BREAD, BULLETS, AND BROTHERHOOD: MASCULINE IDEOLOGIES IN THE MID-CENTURY

BLACK FREEDOM STRUGGLE, 1950-1975

Matthew N. Harvey, B.A.

Thesis Prepared for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

August 2018

APPROVED:

Clark Pomerleau, Major Professor
Jennifer Jensen Wallach, Committee
    Member
Michael Wise, Committee Member
Harold Tanner, Chair of the Department of
    History
David Holdeman, Dean of the College of
    Liberal Arts and Social Sciences
Victor Prybutok, Dean of the Toulouse
    Graduate School

Harvey, Matthew N. *Bread, Bullets, and Brotherhood: Masculine Ideologies in the Mid-Century Black Freedom Struggle, 1950-1975*. Master of Arts (History), August 2018, 112 pp., bibliography, 48 primary sources, 94 secondary sources.

This thesis examines the ways that African Americans in the mid-twentieth century thought about and practiced masculinity. Important contemporary events such as the struggle for civil rights and the Vietnam War influenced the ways that black Americans sought not only to construct masculine identities, but to use these identities to achieve a higher social purpose. The thesis argues that while mainstream American society had specific prescriptions for how men should behave, black Americans were able to select which of these prescriptions they valued and wanted to pursue while simultaneously rejecting those that they found untenable. Masculinity in the mid-century was not based on one thing, but rather was an amalgamation of different ideals that black men (and women) sought to utilize to achieve communal goals of equality, opportunity, and family.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines the gender ideologies of African Americans in the period of the Vietnam War. Specifically, it looks at the various ways men constructed manhood within prevailing attitudes toward family roles, violence, and contemporary social justice movements. The United States in the 1960s saw many cracks and schisms begin to form in its socio-cultural fabric which spread out to influence many different areas of life. Changes in the perception of gender and sex roles in this period gained a prominence previously unknown, prompting new trends that influenced the ways men and women interacted with each other, their identities, and their communities. When these changes reached the military, they coupled with other developments in technology and foreign policy and began to change the way Americans perceived that institution's connection to gender. Finally, organizations and people committed to reforming America's racial politics adopted appeals to gender in their protest rhetoric calling for social justice and equality. These developments reached far and wide, influencing and reacting to the volatility of the period. This thesis seeks to understand how these areas of American life influenced the methods of masculine performance undertaken by black soldiers who fought in the Vietnam War. It will address two characteristics traditionally associated with masculine behavioral norms and determine to what extent these masculine ideals were successful in producing a satisfactory and meaningful sense of manliness in those who practiced them. In addition, the thesis will examine from a macro point of view the two "wings" of the mid-century movement for African American equality, showing that, where many have seen distinctions and differences, there also exists evidence suggesting that the organizations

traditionally associated with either the Civil Rights or Black Power movement performed masculinity in remarkably similar ways.

Military obligations have had various appeals for American men throughout the country's history and different wars produced different reasons for men to fight. Women have contributed to war efforts just as valiantly as men have and served in integrated units during Vietnam. This thesis, however, centers on black men's construction of their gender identities, which makes it important to establish the connection between militaries and masculinities. While administrations have utilized this masculine connection to benefit their own military, political, and social goals, wars have nonetheless provided countless generations of men with the opportunity to prove their mettle and their manhood. The Vietnam conflict was no exception. But "manhood" is a complicated construction. Cultural developments and trends in the 1960s and 70s told the male sex how they should act and behave to be validated as men by their society. This type of dominant masculinity in a given society is termed "hegemonic masculinity." Sociologist R. W. Connell, researching and interviewing men in Australia, coined the term in *Masculinities.* "Hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practices which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women."[1] That the book takes as its source base Australian men,

---

[1] R.W. Connell, *Masculinities*, Second Edition, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 77. Put simply, "hegemonic masculinity" means the norms, characteristics, and values traditionally associated with the male sex. In addition to those attributes listed in the text, other masculine characteristics include great physical size and strength, a proclivity for warfare, and a fundamental need to provide for, procreate with, and protect women, while simultaneously maintaining superiority over them. See also R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," *Gender & Society* 19, no. 6 (December 2005): 832; Scott, Joan W. "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis." *American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (December 1986); Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History,* (New York: Free Press, 1996); Gail

rather than American, does not diminish its importance to this study because the theory of a

hegemonic masculinity can apply to any society. Indeed, in Michael Kimmel's *Manhood in*

America, considered one of the first authoritative texts on the subject on American manhood.

While he is a sociologist, he subtitles the text *A Cultural History,* and in it he observes the ways

that men have developed senses of themselves as men. The monograph traces in four parts the

progression from the ideal of the self-made man that dominated American gender norms in the

19th century, to the early twentieth century at which time modernization and bureaucratization

of labor began to prevent men's ability to meet the status and wealth requirements of the

"self-made man" model. Manhood then became masculinity, which demanded that men

constantly police themselves for any evidence of manly failure. Kimmel describes this behavior

as akin to wearing a mask, a fake identity that must be performed in the presence of others

(particularly other men) and must not betray the feminine characteristics underneath. In this

ever-shifting cultural landscape, men began to feel anxious about their responsibilities and

priorities in relation to dominant cultural notions prescribed for the family, sex, gender, and

work. In response, men in mid-century America made decisions and developed strategies for

meeting the demands of American hegemonic masculinity and this thesis attempts to analyze

the ways that men attempted to do that.[2]

Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Jeffords, Susan. *The Remasculinization of America: Gender and the Vietnam War,* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989); Borchert, Susan Danziger, "Masculinity and the Vietnam War." *Michigan Academician* 15, no. 2 (winter 1983): 195-207; Brandon T. Locke, "The Military-Masculinity Complex: Hegemonic Masculinity and the United States Armed Forces, 1940-1963," (Master's thesis, University of Nebraska, 2013).

[2] Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History,* (New York: Free Press, 1996).

Though it has changed over the years, in Vietnam-era America, this dominant, hegemonic masculinity tended to be associated with white, middle-class customs and norms that place the male patriarch at the head of the family as primary (if not sole) breadwinner and provider. It also typically associates military service with manliness due to that institution's ideological association with valor, bravery, and violence, three more characteristics indicative of the hegemonic masculine ideal. Connell also discusses marginalized masculinities: those men in a society that for one reason or another do not measure up to the standards dictated by hegemonic masculinity. The American construction of racism has always put black men into this category. Thus, black soldiers in Vietnam had to interact within a political and military structure that simultaneously promoted and denied hegemonic masculinity in exchange for military service.

