall on the field of battle on some far-off front? Was he trying to save a buddy under raking machine-gun fire? Nope! Pvt. Droop was hit by a truck while he was crossing a street in the middle of the block."[167] The passages shame him for being hurt off the field of battle, and honor the ways in which soldiers could end up disabled in battle. They further shame him by adding, "He has missed the war – the war he wanted to fight.

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[164] *Pvt. Droop Has Missed the War!*.
[165] Ibid., 1.
[166] Ibid.
[167] Ibid.

He has deserted, not from lack of patriotism, but from thought-lessness."[168] The deserter label is a very serious charge; it came with a very negative connotation and pulled in notions of cowardice and willful abandonment of his nation.

Following this example of failure and emasculation, the pamphlet goes on to warn soldiers of activities that could potentially be dangerous, ranging from drinking and driving to attending "firetrap roadhouses and cabarets" and driving with one hand.[169] On several occasions, the pamphlet uses the word "droop" as a negative description of people who are acting unintelligently or overly risky. This pamphlet shows the ways in which the military took notions of manhood and twisted them to encourage behavior that benefitted them. Men were encouraged to engage in dangerous behavior when it benefitted the military, but expressly avoid it when it could potentially harm the military's ultimate goals.

Aggressiveness - Palau

The publication *The United States Marines No. 4* included a few photojournalism pieces that cataloged successful Marine missions. One such piece, "Palau," featured a photo with the caption, "Using a bomb crater as a foxhole, these Leathernecks took on all comers with their automatic weapons and hand grenades."[170] This statement, placed in the context of photos and proclamations of victory, facilitates the reputation that Marines

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[168] Ibid.
[169] Ibid., 4–13.
[170] "Palau," in *United States Marines No. 4, The*, vol. 1, 4 (United States Marine Corps/Life's Romances Publishing Company; Chicago, n.d.), 8, http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/173/rec/4.

are fearless, and are able to tenaciously take on, and defeat, all comers with little regard for self-preservation.

Aggressiveness - Li'l Abner Joins the Navy!

The Navy comic *Li'l Abner Joins the Navy!*, starring the well-known Al Capp character Li'l Abner, emphasizes restraint and focused aggression in the face of adversity. Li'l Abner, though simple-minded and a bit naive, nearly always represented the moral high ground, and was often contrasted against others will unscrupulous intentions. His morality, along with his impressive stature and chiseled good looks, made him a fitting representative of restraint and appropriate aggression in the face of adversity.

The story begins when Drawin'-Board McEasel interviews for a job as an artist with Al Capp, but is turned down. Drawin' Board is hardly a masculine specimen; an intellectual (in contrast to other Dogpatch residents) with a small stature, oversized bow tie, and glasses. When a mutual friend introduced him to Al Capp, he was introduced with the caveat, "He's not much to look at, but…"[171] Months pass, and Li'l Abner receives a letter from Drawin'-Board, who wanted to explain what happened to him after the interview in Dogpatch.[172] He had returned on Sadie Hawkins Day, and he, like all of the men in town, was running away from a horde of women.[173] Drawin'-Board witnesses a Navy recruiter coming to Dogpatch to sign up "…lots o' strong-backed, intelligent

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[171] Capp, *Li'l Abner Joins the Navy!*, 4.
[172] Ibid., 6–7.
[173] Ibid., 7–10.

young men…eager to serve their country in her first line of defense."[174] The recruit gives

his recruiting pitch, but is overrun first by the fleeing men and then by the women n

pursuit, and is left unconscious on the ground.[175] The recruiter and Drawin'-Board then

encounter another group of people leaving, this time proclaiming, "Run fo' yo' lives!! Th'

Screwballs is on th' loose agin!!!"[176]

The Screwballs, a band of burly, savage criminals, know that all the able-bodied

men would be chased by the women on Sadie Hawkins Day, so they moved in to steal

everything from the old men and women who remained in town.[177] Upon seeing The

Screwballs, the recruiter deputizes Drawin'-Board into the Navy and then proclaims, "The

Navy always carries the fight to the enemy! We prefer to fight in **his** backyard, not

ours!!"[178]

They also do so by turning the tables and taking the fight to the Screwballs'

"backyard."[179] They even go so far as exclaiming "Remember Pearl Harbor!" when they

attack the screwballs, recalling the triumph of the US when the nation was first attacked,

and then turned the aggression to the Japanese and retaliated on their own home turf.[180]

The two much smaller men dispatch with the burly Screwballs with no problem, leaving

them laying on the ground, dazed and bruised, saying "Th' yewnited states navy shore

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[174] Ibid., 9.
[175] Ibid., 11–12.
[176] Ibid., 13.
[177] Ibid.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid., 14.
[180] Ibid.

packs a wallop (groan!)" and "Ow! (sob!) must be a torpedo bashed may jaw!…" giving credit to the Navy for the recruiter and Drawin'-Board's ability to fight them off.[181]

Following their defeat, the Screwballs join with two new associates and attempt to steal plans for a new Navy vehicle. The recruiter recognizes them, and with the help of Drawin'-Board and a white haired sailor named Salty McAnchor, the three catch and subdue the would-be traitors, despite the physical and numerical disadvantage.[182] Their status as sailors is seemingly the only advantage they have, but it is enough to physically overpower them again.

After demonstrating this use of aggression to protect those weaker than him, the restraint concept was extrapolated to national diplomacy. The publication informs readers that, "The Navy is our best insurance to discourage a country from picking a fight with us...and if war does come, a strong Navy keeps destruction from our shores by carrying the battle to the enemy in his backyard!"[183] This echoes conceptions about middle class white masculinity, which prided themselves on restraint every bit as much as on paternalistic protection and aggressive capabilities. By standing strong and putting forth an aggressive and intimidating front, challenges, both interpersonal and international, could be diffused, and security could be attained without violence.

Li'l Abner Joins the Navy! also emphasized the ability of Navy men to fight and protect others, especially those seen as weaker or more innocent. The recruiter draws

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[181] Ibid., 16.
[182] Ibid., 20–30.
[183] Ibid., 32.

upon and reinforces the masculine conception of protection over the feminine by referring to the United States as a feminized "her" and the aggressor nations as "him."[184] Even though the Navy recruiter and Drawin'-Board are not depicted as overly masculine, Drawin'-Board is deputized into the Navy, and the two enlisted men take on the three larger criminals.[185] The recruiter also imagines Drawin'-Board as a sailor, and the image in his mind is a much stronger, barrel-chested version, representing the transformation often represented in recruiting materials.[186]

Aggressiveness - Flight into Fury

The comic "Flight into Fury," published in *The United States Marines No. 8*, is an intense second person narrative which places the reader in the shoes of a pilot about to embark on his first mission after being shot down over enemy territory. The comic addresses issues of traumatic events and the questioning of one's own abilities with some complexity and understanding, though the protagonist resolves his issues through bearing down and acting without regard for his own well-being.

The comic opens with the protagonist, who later comes to be known as Joe,[187] standing on a runway wondering, "Can you trust yourself?…You who remember so vividly that terrible - **Flight into Fury**," and begins walking the reader through the

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[184] Ibid., 9.
[185] Ibid., 13.
[186] Ibid., 14.
[187] The name 'Joe' is a nod to "GI Joe," which sought to establish the soldier as an ordinary man doing extraordinary things, someone anyone could identify with.

terrifying memories that haunt the protagonist.[188] His self-doubt and the damage to his

reputation are paralyzing. The next panel reads, "But mostly you remember the

voices...the unheard voices that ran through your mind as you wandered around the base

after returning to safety..." and a haunting dream sequence is shown across the panel,

with disappointment, depression, mocking, and laughter.[189]

As a soldier on the ground, Joe withstands an intense attack, and he disobeys

orders to hold the position and orders the men to move to a ridge in preparation for

another attack. He questioned his own motives, saying "Why don't you *face* it? You're not

thinking of the men…you're thinking of yourself. You're afraid to tell them they have to

withstand another attack like that! You're a coward…A COWARD! **A COWARD!!!!**"[190]

On the ridge, additional troops converge on the location, and the protagonist, in a rush,

turns and fires upon them. He is stopped when another soldier realizes that the troops are

American.[191] His superior excoriates him, saying his decision to take the ridge cost them

men and, because the enemy is able to bring up artillery, left their position almost

hopeless.[192]

As these thoughts go through his head, he is faced with an opportunity to redeem

himself. He spots an abandoned enemy plane and contemplates attacking the enemy

artillery, while battling insecurity: "But do you have the courage? Can you step inside

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[188] "Flight into Fury," in *United States Marines No. 8, The*, vol. 1, 8 (United States Marine
Corps/Magazine Enterprises; New York, c1952), 20,
http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/175/rec/5.
[189] Ibid., 21.
[190] Ibid., 23.
[191] Ibid., 24.
[192] Ibid.

that thing and do the things you're supposed to be able to do? Can you conquer your fears? Or are you going to be a coward all your life?"[193] The protagonist is hampered by self-doubt and doubts of his peers, and must do something drastic to win them over and assuage his own doubts.

Without much further narration, he is up in the air, searching for the enemy artillery. He destroys the installment and encounters some enemy MiGs, and is reminded of his painful past. He realizes that his back is against the wall this time. He receives enemy fire, but is still able to maneuver and attack the MiGs. He tells himself, "But this time you haven't got a parachute! There is no escape! You have no alternative to death! All right, if you're going to die, the least you can do is die like a man! You've certainly never lived like one!"[194] With the situation clear - kill or be killed - he finds new determination to take out as many MiGs as possible before he goes down. He shoots down another plane and then notices the remaining MiG running. He says, "He's **running!** He's actually running from me! **He's** more scared than I am! **He's afraid of me!!!**"[195]

The next thing he remembers after this triumphant realization is waking up in a hospital with an officer referred to as 'the old man' sitting beside him.[196] Joe learns that his crew was able to hold out for reinforcements thanks to his work.[197] The officer adds,

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[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid., 24–25.
[195] Ibid., 26.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Ibid.

"One thing I can't understand, though, is how a guy who can fly like that didn't stick to aviation," prompting Joe to say that he found his own worst enemy, but "The guy is dead now…His name was Joe."[198]

Joe is able to elevate above his own paralyzing memories and fear by just bearing down and pushing through, and engaging a deadly rogue mission to save his unit and make up for his mistake. He decides to "be a man" and block out any thoughts that would deter him, becoming a war hero in the process. The traits of aggression and courage are primarily displayed as the way to "be a man" as well as a successful soldier. His cowardice, on the other hand, cost the lives of many friendly soldiers.His prior lack of aggression had prevented him from being a man prior to this event, and this thrust of aggression and fearlessness was what he felt he needed to finally become a man.

Aggressiveness - Defend Your Country

The 1941 "Defend Your Country" recruitment poster showed a newly revamped Uncle Sam, standing strong and bracing for war. This masculinized and angry Uncle Sam, bracing for an all-out war. This poster, and others in the WWII era, departed from the paternal but non-threatening image of Uncle Sam, and show him sternly marching off to fight.

This image speaks volumes for the masculinized attitudes towards the war during this era. Uncle Sam, the personification of the nation, had shed his hat and jacket, symbolizing restraint, and showed his muscles as he sternly marched off to war. Federal materials

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[198] Ibid.

likewise depicted the nation's as flexing their military power in response to Pearl Harbor, and as shedding their restraint and marching off to battle the Axis powers. The nation was thus defined through this masculine aggression, and was encouraged to follow through to defend their country by enlisting in the Army.

Aggressiveness - A'feudin' and a'fightin'

One of the most dramatic and complex examples of valorization through dangerous aggression was "A'feudin' and a'fightin'" in *United States Marines No. 8*. The comic plays on traditional notions of rugged, unrefined masculinity, as well as both the positive and negative aspects of aggression and defiance of authorities. The comic's protagonist was Homer McCoy, a mountaineer from the Ozarks who had an anti-authoritarian streak and almost mystical backwoods skills. McCoy's anti-authority and anti-US government streak stems from his distrust and hatred for the "revenooers," federal tax collectors, from his moonshining background in the Ozarks.

The story begins with McCoy being called to the front of the battalion, and told to take out a distant machine gunner's nest.[199] He is able to snipe the enemy installment from an almost impossible distance, but the narrator notes: "There was no delight in Homer McCoy's face. Rather it showed disgust at himself…"[200] McCoy remarked, "Shamed of myself! Ought to have more pride! Imagine me doing anything like that!"[201]

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[199] "A'feudin' and A'fightin'," 4.
[200] Ibid.
[201] Ibid.

According to the narrator, McCoy had "come down" from the hills when he heard there was a war, but he was disappointed when he arrived in Korea to find out this wasn't a **war**, but instead a **police action**.[202] He was excited to fight in a *war*, but a *police action*, in his mind, had none of the adventure, honor, and courage of war, and was instead about controlling others.[203] His backwoods masculinity is thus contrasted against the middle class status quo. He was willing to fight in an all-out war for the well-being of the nation, but was unwilling to fight on the side of the police, who sought to constrain the freedoms of individuals.

McCoy continued to do his job for the revenooers, but only when he was ordered. He stayed on his own, and didn't interact with others in his company, and even built a still and made his own "corn likker," rather than actively participating in the war.[204] His mindset drastically changes, however, when a grenade destroys his whiskey still. He exclaims, "Them Reds! Now I know *who* they are - they're *Hatfields!* If'n there's anybody a McCoy hates *wors'n* the *revenooers* - it's them *Hatfields* [all emphasis original]"[205] McCoy then "…fell on the Reds with the savage ferocity of a feuding mountaineer…" and charged the enemy, brutally killing two with his bayonet while screaming, "Varmits! Hatfields! Only scum like you would blow up a man's still when he was pure dyin' of thirst!"[206] At the end of the story, after McCoy has united with the revenooers against a common enemy, and his rugged skills and extreme tenacity have caused the Reds to

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[202] Ibid., 5.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Ibid., 6.
[205] Ibid., 9.
[206] Ibid.

retreat, it is revealed that the sergeant threw a red grenade on the still as a ruse to incite McCoy.

"A'feudin' and a'fightin'" proves to be more complex than most others in its treatment of masculinity and military culture. McCoy is hypermasculine, but serves as a source of comedy because his masculinity is demonstrated in ways that go against the wishes of the federal government. Prior to the destruction of his still, he practices extreme restraint. It is obvious that he is a talented and deadly soldier, but he does not wish to use these skills unless he must. Once his still is destroyed, however, all restraint is lost, and he savagely attacks the enemy, stopping at nothing to enact revenge against the "Hatfields."

McCoy is an object of comedic relief in this story, and is not to be taken seriously. Although his skill and eventual courage is admirable, he had a complete misunderstanding of the war, and is easily fooled by his superior. He has the right ideas about honor and restraint, but is seen as incorrect, and made a target of comic relief in his judgement of what the proper line is. His lack of intelligence and role as a foil undermines and dismisses his considerable skill and idealistic masculinity. This also discourages the extremes of masculine aggression he showed – restraint when some aggression was required from the military and aggression that came under false auspices and garnered laughter from his associates and readers.

Chapter 5: Antifemininity

In order to "be a man," one must first establish the meanings and roles of the masculine and the feminine, and definite themselves in only one part of the binary. Brannon and David considered antifemininity, defined as, "...the stigma of all stereotyped feminine characteristics and qualities..." to be the central organizing principle from which all other masculine demands derive.[207] Brannon and David wrote, "A 'real man' must never, never resemble women, or display strongly stereotyped feminine characteristics."[208] In the hegemonic male's performance of gender, it is just as important — if not more-so — to define one's masculinity through the absence of feminine traits, than through the positive existence and performance of masculine traits. Unlike the other pillars in which a specific trait or activity was used to cultivate the aura of masculinity, the antifemininity dimension relies on and encourages binaristic gender roles. For the process of antifeminine masculinity to work, there must be an explicit separation of gender characteristics and roles.

The corpus of materials echo Elaine Tyler May's thesis that the containment ideology of the Cold War was mirrored in the domestic lives of young Americans.[209] May argued that young adults were bound to the home because of political, ideological,

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[207] David and Brannon, *The Forty-Nine Percent Majority*.
[208] Ibid., 14.
[209] May, *Homeward Bound*.

and institutional developments that converged at the time.[210] Many of these same forces

coalesced into inelastic gender roles, making the breadwinner/homemaker domestic

family the ideal form.[211]

Many wartime publications, especially those of the Rosie the Riveter campaign,

granted women typically masculine traits and focused on their ability to join the military

and have a career. However women were still largely defined as being subservient to

men, and there was a general understanding that they desire or even *belong* in the home.

To the armed forces clergy at least, women's military service did not provide them

independence (via a career, income, training, or travel), but instead trained them to adjust

to the men of the era. Because of their military service, the pamphlet states, women

would be able to bend to the needs of the former male soldier.[212] The clergy represented

the most socially conservative portion of the armed forces, but did serve as an important

source in the military for finding answers to the questions and concerns about women's

service, relationships, and gender roles. Through these sorts of depictions, both explicitly

and implicitly, gender differentiation was solidified, and masculinity was given the

superior position in the binary.