To be frank, manhood and masculinity are not untrodden subjects in the literature on the Vietnam war and the protest movements that accompanied it in America. Recent scholarship has examined the ways that black power ideals influenced black GIs and changed their perspectives on masculinity and the military. This thesis does not seek to refute these authors' conclusions, which largely argue that black masculinity among servicemen shifted once the Black Power movement began to replace its predecessor as the dominant iteration of the contemporary black freedom struggle. While the rise of black power certainly contributed to new ideas about masculinity, many of these ideas existed much earlier in the period than previous scholarship has suggested. Furthermore, much of this literature tends to examine the umbrella-term "manhood" and all that that term represents without including the specific characteristics of what it meant to be "manly" in this period. Finally, many of these works do

4

not frame their arguments in ways that also address how women, particularly black women, contributed to the process of masculinity-building during the Vietnam era. This failure to address the wide variety of masculine ideals and the ways that African American men conceived of and sought to attain ideals of manhood, as well as how women conceived of these practices, has left a gap in the scholarship. It is this gap that this paper seeks to fill.[3]

In addition, this paper contributes to another historiographic argument that previous historians have not examined in relation to masculinity studies. A new debate among civil rights scholars over the last fifteen to twenty years seeks to examine the differences and similarities between two "wings" of the mid-century black freedom struggle. The first is typically associated with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and is generally known as the nonviolent and integrationist Civil Rights movement. The other wing is associated more closely with Malcolm X, the Black Panther Party, and other individuals and organizations traditionally categorized into the radical and militant Black Power movement. According to Peniel E. Joseph, author of *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights – Black Power Era,* scholars who established this distinction "…differed more in their level of condemnation than in their analysis of the Black Power movement's self-destructive impact." Joseph continues to address some of the characteristics of black power that allowed the movement to become an easy target for criticism. The authors who contribute to this debate focus on many different areas of the two

---

[3] Herman Graham, III, *The Brothers' Vietnam War* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003); Steve Estes, *I Am a Man! Race, Manhood, and the Civil Rights Movement,* (Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Robert Staples, *Black Masculinity: The Black Male's Role in American Society,* (San Francisco, The Black Scholar Press, 1982); Cheryl Xue Dong, "Black Power Soldiers: How the Rising Storm of Radical Black Masculinity in the Vietnam War Shaped Military Perceptions of African-American Soldiers," (Master's thesis, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, 2013).

movements and use many different interpretative frameworks to do so. Some books focus on

the origins of the movements, some approach through politics or economics without reference

to gender, and some examine specific groups and actors, such as the Black Panthers, the Nation

of Islam, and Robert F. Williams, among many others. These works discuss gender occasionally

and peripherally, but this work will examine how the two movements' most prominent leaders

and organizations addressed issues of masculinity in their communities. These efforts by

historians have given rise to what Joseph calls "Black Power Studies" to which this paper will

attempt to contribute by examining the ways that both the Civil Rights and Black Power

movements thought about and tried to construct an effective and meaningful masculinity. It

will argue that not only did the two movements express similar versions of masculine ideology,

but also that women participated in both movements in the same masculine ways that men

did. This will diminish the ideological lines that have separated the two "wings" of the black

freedom struggle, contributing to the work of black power scholars who seek to "demystify,

complicate, and intellectually engage" the story of black power in America.[4]

Chapter two begins by addressing the male breadwinner model of masculinity. This type

of masculinity projected onto men the obligation to provide economically for the women and

children in their nuclear families. In this model, men worked for wages while women kept the

---

[4] Peniel E. Joseph, "The Black Power Movement: A State of the Field," *The Journal of American History* 96, no. 3 (December 2009): 751-776. For more on this historiography, see Curtis J. Austin, *Up Against the Wall: Violence in the Making and Unmaking of the Black Panther Party,* (Arkansas: University of Arkansas Press, 2006); Peniel E. Joseph, *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2006); Peniel E. Joseph, ed., *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era,* (New York: Routledge, 2006); William L. Van Deburg, *New Day in Babylon: Black Power and American Culture, 1965-1975* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Judson L. Jeffries, ed., *Black Power: In the Belly of the Beast,* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006).

home and saw to the raising of children and the maintenance of the household. The chapter examines first how government officials and white, liberal politicians sought to project this ideal onto black men to respond to continued racial oppression and inequality in the black community. Men in government such as Daniel Patrick Moynihan provided a view that saw military service for black men as able to provide a sense of manhood that was sorely lacking due to black families' matriarchal structures. Through economic incentives such as job training and educational assistance, military service would allow the returning black soldier to regain his position as primary breadwinner. This will provide a framework in which to examine, in the next section, African American soldiers' own responses to this ideal. This section will report on the myriad responses of black soldiers to this breadwinner ideal and show that many did view economic opportunity provided by military service as an important masculine attribute. Many soldiers did hold this view and saw the economic advantages of military service as an important element of manhood. But not everyone in the black community saw the breadwinner ideal as a positive force that would foster racial equality. Black feminists of the period responded in force to Moynihan's argument for the breadwinner ideal, objecting vehemently to the patriarchal and sexist views it projected.

The third chapter examines another distinct characteristic of traditional masculinity. In Moynihan's call for black participation in the armed forces, he furthered a second ideal of masculinity that held warriors in high esteem. Military leaders and Drill Instructors took this ideal a step further, suggesting that manhood was closely tied to the ability to do violence against an enemy combatant. These men saw in military service an opportunity for adventure and glory on the field of battle. When black soldiers put these violent warrior priorities into

practice, they found them sorely lacking in the ability to convey any sort of meaning or identity. Black feminists protested the Vietnam war and especially African American's participation in it. These activists' denunciations of the conflict and the violence it wrought make up the final section of this chapter.

The fourth chapter in this thesis will provide an analysis of the evidence in the context of the Civil Rights – Black Power debate, examining each movement's most prominent leaders as representations of the ideology's masculine values. It will argue that, in terms of masculine ideologies, these two movements were not so different from each other. Not only were they similar, but they were similar in a fundamental way. Both movements embraced some aspects of the breadwinner ideal because they saw it as a means to improve their nuclear families and, by extension, the black community at large. The first section will compare how leaders in the Civil Rights and Black Power movements spoke and thought about breadwinning and its value to the black community. The second section in chapter 4 does the same thing, but compares these leaders' theories on violence and self-defensive action, concluding that both were antiwar and pro violent self-defense. Lastly, that these characteristics can be considered masculine at all is called into question by showing that black power feminists employed similar strategies of gender expression. Black women called for economic empowerment and militant defensive action just like men did. Furthermore, examples of women performing traits such as things reach from the black power era of the late sixties back to the "heroic" civil rights era of the 50s and earlier. By comparing these masculine ideals across the spectrums of race, gender, and black social activism, we see that what has previously sown division between ideas and people, might, upon greater reflection, be able to bring about a semblance of unity instead.

CHAPTER 2

BLACK BREADWINNERS

This chapter examines the impact of the hegemonic ideal of the male breadwinner on black soldiers during the Vietnam War. It will show that the ruling class in the 1960s made suggestions and tried to establish methods by which black men would be able to assume a successful gender identity and achieve economic justice for themselves and their families. These policymakers suggested that military service would assist black men in regaining a lost sense of manhood by providing them with job training and financial access to education. Moynihan offered an interpretation of the black family as dysfunctional due to its matriarchal structure. This matriarchy prevented black men from assuming their "rightful place" at the head of the family and perpetuated a "tangle of pathology" that resulted in black poverty, delinquency, and oppression.

Many black soldiers did engage in this model of masculine identity construction, as we can see in their words regarding their motivations for joining. Black soldiers who went to Vietnam did so partly to achieve a patriarchal ideal that saw men as belonging at the head of the family. Since black men had been "emasculated" by black matriarchy in their communities, it has historically been extremely difficult for them to assume this position that many white men are able to take up with ease. This chapter will show the economic and educational motivations for black men who fought in Vietnam and establish the emphasis they placed not on patriarchy, but on the desire to protect and defend the black community.

But not everyone saw this breadwinner ideal to be significant to the struggles of black people. Black feminists in this period rejected the idea that men needed to be the heads of

household. They responded to Moynihan with vociferous criticism, suggesting that women had no more power (and actually much less) than black men in their economic and educational opportunities. Instead, they made calls for a more egalitarian model of family dynamics that presented the idea that men and women were equally capable of providing for their families. These black feminists wanted the same access to economic equality that the government suggested for black soldiers and rejected the idea that this should be reserved for men.

<p align="center">Moynihan and the Political Economy of Patriarchy</p>

A study of black masculinity must first begin with a brief study of hegemonic (generally read: "white") masculinity, for while some argue that the two must be evaluated separately, they are nonetheless intimately connected; one cannot be understood without the other. [5] Many scholars of post-Civil War era America have noted what they term a "crisis" in masculinity. Positing a wide range of causes, these scholars in general observe the changing natures of work and labor, issues regarding gender norms and sexuality, and race relations as creating a new type of man, one far removed from the hegemonic masculinity of the past. It was the removal from these traditional gender norms that caused what many social critics and writers deemed a feminization of America.[6] This had far-reaching social consequences. Primarily, this imagined feminization of America led to many attempts to recall what American

---

[5] See Martin Summers, *Manliness and its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity, 1900–1930, (*Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).; Jeff Loeb, "MIA: African American Autobiography of the Vietnam War," *African American Review* 31, no. 1 (1997): 105.; A. G. Hunter and J. E. Davis, "Hidden Voices of Black Men: The Meaning, Structure, and Complexity of Manhood," *Journal of Black Studies* 25, no. 1 (1994): 20-40.

[6] See, for example, Patricia Cayo Sexton, *The Feminized Male: Classrooms, White Collars and the Decline of Manliness*, (New York: Random House, 1969).

society at large had regarded as a true sense of manhood. Many ideas typically and traditionally

associated with manliness contributed to this hegemonic masculinity, but this chapter focuses

on one of the most prominent: the man as primary family breadwinner. There were many ways

that white men sought to reestablish these manly ideals that they regarded as having been lost,

but one primary method was in the denial of black manhood.[7] We see this typified most

villainously in the rise of lynching as a punitive measure in the late nineteenth century. In many

cases, rape of a white woman was the crime for which many black men were lynched. White

southerners saw it as their duty to protect white women from black rapists. This was an

ingenuous rationale, however, and Ida B. Wells questioned this justification in many of her

writings. In her autobiography *Crusade for Justice,* she argues that lynching was a means of

capitalist exploitation of black people to keep them from attaining too much economic power.

Terror against African Americans was a method by which the oppressing class sought to "keep

the nigger down."[8] Lynching had less to do with the need to protect white women than with

the desire to maintain total power and control over blacks. Furthermore, white men saw in

black men a means by which they would be able to reassert their role as protector of women.

Paul Hoch examines the psychosexual dimensions of this interracial competition for women in

his *White Hero, Black Beast: Racism, Sexism, and the Mask of Masculinity.* He writes that

"[d]efence of manhood demanded, above all, the defence of the white goddesses of civilization

against the dark, sex-crazed, barbarians at the gates, and such fears provided the most

---

[7] Edward E. Baptist, "The Absent Subject: African American Masculinity and Forced Migration to the Antebellum Plantation Frontier," In *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South*, edited by Craig Thompson Friend and Lorri Glover, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004), 137.

[8] Ida B. Wells, *Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells,* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1970), 64.

explosive fuel for interracial hatreds, lynching and war."[9] The crisis of black masculinity

stemmed from the crisis in white masculinity, and that crisis had its roots in the ability (or

inability) of white men to protect white women from a supposed threat posed by black men.

This was largely a false threat, however, and many activists saw through it and viewed lynching

as the economic, social, and sexual oppression that it was. Therefore, to combat this, black men

sought means by which to prove to whites and to themselves that they, too, were capable of

protecting and providing for the female members of their race.

This was a popular conception among policymakers and legislators during the 1960s:

that achieving manhood meant providing for a family economically. In March of 1965, Daniel

Patrick Moynihan and the Office of Policy Planning and Research of the United States

Department of Labor published *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action.* Commonly

referred to simply as "The Moynihan Report," this study examined the dimensions of African

American families and concluded that the afflictions of the black community at large were the

result of the demise of the black family unit. The research has since proven flawed in ways that

become clear throughout the thesis, but it nonetheless created an uproar when it was leaked to

the press in late 1965. Moynihan and his partners argued that African American economic and

familial conditions were mutually constitutive – that they operated in a kind of vicious cycle,

one continuously reinforcing the other. He argued that "[t]he fundamental problem… is that of

family structure… that the Negro family in the urban ghettos is crumbling."[10] Suggestions for

---

[9] Paul Hoch, *White Hero, Black Beast: Racism, Sexism, and the Mask of Masculinity,* (London: Pluto Press Limited, 1979), 47. This book takes a psychoanalytic approach to the examination of black and white masculinities. While it does not examine the question of black soldiers in Vietnam specifically, it nonetheless provides valuable background insight into how and why white men were able to deny manhood to African Americans for so long.
[10] United States. Department of Labor, 1913-. Office of Policy Planning and Research. *The Negro Family. The Case for National Action.* By Daniel P. Moynihan. Pp. 78, 1965. 1. This study was an important to contribution to the

addressing this problem followed, and overwhelmingly they centered on federal support (both

economic and social) for black families. The report emphasized what its authors deemed a

"Tangle of Pathology," which argued for the self-perpetuation of social trends that negatively

affected the African American family.