The rejection of femininity has long been a staple of military masculinity, and is a

concept deeply etched into the institution. This polar dichotomy was used as a tool for

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[210] Ibid., 18.
[211] Ibid., 198.
[212] U.S. Department of Defense, "Builders of Faith: The Moral and Spiritual Responsibilities of Religious Leaders and Citizens of All Faiths to Young Americans in Today's World" (Washington, D.C. : US Department of Defense, 1950s), 11, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Library.

training and socialization: "The military uses its socially constructed polarity between masculine and feminine in order to use masculinity as the cementing principle that unites 'real' military men in order to distinguish from non-masculine men and women."[213] Mary Wertsch, who researched American military socialization, wrote, "One of the things characterizing life inside the fortress is the exaggerated difference between masculine behavior and feminine behavior, masculine values and feminine values, Macho maleness is at one end of the spectrum; passive receptive femininity on the other."[214]

The idea of antifemininity in the military was certainly not limited to the information and entertainment produced, nor was it limited to this specific time period. Many scholars of military masculinity have focused on the disavowal of anything feminine in the creation of masculinized soldiers. Aaron Belkin argued that the masculinity produced and circulated through the military served to smooth over contradictory moral and gender ideologies that are implicit in military service.[215] Belkin argued that the narrative of a disavowal of femininity allowed soldiers, as well as the general public, to overlook the contradictions and complications that military service placed upon men's masculinity.[216] In practice, service often included homoerotic activities, paralyzing fear, physical debilitation, and a subordination to authority that cannot be questioned. This process of military masculinity also created a facade of perfect manhood that the public could trust. Because the narrative of service was free

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[213] Paul Higate, *Military Masculinities: Identity and the State* (Praeger, 2003), 75.
[214] Mary Edwards Wertsch, *Military Brats: Legacies of Childhood Inside the Fortress* (Brightwell Publishing, LLC, 2011), 196; Belkin, *Bring Me Men*, 28–29.
[215] Belkin, *Bring Me Men*, 24–25.
[216] Ibid.

from the perceived weaknesses of femininity and composed of exemplary masculinity, men to serve without questioning processes which put them in close quarters with other men and stripped them of their autonomy.

Women in the Military-Masculinity Complex

Separated gender roles and descriptions created a discourse of what is acceptable and unacceptable. By illustrating differing and often dichotomous images and roles, these publications put forth notions of what was appropriate for men. Women, especially those illustrating traditionally feminine gender roles, were shown to be unfit for the workplace or subservient, and sometimes even demonized or demeaned them through female sexuality. Men and women were often shown in dichotomous roles, where women aided men in their military or capitalistic endeavors. These messages were sometimes explicit, while other times the ideologies behind them were embedded into narratives.

In some publications, especially in recruiting materials that target women, women were able to be celebrated and empowered through exhibiting traditionally masculine traits. When women exhibited traditionally masculine traits such as strength or courage, or gained employment, they were shown in a positive light. It was generally considered unacceptable for men to exhibit feminine traits, such as showing emotion or being non-aggressive or subservient. Although a number of these materials promote the idea of women joining the military or working in private industry, there was an understanding that these roles and manifestations of masculinity were only temporary, or that women could be easily distracted from them.

The differentiation between the Navy's conceptions and assumptions about men and women can perhaps best be seen in the comparison between the comics Dick Wingate of the United States Navy and Judy Joins the Waves. The two comics, both published in 1951, begin with both protagonists unable to afford college to pursue the careers they desired. From there, the narratives varied greatly. Immediately after Judy joined the serve, she saw a male sailor walking through the train, and immediately clashes with another woman over the man's attention.[217] The story focuses on her relationship with the sailor and her troubles with the other woman, leading up to Judy's realization that the other woman was left behind on an island that was about to be shelled in training.[218] Judy alerted the sailors and they saved the other woman, and the story ended with Judy and the sailor presumably living happily ever after. Soon after joining, Dick is living his dreams and working on high-tech projects. Dick became engaged in a rogue smuggling and kidnapping investigation, and soon earned the attention of an attractive lounge singer who knew the kidnapped sailor's whereabouts.[219] Dick came in and saved the sailor, and tackled the kidnapper just as he was about to shoot the lounge singer.[220]

Although both Dick and Judy found adventure and saved lives in the Navy, the focus of the stories is telling in the way the authors perceived the differences between

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[217] U.S. Navy, *Judy Joins the Waves* (Toby Press, 1951), 11–13, http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/72/rec/1.
[218] Ibid., 30–34.
[219] U.S. Navy, *Dick Wingate of the United States Navy* (New York, N.Y.: Toby Press, 1951), 24–28, http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/50/rec/1.
[220] Ibid., 30–32.

men and women. Judy's career aspirations were quickly abandoned for a love interest. The creators presumably felt that women would be more interested in a love story than a story about career success through the Navy. In many ways this assumption, along with the narrative throughout *Judy Joins the Waves*, aligns with the worldview that women may be interested in a career, but ultimately, they truly desire a husband and work in the domestic world. The assumption that women could work in times of crisis or prior to getting married, but not afterwards, was popular amongst men, and was a source of tension following WWII when many women were forced out of the workplace when men returned from abroad. Women increasingly fought against this notion, citing their abilities in the workplace during the war.

Some materials were much more explicit with the view that women were best suited for the domestic world, and were even misogynistic at times. This was especially clear in productions that were not meant for recruiting women. In a pamphlet distributed to clergy members of the armed forces, the piece portrayed an understanding of female enlistment that goes directly in the face of many empowering recruiting materials for women. In a question and answer section, the pamphlet read:

> Q: Does service in the Armed Forces change a woman's attitude towards having a home and family of her own in the future?
>
> A: A woman's natural instincts are for a home and family. Whether she serves a tour of duty in the military, works in an office or at a profession, or engages in some other endeavor, she never loses her interest in being a woman and a homemaker. A good many young people have met and have been married while in military service. Whether her marriage takes place then or later, chances are she will marry a former serviceman. She is likely to be a better wife and mother

because of her military training. She will better understand the importance of daily routine and

discipline, having learned in the military. She and her husband will have the common interest of

past military life, and a shared mutual relationship which will make their marriage relationship

much closer. Then, too, women everywhere are sought out when there are tasks to perform that

women do exceptionally well. So it is in the military. If there's a Sunday School class to teach, a

nursery nearby or entertainment to plan, the officers and enlisted men alike turn to the woman

in their ranks because she is a woman and can do that job particularly well. All of these

contribute to her future success and happiness as a wife and mother.[221]

Other texts were openly misogynistic, and demonized women by illustrating female

sexuality as dangerous or threatening. One WWII-era comic, *This is Ann*, warned soldiers

of the dangers of malaria through the use of a feminized mosquito named "Ann." The

comic puts out a clear, though unspoken, link between malaria carried by mosquitoes and

venereal disease carried by women. The cover claims that Ann is "dying to meet you," as

she stands primping herself.[222] The next page advances the sexualized image of Ann,

viewing her in the same pose, but this time through a keyhole, adding voyeurism to the

imagery of feminization and sexualization.[223] Along with her apparent beckoning to the

voyeuristic reader, the pamphlet emphasizes that she really is inviting – "Ann really gets

around" – the caption reads.[224] Ann's sexualized identity and loose morals are solidified

by adding, "Ann moves around at night, anytime from dusk to sunrise (*a real party gal*),

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[221] U.S. Department of Defense, "Builders of Faith: The Moral and Spiritual Responsibilities of Religious Leaders and Citizens of All Faiths to Young Americans in Today's World," 11.
[222] Dr. Seuss and Leaf Munro, *This Is Ann* (War Department; U.S. G.P.O., 1943), 11, http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/168/rec/1.
[223] Ibid., 2.
[224] Ibid.

and she's got a real thirst."[225] By equating the spread of malaria with the spread of

venereal disease, the comic demonizes female sexuality, and promotes the idea that

women who are openly sexual are dangerous or have hidden motives. Many anti-VD

posters and pamphlets also put forth this narrative, but *This is Ann* stands out above the

others for forcibly inserting female sexuality into non-sexual matters.

Emasculated Men

These examples depict a process where femininity is defined as inferior or

subservient, while masculinity is prized and positive. The military materials I examine

rarely explicitly demean men exhibiting femininity. Instead, they generally offer positive

support of masculinity, while constructing femininity in women as the second gender.

There were very few times when artist's renderings of men showed them as being

anything less than a prime male form. In one glaring exception, however, a character was

feminized, demeaned, and insulted as a method to discourage reckless behavior.

The 1944 Army pamphlet, *Pvt. Droop has Missed the War!*, warns soldiers of the

risky behavior they must avoid in order to remain a part of the US military.[226] The

publication shames Pvt. Droop for acting dangerously while on leave, rendering him

inactive for the rest of the war. The pamphlet shames him in writing, as well as through

unmasculine depictions, as if to connect discouraged behavior with his body type and

appearance. He is depicted as child-like, with a large head and a small, undeveloped

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[225] Ibid., 5–6.
[226] *Pvt. Droop Has Missed the War!*.

body. This unmasculine depiction is a stark contrast from the broad shoulders and bulging muscles displayed in most soldier illustrations. The name "Droop" is also loaded, and signifies a lacking virility and physical presence.[227] Pvt. Droop was used as an example of a lack of masculinity, one that could be avoided by soldiers if they aced responsibly.

In instituting male superiority, the materials also draw upon some classically held ideas about men preferring male children. This idea is not only underwritten by ideas of male superiority and advantaged property inheritance, but also through the idea that a man was much better suited to be a father for a son, rather than a daughter. *Time of Decision* was an Army ROTC comic book about a man who uses his ROTC training to advance in the business world and become an ideal breadwinner. His wife is pregnant with their first child when they hear word that war has broken out in Europe. He advises her, "Don't worry about it honey, just take care of yourself and make sure you present me with a husky son on schedule."[228] Not only did the man request that he would be "presented" with a son, but also a masculine son. By requesting a "husky" son, he was not only asking for a sufficiently medically healthy son, but also a son that fit some of the ideas about what comprised a man's health, like a strong build and a certain amount of mass. The comic ends happily – his wife gave birth to a husky son right on schedule. Similarly, Henry, the protagonists' neighbor in *It's All in the Family*, a trope about the

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[227] Ibid., 1.
[228] *Time of Decision* (Department of the Army; R.O.T.C., 1963), 6, http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/157/rec/1.

importance of family in the fight for the American way of life in the face of Communism, danced around the waiting room when he learns his wife gave birth to a boy.[229]

The masculine dimension of antifemininity can be seen through these pieces, though not always exactly as David and Brannon defined it. David and Brannon viewed this as a largely social process whereas men disavow femininity in their own lives, and police peers on the same lines. Although much of the "Inexpressiveness and Independence" corpus can be interpreted in this manner, there are few other examples where individual men explicitly reject characteristics that may be interpreted as feminine. Rather, in the majority of the corpus, masculinity and femininity are painted in very different tones, and masculinity is given a clear endorsement. Men are more celebrated as they are shown as more masculine, while women are more subservient and demeaned as they are more feminine.

Antifemininity - Time of Decision

In instituting male superiority, some of the materials also draw upon some classically held ideas about men preferring male children. This is not only underwritten by concepts of male superiority and advantaged property inheritance, but also through the idea that a man would much prefer a masculine child rather than a feminine one. *Time of Decision* was an Army ROTC comic book about a man who uses his ROTC training to advance in the business world and become an ideal breadwinner. His wife is pregnant

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[229] Ham Fischer, "It's All in the Family," in *Citizenship Booklet* (Harvey Publications, Inc./Armed Forces Information and Education Division, Office of the Secretary of Defense, c1951), 10–11.

with their first child when they hear word that war has broken out in Europe. He advises her, "Don't worry about it honey, just take care of yourself and make sure you present me with a husky son on schedule."[230] In this story, not only did the man request that he would be "presented" with a son, but also a properly masculine son. By requesting that he be "husky," he was not only asking for a sufficiently healthy son, but also a son that fit some of the ideas about what comprised a man's health, like a strong build and an imposing size. The comic ends happily for the man – not only did he remain safe through the war, his wife gave birth to a husky son right on schedule.

Antifemininity - This is Ann

The informational pamphlet, *This is Ann*, produced by Theodore Geisel, later known as Dr. Seuss, is loaded with vixenization of women and demonization of female sexuality. The WWII-era comic warned soldiers of the dangers of malaria through the use of a feminized mosquito named "Ann." Although the decision to create a female mosquito rather than a male is natural – females carry blood and males do not – but the characterization of Ann in the text is highly misogynistic.

The comic puts out a clear, though unspoken, link between malaria carried by mosquitoes and venereal disease carried by women. The cover claims that Ann is "dying to meet you," as she stands primping herself.[231] The next page advances the sexualized image of Ann, viewing her in the same pose, but this time through a keyhole, adding

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[230] *Time of Decision*, 6.
[231] Seuss and Munro, *This Is Ann*, 1.

voyeurism to the imagery of feminization and sexualizaton.[232] Along with her apparent

beckoning to the voyeuristic reader, the pamphlet emphasizes that she really is inviting --

"Ann really gets around" -- the caption reads.[233] Ann's sexualized identity and loose

morals are solidified by adding, "Ann moves around at night, anytime from dusk to

sunrise (*a real party gal*), and she's got a real thirst. No whiskey, gin, beer, or rum coke

for Ann...she drinks blood."[234]

By equating the spread of malaria with the spread of venereal disease, the comic

demonizes female sexuality, and promotes the idea that women who are openly sexual

are dangerous, or have hidden motives. Many anti-VD posters and pamphlets also put

forth this narrative, but *This is Ann* stands out above the others for forcibly inserting

female sexuality into non-sexual matters.

Antifemininity - Pvt. Droop has Missed the War!

The 1944 Army pamphlet, *Pvt. Droop has Missed the War!*, warns soldiers of the

risky behavior they must avoid in order to remain a part of the US military.[235] The

publication shames Pvt. Droop for acting dangerously while on leave, rendering him

inactive for the rest of the war. The pamphlet shames him verbally, as well as through

unmasculine depictions, as if to connect his discouraged behavior with his body type and

appearance. He is depicted as child-like, with a large head and a small, undeveloped

body. This unmasculine depiction is a stark contrast from the broad shoulders and

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[232] Ibid., 2.
[233] Ibid.
[234] Ibid., 5–6.
[235] *Pvt. Droop Has Missed the War!.*

bulging muscles displayed in most soldier illustrations. The name "Droop" is also loaded, and signifies a lacking virility and male physical presence.[236] Pvt. Droop was used as an example of a lack of masculinity, one that could be avoided by soldiers if they acted responsibly.

Antifemininity - Mister Marine Corps

The comic, "Mister Marine Corps" comes from the 1952 publication *Marines #7*, a compilation of news, photojournalism, and comics printed by the US Marine Corps. The central character, "Mr. Marine Corps," is Lou Diamond, an aging Marine whose legend precedes him. This "Marine Hall of Fame" feature seeks to bolster the mythology that surrounds him, by publishing the exaggerated and fictional reports of his exploits. He was a veteran of the both World Wars, and is repeatedly depicted as being in better shape than the younger soldiers.

This "Marine Corps Hall of Fame" feature crafted an idyllic narrative of a legendary hegemonic male whose athletic and military prowess are impressive, despite is advancing age. His competitiveness and intense masculine bravado drive the story, and he backs each up with his impeccable skills.

These skills provide him a masculine platform from which he can criticize, mock, and emasculate the other soldiers. When a colonel complains that his advance is held up by ineffective mortar fire, Lou marches to the mortarmen, greeting them, "All right what

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[236] Ibid., 1.

are you guys doin, thrown' rice at a bride? Lemme at that weapon!"[237] This statement

feminizes the ineffective soldiers by accusing them of performing with the delicate act of

tossing rice at a wedding. By equating their inability to perform with the tossing of rice at

a wedding -- the ultimate feminine imagery -- he is criticizing and scolding them by

equating their actions and abilities with femininity.

Lou soon finds the cause of the soldiers' femininity, however, and takes steps to

help them. He asks what the men have been eating, and when they tell him k-rations, he

exclaims "**K-RATIONS???** No wonder you can't fight!" and then goes to the Army base

to steal food from the quarter-master.[238] The narration goes on to say, "Needless to say,

Edson's men moved faster in spite of the extra weight some of them were carrying…"[239]

The mortarmen ultimately were not feminine or unmasculine, they were just starved and

unable to eat as much as a man should. Once the men were cured of their feminine

impairments, they were able to fight on like idyllic Marines. With the additional chow

from the quarter-master, the men were able take out enemy installments rather than

simply throw rice at the bride.

Antifemininity - Leatherhead in Korea

The publication *Leatherhead in Korea* was a collection of comedic cartoons

published by Norvel E. Packwood, an artist for the *Marine Corps Gazette*. The comics

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[237] "Mister Marine Corps," in *United States Marines No. 7, The* (United States Marine
Corps/Magazine Enterprises; New York, 1952), 25,
http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/148/rec/3.
[238] Ibid., 25–26.
[239] Ibid., 26.

were originally published in the *Gazette*, and were compiled into this publication in 1952.