Where Moynihan's report coincides most specifically with this study is in its examination

of the African American male. The report argued that the failure of black men to provide for

their families and the subsequent matriarchal structure of African American families

"…seriously retards the progress of the group as a whole, and imposes a crushing burden on the

Negro male and, in consequence, on a great many Negro women as well."[11] Due to the crushing

racial inequality and economic poverty in the urban ghettos, Moynihan (and many others who

were familiar with his report) argued that black men needed to retake their place at the heads

of their families in order to further the goals of the Great Society and reach economic

fulfillment and equality for all. These ideas came from generations of beliefs about manhood,

from classic family models operating in the U.S. that placed the male sex at the head of the

family unit. Moynihan and his cohort of male politicians and policymakers during the 60s largely

all served in the military in some capacity and their experiences colored their understanding of

the relationship between race, gender, and the military. They believed, as did many others in

America (not just the elite), that males belonged at the head of their families and that men

should provide for their dependents financially, physically, and emotionally. It was a cycle of

---

discussion of the African American family in the 1960s. It received a large amount of backlash, but that criticism only provided more insight into the true nature of African American family conditions, due to written arguments questioning the validity of Moynihan's statements. See William L. Yancey and Lee Rainwater, *The Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: The M.I.T. Press, 1967) for an in-depth discussion of the controversy surrounding the landmark study just two years after its publication.
[11] Moynihan, *The Negro Family*, 29.

poverty and racism that prevented men from being able to do so: poverty kept them

emasculated and their emasculation furthered their poverty.

Overlooking what today would be criticized as the report's racism and sexism, it is

obvious nonetheless that there was at least a perceived view of the African American male as

unable to provide for his family and, therefore, not sufficiently masculine. Moynihan does note

that the matriarchy prevalent among black families was not an inherently negative structure,

but that because it is so out of line with the rest of American society it is something that the

government needs to address and rectify if the black community is to enjoy equal opportunity

in America.[12] As it was, in 1965, 39.7% of African American families fell below the poverty line,

compared to only 11.1% of white families. Furthermore, the percentage of families headed by a

male that were in poverty was only 32.3%, while black families with a female head were

poverty-stricken at a rate of 63.6%.[13] African Americans were unemployed at a rate of 8.1% in

1965, while in that same year they only accounted for 9% of the armed forces.

Based on these data, "The Moynihan Report" offered methods by which the federal

government could assist black men in returning to the heads of their households, thereby lifting

their families up above the poverty line. The report focused largely on reporting the problem,

though many legislative and social remedies were proposed to fight black poverty and

unemployment. One of these methods was through participation in the armed forces. Indeed,

Moynihan contributed an entire section of his paper to the importance of military service.

While he begins with an examination of the inequities inherent in the armed forces and the

---

[12] Moynihan, *The Negro Family*, 29.
[13] U.S. Bureau of the Census, <u>Current Population Reports</u>, Series P-60, No. 68, "Poverty in the United States: 1959 to 1968," U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1969.

underrepresentation of African Americans in those institutions, he nonetheless argues that the

military provides substantial economic benefits for veterans. In addition, he claimed that the

training soldiers received was of immense value after discharge from military service; veterans

had a skill on which they could rely for employment opportunities. Finally, and most

importantly, Moynihan addressed the utterly masculine nature of the armed services. He

wrote, "Given the strains of the disorganized and matrifocal family life in which so many Negro

youth come of age, the Armed Forces are a dramatic and desperately needed change: a world

away from women, a world run by strong men of unquestioned authority, where discipline, if

harsh, is nonetheless orderly and predictable, and where rewards, if limited, are granted on the

basis of performance."[14] The report then quotes a U.S. Army recruiting poster that appealed to

men's gender identities in its claim that "[i]n the U.S. Army, you get to know what it means to

feel like a man."[15] Furthermore, the same section of Moynihan's report goes on to quote a

witness at a Civil Rights Commission hearing in Mississippi as saying of his Army service that it

was "the only time I ever felt like a man."[16] It was apparent to Moynihan, as it was apparent to

a majority of men in the United States, that the military built the kind of men that America

praised and that would be able to regain their "proper" place at the head of the family.

In 1965, President Johnson was just beginning his escalation in Vietnam (always the

political maneuverer, he waited until after his 1964 election to commit to sending in more

ground troops). In March of 1965, Johnson sent 3,500 Marines to South Vietnam, the first in a

series of escalations that would parallel a rise in popular opposition to the conflict. By the end

---

[14] Moynihan, *The Negro Family*, 42.
[15] Moynihan, *The Negro Family*, 78.
[16] Moynihan, *The Negro Famil*y, 43.

of the year, there were almost 200,000 U.S. military personnel in Vietnam. With the Gulf of

Tonkin Resolution, Johnson had found a political justification for raising the number of troops in

Vietnam, but he also wanted a popular one that he could sell to the American public and his

constituents.

He found help in Moynihan. Johnson recognized the political utility of *The Negro Family*

and made plans to incorporate its findings into policy objectives, for it was "nine pages of

dynamite about the Negro situation" that Johnson wanted to use to his advantage.[17] Eager to

detonate said dynamite, the president had Moynihan help cowrite a commencement speech

for a graduation ceremony at Howard University, a prestigious historically black college, and

include many of his findings. Johnson delivered the speech on June 4, 1965 and in it, he echoed

Moynihan's report, speaking of the breakdown of the black family which "flowed from

centuries of oppression and persecution of the Negro man. It flows from the long years of

degradation and discrimination, which have attacked his dignity and assaulted his ability to

provide for his family." Johnson did not specifically advocate for military service, but he did see

it a path out of poverty through it. His own military and political background, his own ideas of

masculinity, and his current escalation of the war effort all led him to want to advocate for

military service for African Americans. As a politician, he considered that he could achieve two

major objectives of his presidency (the Good Society and victory in Vietnam) through

encouraging black people to join the military. He noted the importance of jobs and technical

training to combat the social problems faced by black families. "Jobs are part of the answer,"

---

[17] John Christian Worsencroft, "Salvageable Manhood: Project 100,000 and the Gendered Politics of the Vietnam War," (Master's thesis, University of Utah, May 2011), 29.