The comics in *Leatherhead in Korea* were short - generally one panel – and drew upon

Packwood's experiences in the field. His pieces differ from many of the other comics I

examine, in that they are less propagandistic than the others, and only sought to make

light of typical situations the soldiers found themselves in.

The masculinity of the soldiers was elevated by emasculating the journalists in the

military. While two soldiers sit next to each other on a hill, both dreaming about scantily-

clad pinups.[240] On the other side of the hill, looking lonely and dejected, a journalist sits

and dreams about a typewriter.[241] In this bit of self-deprecating humor, military

journalists are shown to be less masculine than soldiers in a few ways. First, in a

departure from the heteronormativity and virility displayed by the soldiers, the journalist

is not preoccupied by women. This absence of a sexually masculine marker depicts the

journalist as unmasculine, a quality which contributes to the inferior depiction of him in

relation to the other soldiers. The journalists are feminized and separated from the

soldiers, emphasizing the masculinity that is implicit with warfare.

Antifemininity - Four Futures

The pamphlet *Four Futures* illustrated four possible career paths for women - the

nursing profession, the dietetic profession, physical therapy, and occupational therapy.

The pamphlet added, near the very end, that all of these paths can be pursued through

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[240] Norvel E. Packwood, *Leatherhead in Korea* (Quantico, Va,. Marine Corps Gazette, 1952), 67, http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/77/rec/2.
[241] Ibid.

military service. The text stated that women, "…want security – and one based on your own self-sufficiency, when that is called for. And, of course, [they] probably want a husband – a home – and a family."[242] The pamphlet does not specify when self-sufficiency may be called for. This phrasing seems to place the husband, home, and family as the primary avenue for security, with job skills and a career only being used secondarily, "when called for." The pamphlet generally supported the idea of women working, and even the idea that a woman could desire both a job and a family, but the occupations were framed as being directly supportive of men's efforts.

After showing the various jobs available in the armed forces, all of which offered services to male GIs, the pamphlet added, "Perhaps the greatest satisfaction of all will be the knowledge that because of you, many of our nation's finest men have been returned to civilian life with their health maintained, restored, or greatly improved, and are self-supporting, self-respecting, useful American citizens."[243] Rather than asking women to directly serve their country, it framed their role as serving the men who serve the country. This separation of gender roles means that anything perceived as advancing the nation can be seen as a masculine endeavor, in opposition to feminine support service. Through this language, the men were depicted as the primary American citizens, the ones who were most important to the nation's well-being. Women, on the other hand, offered their support to the men.

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[242] U.S. Department of Defense, "Four Futures: Pick a Professional Career and Plan with a Purpose" (US Department of Defense, 1956), 1, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Library.
[243] Ibid., 17.

Antifemininity - Dick and Judy

The differentiation between the Navy's conceptions and assumptions about men and women can perhaps best be seen in a comparison of the comics *Dick Wingate of the United States Navy* and *Judy Joins the Waves*. The 1951 women's recruiting comic *Judy Joins the Waves* depicted the Waves (the US Navy's female division) as a masculinized career-building route for women to pursue. The opening paragraph laid out Judy's plans for the future: "After high school, there'd be college where she'd study journalism. She'd become a newspaper woman, perhaps a foreign correspondent. She'd travel, have adventures, a glamorous career..."[244] Judy lost hope in this future when her father lost his job, and she was forced to forego college and work at a ribbon counter.[245] Similarly, Dick Wingate's story opens with his hopes of a technical career including, "…flying, electronics, radar – all this new stuff…," but his family was unable to afford to send him to a training school.[246] The narratives and the presentation of Dick and Judy's priorities and desires differed once they joined the Navy.

Immediately following Judy's swearing-in ceremony, a male sailor (Jeff) walked through the Waves train car, and Judy and another woman, Sheila, immediately clashed over their attraction to the sailor.[247] The middle portion of the story is driven by her competition with Sheila for Jeff's attention and affection. Dick, on the other hand, soon experienced the things he dreamed of – he is shown working on cutting-edge undersea

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[244] U.S. Navy, *Judy Joins the Waves*, 3.
[245] Ibid., 3–4.
[246] U.S. Navy, *Dick Wingate of the United States Navy*, 6.
[247] U.S. Navy, *Judy Joins the Waves*, 11–13.

radar technology.[248] Both Dick and Judy then have brushes with extra-military adventure and intrigue. Dick became engaged in a rogue smuggling and kidnapping investigation, and soon earned the attention of an attractive lounge singer who knew the kidnapped sailor's whereabouts.[249] Dick came in and saved the sailor, and tackled the kidnapper just as he was about to shoot the lounge singer.[250]

Judy had a tamer adventurous arc. She realized that Sheila had been left behind on an island that was about to be shelled by US battleships.[251] Judy returned to the island, where she found Sheila incapacitated, and shouted for sailors to come rescue her. When Sheila discovered that it was Judy who saved her, she admitted to sabotaging Judy and Jeff's relationship.[252] Sheila's confession saved Jeff and Judy's relationship, and the comic ended with Sheila and Judy walking arm-in-arm, singing the Waves's song.[253]

While Judy had many of the same hopes and dreams as Dick, the comic focused on her relationship with Jeff and her rivalry with Sheila, rather than her training, experiences, or career prospects. The creators presumably felt that women would be more interested in a love story than a story about career success through the Navy. In many ways this presumption, along with the narrative throughout *Judy Joins the Waves*, aligns with the worldview that women may think they are interested in a career, but ultimately,

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[248] Ibid., 12.
[249] U.S. Navy, *Dick Wingate of the United States Navy*, 24–28.
[250] Ibid., 30–32.
[251] U.S. Navy, *Judy Joins the Waves*, 30–34.
[252] Ibid.
[253] Ibid.

they truly desire a husband and work in the domestic world.[254] The assumption that women could work in times of crisis or prior to getting married, but not afterwards, was popular amongst men, and was a source of tension following WWII when many women were forced out of the workplace when men returned from abroad. Women increasingly fought against this notion, citing their abilities in the workplace during the war.

The adventure arcs also illustrated some presumed gender capabilities and limitations. Both Dick and Judy saved a damsel in distress, but did so in different and ideologically revealing ways. Dick's rescue required the use of force against a direct and dangerous opponent. Judy's, on the other hand, was an escape from an impending disaster. Although Judy showed a great amount of courage by putting herself in harm's way, she does not have to face down or defeat a foe. Furthermore, she was incapable of saving Sheila on her own, and had to yell for the male soldiers to come and carry her back. The comparison of these two are emblematic of the difference between male masculinity and female masculinity in the corpus of materials.

Antifemininity - Builders of Faith

Department of Defense materials that were not meant for recruiting women often showed a vast division between men and women, and reinforced traditional gender roles. In *Builders of Faith: The Moral and Spiritual Responsibilities of Religious Leaders and Citizens of All Faiths to Young Americans in Today's World*, a pamphlet distributed to members of the armed forces clergy, the DoD portrays an idea of female enlistment that

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[254] This worldview is explicitly described in Builders of Faith, a pamphlet for military clergy.

goes directly in the face of female recruiting materials. In a question and answer section,

the pamphlet says:

> Q: Does service in the Armed Forces change a woman's attitude towards having a home and
> family of her own in the future?
>
> A: A woman's natural instincts are for a home and family. Whether she serves a tour of duty in
> the military, works in an office or at a profession, or engages in some other endeavor, she never
> loses her interest in being a woman and a homemaker. A good many young people have met and
> have been married while in military service. Whether her marriage takes place then or later,
> chances are she will marry a former serviceman. She is likely to be a better wife and mother
> because of her military training. She will better understand the importance of daily routine and
> discipline, having learned in the military. She and her husband will have the common interest of
> past military life, and a shared mutual relationship which will make their marriage relationship
> much closer. Then, too, women everywhere are sought out when there are tasks to perform that
> women do exceptionally well. So it is in the military. If there's a Sunday School class to teach, a
> nursery nearby or entertainment to plan, the officers and enlisted men alike turn to the woman
> in their ranks because she is a woman and can do that job particularly well. All of these
> contribute to her future success and happiness as a wife and mother.[255]

This mentality supports Elaine Tyler May's thesis that the containment ideology

of the Cold War was mirrored in the domestic lives of young Americans.[256] May argued

that young adults were "homeward bound," and bound to the home as a result of political,

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[255] U.S. Department of Defense, "Builders of Faith: The Moral and Spiritual Responsibilities of
Religious Leaders and Citizens of All Faiths to Young Americans in Today's World," 11.
[256] May, *Homeward Bound*.

ideological, and institutional developments that converged at the time.[257] Many of these same forces coalesced into inelastic gender roles, making the breadwinner/homemaker domestic family the ideal form.[258] These trends define feminine roles almost exclusively as wives and mothers, bolstering the male breadwinner role that defined ideal manhood in the era. To the clergy at least, women's military service did not provide them independence via a career, income, training, or travel, but instead trained them to adjust to the men of the era. Because of their military service, the pamphlet states, women would be able to bend to the needs of the former male soldier. Through these sorts of depictions, both explicitly and implicitly, gender differentiation was solidified, and masculinity was given the superior position in the binary.

Antifemininity - It's All in the Family

The Department of Defense comic *It's All in the Family* focuses on the central role of family in the American system, and as a functioning organization to fight the Communist way of life. Throughout the entirety of the comic's sixteen pages, nearly every activity or discussion falls into a stereotypical gender role. I have listed the following activities and characteristics which are demonstrated within the text, all of which are demonstrative of the distinct gender roles of the area, with the exception of one which comes close to challenging the norm.

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[257] Ibid., 18.
[258] Ibid., 198.

Male

- In the very first panel, Joe (eldest child) is seen holding open a door for his wife, illustrating chivalry.[259]

- Stephen (middle child) is introduced as he is repairing a fence in front of the house.[260]

- Stephen steps in and helps Rosie (youngest child) with her typing, saying that he learned to type in the Navy.[261]

- Stephen tells the family that he is a year away from his engineering degree, which is contrasted in the same panel with Rosie's news that she has a new boyfriend.[262]

- Following the meal, the father excuses himself to rest, while the mother and Rosie haul away the dishes.[263]

- For Father's Day, Mr. Palooka received clothing from Rosie and his wife, while Stephen gave him new technology, a radio, so that he could listen to baseball games.[264]

- When the neighbors had trouble getting their car started, Joe offered to drive them to the hospital, while Stephen went to work on the car's engine.[265]

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[259] Fischer, "It's All in the Family," 2.
[260] Ibid.
[261] Ibid., 3.
[262] Ibid., 4.
[263] Ibid., 5.
[264] Ibid., 6.

- The mother and father reminisce about the kids' willingness to help others throughout their childhood. They recall that Joe got a job delivering newspapers to help with expenses, and Stephen said that he wanted to get a job when he was older.[266] This is contrasted against Rosie's selflessness in offering to give up one of the dolls she received for Christmas.[267]

- When the parents are preparing to leave on a two week trip, Stephen offers to fulfill his father's role and look after the farm.[268]

Female

- The mother is first introduced as she is rounding up the children in preparation for Joe and his wife's arrival. The mother tells her husband and Stephen to clean up, but asks Rosie to help with the dusting, signifying that the men are done with their work, while Rosie is expected to do more.[269]

- Rosie is introduced when her mother asks her to help with the housework.[270]

- Rosie was given the honor of serving in a leadership role at school, serving as student council secretary, although she struggles greatly with her typing.[271] This leadership role somewhat defies the stereotype, though her position as secretary is fairly gendered.

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[265] Ibid., 8.
[266] Ibid., 10.
[267] Ibid.
[268] Ibid., 12.
[269] Ibid., 2.
[270] Ibid.
[271] Ibid., 2–3.

- The mother, along with Ann and Rosie, serve dinner (which she has presumably cooked herself) to the three men.[272]

- Rosie tells the family that she has a new boyfriend, which is contrasted in the same panel with Stephen's news that he is a year away from his engineering degree.[273]

- When the neighbors had trouble getting their car started, Rosie tells Mrs. Harris that she will look after the children.[274]

- The mother and father reminisce about the kids' willingness to help others throughout their childhood. They recall Rosie's willingness to give up a doll when she received two for Christmas.[275] Her sharing of a consumer good is contrasted with Joe and Stephen's willingness to get a job to help with expenses, and Stephen said that he wanted to get a job when he was older.[276]

- When the parents are preparing to leave on a two week trip, Stephen reassures them that Rosie will be able to do all of the housework after school.[277]

These roles, which almost exclusively exist in dichotomous spheres, create a higher value on the male sphere. The men are depicted as the earners and have the highest share of power and agency. This is perhaps best illustrated when the parents reminisce about their kids' willingness to sacrifice for others. The mother ends the story with, "Don't

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[272] Ibid., 4.
[273] Ibid.
[274] Ibid., 8.
[275] Ibid., 10.
[276] Ibid.
[277] Ibid.

forget…You worked pretty hard yourself in those days!" to which he responds, "And *you* kept me from getting' discouraged! You kept me plugging' along…"[278] Here he does not acknowledge his wife's hard work in the home or her share of the responsibility in raising the children to be selfless. Instead he thanks her for the encouragement that enabled him to work so hard for the family. In this story, the separate roles and spheres are not considered equal and balancing, but instead the male role is considered primary to the family's survival, and the female is there for support.

In addition to these rigid gender roles and the privilege given to the male role, the story also draws upon some classically held ideas about patriarchal inheritance patterns and the preference for male children. Though Mr. Palooka is open to his sons pursuing other careers, he does state that he was hoping that Stephen would take over the farm, and had expressed the same desires when Joe was his age.[279] Henry Harris, the neighbor, danced around the waiting room when he learned his wife gave birth to a boy.[280] This idea is not only underwritten by ideas of male superiority and property inheritance, but also through the idea that a man was much better suited to be a father for a son, rather than a daughter. The expressed roles and statements carry heavy weight, as the story seeks to establish an ideal American family, and explain the ways in which families (presumably families like these) service as the bedrock of democracy and the American Way.

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[278] Ibid.
[279] Ibid., 5.
[280] Ibid., 10–11.

Chapter 6: Be a Big Wheel

David and Brannon's "Be a Big Wheel" categorization argued that men strive to achieve higher social status through success, primarily in regards to work, sports, and heterosexual conquest.[281] "Big Wheel" status comes from an admiration and appreciation for a man's successes, and results in even more advantages in social standing and privilege in areas such as occupational and civic status. In America, David and Brannon noted, there is a special focus on a man's work - primarily the ways through which his success is translated into, "...visible and socially acceptable symbols - money, possessions, power."[282] Beyond these symbols of monetary value largely only available to the upper classes, David and Brannon added that other avenues are available to men of all classes, including discursive and physical competition in order to gain respect or prestige within a social group or workplace, or gaining a reputation for athletic prowess or sexual performance.[283]

The DoD's depictions of soldiers, both the real soldiers profiled as well as fictional characterizations, often referenced a successful athletic background, a promising career, and as highly regarded by women, all of which purportedly gave them the opportunity to be big wheels and successful breadwinners in postwar life. This past-

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[281] David and Brannon, *The Forty-Nine Percent Majority*.
[282] Ibid., 90.
[283] Ibid., 90–91.

present-future narrative provides the typical arch of manhood. As boys, these men are understood as competing against their peers, playing games and proving their budding manhood to each other. Service in the military then comes next, and is understood as a necessary process to 'become men' by focusing their masculine aggression for good. Once their manhood and aggression has been proven, these men then learn to control their aggression and return to their paternal roles on the homefront. At home, veterans' success is still tied to the nationalist Cold War narrative, but is articulated through success as a breadwinner.

Status Achievement

Defense productions depicted the military as a means through which men attained higher status, while also showing many examples where status was inherent in the men who enlisted in the military. The Big Wheel dynamic covered all parts of a man's life, including his status as a big wheel before, during, and after his military service. This occurred most often when recruits were shown to be successful athletes in college or high school, then joined the military, gained training and an education, and landed a well-paying job.

Additionally, military provided both an inherent sense of status through honor, while providing means for men to attain status through other means, such as civic engagement and leadership, physical prowess, and economic success. One of the primary recruiting pitches, especially in the postwar years, was the benefit of education and training for the men. Service allowed men to attain a good paying job, social status, and in many cases, a wife as a direct result of these earnings. According to the documents, the

military was a place for men of high status to attain even higher status in society. Big wheel status could be attained through a number of different avenues, and the DoD materials illustrate three primary avenues to be explored: athletic achievement and physical prowess, the breadwinner ideal, and respect and admiration from society, including romantic appeal to young women.

Varying and Intersecting Avenues of Bigwheel Status

I identify three primary ways through which these documents portrayed military men as "Big Wheels":

- **Athletic Success and Physical Prowess**

The comics often promoted a man's masculinity before they were enlisted, often through the use of athletic success. Once they were enlisted, their physical prowess continued - through recreational sports as well as battle.