Johnson said. "They bring the income which permits a man to provide for his family."[18]

Economic incentives provided by military service would provide African Americans with a ladder

out of poverty by promoting them to the position of family breadwinner; simultaneously, more

men in the military meant an advantage for the Johnson administration in achieving its

objectives in Vietnam.

But Johnson had his own masculine demons to reckon with during the war. His

continued escalation of involvement throughout his presidency sheds light on his motivations

when observed through the lens of gender and masculinity. Johnson found it difficult to

capitulate to the fact that the war was going nowhere and that he bore much of the

responsibility for the blunders of that conflict. He spoke in distinctly masculine terms when

discussing the war, saying that "If I left the woman I really loved – the Great Society – in order

to get involved with that bitch of a war on the other side of the world, then I would lose

everything at home… But if I left that war and let the Communists take over South Vietnam,

then I would be seen as a coward and my nation would be seen as an appeaser and we would

both find it impossible to accomplish anything for anybody anywhere on the entire globe."[19]

President Johnson was in his own sort of masculinity quagmire. If he left the war to focus on

combatting poverty at home, the world would see him as a weak man, unable to protect his

country through arms, calling into question that which he defined as manly. If he maintained his

course in Vietnam, heading toward total victory in southeast Asia, then he would have no

---

[18] Lyndon Johnson, "To Fulfill These Rights," Commencement address at Howard University, June 4, 1965, accessed January 13, <2018, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=27021.>

[19] Lyndon Johnson, *The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963-1969,* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1971).

chance to implement the Great Society programs that he so desired to see come to fruition. Speaking of the Great Society as the "woman he really loved" and the calling the war "a bitch" adds another layer of masculine analysis to this quote. Through his public speeches and his private words, it is apparent that Johnson saw the connection between military service and manhood and sought to protect it or at least believed in its potential applicability to black men.

Politicians conducted a lot of political maneuvering around the psychological issue of manhood that faced many potential military recruits. Using their power and influence, they manipulated commonly-held gender ideologies to appeal to men in America who had grown up indoctrinated in the breadwinner masculinity but were unable to achieve it in civilian life due to inequality and poverty. Seeking to fight this poverty, poor education/job training, and military manpower needs, they included in their arguments the masculine benefits of military service and projected them onto a population that would be susceptible to such appeals. The military, however, had its own institutional goals and requirements and tweaked their masculine ideology from that of the politicians and included the image of the violent warrior as another marker of true manhood, which chapter 3 will examine in more depth.

Black Soldiers' Military Motivations

While many in the government elite and in the military praised Moynihan's report, prominent intellectuals and activists viewed the report's analysis as reductive and (to differing degrees) racist. Citing faults in Moynihan's methodology and source base, they pointed out that the report accomplished nothing more than to shift the blame for black poverty away from the government and onto black families themselves. Two years after the report's publication in

1965, Lee Rainwater and William L. Yancey collected much of this public backlash into a collection titled "The Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy." Published by The M.I.T. Press, the book included a full copy of Moynihan's report itself, President Johnson's speech at Howard University (analyzed here in chapter two), and a wide-ranging display of responses from government entities, civil rights leaders, and contemporary intellectuals. These people did not believe that the "crumbling" structure of the Negro family was primarily to blame for inequality between the races and they sought to deliver alternative explanations that could shed light on the new direction that the Civil Rights movement was now traveling. While these Moynihan detractors did not believe that black matriarchal family structure was as significant a problem as the report made it out to be, they simultaneously reinforced some of the beliefs surrounding black masculinity, employment, and military service. This chapter will first examine the dichotomy between how African Americans responded to the report and how those responses were different from and similar to Moynihan's arguments.

Among those who spoke out against Moynihan's findings was Hylan G. Lewis, a Howard University sociologist. Rainwater and Yancey included in their book an article published by the Washington Post from 1965 by a staff writer named Jean M. White who covered Lewis's debate on the topic. Lewis claimed that the problems facing the Negro family stemmed from discrimination in housing, employment, health, and education, rather than from the breakdown of the family. He says that it is "…more important to provide jobs than to worry about the strong male image which will take care of itself once Negro men can get better education, well-

paring jobs, and provide for their families."[20] Lewis echoed the call made two years previously

at the March on Washington, in which Bayard Rustin read out the "demands of this revolution."

Rustin demanded first that "we have effective Civil Rights legislation… and that it include public

accommodations, decent housing, integrated education, FEPC [Fair Employment Practices

Commission], and the right to vote."[21] Lewis took up the call later and furthered the idea that

family life is not the problem; rather, discrimination against African Americans has had real,

tangible consequences for their ability to sustain family life in the American system.

Rustin also wrote an article in *America* magazine called "Why Don't Negroes…?" The

sardonic title referred to "…the questions white people often raise about Negroes. For instance:

'Why don't Negroes respect law and order?' 'Why don't they straighten up their families and

stop asking for handouts?' 'Why don't they pull themselves up by their bootstraps as we did?'"

Rustin interpreted Moynihan's findings in the same vein that these questions were asked. Like

the authors above, he too forgave Moynihan's rhetoric, saying "Let me make it clear at the

outset that I feel it is unfair to charge Moynihan with being a racist, open or covert, and that, as

a matter of fact, he was trying in his report to insist on the social and economic dimension of

the race issue…"[26] During this period, Rustin and other activists sought to initiate a

"realignment" of American party politics. Creating a coalition of liberals, left-wing radicals, and

workers' unions, they made moves to push out the reactionary Dixecrats from the Democratic

party and turn it into the progressive party in America. Perhaps his above interpretation of

---

[20] Lee Rainwater and William L. Yancey, *The Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy,* (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1967), 380.
[21] "March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom; Part 8 of 17," 08/28/1963, WGBH Media Library & Archives, accessed June 13, 2018, http://openvault.wgbh.org/catalog/A_27BB06E300874F279030125D1216C8B5.
[26] Rainwater and Yancey, *The Moynihan Report,* 421.

Moynihan was nothing more than an attempt not to alienate the liberal powers that be and that he relied on for his vision of legitimate political participation. Perhaps he simply meant to forgive what he saw as a misguided thesis by an otherwise staunch advocate for black empowerment. What Rustin did say was that, "...there are two theses I believe we can all accept. The first is that the Negro family can be reconstructed only when the Negro male is permitted to be the economic and psychological head of the family." So, while he critiqued the methods by which Moynihan presented his opinion on black manhood, he did not fully discredit his conclusions, believing still that it was important for men to lead their families.

Leaders who spoke out against Moynihan's report largely were not under the impression that Moynihan was a racist who sought to blame black Americans for their woes. One writer in *The Nation* said the report "encourages a new form of subtle racism" but that was about as unfriendly as it got.[27] Most commentators simply noted the objectively inaccurate information and statistics that Moynihan included as evidence for his arguments. Like the author above, Dr. Benjamin F. Payton, a former professor of sociology, religion, and social ethics at Howard University, begins his assessment of Moynihan's report by writing that "It should be said that the errors of the report are not rooted in any racial hostility on the part of its authors."[28] Following these pleasantries, Dr. Payton then notes three inconsistences in the report. The first, he writes, is that the report "is much more optimistic about the employment situation among Negroes than are other observers. The crucial factor is income level..."[29] Here, Payton focuses on Moynihan's economic inaccuracies, arguing that these are much more

---

[27] Rainwater and Yancey, *The Moynihan Report,* 384.
[28] Rainwater and Yancey, *The Moynihan Report,* 399.
[29] Rainwater and Yancey, *The Moynihan Report,* 399.

relevant to problem of African American family breakdown than are its inherent structures. Furthermore, his second point is that Moynihan should not have analyzed family data by color and instead should have observed it by income level. He then cites Hylan Lewis (above) as having conducted much more thorough research in this regard that resulted in more sobering conclusions.[30]

Moynihan's conclusions represent the contemporary elite view of the time, one of the most prominent of viewpoints regarding the relationship between African Americans, manhood, and the military. The backlash to this view among civil rights leaders is indicative of some fundamental divergence between Moynihan and the government's analysis of the black family and how real African Americans saw things differently. The people arguing against the so-called "Tangle of Pathology" did not believe that the only way (or the most important way) to fix discrimination against black Americans was through the replication of the white nuclear family, with the male at its head. Many found this a simplistic analysis of a much more complicated problem that could not be solved through familial reconciliation alone. Yet simultaneously, they acknowledged the impact of jobs and money on the black male, noting the presumption that until the Black male reached full economic power and assumed his place back at the head of the family then he would remain emasculated. Acceptance that jobs and education could assist in the reconstruction of the Black family combined with rejection of military service shows that the lines between these movements' ideals of appropriate black manhood were not as distinct as the lines black/white, rich/poor, soldier/civilian. These ideas fused and shifted very fluidly and that applies to the way that scholars consider the divide

---

[30] Rainwater and Yancey, *The Moynihan Report,* 399-400.

between the Black Power and Civil Rights movements as well. Despite the debates, some truth remained in Moynihan's report that can be seen in the reasons that African American gave for fighting in Vietnam. The rest of the section examines how African Americans conceived of the manhood/military relationship in ways that placed their ability to be family breadwinners at the top of their masculine characteristics hierarchy.

When black soldiers did agree with Moynihan, it was largely to do with the economics of military service. One of the reasons that men joined the military was for its ability to provide economic advantage to economically disadvantaged men. The military was a place of (supposed) social equality, where men of any race or class had the same opportunities for advancement and training. Wallace Terry's *Bloods* highlights these motivations. Sergeant Robert Daniels of Chicago worked at the post office before enlisting in the military. He describes growing up poor on the South Side of Chicago, noting that his mother left his father when he was three. "They used to argue all the time. They got married too young… They didn't finish high school, and there wasn't no money. I didn't know where my father was. I knew my mother was working, and she lived somewhere else. My grandmother raised me."[31] This description places Daniels squarely in the audience that Moynihan sought to address and Daniels, despite all the backlash to the report, really reinforced some of the arguments of that report. The U.S. Army Sergeant said "I decided to enlist 'cause it didn't seem like I was getting' anywhere. And I felt it was gon' make me sort of like grown up. I didn't have anybody to sort of rear me into becomin' a man. And I thought the GI benefits would help me go to college since I

---

[31] Terry, *Bloods*, 236.

didn't have no money for college."[32] Daniels spoke of his military service in rhetoric that

mirrored almost exactly Moynihan's reasoning for the failure of the black family, as well as the

function of the armed forces in providing training, economic stability, and manhood.

It was not just this lone Army Sergeant from Chicago that spoke of his military

occupation as a pathway to a better life. One Army Specialist named Charles Strong from

Florida even extended his service for a further three years to "…get out of the field and get

trained for welding."[33] By extending his enlistment, Strong hoped to be able to find gainful

employment in a field for which his military service had prepared him. Despite the institutional

racism inherent in the structure of the military and the disproportionate numbers of black

soldiers that both served and died in Vietnam, the armed forces were nonetheless a primary

route through which black men sought to attain economic independence and stability, an

important characteristic of contemporary hegemonic manhood.

During an oral history seminar at Texas Tech University on 14 March 2008, Robert

Blackwell spoke similarly of his time in the military during Vietnam. He said in his speech given

that day that, "A simple question was asked of me of one of my comrades. And one of them

was 'when I joined the United States Marine Corps, did I go in there to kill?' And my answer was

no, because coming from a small city, a small town, country town, that my outlook was that it

was an opportunity to better myself…."[34] Sergeant Blackwell very clearly expressed a belief in

---

[32] Terry, *Bloods*, 236.

[33] Terry, *Bloods*, 61.

[34] Texas Tech University Vietnam Center Sixth Triennial Symposium: Session 6C - Telling Our Stories: African American Vietnam Veterans. Vietnam Center and Archive. 14 March 2008. D144.1C. Vietnam Center Collection. The Vietnam Center and Archive, Texas Tech University. Accessed 3 May 2018.

the military's ability to allow for socioeconomically disadvantaged people to get a leg up, so to speak.

Captain Norman McDaniel was a prisoner of war for six years, six months, and twenty-three days. When speaking about what helped to get him through his time in captivity, he states that "My wife, Carol, and I had a close-knit family. It was one of my constant concerns. In my primary petitions to God, I asked Him to take care of them."[35] McDaniel also penned his own memoir entitled *Yet Another Voice*.[36] He spoke at length about the extent of his faith in his religion and the importance to him of his family. When analyzed alongside evidence from interviews with black men that advocate parental involvement and a sense of family as being of utmost importance to African American conceptions of manhood, it becomes apparent that McDaniel sought to construct his masculinity in terms of protection and provision for his family. Though he was unable to do so vocally, his deep religious faith allowed him to do so through prayer and meditation.