- **Breadwinners**

In many ways, military service provided men a fast-track to being a "Big Wheel." These men were mythologized through media depictions – many of them stemming directly from the DoD – and were given a clear pathway for success through training and education provided by the GI Bill.

- **Sexual Appeal and Adoration**

Men were socially elevated through the honor granted to them by the uniform. Soldiers and veterans, according to defense documents, were also given an amount of financial security through payment, education, and training. Financial security and the skills

learned in the service provided the men with a high social status for the rest of their lives. The documents show that young women were attracted to this combination of honor and financial security.

Be a Big Wheel - Sports

The male body is inextricably associated with notions of masculinity and anatomically based, binaristic gender constructions of the era. The body, its physical strength, and its sexual virility, were essential markings for a man's masculinity. Connell wrote, "True masculinity is almost always thought to proceed from men's bodies — to be inherent in a male body or to express something about a male body.[284] Non-masculine body types were often associated with weakness — physically, intellectually, and morally. A man's physical masculinity was a status symbol, one that many politicians utilized in their campaigns, publicizing their achievements as warriors and athletes, and downplaying any physical shortcomings.[285] One's bodily masculinity could be used both as a way to assuage doubts or criticism of a man as well as a way to attain an elevated social status.

The Body of a Warrior

The perfection of bodily masculinity was a central component in military training, as well as in the military's public perception. Belkin wrote, "...constructions of the

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[284] Raewyn Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 45.
[285] Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 35–39.

soldier's toughness, masculinity, dominance, heterosexuality, and stoicism can conjure

images of military strength, state legitimacy, and imperial righteousness, while depictions

of the soldier's flaws can implicate notions of military weakness and state and imperial

illegitimacy."[286] Belkin argues that this gives reason for the military to insure that

normative masculinity of the solider, military, and state were all aligned. These

constructions and this imagery would have direct repercussions on American manhood,

especially for the men in the military, who were the subjects of the constructed manhood.

Within American society and American masculinity, Belkin argued, "...the ubiquitous

characterization of American military masculinity as an ideal that marks not just being a

man, but a real man, and the association of authenticity and legibility with warrior

masculinity in US military culture" resulted from military masculinity's insistence of its

own flawlessness.[287] Echoing Regina G. Kunzel and Michel Foucault, Belkin argued that

this insistence proved the constructionism of military masculinity, and the power wielded

in the mask of normativity.[288] This imagery and the linkage of proper manhood with

military masculinity raised the status of soldiers and veterans' manhood and assuaged any

doubts about them.

In military documents, physical masculinity was used as a signifier for success

and triumph, and a lack of physical masculinity was used as a marker for failure and

impotence. Federal productions, in combination with similar materials in popular culture

and the intrusive Selective Service examinations, reinforced the notion that American

[286] Belkin, *Bring Me Men*, 58.
[287] Ibid., 67.
[288] Ibid.

soldiers were ultra masculine men in a very specific vein — white, tall, clean-cut, strong jaw line and facial features, and a strong frame.

Athletes and the Individual's Claim to Masculinity

The draft brought about a national discourse on the physical well-being of its citizens, especially its young men. In addition to young male bodies representing the nation's strength, courage, and aggressiveness, Christina Jarvis argued that during WWII, "American male bodies were physically examined, classified, categorized, disciplined, clothed in particular uniforms, sexualized via venereal disease screenings, and subject to numerous other processes by the military and other institutions."[289] This process, applied to tens of millions of men over the course of the Selective Service draft, brought about a national discourse on the health and bodies of the nation's young men. During WWII, when the draft was at its peak, "Newspaper stories about the Selective Service system were filled with the terms, and 'one's draft status became the topic of daily conversation and radio comedians' jokes.'"[290] While service in the military could provide others with basic assumptions of a man's physical capabilities, sports provided another avenue to display one's masculinity in a way that was culturally heralded and highly visible. Historian Anthony Rotundo argued that, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, competitive sports took on a "...new meaning and heightened importance for Northern

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[289] Jarvis, *The Male Body at War*, 5.
[290] Ibid., 59–60.

[US] men."[291] Goldstein endorsed Rotundo's view, and added, "Physical culture shifted focus from strengthening the body to competition, and sports played an important role in the emergence of the new ideals of manhood at the turn of the century."[292]

Robert Dean found sports to be one of the primary arenas where Cold War-era elites earned social status and prestige. "The 'big men' of the schools were often the athletic stars. The *agon* of athletic competition was metaphorically linked to the experience of war, with analogous opportunities to achieve a kind of immortality, a 'homosocial rebirth.'"[293] Dean stressed the importance of this status and social ascendancy, adding, "Athletic accomplishment was associated with 'leadership' by the masters; positions of authority over other boys often went to those who excelled at sports."[294]

Through athletic success, both in the past and through ongoing competition, markers for manhood such as physical strength, aggressiveness, and courage could be produced, displayed, communicated, and compared with other men. Most military installments outside of combat zones participated in competitive sports, and often had intramural leagues and teams that competed against other military installments and local teams. These events were often well-attended and well-covered by local media sources, and thus publicized men for their athletic ability and made them well-known around the

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[291] E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations In Masculinity From The Revolution To The Modern Era*, Reprint (Basic Books, 1994), 239–244.
[292] Goldstein, *War and Gender*, 299.
[293] Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood*, 30.
[294] Ibid.

military installment or community. Individual men were able to establish reputations for their physical well-being and their athletic abilities. These same kinds of skills and abilities, and the value and appreciation assigned to them, were often expressed through comics to portray men in the military as being superior athletes and physical specimens. These pieces insisted upon a specific type of physical masculinity — athleticism — that was culturally valued, and allowed men to achieve higher social standing through performance. In these pieces, the playing field was as an important social space where men gained recognition, status, and an identity woven into their achievements.

The power of athletic ability in gaining social status is well-illustrated in the comic *It's All in the Family*. The story stars Joe Palooka, a well-known syndicated character, who is a heavyweight prizefighter. The neighbors, Henry and Mrs. Harris, directly acknowledge his 'bigwheel' status and the weight it carried when they are first struggling to start their car. When Mrs. Harris suggests Henry ask the Palookas for help, Henry responds with, "Listen...I've never asked help from **that kind** of people before.."[295] When asked what he means, he replies, "His son is the heavyweight champion of the world — so they probably think they are real stuff and we're nobody!"[296] Even though the Palookas thoroughly disprove Henry's assumptions, he is taking Joe's pedigree as an athlete and the notoriety he has gained to assume that the Paloookas are of a higher social class and would not give any mind to someone of his class. It also demonstrates that, although he has never met any of them, he has heard of Joe's talents and

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[295] Fischer, "It's All in the Family," 6.
[296] Ibid., 7.

accomplishments, and that his reputation (at least so far as his athletic ability) precedes him.

The military gave the impression that soldiers, especially he best ones, came from the ranks of the nation's elite athletes and best physical specimens. Athletes were typically heralded for many of the same things soldiers were — their strength, courage, and keeping their wits about them in harrowing times. Characters were often masculinized through the display of past athletic achievements, creating a bridge between the status of athletic "big wheels" and the soldier.

Athletics and male physical power were very much stressed in the material, depicting many soldiers as former athletes. The comic, "Mister Marine Corps" comes from *United States Marines No 7*, a compilation of news, photojournalism, and comics printed by the US Marine Corps. The central character, "Mr. Marine Corps," is Lou Diamond, is an aging Marine whose legend precedes him. This "Marine Hall of Fame" feature seeks to bolster the mythology that surrounds him, by publishing the exaggerated and fictional reports of his exploits. Lou's athletic ability plays a big role in this mythology. First, in a departure from the battle-centric imagery throughout the piece, an early scene shows him on a baseball field, adding, "But some claim he was fifty years old when he pitched a one-hit shutout for the Quantico Marines some time in the twenties."[297] The conversation between Lou and a teammate encourage his prowess as a pitcher and the team's overall success. His competitiveness, along with his masculine bravado, soon

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[297] "Mister Marine Corps," 24.

comes into play on the battlefield. Despite his age, the narration reads, "…he proved his right to the title of the greatest mortarman in the world," and he continued to serve with honor and distinction.[298]

Through the discursive linkage between sports and the military, a close tie was drawn between the accepted physical prowess at home and the physicality of the male soldiers, and placed them in the dominant and highly regarded hegemonic social role. In addition to displaying soldiers as former athletes, athletics were shown to be a large part of military life. While the former often plays on the "Big Wheel" persona, the latter functioned as a masculine discourse. Athletic competition between men is a performance of masculinity, and creates a communication of strength and physical virility between the men. The projection of this discourse serves the same function, by showing that these men are physical specimens and work to maintain this status. A publication on life at the new US Air Force Academy, an elite institution that only sought the best and brightest, featured several pages of photographs of cadets engaged in organized athletics. The Academy also highlighted the rigorous physical training, intramural sports leagues, and competitive intercollegiate athletic program they offered.[299]

Be a Big Wheel - Sports - US Air Force Academy

US Air Force Academy was a publication that documented and promoted life at the newly opened US Air Force Academy, an elite institution that only sought the best and brightest. The piece featured several pages of photographs of cadets engaged in

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[298] Ibid., 25.
[299] *U.S. Air Force Academy* (US Department of Defense, 1958).

organized athletics. The Academy also highlighted the rigorous physical training, intramural sports leagues, and competitive intercollegiate athletic program they offered.[300] This publication created the impression that the men who were enrolled in the Air Force Academy were superior physical specimens, and detailed the process through which their bodies were developed and improved. It also showed recruits that they would have the opportunity to prove their own masculinity in the Academy through athletics, as well as the other important parts of the institution.

Be a Big Wheel - Sports - The Spirit of Semper Fi

The 1952 Marines comic, *The Spirit of Semper Fi* told the story of a baseball star who received a Selective Service notification just before signing a contract for a professional baseball career. The baseball player, Roger Hart, saw the war as "..a stumbling block between him and big league baseball career," and approached his service as such.[301] However, after letting down his father, himself a decorated Marine, he changes his viewpoint towards the Marines, and utilizes his athletic abilities to be an exemplary soldier.

Roger's status as a star pitcher is a central component of the comic, and is used to provide readers an idea of Roger's background and identity. The cover image shows Roger pitching a in large park, alongside images of Marines in combat.[302] The story picks

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[300] Ibid.

[301] "The Spirit of Semper Fi!," in *United States Marines No. 7, The* (United States Marine Corps/Magazine Enterprises; New York, 1952), 29–31, http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/148/rec/3.

[302] Ibid., 28.

up as Roger strikes out the final batter in his no-hitter, and he meets with a scout who tells him he has a contract and bonus check with him.[303] Here, Roger's pitching ability is clearly articulated, and his promise for a big league career is made abundantly clear. He also makes it clear that he doesn't want to join, and that his father's thirty year career has not sufficiently rewarded him.

Roger's disinterest in the military is abundantly clear, and he disappoints his father by failing to put out a box of uniforms that catch fire.[304] His father berates him for disobeying orders and not respecting the Marine uniforms, and even calls out his manhood, exclaiming, "Don't call me 'Pop', you poor excuse for a man! Go play with your bats and balls and leave me alone!"[305] Roger remained skeptical of the "Spirit of Semper Fi," until a close brush with the enemy. A Communist soldier charged towards his position and came within inches of killing him with his bayonet.[306] Another solider came in at the last moment and intercepted the charging enemy, and Roger finished him with his bayonet.[307] After this, Roger "has the Marine Corps spirit," as his associate tells him, and when his father asks for a volunteer, he jumps at the opportunity.[308] His father wants someone to provide cover fire while he throws a grenade, but Roger, insisting that he is "still the pitcher," volunteers to throw the grenade.[309] Roger is able to throw a grenade into the open lid of a passing tank, a nearly impossible task, and the resulting

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[303] Ibid., 29.
[304] Ibid.
[305] Ibid., 30.
[306] Ibid., 32.
[307] Ibid.
[308] Ibid., 31–32.
[309] Ibid., 33.

explosion sends the much larger force retreating in fear.[310] Roger's elite athletic skills and his newfound feeling of Semper Fi, come together to make him a war hero and an exemplary man. Roger and his father engage in a canteen toast to "...the best pitcher west of the Polo Grounds!," "…the best old man a guy ever had…" and "…to the Marine Corps and the Spirit of Semper Fi!"[311]

In contrast to the nearly all of the recruiting pieces, which tout the job opportunities that come from service, this piece shows a young man who sees military service as an interruption to a promising career. This is likely due to the difference in circulation, as the *Marines* publications were directed towards those who were already enlisted. This piece sought to instill pride and honor in the "Spirit of Semper Fi" – to encourage men to align behind the principles and spirit of the Marine Corps. The choice of a star athlete as the main character is interesting here - the character could have been in any number of professions, or had any number of promising opportunities, but the authors chose to represent this Semper Fi awakening with a star athlete. By doing so, they take a man who is well respected and has proven himself through physical superiority and a strong work ethic.

Even though the professional athlete was skeptical of the Marine way, and had very good social and economic opportunities outside of the Marines, he was still able to see the draw of "The Spirit of Semper Fi," and bought into the service. Furthermore, a

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[310] Ibid.
[311] Ibid.

clear connection is made between the kind of skills and composure needed in sports with the same kinds of values required of servicemen.

Be a Big Wheel - Sports - Mister Marine Corps

The comic, "Mister Marine Corps" comes from the 1952 publication *Marines #7*, a compilation of news, photojournalism, and comics printed by the US Marine Corps. The central character, "Mr. Marine Corps," is Lou Diamond, is an aging Marine whose legend precedes him. This "Marine Hall of Fame" feature seeks to bolster the mythology that surrounds him, by publishing the exaggerated and fictional reports of his exploits. He was a veteran of the both World Wars, and is repeatedly depicted as being in better shape than the younger soldiers.

Lou's athletic ability plays a big role in this mythology. First, in a departure from the battle-centric imagery throughout the piece, an early scene shows him on a baseball field, adding, "…some claim he was fifty years old when he pitched a one-hit shutout for the Quantico Marines some time in the twenties."[312] The conversation between Lou and a teammate encourage his prowess as a pitcher and the team's overall success. His competitiveness, along with his masculine bravado, soon comes into play on the battlefield. Despite his age, the narration reads, "…he proved his right to the title of the greatest mortarman in the world."[313] Another man in Lou's unit remarks that he has taken out fourteen buildings, and bets that he will not be able to hit the fifteenth building on the

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[312] "Mister Marine Corps," 24.
[313] Ibid., 25.

first try. Lou is so sure of himself that he places a bet, and adds that he will "…drop the shell right down the chimney."[314]

This "Marine Corps Hall of Fame" comic was clearly intentioned to set a picture of a legendary hegemonic male, one that sets an unreachable precedent, but encourages Marines to attempt to live up to his standards. Here, the use of his athletic ability and confidence, as well as his physical stature even in advanced age, is one of several factors that contribute to his idealism. These skills and abilities are not simply outlined, but are backed up with very specific examples, which showcase his abilities.

Be a Big Wheel - Sports - Look After My Billy

"Look After My Billy," a comic in the 1952 publication, *The United States Marines No 7*, is a short piece that addresses 'momism,' stoicism, and courage at war, as well as the interpersonal dynamics of military service.

The comic opens with a panel showing a young, weak, and inept looking American soldier with a letter from Billy's mom asking Jim to look after him.[315] Given the context, it's rather clear that Billy is the weak, young GI, about to be killed in combat, who is inept and needs his mother to look after him.[316] Billy was perturbed that his mother sent the letter, and the story began with Billy being overzealous and acting as though he had been there for some time and held a position of authority, although the

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[314] Ibid.

[315] "Look After My Billy!," in *United States Marines No. 7, The* (United States Marine Corps/Magazine Enterprises; New York, 1952), 18, http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/148/rec/3.

[316] Ibid.

artwork and the pushback from others told another story.[317] Billy repeatedly attempts to

establish as reputation as a rugged, masculine soldier, playing craps and getting into

fights.[318] These are attempts to assert his masculinity are clearly intended to contrast with

his immaturity, boyish looks, and the letter his mom sent to Jim. One further example of

this, in addition to gambling, fighting, and roughhousing, is one GI complaining, "If that

guy mentions one more time about what a tough football player he was, I'm gonna slug

him!"[319] Although his overbearing attempts to prove his masculinity are clearly not

working with others in his unit, this illustrates that his football prowess is an important

factor in his attempts to gain respect. This exchange also shows the delicate masculine

hierarchy that soldiers had to navigate in their installment, and the role that athletics and

similar masculine bravado played in these reputations.

Be a Big Wheel - Sports - Five Years Later

The comic *Five Years Later…Where Will You Be?* is a 1962 Army recruiting

publication that was heavily invested in the masculine *Be a Big Wheel* concept.[320] The

comic primarily did so through the protagonist, Bud, who used the Army to ensure a

secure financial future, and won back his girl, Mary Lou, in the process. At the beginning

of the comic, Bud is immature, and unsure of his future, and it is causing problems with

Mary Lou. Bud spoke with Jack, his older brother, and his friends, who helped him make

some serious decisions about his financial future. They all share their stories with Bud.