Another African American POW in Vietnam expressed similar thoughts about manhood and family. During his captivity, Army Sergeant Donald Rander developed his own coping mechanisms to help keep himself sane:

> It was important for me to remember my daughter's birthday, my wife's birthday, my mother's birthday, the date we got married, Christmas and New Year's. I'd think, Gee, if I were home what would I do for that day? What did we do last year, or the years before? Remember that time… it was important. It was a survival mechanism. I would be like, Today is Mom's birthday. If I were home I would take her to such and such restaurant because I know that's where she would like to go. What would I have bought her? Gee, she likes scarves. So I would picture a designer scarf or something, and that would take the whole day

---

[35] Terry, *Bloods*, 144.

[36] Norman McDaniel, *Yet Another Voice*, (New York: Hawthorn Book, 1975).

to think about all that. Then I'd think about what I did last year on her birthday and try to remember a funny incident the year before that.[37]

The importance of family to this prisoner while enduring torture and abuse at the hands of his captors is striking, and it shows the need of this soldier to maintain a connection to his family. In addition, Rander established a kind of relationship with a Vietnamese guard employed at the camp. The guard gave him extra cigarette rations and carried messages back and forth from the prisoners. Rander could "…see something in his eyes…" that he seemed to interpret as compassion. Instead of wishing ill on his captors or fantasizing about utilizing the warrior training and mentality that the military had tried so hard to instill in him, he hoped to see that prisoner guard again someday.[38] The manly ideals to which he subscribed were not based in the violent rhetoric espoused by the military, but rather had their roots in the Breadwinner Ethos that advocated provision for and protection of a man's family.

As the conflict in Vietnam progressed through the mid-60s into the 70s, black soldiers began to express less support for the war, as well as less interest in the economic benefits of their military service. Gerald Gill, Professor of History at Tufts University in Boston, wrote about the black experience in Vietnam for *Indochina Newsletter* in 1984. He wrote that "…the sentiments and thoughts of black soldiers in 1970 were far different from those voiced by black military personnel… in the mid-1960s."[39] In this period, the armed forces had been officially and fully desegregated for only a decade and many argued that military service "offered young black males more opportunities for social mobility and occupational advancement than did the

---

[37] Latty and Tarver, *We Were There*, 111.
[38] Latty and Tarver, *We Were There*, 112.
[39] Gerald Gill, "Black American Soldiers in Vietnam." *Indochina Newsletter,* January 1984, 1-2.

more racially stratified civilian sector." Gill went on: "In the mid-1960s, black soldiers repeatedly stressed that military service offered 'a chance to improve yourself professionally' and that the armed forces was one of the few institutions in the United States where one's race was not an apparent barrier." The rest of his article shows the progression from early African American support for military service as socioeconomic ladder to a discontent with the role of the black soldier in Vietnam. Instead, the idea that men should achieve economic enfranchisement within and for their own communities and outside the power structures of the armed forces took hold.

Carol Stack has shown that many black families of this period tended to band together to form economic and childcare networks of kin, fictive kin, and extended kin that collectively worked to raise children in that community. This survival strategy was borne out of the historical communities created by slavery and shows that women developed these ties to sustain her family. These kinship networks emphasized the community over the individual, with black women frequently making choices for their families that might not benefit them directly but hopefully will sustain their families and communities in the face of continued oppression. In the case of masculine ideals in the mid-century black freedom struggles, this emphasis on the community over the individual persisted and influenced not just how men performed gender roles in this period, but how women utilized these same ideals that had traditionally been reserved for men.

Black feminists were instrumental in this shift away from Moynihan's patriarchal breadwinner ideal. Women of color saw it as an extension of white male patriarchy that prevented black women from gaining even the same minimal level of political and economic

agency that black men had. We have seen in this chapter how white political and cultural

authorities sought to organize and define masculinity and the ways that black men *should*

practice their gender. To varying degrees, these pundits and officials pushed women towards

peripheral positions within these movements, limiting the amount of participation that was

acceptable for black women to undertake. Instead, many suggested that men alone should lead

the movement to freedom and equality. These authority figures did not consult the women

who these masculine ideals impacted most, nor did they adequately address the roles and

status of women within the movement's new ideals. The next section will deal with how black

feminists in the 1960s critiqued Moynihan's ideals and called for women's access to the same

modes of behavior and for the same community-based reasons.

Black Feminists Respond to Moynihan

The primary problem that many black women had with Moynihan's thesis was that, in

focusing on the negative impact of the so-called "matriarchy" that was so prevalent in the black

community, he placed the impetus for change on the black family. A classic tactic of American

racism-denial has been to blame the victim, and many saw Moynihan's report as an example

(whether intentional or not) of this practice. While the report did discuss some of the lingering

effects of slavery and the contemporary climate of continued discriminatory practices in public

policy, its focus on the sociological condition of black families served to do little more than to

assuage white guilt at the enduring state of African American poverty. "The Negro Family"

emphasized a belief in white, liberal, middle-class breadwinner masculinity which, essentially, is

an extension of the idea that people of color needed to be subservient to whites to achieve full

equality under the law and society. Among many whites hesitant to believe in the extent of anti-black discrimination, there existed a widespread belief that if African Americans made a more concerted effort to fit into respectable norms of American society, then they would see more of that society's "fruits" in exchange for this "labor." This idea has continued to plague the American racial conversation into the present day, remaining as nonsensical now as it was then for many reasons, primary among them being the near century of insurmountable roadblocks constructed by Jim Crow, which effectively thwarted any such attempts at assimilation. Feminist activists of the period sought to fight against or offer alternative explanations for the myriad contradictions inherent in these calls for African Americans to "just try harder" to adopt mainstream American approaches to gender, family, and work. Becoming hegemonic was neither possible nor desirable to many Black feminists, and this chapter will show why they fought against these masculine constructions and what they sought to build in its place.