[317] Ibid., 18–21.
[318] Ibid., 19.
[319] Ibid.
[320] U.S. Army Recruiting Service, *Five Years Later...Where Will You Be?* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. G.P.O., 1962), http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/53/rec/1.

Then men are seen as mature and developed role models, although one had been off track and was using the military to get back on track. Three of the four men served in the military, and the other is about to leave for training.

Although the men they haven't talked much, if at all, over the last four years, they made fast friends once again, uniting behind their collective nickname, "The Four Musketeers," and sharing stories about their time in the service.[321] They went on to talk about how they composed "...the greatest backfield central high ever had!" and relived their glory days of high school football.[322] Their experience as athletes, and successful ones at that, served as a common bond between them, and provided them with an identity and reputation.

The athletic ability and the prestige of these men is further supported and legitimated when the boys' basketball coach met with their guidance counselor. The coach told him, "You know, as guidance counselor, you could honestly recommend professional ball to a few of those boys...especially Jack and Barney."[323] Jack and Barney then spoke with the counselor, who advised them to get their military obligation behind them, and they joined the military right away.

In the process of catching up, the Four Musketeers also engaged in competition by bowling. Though it is not highly physical in nature, they give each other a hard time and joke around in a competitive spirit, even placing a very small bet on the game. The two

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[321] Ibid., 3.
[322] Ibid., 3–4.
[323] Ibid., 7.

men in the Army that are currently enlisted win, prompting one of the men on the losing squad to quip, "At least it took the U.S. Army to bowl us over!" supporting the idea that, as currently enlisted soldiers, they would be naturally better, or that they carry an elevated status.[324]

The most striking aspect of this comic in regard to sports and the Big Wheel idea is the cover art chosen to go with the comic. Although the story revolves around Bud's relationship with Mary Lou and his decision to join the military, the front cover features Jack, in full military uniform, bowling. Everyone else is watching excitedly, and Jack is clearly in alpha male form. Even more curiously, Bud is not pictured, and Mary Lou and another female (who never appears in the comic) are pictured watching Jack bowl. The cover art is instead a picture that situates Jack as the alpha male, and is only tangentially (and partially fictionally) related to the story. The front cover conveys a uniformed man's Big Wheel status though his participation in competition and the social dynamic of others looking on admirably.

Be a Big Wheel - Sports - Dick Wingate of the United States Navy

The story of Dick Wingate encompasses a number of important aspects of masculinity and the military. Dick joined the Navy because he wanted to work with emerging technology, but was unable to pay for school. He joined the Navy to get training to prepare him for a job outside the Navy, or to offer him the security of a career and pension. Once he enrolled in the Navy and began working on advanced, top secret

[324] Ibid., 6.

projects, he encountered upon intrigue, adventure, and exotic women. While this comic constructed Dick as a "Big Wheel" in various different ways, it showed that Dick was a "Big Wheel" first as a high school football player.

Just after introducing Dick as some sort of technician in the Navy, on a "mighty important" mission working on the Navy's new electronic weapons, the narrator notes that he has come "...a long way from playing his new role back to his days playing football for Centerville High..."[325] Although the piece downplays Dick's excitement about his football playing, his identity as a superior athlete is a primary way in which Dick is given an identity and a history. His skills on the football field are also clear. He wasn't simply an athlete – he was a successful athlete and something of a hero. This is illustrated when his friend Joe says that they'll miss him the next year.[326] Soon after, Dick meets his father outside their home, and his father has heard that he scored two touchdowns in the game that day.[327] Dick once again downplays his success, showing that he is humble, but these two interactions make it clear that Dick has proven his physical ability on the football field and has likely gained some notoriety for his abilities.

Be a Big Wheel - Sports - At the Ramparts - The United States Air Force Academy

The 1959 United States Air Force Academy publication, *At the Ramparts - The United States Air Force Academy*, is has athletic imagery and stories scattered throughout

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[325] U.S. Navy, *Dick Wingate of the United States Navy*, 5.
[326] Ibid.
[327] Ibid., 7.

its pages.[328] The book, meant for perspective recruits, attempted to put forth a positive, strong image of Air Force cadets. Some stories specifically highlight teams and individuals that represent the Academy in competitive varsity sports, and touted the abilities of those specific teams and individuals.

The book touts the success of the varsity football team, who beat the Denver University freshmen in their debut game.[329] Another page shows photographs from burgeoning varsity track & field and basketball teams.[330] The basketball photo also names a specific cadet, and call him 'the star of the AFA team,' giving him a status boost based upon his athletic performance.

The Air Force Academy presented recruits with the ability to engage in masculine discourse by showcasing these athletic programs and options. The recreation options at the Academy provided the men with the opportunity to illustrate and compare their masculinity with others. Meanwhile, the pieces that demonstrated the Academy's success over other teams showed that the men there were quality athletes and had proven themselves in competition with other institutions.

Be a Big Wheel - Sports - It's All in the Family

It's All in the Family is centered on Joe Palooka, a heavyweight prizefighter and well-known syndicated character. The Palooka's neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Harris, directly acknowledge his 'bigwheel' status and the weight it carried when they are struggling to

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[328] United States Air Force, *At the Ramparts - The United States Air Force Academy*, 1959.
[329] Ibid., 8.
[330] Ibid., 13.

start the car. When Mrs. Harris suggests her husband, Henry, ask the Palookas for help, Henry responds, "Listen...I've never asked help from **that kind** of people before…"[331] When asked what he means, he replies, "His son is the heavyweight champion of the world — so they probably think they are real stuff and we're nobody!"[332] Even though the Palookas thoroughly disprove Henry's assumptions, he is taking Joe's pedigree as an athlete and the notoriety he has gained to assume that the Paloookas are of a higher social class and would not give any mind to someone of his class. It also demonstrates that, although he has never met any of them, he has heard of Joe's talents and accomplishments, and that Joe's reputation (at least so far as his athletic ability) precedes him.

The comic details the Palookas and their generosity, and describes families (presumably ones just like Joe's) to be the foundation of democracy. Joe is at the center of this family, and is a veteran who came to recognize the role of family in democracy through his service. Thus Joe, a notable athlete and US veteran, is chosen as a vessel through which to preach the ideals of generosity and family values. There is an unspoken linkage between his perfect masculine body and his perfect morality and generosity.

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[331] Fischer, "It's All in the Family," 6.
[332] Ibid., 7.

Be a Big Wheel - Breadwinner

The breadwinner role sat at the intersection of a man's duties as a father and a man's position in the workplace.[333] The breadwinner ethic combined the two roles most important to men on the homefront or during peacetime, and served as a key component of the way others judged him. During the postwar era, men were under great scrutiny for their abilities in both of these gendered arenas, and a large amount of discourse took place about proper masculinity, fatherhood, and the ability for a man to provide for his family. The military publications promote the idea that military men were exemplars of postwar masculinity, and could thrive in the gendered spheres that composed the breadwinner role.

The Self-Made Man

Becoming a big wheel financially through military service was carefully depicted as a situation where a man could earn his benefits to financial success. Unlike the programs of the New Deal, which were often seen or demeaned as handouts or, in the case of the CCC and WPA, work created just to keep men busy. The military then became a more respectable avenue for a man to earn his education and training. This aligns with the central concept of the Self-Made Man, put forth by Michael Kimmel in *Manhood in America*.[334] Because of the central role the military was seen in providing essential security to the nation, along with longstanding respect and admiration for

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[333] I have explored the specific duties, meanings, and histories of the breadwinner role during this time period in the American Manhood section.

[334] Kimmel, *Manhood in America*.

warrior culture, military service was an acceptable way to earn assistance from the federal government.

Many of the comics framed success by focusing traditional individualistic successes to contribute to the greater good. Michael Kimmel bases his influential book *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* around the centrality of 'The Self-Made Man' in American manhood.[335] Kimmel wrote, "This book is a history of the Self-Made Man – ambitious and anxious, creatively resourceful and chronically restive, the builder of culture and among the casualties of his own handiwork, a man who is, as the great French thinker Alexis de Tocqueville wrote in 1832, 'restless in the midst of abundance.'"[336] Although the conformity and control of the military goes directly in the face of this ideal, it was accepted and celebrated via other masculine ideas. The acceptance of conformity, control, and pride in being one small piece of a giant conglomeration would not endure in private lives. The 1950s produced a large corpus of popular articles, literature, and film that harshly criticizes the conformity and perceived lack of purpose for the corporate men of the decade. However, these materials do attempt to inject a sense of pride in contributing to a larger cause at the cost of independence.

Adult suburban men in the 1950s, according to Robert Griswold, were expected to be "team players," contributing to the needs of large organizations and embodying the organization's social ethic and values.[337] This mindset was key for men as they navigated

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[335] Ibid.
[336] Ibid., 6.
[337] Griswold, *Fatherhood in America*, 201.

the duties of breadwinners. Families were becoming increasingly based upon companionship between the husband and wife, and men were encouraged to make sacrifices (namely, their time) for the good of the family. Additionally, middle class men were now often employed in bureaucratic governmental or corporate institutions, which did not afford as much agency, and often depended on sacrifice by all for the greater good. The "team player" ethic was primary to military training and experience, and instilled ideas of honor and independence in men, despite having strict control of their day-to-day lives.[338] The military productions touted the ways in which military service could prepare and aid men for this essential societal role, and also created an understanding that these skills and traits were imbued within all soldiers and veterans.

The military materials depicted successful breadwinners as normative, and intricately tied military service with a man's breadwinning abilities. In post-war recruiting materials, especially, narratives relied upon anxieties about these roles to persuade readers. These materials also bolstered the gendered divisions in the home and workplace, depicting men and women fulfilling very distinct roles in the home, and often, though not always, supporting the idea that women are best suited in the home rather than the workplace.

Fatherhood and the Family

Men during this time were under intense scrutiny for their abilities to succeed in their growing duties as fathers, as well as their position in the workplace. The need to

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[338] Belkin, *Bring Me Men*, 25–28.

balance workplace responsibilities with the family was challenging and full of conflict.

Employment meant time away from the family, and changing cultural landscapes and

upward mobility meant that children spent more time outside of the home as well. In the

1920s, cultural critics believed that new institutions that came with urbanization and

industrialization, namely schools, factories, hospitals, welfare agencies, and juvenile

courts, put public authority over realms that were previously internal to the family.[339]

Though the term itself was not coined until 1942, the concept of 'momism' —

feminization due to overbearing women — gained traction in academic and popular

discourse in the 1930s, with continued blame placed upon industrialization and the absent

father.[340] Through the Great Depression, concerns over feminization and male

absenteeism continued, according to Griswold, even as fathers struggled or were unable

to provide for their children or be a strong male role model, according to popular cultural

definitions.[341] Griswold argued that the war played a large role in placing fatherhood as

an essential component of the conservative family ideology that characterized the

postwar years.[342] Griswold wrote, "By emphasizing the contributions of fathers to social

order, democracy, middle-class capitalism, eugenic trends, personality development, and

psychological health, family researchers, politicians, and ideologues reemphasized the

importance of fatherhood after its decline in the 1930s. But they did so without

challenging a sex-based division of labor that relegated women to the home and left men

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[339] Griswold, *Fatherhood in America*, 93–94.
[340] Ibid., 94.
[341] Ibid., 141–148.
[342] Ibid., 183–184.

in control of political, economic, and social affairs."[343] Military publications adjusted with the changing conceptions of masculinity that consisted of less industry and more white-collar work. Postwar recruiting materials - especially those of the Army and Navy - touted the skills and career prospects one could learn from time in the service.

Breadwinning in the Military-Masculinity Complex

The Department of Defense-sponsored comic, *It's All in the Family*, sought to reinforce the importance of the family in American society, as well as illustrate the giving and charitable nature of Americans.[344] The title of the comic comes from a statement near the end of the comic: "Dictators have to smash family life...'cause that's where democracy is born...where kids learn to love it and understand it and practice it...*It's all in the family!*"[345] Therefore, the comic puts forth an idealized form and function of a family, and then places the family at the center of the American Way and democratic ideology.

The family structure in *It's All in the Family* is rigidly divided along gendered lines, whereas men are expected to make an income, while women are meant to encourage and serve them. The men fix things, take over the farm, and get jobs to support the family. The women cook, bring food to the table, and babysit. Though this division alone is not indicative of the breadwinner ethos, one passage does give credence to the idea that the male (monetized) role is legitimated and appreciated far more than the feminine (unpaid domestic) role. The woman who lives next door is going into labor and

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[343] Ibid., 184.
[344] Fischer, "It's All in the Family."
[345] Ibid., 13.

her husband is having trouble starting the car.[346] The kids all do their part to help them out, and the parents discuss how fantastic their kids are, based on their willingness to pitch in and help others.[347] As Mr. and Mrs. Palooka reflect on the selflessness of their children, they recall a Christmas when Rosie offered to give a doll to their neighbor, Joe volunteered to get a paper route, and his younger brother expressed interest to do the same when he got older.[348] The mother tells the father that he worked pretty hard himself in those days, to which he replies, "And *you* kept me from gettin' discouraged! You kept me pluggin' along..."[349] These two frames, side by side, describe a familial structure where it is the duty of males to earn money for the family, and the female's duty to encourage them -- not to work an equal or greater amount at a job or at home, but to keep the breadwinning husband from getting discouraged. These distinctly divided roles for genders, centered upon the leadership of the adult male and placed into a storyline that is set to depict an ideal family, and names the family as the key building block in which American democracy is built, places a great deal of social value and worth upon the adult male who can fulfill this role.

In addition to constructing idealistic families as centered upon a breadwinner, with others available for support, other materials directly endorsed the idea that a man must earn a good living to attain a wife and family. *Five Years Later…Where Will You Be?* was a 1962 Army recruitment comic that told the story of Bud, a young man whose

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[346] Ibid., 6.
[347] Ibid., 10.
[348] Ibid.
[349] No Reference

inability to make plans threatened his financial future, as well as his future with his girlfriend, Mary Lou. At the beginning of the comic, Bud is depicted as immature, and unsure of his future. Mary Lou became very upset with Bud's indecisiveness, especially regarding his plans after graduation and their future together.[350] Mary Lou tells Bud he's not half grown up yet because of this indecisiveness, and makes more remarks later on, contrasting Bud's indecisiveness with the way a secret agent in the film who "…**made** things happen."[351] Mary Lou tells him she wants to go straight home, where she tells him not to call her until he's changed his attitude.[352]

Mary Lou's frustrations with Bud clearly threaten their relationship, and all revolve around Bud's inability to make decisions or "make things happen." This kind of language makes it clear that their relationship is on the rocks because of his shortcomings as a mature male who can make decisions and has some degree of financial security. Bud meets with his older brother and his friends, who encourage him to join the Army. Bud proudly tells Mary Lou that he plans to gain an income and training in the military, and find a job from there.[353] Building on this, he then tells her he has plans for them too, that involves an aisle.[354] This is to say, of course, that the marriage (or at least the future of the relationship) is either incomplete or dependent upon Bud securing a steady income and being able to provide for the family.

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[350] U.S. Army Recruiting Service, *Five Years Later...Where Will You Be?*, 2–3.
[351] Ibid., 5.
[352] Ibid.
[353] Ibid., 16.
[354] Ibid.

This comic depicts supports the fundamental placement of the male breadwinner role in society, by depicting heterosexual relationships with the male's career and earnings as central to the relationship. The comic *Five Years Later* plays on the appeal of the male breadwinner to women through the role of the breadwinner. Male financial 'security' -- that is, a well-paying job capable of supporting a family -- was given an elevated role in this piece.

The messages embedded in these publications promote the military as an effective way for men to attain the status of an effective breadwinner, while also endorsing and reifying the importance of the male breadwinner in American society.

Be a Big Wheel - Breadwinner - Time of Decision

The 1963 Army ROTC comic *Time of Decision* traced Ted Wright's journey into college ROTC and his eventual status as a successful businessman and husband. To quote the opening scene of the comic, "...this is his story and the story of the thing that changed Ted Wright from an outsider to a popular man-about-college and a leader in a world of competition."[355]

Ted's guidance counselor retells his own personal story, and credits his own ROTC experience for providing him with the skills he needed to quickly moves up the corporate chain. Likewise, when Ted joins the workforce, he gets a promotion and a raise very quickly.[356] The value of ROTC training in the corporate world is also repeatedly

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[355] *Time of Decision*, 2.
[356] Ibid., 5.

illustrated through Ted's training, as his instructors continually reinforce teamwork and problem-solving.

Success in the military and private realm can also be drawn to other factions of life. Once the counselor has earned this promotion, he proposes to his girl, saying "It's what we've been waiting for..."[357] His job and income, then, are a primary factor in their relationship and their future together. They can't get married until he has a good job and a good income to provide for them both. This element is nearly identical to *Five Years Later…Where Will You Be?*, in that it highly inflates the necessity of the men to have a good job in order to have a lasting relationship and marriage. As part of Ted's transformation into a "popular man-about-college and a leader in a world of competition," his success in the workplace is strongly tied to his finding a partner and starting a family.

Be a Big Wheel - Breadwinner - Kerry Drake in the Case of the Sleeping City

The postwar-era Defense Department comic *Kerry Drake in the Case of the Sleeping City* featured Kerry Drake, a detective from a well-circulated syndicated comic. This piece stressed the importance of civic duty to servicemen, and to encourage them to take the skills, training, and morality acquired in the service to lead the nation forward at all levels of government. This comic differed from some other pieces that place social ascendancy upon men for earning a living and supporting their family financially. Instead, this supported the idea that military provides ascendancy through male

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[357] Ibid.

leadership, which begins as a role as driving force in the home, and continues through the levels of government.

In the story, two young brothers on leave from the Army and the Navy learn that the local government in their hometown of Norville is completely corrupt, having fallen prey to a politician who answers to a shadowy building materials salesman. The town is seemingly apathetic, but the young men contact Kerry Drake, a friend of their father and former Norville resident.[358] Drake soon moves in and begins talking tough, blaming the "...evil that exists in Norville" on the indifference of the citizens.[359] Even though the young men feel powerless, Drake single-handedly battles on in the face of resistance. He keeps moving up the legal and judicial chain, until he is appointed special prosecutor by the governor, and begins clearing up the corruption.[360] Before he leaves Norville, he delivers another of his speeches, denouncing civic apathy and indifference, and encouraging the citizens to ensure that this corruption does not creep into town again.[361]

The story ends with a monologue from the young sailor, saying: "Teamwork paid off in Norville. Without help from the townspeople, Kerry Drake would have been powerless. It took the combined action of many people to clean out their city and re-establish good government."[362] This statement, however, does not exactly reflect the true arc of the story. The citizens of Norville expressed an inability to fight back against

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[358] Alfred Andriola, "Kerry Drake in the Case of the Sleeping City," in *Citizenship Booklet* (Harvey Publications, Inc./Armed Forces Information and Education Division, Office of the Secretary of Defense, c1951), 5.
[359] Ibid., 6.
[360] Ibid., 6–13.
[361] Ibid., 15–16.
[362] Ibid., 16.

corruption because of intimidation, and even the brothers gave up hope at one point.[363] It took Kerry Drake's effort to put himself in a position of power above and beyond that of the corrupt city officials to get anything done. This line at the end, twisting a story of individual heroism into a story of teamwork, is reflective of the individual masculinity available within constraining groups.

The soldier's monologue at the end continued to reinforce this concept: "Teamwork pays off big in the armed forces, too. Servicemen realize that group action is essential to success! Every member of the military team has a job that must be done, and done well, if the team is to win. Combined teamwork of civilians and servicemen alike keeps our nation strong and free."[364] One's individual efforts and courage exhibit leadership and, when done in conjunction with similar efforts from others, can contribute to the greater good. Aaron Belkin argued, in *Bring Me Men*, that individual actions and efforts were often highlighted in military discourse to smooth over the contradictory nature of limited freedom that comes with military service.[365] Kerry Drake's heroism and highlight and celebrated, but remains attributed to the team effort, and is shown to advance the collective good. By wedging Kerry's arc into this format, the story illustrated that a man's individual efforts contribute to the greater good, and are admirable because of it. This message, combined with the piece's inclusion in a *Citizenship Booklet* given to soldiers re-entering civilian life, gives a clear indication not only that military service

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[363] Ibid., 7.
[364] Ibid., 16.
[365] Belkin, *Bring Me Men*, 58.

crafts men into civic leaders, but also that these soldiers have a special duty to serve their communities in leadership roles.

Be a Big Wheel - Breadwinner - Jap…You're Next!

The US Army poster, "Jap…You're Next! We'll Finish the Job" illustrates that strength and masculinity of the American breadwinner, and asserts the importance of their role in the war effort. This poster, produced by the Domestic Operations Branch of the Office of War Information in 1944, used the same muscular, masculinized Uncle Sam as many other wartime posters. This poster showed Uncle Sam standing aggressively and glaring forth, presumably towards the Japanese, but he is clutching a wrench. The secondary tagline, "We'll Finish the Job!" further cements this Uncle Sam not as a military soldier, but rather an economic soldier, contributing to the nation's well-being through industry. The similarity between Uncle Sam's depiction in this poster and recruiting posters such as "Defend your Country" is no coincidence, however. This imagery bridged the gap between individuals who worked on the domestic front and those who engaged in battle abroad. Although many women joined the workforce during the war (and were usually imbued with masculinity), the workplace was still considered a masculine sphere, and men stood to gain from any power or heroism earned during this time. The notion of worker-as-economic soldier would also grow substantially in the postwar years and into the Cold War.

Be a Big Wheel - Breadwinner - Five Years Later...Where Will You Be?

The comic *Five Years Later...Where Will You Be?* is a 1962 Army recruiting publication that was heavily invested in the masculine *Be a Big Wheel* concept.[366] The comic primarily did so through the protagonist, Bud, who used the Army to ensure a secure financial future, and won back his girl, Mary Lou, in the process. At the beginning of the comic, Bud is immature, and unsure of his future, and it is causing problems with Mary Lou. Bud spoke with Jack, his older brother, and his friends, who helped him make some serious decisions about his financial future. They all share their stories with Bud. Then men are seen as mature and developed role models, although one had been off track and was using the military to get back on track. Three of the four men served in the military, and the other is about to leave for training.

At the beginning of the story, Mary Lou, Bud's girlfriend, became very upset with Bud's indecisiveness, especially regarding his plans after graduation and their future together.[367] Mary Lou tells Bud he's not half grown up yet because of this indecisiveness, and makes more remarks later on, contrasting Bud's indecisiveness with the way a secret agent in the film "...**made** things happen."[368] Mary Lou tells him she wants to go straight home, where she tells him not to call her until he's changed his attitude. Mary Lou's frustrations with Bud clearly threaten their relationship, and their troubles stem from Bud's inability to make decisions or "make things happen." This kind of language make it

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[366] U.S. Army Recruiting Service, *Five Years Later...Where Will You Be?*.
[367] Ibid., 2–3.
[368] Ibid., 5.

clear that their relationship is on the rocks over his shortcomings as a mature male who can make decisions and has some degree of financial security.

Bud meets up with Jack and all of his friends, who explain their career paths in the five years since they graduated, one of his friends had to drop out of high school, and in describing the thought process behind his getting a job, a comic pane shows him telling a young woman about have a money and a car soon, to which she replies, "Call me **then, big man!"**[369] Here, more support is given to the importance of a man's ability to earn a living, and the weight women put into this status when choosing a partner.

After learning about the experiences of Jack's friends and the options service provided for a career and financial security, Bud decided to join the Army.[370] Bud proudly informs Mary Lou that he plans to gain an income and training in the military, and find a job afterwards.[371] Building on this, he then tells her he has plans for them too, that involves an aisle.[372] This hints that the marriage (or at least the future of the relationship) is either incomplete or dependent upon Bud securing a steady income and being able to provide for the family.

This comic depicts supports the fundamental placement of the male breadwinner role in society, by depicting heterosexual relationships with the male's career and earnings as central to the relationship. The comic, *Five Years Later…Where Will You Be?,* plays on the appeal of the male breadwinner to women through the essentialism of

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[369] Ibid., 9.
[370] Ibid., 16.
[371] Ibid.
[372] Ibid.

the role male providers in families. The language of the story, speaking of financial security, is reminiscent of Elaine Tyler May's *Homeward Bound* thesis. May argued that Cold War-era domesticity mirrored foreign policy, focusing on concepts of containment and security.[373] Male financial 'security' - that is, a well-paying job capable of supporting a family - was given primacy in the courtship and the understanding individuals had in society. The Navy attached their recruiting message to this ideology, putting forth service as a stable and reliable way to fulfill this essential component of manhood.

Be a Big Wheel - Breadwinner - Dick Wingate of the United States Navy

The US Navy's 1951 recruiting comic book, *Dick Wingate of the United States Navy,* opens with a young sailor participating in a secret military test aboard the U.S.S. Merrick somewhere in the Pacific.[374] Dick reflects on his current position, working on top secret Navy weapons, and traces the steps from playing football at Centerville High to this "mighty important" mission.[375] The story then goes back to the final football game of Dick's senior year of high school. Dick and a friend are discussing their futures in the locker room. Dick cannot afford to attend college, but is interested in a career in, "...flying, electronics, radar -- all this new stuff..."[376] Throughout the opening pages, Dick illustrates that he desires a fulfilling career in new technology, and the financial security that comes with it. Although the comic goes on to show the adventure and intrigue one

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[373] May, *Homeward Bound*.
[374] U.S. Navy, *Dick Wingate of the United States Navy*, 4.
[375] Ibid.
[376] Ibid., 5–6.

could possibly experience in the Navy, it first establishes Dick as emerging as a financially secure Big Wheel through his time in the Navy.

The opening portion of the story illustrates that the Navy is an excellent place for a young man to establish himself as a Big Wheel in the workplace. It provided a good job one could be proud of, as well as long-term security. When Dick's friend Joe suggests that the only jobs in the Navy were scrubbing decks, Dick rebuffed him, adding that there are lots of specialist positions where men can learn technical skills.[377] Dick also speaks to the long-term benefits and financial security a career in the Navy can provide, informing Joe that he could retire at thirty-eight and receive half of his base pay, and then get a job afterwards.[378] Dick tells his father that training and working in the Navy would be a "swell break" for him to attain the advanced career he was hoping for.[379] Although Dick mentions the sense of fulfillment in contributing to the national defense of the nation, his focus throughout the opening is the skills training and financial security that comes from service.[380] The story then moves forward to his Navy training, the beginning of the process toward, "...Dick's goal of an interesting, well-paid career..." and the adventure and intrigue he encounters while enlisted.[381] The final page of the publication returns stress the financial security that comes from service in the Navy. The page features the

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[377] Ibid., 5.
[378] Ibid., 6.
[379] Ibid., 8.
[380] Ibid., 6–8.
[381] Ibid., 9.

headline, "The Navy offers you a career--plus security!" followed by a pay chart showing

different personnel rankings and the base pay for each given years of service.[382]

Be a Big Wheel - Breadwinner - It's All in the Family

The comic book *It's All in the Family* featured Ham Fisher's well-known character

Joe Palooka. Joe Palooka was a heavyweight champion boxer, who embodied an

exaggerated image of white physical masculinity; he had an impossibly large chest,

strong protruding jawline, and blonde hair. This comic focuses on the role of the family

and its place as a cornerstone of democracy, and the antithesis of Fascism and

Communism.

The story aims to demonstrate Joe's family as an example of the American spirit

of charity, friendliness, and democracy. The title of the comic comes from Joe's statement

near the end of the story: "Dictators have to smash family life...'cause that's where

democracy is born...where kids learn to love it and understand it and practice it…**It's all

in the family!**"[383] Therefore, the comic puts forth an idealized form and function of a

family, and then places the family at the center of the American Way and democratic

ideology. Thus, the structure and form of the family carried heavier weight and deserves

a closer inspection.

The family structure in *It's All in the Family* is largely constructed around the

male breadwinner position. Gendered roles are encouraged through the division of work

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[382] Ibid., 35.
[383] Fischer, "It's All in the Family," 13.

around the home, and a clear division is made between monetized services and domestic

work. The men fix things, take over the farm, and get jobs to support the family. The

women cook, bring food to the table, and babysit. Though this division alone is not

indicative of the breadwinner ethos, one passage does give credence to the idea that the

male (monetized) role is legitimated and appreciated far more than the feminine (unpaid

domestic) role. The woman who lives next door is going into labor and her husband is

having trouble starting the car.[384] The kids all do their part to help them out, and the

parents discuss how fantastic their kids are, based on their willingness to pitch in and help

others.[385] As Mr. and Mrs. Palooka reflect on the selflessness of their children, they recall

a Christmas when Rosie got two dolls and offered to give one to the neighbor.[386] Then

they remember when Joe volunteered to get a paper route to help, and his younger brother

expressed interest to do the same when he got "bigger."[387] Here their daughter exhibited

selflessness by offering to sacrifice a consumer good, while the sons got a job, or

expressed interest in a job as soon as they became old enough.

 The non-earning role of the female is further encouraged as the wife tells him he

worked pretty hard himself in those days, to which he replies, "And *you* kept me from

gettin' discouraged! You kept me pluggin' along..."[388] These two frames, side by side,

describe a familial structure where it is the duty of males to earn money for the family,

and the female's duty to encourage them -- not to work an equal or greater amount at a

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[384] Ibid., 6.
[385] Ibid., 10.
[386] Ibid.
[387] Ibid.
[388] Ibid.

job or at home, but to keep the breadwinning husband from getting discouraged. These distinctly divided roles for genders, centered upon the leadership of the adult male and placed into a storyline that is set to depict an ideal family, and names the family as the key building block in which American democracy is built, places a great deal of social value and worth upon the adult male who can fulfill this role.

Be a Big Wheel - Military Appeal

The cultural appeal of an enlisted military serviceman, both in sexual attention from women and from admiration from men and women of all ages, was a common theme in the depictions of soldiers on the home front. Admiration in the materials reflected the raised status of enlisted men through the honor of service, as well as through other avenues for success provided by the military, like the ability to fulfill the breadwinner role and physical prowess. Cultural admiration in these resources can be read as a reflection of the elevated status enlisted men received in avenues that are explicitly masculine.

Federal reflections of cultural admiration were not imagined or propagandized, though they were often highlighted and exaggerated. Independent of government-sponsored materials, notions of masculinity and citizenship have long been associated with warrior and military culture. Goldstein, surveying the relationship between war and gender across cultures, concluded "Cultures need to coax and trick soldiers into participating in combat — an extremely difficult challenge — and gender presents a

handy means to do so by linking attainment of manhood to performance in battle."[389]

Additionally, many popular novels and books throughout the era played up the courage, strength, and valor required of soldiers and veterans, and mocked men who were deemed unfit for service.[390] As I have elaborated elsewhere, military service provided a launchpad for men to launch careers in politics and civil service, and was practically a requirement for service at the highest levels. James Gilbert, in his examination of masculinity in intellectual and popular culture, echoed Goldsmith's conclusion on the pervasiveness of warrior culture in masculinity.[391] Gilbert added, "I believe the 1950s were unusual (though not unique) for their relentless and self-conscious preoccupation with masculinity, in part because the period followed wartime self-confidence based upon the sacrifice and heroism of ordinary men.[392]

The masculine idealism that propelled many veterans to social ascendancy was reflected in the government materials, and was a major selling point for recruiting. The appeal illustrated in the materials largely played off of the ideals of citizenship and the high stature the military held in society. The showcase of young women being romantically and sexually attracted to soldiers and veterans were reinforced by the military, and used as a catalyst for enlisting more young men. This would have taken any existing proclivities and exacerbated them, by further pushing the idea that military men were more desirable than other men. Beyond being used as a recruiting tool, this worked

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[389] Goldstein, *War and Gender*, 331.
[390] Jarvis, *The Male Body at War*, 60.
[391] Gilbert, *Men in the Middle*, 222.
[392] Ibid., 2.

in unison with the admittance structures, which required psychological and physical testing to spread the idea that these enlisted men truly were *better men* than those who weren't enlisted. Though the documents themselves may not have been the primary driver behind this admiration, it did reinforce the expectation. It also bolstered heteronormativity, and illustrated that a man's primary goal was either in sexual exploits or marriage, and other achievements only assisted in this goal.

While some stories centered on the power of the uniform, many more comics and other materials were littered with small nods to the attraction enlisted men held amongst young women, and the admiration earned from other men. This admiration is illustrated in *Leatherhead in Korea*, which depicted soldiers placing a photograph of John Wayne over the top of a collection of pin-up women.[393] While the enlisted men famously worshipped the female body, this comic shows that they also worshipped the rugged masculinity of John Wayne as a soldier. While one can assume this is not in a sexual manner, as the pin-up girls are, the homosocial admiration is clear.

Dick Wingate in the US Navy first illustrated Dick's transformation into a sailor and the appreciation he earned in a collage.[394] The text describes this process where Dick begins serving his country and ensuring himself an interesting and well-paid career, while the three pictures show this process in better detail. The photos show Dick wearing a suit and acting professionally with a superior officer, his physical training, which is crafting his body into a more virile and dangerous weapon, and an image of him in a sailor's

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[393] Packwood, *Leatherhead in Korea*, 62–63.
[394] U.S. Navy, *Dick Wingate of the United States Navy*, 9.

uniform, signaling his transformation and illustrating his achievement. On the right, Dick

is shown returning home to Centerville as a sailor, and is greeted happily by a young

man, while three women look on and approach. This image illustrates the admiration that

those at home had for a sailor, and especially the three young women looking on

admirably. Taken as a whole, this image shows that his training process returned him to

his hometown as someone who garners respect, as well as attention from young women.

The comic *Time of Decision*, describes itself as "...the story of the thing that

changed Ted Wright from an outsider to a popular man-about-college and a leader in a

world of competition."[395] By serving in the ROTC, not only does he learn skills that will

make him well-equipped for civilian and military success, but he also began to 'look

sharp' and earn the admiration of women all over the world. His guidance counselor

regales him with tales of the benefits he's seen from his experience in the ROTC,

including a woman telling him, "I was just thinking -- you remind me of the song 'There

is something about a soldier'!", clearly internalizing the cultural constructions about the

appeal of military men and applying them to the people she sees on the street, while also

pushing forth the idea that there truly is something about a soldier.[396]

Ted encounters some similar attention and admiration from his female (as well as

male) peers. One scene features a young woman leaning in and grabbing Ted's arm, and

the narration reads, "Ted found that ROTC paid off in **other** ways too..."[397] The young

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[395] *Time of Decision*, 2.
[396] Ibid., 4.
[397] Ibid., 7.

woman is impressed by his accomplishments, saying, "Ted, you're getting so many decorations! What are you, a general or something?"[398] The clear implication in this portion is that the ROTC "paid off" by providing him with status symbols that were intriguing and attractive to young women. Additionally, there are two young men and a young woman looking on from behind the two, and the male and female couple on the left are looking on in admiration, similar to a scene in *Dick Wingate in the US Navy* where Dick's new status os sailor is celebrated.

Be a Big Wheel - Time of Decision

Time of Decision was an Army ROTC comic book about a man who uses his ROTC training to advance in the business world and become an ideal breadwinner. Early in the story, Ted's guidance counselor shares his own experience in ROTC as an undergraduate. One of the first things the counselor told Ted was the attention and attraction he received from women. The illustrations support these notions and highlight his interactions with women throughout. When the counselor tells ted that he had classes with other students, the accompanying image shows a smiling, attractive blonde woman in the foreground, and a uniformed man sitting behind.[399] Here, there is an implication that this female, given her prominence in the photo, was a part of his positive memories as an ROTC student. This notion is immediately supported when he added, "And at the end of the day when classes were over, the boys in uniform had plenty of social activity...", followed by an image of him with a (presumably the same) woman at a soda

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[398] Ibid.

[399] Ibid., 4.

shop telling him, "I was just thinking - you remind me of the song 'There is something about a soldier'!" He is then seen making future plans with "his girl" during his senior year. This section not only plays up the opportunities to meet and impress women as an enlisted military personnel, but also echoes a piece of popular culture which expresses the same sexual appeal of a man in the military.

Ted encounters some similar attention and admiration from his female (as well as male) peers. One scene features a young woman leaning in and grabbing Ted's arm, and the narration reads, "Ted found that ROTC paid off in **other** ways too..."[400] The young woman is impressed by his accomplishments, saying, "Ted, you're getting so many decorations! What are you, a general or something?"[401] The clear implication in this portion is that the ROTC "paid off" by providing him with status symbols that were intriguing and attractive to young women. Additionally, there are two young men and a young woman looking on from behind the two, and the male and female couple on the left are looking on in admiration, similar to the scene in *Dick Wingate in the US Navy*.

The social and romantic life of ROTC cadets is also illustrated elsewhere. The ROTC Cadet ball is also highlighted as a highly-regarded social activity.[402] The narration reads "To all cadets and their girls, the annual military ball tops the list of social activities."[403] A woman in the background tells her ROTC date, "I wouldn't have missed this for anything!" and her date responded, "Yes, you would if you weren't going steady

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[400] Ibid., 7.
[401] Ibid.
[402] Ibid., 8.
[403] Ibid.

with an ROTC man."[404] Ted and his girl are in the foreground, expressing affection for each other. The scene puts forth the idea that the dance is a place where many desire to attend, but only the ROTC men are able to invite people, providing them with social capital. Later on, Ted, as a senior and cade officer, was chosen to escort the campus homecoming queen.[405] The scene in which this occurs includes several onlookers, and one young woman commented, "I don't see why they couldn't elect me campus queen! I'd like to be sitting up there next to that fellow on the right!"[406] Her friend informs her that he's going steady, but it's apparent from this scene that the author played up the attraction women have toward these uniformed men, and also that the ROTC placed young in positions of high social value.

As part of an ROTC training montage, a young man and woman are shown sitting poolside.[407] The young woman says "It's a lot of fun for us girls when you boys are up here at summer camp!" alluding to the availability of interested young women around military camps and installments.

Be a Big Wheel - Military Appeal - Leatherhead in Korea

Leatherhead in Korea, a collection of comics by Norvel E. Packwood, took a much more humorous view of military life than than most other sources. Packwood made light of the admiration men showed for exaggerated, idealistic masculinity. His cartoon drew upon the well-known practice of soldiers plastering walls with picture of pin up

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[404] Ibid.
[405] Ibid., 10.
[406] Ibid.
[407] Ibid., 9.

girls. The large, two-page illustration showed a group of soldiers placing a photograph of John Wayne over the top of a collection of pin-up women.[408] The way the men are crowding around the John Wayne illustrates the worship for the rugged masculinity of John Wayne as a soldier. While one can assume this is not in a sexual manner, as the pin-up girls are, the homosocial admiration is clear.

Be a Big Wheel - Judy Joins the Waves

The women in *Judy Joins the Waves*, though initially shown to be strong, independent, career-minded women, are depicted in a very different manner when they see the men in the Navy.[409] Two of the women, Judy and Sheila, even turn against each other because of their competition for the affection of Jeff, one of the first sailors they encounter upon enlistment. What began as a story about Judy earning a living, getting an education, and going on adventures soon changes to a story about two women feuding over the attention of an enlisted man. The story arc largely revolved around Judy's enlistment in the Waves and her courtship with Jeff, thus making the ability to meet sailors one of the dominant messages coming from the story.

Be a Big Wheel - Foxhole on your Front Lawn

The comic *Foxhole on your Front Lawn* encouraged families to purchase Defense Bonds for their own financial benefit, in addition to the contribution to military strength. The story focused on the Brightside family, who were taking a number of steps to cut

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[408] Packwood, *Leatherhead in Korea*, 62–63.
[409] U.S. Navy, *Judy Joins the Waves*, 11.

back on their expenses. Midway through the piece, young men across the city begin

receiving Selective Services draft notifications, including Bill Brightside, the family's

son. When Bill receives his acceptance letter, he is shown standing in a car, boastfully

speaking to a group of two young women and a young man, all of whom look on in

admiration.[410] Bill directly asks one young woman, "Will you pine for me, my fair

lady?"[411] The body language in this image strongly supports the idea that women were

strongly attracted to men who were enlisted. This notion is so strong, his friend gets mad

at him for, "hogging the stage," and pushes through to show the group that he's "in the

act" too.[412] These images put forth the notion that military service was a tool young men

could use to impress young women, as well as their male peers, and elevated the status of

soldiers.

Be a Big Wheel - Five Years Later

The publication *Five Years Later* is a 1962 Army recruitment comic that is

heavily invested in the masculine *Be a Big Wheel* concept. The comic primarily expresses

this through the protagonist, Bud, who uses the Army to ensure a secure financial future,

and wins back his girlfriend, Mary Lou, in the process. At the beginning of the comic,

Bud is seen as immature, and is unsure of his future. This uncertainty is causing problems

with Mary Lou. Bud speaks with Jack, his older brother, and his friends, who help him

make some serious decisions about his financial future. They all share their stories with

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[410] Charles Biro, *Foxhole on Your Front Lawn* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. G.P.O., 1951), 9,
http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/52/rec/1.
[411] Ibid.
[412] Ibid.

Bud. Then men are seen as mature and developed role models, although one had not been very successful, and was using the military to get back on track. Three of the four men served in the military, and the other is about to leave for training.

Bud's ability to win over Mary Lou is heavily contingent upon his ability to be a breadwinner. His ability to establish a career is an important component of this, and plays into his worthiness as a romantic suitor. Mary Lou, became very upset with Bud's indecisiveness, especially regarding his plans after graduation and their future together.[413] Mary Lou tells Bud he's not half grown up yet because of this indecisiveness, and makes more remarks later on, contrasting Bud's indecisiveness with the way a secret agent in the film "...**made** things happen."[414] Mary Lou tells him she wants to go straight home, where she tells him not to call her until he's changed his attitude.[415] Mary Lou's frustrations with Bud clearly threaten their relationship, and all revolve around Bud's inability to make decisions or "make things happen." This kind of language make it clear that he their relationship is on the rocks over his shortcomings as a mature male who can make decisions and has some degree of financial security. After Bud speaks with his brother and his brother's friends about their military service, Bud proudly tells Mary Lou that he plains to gain an income and training in the military, and find a job from there.[416] Building on this, he then proposes to her.[417] Here it is clearly illustrated that military

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[413] U.S. Army Recruiting Service, *Five Years Later...Where Will You Be?*, 2–3.
[414] Ibid., 5.
[415] Ibid.
[416] Ibid., 9–16.
[417] Ibid., 16.

service, and the financial security it brings, is a tool that can be used to gain and retain the commitment of young women.

One of the most striking examples of this comic's treatment of military romantic and sexual appeal is the cover art chosen to go with the comic. Although the story revolves around Bud's relationship with Mary Lou, and his decision to join the military, the front cover features Jack, in full military uniform, bowling. Everyone else is watching excitedly, and Jack is the center of attention. Even more curiously, Bud is not pictured, and Mary Lou and another female (who never appears elsewhere in the comic) are pictured watching Jack bowl. The cover art is instead a picture that situates Jack as the alpha male, and is only tangentially (and partially fictionally) related to the story. This cover image puts the adoration many have for men in uniform front and center, even though the scene has little to do with the content of the comic.

Be a Big Wheel - Dick Wingate in the US Navy

In the course of an intriguing and adventurous tour in the Navy, the comic *Dick Wingate in the US Navy* touts the appeal of the uniform to women, both at home and abroad. The publication first illustrated some of this appeal and appreciation in a collage marking Dick's transformation from a high school student to a sailor.[418] The text describes Dick's transformation into a sailor with a bright future ahead, while the three images show this process in better detail. The photos show Dick wearing a suit and acting professionally with a superior officer, his physical training, which is crafting his body

[418] U.S. Navy, *Dick Wingate of the United States Navy*, 9.

into a more virile and dangerous weapon, and an image of him in a sailor's uniform, signaling his transformation and illustrating his achievement. On the right, Dick is shown returning home to Centerville as a sailor, and is greeted happily by a young man, while three women look on and approach. This image illustrates the admiration that those at home had for a sailor, and especially the three young women looking on admirably. Taken as a whole, this image shows that his training process returned him to his hometown as someone who garners respect, as well as attention from young women.

The story also hints at the availability of exotic women waiting for the sailors at Navy ports. One of Dick's fellow sailors, Mike, heard that the ship would be heading to Malibau, and he tells Dick that Malibau is home to the most beautiful women in the Pacific.[419] When a fellow sailor refers to Mike as 'loverboy,' Mike retorts, "Whadd'ya mean 'Lover Boy'? I just happen t'appreciate the attraction this uniform has for the opposite sex! Anybody want to argue about that?"[420] He then supported his claim even further by pulling out a file of women at Malibu, showing that women are so plentiful for him, thanks to his uniform, that he must keep a paper trail on them.[421] He further asserts the power of the uniform on with by trying to choose which one would be good for Dick, with the assumption that all would be interested in him.[422] This discourse places sexual agency with men - in this case, sailors - and out of the hands of women. Men have all of the selection and control in the matter, and women are simply objects that are attracted to

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[419] Ibid., 10.
[420] Ibid., 10–11.
[421] Ibid., 11.
[422] Ibid.

the uniform. These types of depictions set a precedent for male virility and attractiveness, as well as reinforcing the heteronormativity of the dominant culture of the military.

Chapter 7: Inexpressiveness and Independence

David and Brannon argued that inexpressiveness and independence composed an essential dimension of manhood, the archetypal example of which they termed the "sturdy oak." The dimension is defined as the maintenance of emotional composure and self control no matter what, and an unwavering drive to solve problems without help or showing weakness of any kind.[423] The term "sturdy oak" further relates the oppositional relationship the characteristic has with women: "The metaphor of the male as the 'sturdy oak' and the female as the 'clinging vine' has been a common one in America. Looking at an oak tree, one can see a solid trunk that will not bend with the wind, that will always be there, and that will give shelter to those who need it."[424] The authors go on to write, "American men are supposed to be tough, confident, self-reliant, strong, independent, cool, determined, and unflappable."[425] Sturdy oak characteristics are are most important and most visible in times of war and crisis, and these sheltering, stable male qualities were a large part of the masculine qualities applied to the nation during WWII and into the Cold War.

The sturdy oak has also been a key component of military masculinity for across different cultures, as Goldstein argued in *War and Gender*.[426] Given the militarized environment in which most of the DoD materials takes place, there is a great amount of overlap between Inexpressiveness and Independence and Aggressiveness and

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[423] David and Brannon, *The Forty-Nine Percent Majority*, 160–165.
[424] Ibid., 161.
[425] Ibid.
[426] Goldstein, *War and Gender*, 267–268.

Adventurousness, where men are faced with danger and death, but fight on anyway. Therefore the stoicism and confidence that David and Brannon describe is innate and central in many of the works in the Aggressiveness and Adventurousness dimension. For the purposes of this project, I have separated the emphasis on a man's ability to fight unflinchingly from an emphasis on the ability to show no emotion and stay composed. In this section, I will highlight the ways in which inexpressiveness is used to present a more cool and steeled man, in contrast to the Aggressiveness and Adventurousness, where this quality is shown to be a more heroic and valorous archetype.

The masculine archetype of being unemotional and inexpressive is bolstered by numerous example of men unaffected, and in many cases, seemingly unaware, of the death and destruction around them. While there are many times when the men respond to these kinds of hazardous conditions with aggression and heroism, there are also times where they just remain steely-eyed and push through. Sometimes they even make light of the situation and make jokes in the face of grave danger, illustrating how unaffected they are.

Stoicism was often manifest through humor in the face of danger in the 1952 publication *Leatherhead in Korea,* a collection of comedic cartoons originally published in the *Marine Corps Gazette* by Norvel E. Packwood. In a number of comics, he depicted the soldiers as able to act oblivious to enemy fire, and to make witty remarks or carry on with their casual conversations as though they were at no risk. Though done in jest, these depictions do carry with them an understanding that the men are fearless and cannot be rattled by anything. This presents a different sort of fearlessness than the comics in the Aggressiveness and Adventurousness section, but nonetheless offers a counter to men

cowering in foxholes or running away from threats. Although this is certainly a less heroic or desirable form of stoicism, it reinforces the idea that these men do not feel emotion, or that they can hide their emotions and act as though nothing is wrong, even under the most dire and deadly situations.

When men in DoD publications were faced with serious threats, difficulty, and loss, the vast majority embodied the expectation of silent strength and emotional disconnect, though some acknowledged emotional pain. The DoD was conscious of the psychological trauma that was being experienced by the men, and did not actively criticize men who showed sorrow or required psychological help. At the same time, their depictions of men in entertainment media always displayed independence and courageousness alone as a cure to emotional trauma. The men who face difficulty do not seek out help from therapists, counselors, clergy, or senior officers, but instead bear down and fight through. It is telling, in this respect, that the pamphlet *Builders of Faith: The moral and spiritual responsibilities of religious leaders and citizens of all faiths to young Americans in today's world* leaves out any mention of helping men with emotional problems or dealing with loss, despite the fact that it addresses a broad range of duties for clergy members, including their influence on the men's spiritual growth and well being, community outreach, family structures and gender roles, and, most of all, preparing the men for the moral requirements of military service.[427]

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[427] U.S. Department of Defense, "Builders of Faith: The Moral and Spiritual Responsibilities of Religious Leaders and Citizens of All Faiths to Young Americans in Today's World," 2–3.

The comic "Flight into Fury," published in *The United States Marines No. 8*, is an intense second person narrative which places the reader in the shoes of a pilot about to embark on his first mission after being shot down over enemy territory.[428] The comic addresses issues of traumatic events and the questioning of one's own abilities with some complexity and understanding. However, the story encourages Marines to ignore their fears, and to just simply bear down and act courageously and aggressively.

The comic opens with the protagonist, who is later referred to as Joe, standing on a runway wondering, "Can you trust yourself?…You who remember so vividly that terrible - **Flight into Fury**," and begins walking the reader through the terrifying memories that haunt him.[429] More terrifying than the life-threatening events is reaction from others back home, and the damage caused to his reputation. The narration reads, "But mostly you remember the voices...the unheard voices that ran through your mind as you wandered around the base after returning to safety..." and a haunting dream sequence is shown across the panel, with disappointment, depression, mocking, and laughter.[430] A depressed man in shown drinking at a bar with his head in his hands, and a range of people, including associates, mechanics, a superior officer, and an enemy pilot all reinforcing the protagonist's failures. He sees himself as a failure, and he presumes others do as well, and this is what leads him to question himself so intensely. This questioning,

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[428] "Flight into Fury," 20–26.
[429] Ibid., 20.
[430] Ibid., 21.

and the pressure from the presumed comments occurring behind his back, pushed him to request a transfer and start anew with a new unit.[431]

In the new unit, Joe was still gripped by his memories and fears of harm to his reputation. He questioned his own motives to reposition his unit, saying "Why don't you *face* it? You're not thinking of the men…you're thinking of yourself. you're afraid to tell them they have to withstand another attack like that! You're a coward…A COWARD! **A COWARD!!!!**"[432] His decision to reposition was a costly one, and resulted in friendly fire between Joe's unit and Marine reinforcements. His superior officer excoriates him, playing upon Joe's self-doubt in saying, "…I don't suppose it's entirely your fault. A man with your record should never have been given such an assignment!"[433] This statement plays upon all of the protagonist's fears and insecurities; the subsequent narration reads, "*A man with your record!* The words burn into your memory..."[434]

The story then returns to the present, with Joe facing an opportunity to redeem himself. He spots an abandoned enemy plane and contemplates attacking the enemy artillery. He is forced to face his own insecurities, saying; "But do you have the courage? Can you step inside that thing and do the things you're supposed to be able to do? Can you conquer your fears? Or are you going to be a coward all your life?"[435] Joe took the enemy plane into the air, eliminated enemy artillery, and shot down enemy planes, before

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[431] Ibid.
[432] Ibid., 23.
[433] Ibid., 24.
[434] Ibid.
[435] Ibid.

crash landing. Joe woke up in a hospital to learn that his crew was able to hold out for reinforcements, all thanks to his heroism in the air.[436] The officer adds, "One thing I can't understand, though, is how a guy who can fly like that didn't stick to aviation," prompting Joe to say that he found his own worst enemy, but "The guy is dead now…His name was Joe."[437]

In "Flight into Fury," like many of the DoD's depictions of insurmountable odds, men were able to survive and triumph by staying in control, acting bravely, and fighting on. "Flight into Fury" deviates from this a bit by acknowledging and exploring the paralyzing fear and self-doubt one may encounter. However, the narrative encourages men to ignore these feelings and carry on without them. When Joe made a decision he felt was best, it backfired, and was attributed to his cowardice. When he put his feelings aside and did the "brave" thing, he helped the men in his unit and "killed" his own worst enemy; his own self-doubt.

Inexpressiveness and Independence - Victory at Gavutu

The Marine Corps comic "Victory at Gavutu" illustrated the strength and calmness expected of Marines in the face of danger.[438] The comic opens with foreshadowing narration: "Expecting to find the main body of the Japanese troops at Guadalcanal, a mere fistful of U.S. Marines was assigned to the landings at Gavutu and

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[436] Ibid., 26.
[437] Ibid.
[438] U.S. Marine Corps, "Victory at Gavutu," in *United States Marines No. 1, The* (New York NY: Magazine enterprises, 1943), 2–7,
http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/145/rec/1.

Tanambogo in the Solomon Islands group. Instead, the small force of Marines ran into the fiercest resistance from overwhelming numbers of veteran jungle fighters…"[439] The Marines were shocked to find the island heavily populated, and loaded with Japanese snipers and pillboxes. Despite being outnumbered and under constant shelling, the Marines keep their composure and claw their way onto the Gavutu, dynamiting caves and gaining traction on the island.[440] The Marines then attempt another landing on Tanambogo when a freak accident causes the leading boat to spin around and head in the opposite direction.[441] Despite this additional frustrating setback, the Marines again stay focused and take the island, killing over 800 Japanese men while only losing twenty-seven Marines.[442]

Although the story arc in "Victory at Gavutu" is similar to many of the arcs examined in the Aggressiveness and Adventurousness section - American troops are greatly outnumbered and overcome the odds - this story stressed the calmness and intelligence of the troops, rather that solely focusing on tenacity. "Victory at Gavutu" does have a few examples if this kind of heroism, but the thrust of the story is not the fearlessness or overwhelming power of the Marines, so much as their ability to strategically dismantle the Japanese defense and take the island. These kinds of comics set a precedent for the kind of stoicism expected of Marines.

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[439] Ibid., 2.
[440] Ibid., 6.
[441] Ibid., 7.
[442] Ibid.

Inexpressiveness and Independence - The United States Marines, No. 4

Powerful imagery in the table of contents for *The United States Marines, No. 4*, defines the Corps with this stoicism and bravery in the face of death and danger.[443] The table of contents page featured a nearly full-page photo of two Marines carrying another wounded soldier.[444] The headline above reads "First to fight for right and freedom And to keep our honor clean; We are proud to claim the title of UNITED STATES MARINE," with the caption to the photo adding "Two Marines brave a withering Jap cross fire to rescue a wounded comrade."[445] The prominence of this photo and message illustrated the honor and pride in which the Marines were expected to carry themselves. The somber nature of the display takes the soldiers' losses into consideration, but sets the expectation that soldiers will remain stoic and carry out their duties and responsibilities to their fellow Marines.

Inexpressiveness and Independence - Look After My Billy

"Look After My Billy," a comic piece in the 1952 publication *The United States Marines No 7*, is a short piece that addressed 'momism,' as well as the relationship men had with each other and their friends and family at home. The opening panel showed a handwritten letter with a Communist soldier about to bayonet a young, weak, and inept

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[443] Gene Ward and Milburn McCarty, *The United States Marines No. 4*, vol. 1, 4 (United States Marine Corps/Life's Romances Publishing Company; Chicago, n.d.), 3, http://contentdm.unl.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/comics/id/173/rec/4.
[444] Ibid.
[445] Ibid.

looking American soldier.[446] Behind them, a more mature, stronger looking GI is approaching, weapon in hand. The letter asks Jim to look after her Billy, and the caption begins, "Mothers sometimes have funny ideas about their sons..." Given the context, it's rather clear that Billy is the weak, young GI, about to be killed in combat, who is inept and needs his mother to look after him.[447]

The story begins as Billy joins a military installment, and is obnoxious and overzealous, irritating many of his peers.[448] Billy rebuffs Jim for offering to look after him, as his mother has requested, and tells Jim that he will be playing craps for the rest of the night.[449] Billy continues to attempt to display his masculinity, as he cheats in the craps game, and then challenges a fellow soldier for accusing him of cheating.[450] He also frustrates his unit members with his false bravado and brags about his football abilities.[451]

Once the unit engages in battle, Billy is scared and completely frozen in place. He's overwhelmed by the attacking force, and refuses to move until Jim smacks him hard across the face.[452] Here Jim is directly challenging his courage and masculinity through physical means, and it seemingly casts aside Billy's fears and he agrees to move on.[453] Billy trips an attacker running into the trench, and then becomes enraged when Jim is

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[446] "Look After My Billy!," 18.
[447] Ibid.
[448] Ibid., 18–21.
[449] Ibid., 19.
[450] Ibid.
[451] Ibid.
[452] Ibid., 19–22.
[453] Ibid., 22.

stabbed with a bayonet.[454] Readers see Billy, now with a completely different demeanor and, for the first time, a straight and orderly helmet, saying, "Why, you dirty son-of-" and attacking the Communist soldier.[455]

In the next scene, readers see an officer telling Jim, "You've got Billy to thank for saving your life, Jim. I don't know what came over him, but he held his position over three hours through four Commie charges, when they finally withdrew there were eleven bodies lying around him, and he was still fuming, standing over you like a watchdog!"[456] Billy comes to visit Jim in the hospital, and his bravado and arrogance are gone, and plans to refuse the Navy Cross for his actions.[457] He is embarrassed that he was a coward and ran away from combat. Billy was at first frozen by the horrors of war, but when is friend was hurt, he found a reserve of courage and defended him tenaciously. The story ends with Jim writing a letter to Billy's mother, letting her know that Billy can look after himself, and that she need not worry about him again. The comic acknowledges the fear that men encounter in war, but also lays out a transformation that men can go through. The bookend correspondence with Billy's mother really sets the tone for this transformation into adulthood -- and more specifically, manhood.

This comes with some mixed messages regarding "Sissy Stuff." On one hand, the narrative acknowledged that men are often scared, and may freeze or flee when placed into battle. As Jim says from the hospital bed, "...You're not the first guy who got scared

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[454] Ibid.
[455] Ibid.
[456] Ibid., 23.
[457] Ibid.

of those Commie Advances. What counts is that you came through in the clutch! When you first came here, you weren't a first class soldier because you hadn't known fear. Now you know it...and I think you'll be a different guy."[458] Billy's transformation here is made clear through means much more broad than simply being a good soldier. When Billy enters the service, he is full of false bravado, cowardly, and his mother must keep an eye over him. This immaturity presumably caused in part by "momism" and similar fears of feminization at the time. He was able to these flaws by battening down and responding to incoming threats and "knowing" (and ignoring) fear, and comes out more mature and humble.

Inexpressiveness and Independence - Leatherhead in Korea

The publication *Leatherhead in Korea* was a collection of comedic cartoons published by Norvel E. Packwood, an artist for the *Marine Corps Gazette*. The comics were originally published in the *Gazette*, and were compiled into this publication in 1952. The comics in *Leatherhead in Korea* were short - generally one panel - and drew upon Packwood's experiences in the field. His pieces differed from many of the other comics I examine, in that they are less propagandistic, and only sought to make light of typical situations the soldiers found themselves in.

One common theme across the collection of comics in *Leatherhead in Korea* was the ability of soldiers to act oblivious to enemy fire, and to make witty remarks or carry on with their casual conversations as though they were at no risk. Though done in jest,

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[458] Ibid.

these depictions do carry with them an understanding that the men are fearless and could not be rattled by anything. This presented a different sort of fearlessness than the comics in the Aggressiveness and Adventurousness section, where men would directly counter danger with aggression. Nonetheless, Packwood offered a counter to men cowering in foxholes or running away from threats. This humorous form of stoicism, though perhaps less valorous than its aggressive counterparts, did reinforce the idea that these soldiers did not feel emotion, or that they were able to hide their emotions and act as though nothing was wrong, even under the most dire and deadly situations.

Leatherhead in Korea delved into a long and very serious discussion of the Chosin Breakout, and attacked the usage of the word "retreat: to describe the actions, arguing that it paints them in cowardly terms. The issue is introduced in a two-page illustration that used humor to show the dire situation American troops were facing. Two men were up against an overwhelming onslaught of enemy troops and say, "To hell with tradition. Let's get out'a here."[459] The rather than taking on the overwhelming force, as many examples in the Aggression and Adventurousness section, or "retreating," the men decide to get out of the situation. Even though they knowingly go against tradition and relocate, they are not shown as being frightened, but rather as calm and cool.

The following three pages, nearly all expository text, discussed the line between retreat and relocation in a much more serious manner, dissecting the events and press coverage of the Chosin Breakout. Packwood angrily lamented that some members of the

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[459] Packwood, *Leatherhead in Korea*, 36–37.

press "...erroneously used the words **retreat** and **trapped** in their descriptions of the Chosin Breakout."[460] Packwood was highly offended and insulted by this language and openly maligned the journalists who initially covered the event. He then quoted a statement from General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., who said, "...despite the frequent accounts in the press, **the men of the First Marine Division did not retreat.** They obeyed orders...to conduct an orderly move from exposed positions to a more secure area near Hamhung."[461] Packwood went on to disavow the use of the word "trapped," saying that the First Marine Division was prepared for an attack from guerrilla forces and thus, "...when the crisis arose it was readily met."[462]

Packwood then described the troop movements in the most complementary way, stating that they were '...in a new and different war, engaged with a numerically superior and fresh enemy..." and had to relocate and concentrate its forces.[463] He even made the movements sound heroic, saying the men were forced to move "...southward over 75 miles of the most tortuous mountain roads conceivable."[464] He added that the First Marine Division launched "...a series of deadly attacks which resulted in the complete route of all six of the Chinese divisions opposing it."[465] He then returned to the offensiveness of the term "retreat," saying of the situation, "...by no stretch of the

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[460] Ibid., 38.
[461] Ibid.
[462] Ibid., 39.
[463] Ibid.
[464] Ibid.
[465] Ibid., 40.

imagination can this be described as retreat, since a retreat presupposes defeat -- and the only defeat involved in this battle was the one suffered by the Chinese…"[466]

Although there is obviously and deservedly a concern over the factuality of reports on the fighting, this sort of response against the use of a few words, from commanders as well as journalists and comic writers, shows a serious concern over their self-defined honor and heroism. This shows that these Marines were forever conscious and defensive about the descriptions of the heroics of the Marines, and were determined to prove that they were not scared or eager to retreat.

Inexpressiveness and Independence - Flight into Fury

The comic "Flight into Fury," published in *The United States Marines No. 8*, is an intense second person narrative, which placed the reader in the shoes of a pilot about to embark on his first mission after being shot down over enemy territory. The comic addressed issues of traumatic events, and the questioning of one's own abilities with some complexity and understanding. However, in the end, the protagonist resolves his issues by setting aside his emotions, bearing down, and acting courageously and aggressively.

The comic opens with the protagonist, who later comes to be known as Joe,[467] standing on a runway wondering, "Can you trust yourself?…You who remember so vividly that terrible — **Flight into Fury**."[468] The comic begins walking the reader

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[466] Ibid.
[467] The name 'Joe' is a nod to "GI Joe," which sought to establish the soldier as an ordinary man doing extraordinary things, someone anyone could identify with.
[468] "Flight into Fury," 20.

through the terrifying memories that haunt him. More terrifying than the dangerous

events is the reaction from others back home, and the damage caused to his reputation.

The narration reads: "But mostly you remember the voices...the unheard voices that ran

through your mind as you wandered around the base after returning to safety..." and a

haunting dream sequence is shown across the panel, with disappointment, depression,

mocking, and laughter.[469] A depressed man in shown drinking at a bar with his head in

his hands, and a range of people, including associates, mechanics, a superior officer, and

an enemy pilot all reinforcing the protagonist's failures. He sees himself as a failure, and

he presumes others do as well, and this is what leads him to question himself so intensely.

This questioning, and the pressure from the presumed comments occurring behind his

back, pushed him to request a transfer and start anew with a new unit.[470]

As a soldier on the ground, the protagonist withstands an intense attack, but then

disobeys orders to hold the position and orders the men to move to a ridge in preparation

for another attack. He questions his own motives, saying, "Why don't you *face* it? You're

not thinking of the men…you're thinking of yourself. You're afraid to tell them they have

to withstand another attack like that! You're a coward…A COWARD! **A**

COWARD!!!!"[471] On the ridge, additional troops converge on the location, and the

protagonist, in a rush, turns and fires upon them. He is stopped when another soldier

realizes that the troops are American.[472] His superior excoriates him, saying his decision

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[469] Ibid., 21.
[470] Ibid.
[471] Ibid., 23.
[472] Ibid., 24.

to take the ridge cost them men and, because the enemy is able to bring up artillery, left them almost hopeless.[473] He then adds, "But I don't suppose it's entirely your fault. A man with your record should never have been given such an assignment!"[474] This statement plays upon all of the protagonist's fears and insecurities; the following narration reads, "*A man with your record!* The words burn into your memory..."[475]

As these thoughts go through his head, he is faced with an opportunity to redeem himself. He spots an abandoned enemy plane and contemplates attacking the enemy artillery, while battling insecurity: "But do you have the courage? Can you step inside that thing and do the things you're supposed to be able to do? Can you conquer your fears? Or are you going to be a coward all your life?"[476]

Without much further narration, he is up in the air, searching for the artillery. He destroys the installment and encounters some enemy MiGs, reminding him of his painful past. He realizes that his back is against the wall this time, and receives enemy fire. He is able to maneuver and attack the MiGs, and he tells himself; "But this time you haven't got a parachute! There is no escape! You have no alternative to death! All right, if you're going to die, the least you can do is die like a man! You've certainly never lived like one!"[477] With the situation clear — kill or be killed — he finds new determination to take out as many MiGs as possible before he goes down. He shoots down another plane and

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[473] Ibid.
[474] Ibid.
[475] Ibid.
[476] Ibid.
[477] Ibid., 24–25.

then notices the remaining MiG running. He says, "He's **running!** He's actually running from me! **He's** more scared than I am! **He's afraid of me!!!**"[478]

The next thing he remembers after this triumphant realization is waking up in a hospital with an officer referred to as 'the old man' sitting beside him.[479] Joe learns that his crew was able to hold out for reinforcements thanks to his work.[480] The officer adds, "One thing I can't understand, though, is how a guy who can fly like that didn't stick to aviation," prompting Joe to say that he found his own worst enemy, but "The guy is dead now…His name was Joe."[481]

The story explores the mental cost associated with war, and especially the role in which one's own pride and reputation can cause them real harm. This portion may bring some comfort to soldiers dealing with their own post-traumatic stress, by showing that it's natural to feel this way and question your own abilities if things turn sour. This sensitivity is rather shallow, however, as the story paints his decision-making in response to legitimate threats as selfish and made as a result of his fear and insecurities. Furthermore, Joe's solution to his stress is not through treatment or therapy, or even reassignment, but through further repressing his emotions, doubling down on his courage and "being a man" to make up for his mistakes. Here, aggression and courageousness are used to kill his own worst enemy, his own self-consciousness and anxieties.

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[478] Ibid., 26.
[479] Ibid.
[480] Ibid.
[481] Ibid.

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