Black feminists of the period produced what were probably the most scathing responses to Moynihan and his calls for breadwinner masculinity. Many renowned scholars and activists questioned the idea that men should be breadwinners and women should be homemakers. With the successes of the Civil Rights movement so far, many women became much more vocal in their opposition to policies and proposals that sought to lift black men out of poverty and discrimination at the expense of black women. Daniel Geary in *Beyond Civil Rights: The Moynihan Report and Its Legacy* spoke of this tendency in no uncertain terms:

> Black Feminists proved among the report's most influential and comprehensive critics. To them, Moynihan propagated a pernicious myth of black 'matriarchy' that combined racism with sexism. They noted that many African American male activists shared Moynihan's idea that achieving racial equality required black

men to be patriarchs. According to Michele Wallace, Moynihan duped black men into confusing patriarchy with equality: "Your problem, buddy, [Moynihan] seemed to suggest, is this black woman of yours. You want to be equal but, if you're a man, you must do something about her first."[40]

Geary, as well as Wallace, did not agree with the rhetoric that surrounded Moynihan's analysis due to its emphasis on outdated or questionable models of family life.

Dr. Pauli Murray, a graduate of Howard University's law school class of 1944, was a black feminist writer and activist who vehemently challenged Moynihan's findings. Having spent her career fighting against "Jane Crow" (a term she coined while at Howard Law that referred to combined racial AND sexual discrimination) and inspiring such figures as Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Dr. Murray was in a unique position to critique "The Negro Family" and its conclusions. Furthermore, as a lesbian and queer activist, she had chosen a path for herself that was outside the realm of traditional gender norms and so became one of the first to argue against such models of "respectable" behavior. Murray learned of Moynihan's report in *Newsweek* magazine and quickly wrote to their editors to voice her opinion, though her words were never published in the periodical itself. One of the first to respond after the report hit the public, she foreshadowed much of the backlash that Moynihan received from feminists later in the decade. Murray questioned the claim that black women received a "'disproportionate share' of white-collar and professional jobs versus black men" and even whether it was desirable for people and women of color to pursue these types of goals. The myth of the black matriarchy, she said, "did a grave disservice to the thousands of Negro women in the United States who

---

[40] Daniel Geary, *Beyond Civil Rights: The Moynihan Report and Its Legacy,* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 140-141.

have struggled to prepare themselves for employment in a limited job market which... has severely restricted economic opportunities for all women as well as for Negroes."[41] In describing herself, she wrote that she identified with "the class of unattached, self-supporting women for whom employment opportunities were necessary to survival... the ones most victimized by a still prevalent stereotype that men are the chief breadwinners," Murray's critique and analysis focused on the problems that the male-breadwinner ideal produced regarding women's economic opportunity, a detail which Moynihan overlooked in his report.

Murray was also a mentor to Eleanor Holmes Norton, a black feminist who would become an ACLU lawyer, and (in the 2000s) a non-voting Delegate to the House of Representatives from Washington, D.C. Norton also spoke out against the Moynihan Report's prescriptions for black masculinity, noting that the breadwinner ideal for which the paper argued was a method of white, patriarchal control over the African Americans community. She recognized, however, that the masculine ideal of being able to adequately provide for a family particularly appealed to black men. It is difficult to criticize black men for their susceptibility to and acceptance of this message, for it has been catered specifically to the male sex as well as propagandized at the national level. But Norton cautioned men of color against these beliefs. She wrote "Are black people to reject so many of white society's values only to accept its view of woman and of the family? At the moment when the white family is caught in a maze of neurotic contradictions, and white women are supremely frustrated with their roles...?" The 1960s

---

[41] Geary, *Beyond Civil Rights,* 141.

certainly saw dramatic shifts in the ways that people thought about the roles of family

and women in America. The nuclear family model of breadwinning father, homemaking

mother, and (bread-eating/home-destroying) children had begun to cause massive

amounts of dissatisfaction among its members. No doubt bolstered by changing ideas

regarding work, sex, and American life itself, this frustrated discontent directed at the

nuclear family, Norton thought, was none too enviable. "White men in search of endless

financial security," she continued, "have sold their spirits to that goal and begun a steady

emasculation in which the fiscal needs of wife and family determine life's values and

goals…. The whole business of the white family - its softened men, its frustrated women,

its angry children – is in a state of great mess." To this black feminist, the contemporary

white American family and its reliance on breadwinner masculinity was not a model that

African Americans should emulate.[42]

One of the most important black feminists of the era was Gloria Jean Watkins,

more commonly known by her pen name bell hooks. She questioned not only Moynihan's

methods, but the whole issue surrounding the supposed emasculation of black men at

the hands of white oppressors. She wrote that

> Exaggerated emphasis on the impact of racism on black men has evoked an
> image of the black male as effete, emasculated, crippled. And so intensely does
> this image dominate American thinking that people are absolutely unwilling to
> admit that the damaging effects of racism on black men neither prevents them
> from being sexist oppressors nor excuses or justifies their sexist oppression of
> black women.[43]

---

[42] Eleanor Holmes Norton, "For Sadie and Maude," in Robin Morgan, ed., *Sisterhood is Powerful: An Anthology of Writings from the Women's Liberation Movement,* (New York: Random House, 1970), 357.
[43] bell hooks, *Ain't I a Woman* (Boston: South End Press, 1981), 123.

She went on to argue that beginning under slavery and extending to the contemporary period in which she wrote, black men enjoyed privileged status over black women. Her critique focused not just on Moynihan, however, but on black women's continued support for the theories that he laid out in his report. Claiming that black women too have come to equate the idea of breadwinning with masculinity and that, subsequently, black women have felt cheated by Black men's inability to provide and protect just furthers black women's complicity in the patriarchal American system.

In criticizing the breadwinner role itself, hooks presciently notes that it relies on the idea that men find their identity and meaning through work. We heard from Connell, Kimmel, and other scholars who hold this view, but hooks questioned it long before those men advanced it. hooks writes that while black women have come to accept and expect the breadwinner role to be fulfilled by their men, black men themselves have not, historically, maintained that belief themselves. Noting that work in America has never been able to provide this type of meaning and "masculine power," she writes that "black men in America have rarely romanticized labor, largely because they have for the most part performed less desirable tasks."[44] Primarily, then, it has been socially-mobile, middle-class black men who have been most keen to advance the breadwinner ideal for black men.

Frances Beal, founder of the Third World Women's Alliance, also protested the patriarchy of traditional gender roles. In "Double Jeopardy: To be Black and Female," she discusses the impact of racism, sexism, and capitalism has had on black women in

---

[44] hooks, *Ain't I a Woman,* 130.

America. She describes men and women's gender roles as having been established by the entrenched American capitalist system to further its own interests of oppression of the black race. She notes the male breadwinner/female homemaker ideal and "unqualitatively reject[s]" these respective models. She calls it "idle dreaming" to think that black women have only ever cared to tend home and raise children. "Most black women," she wrote, "have to work to help house, feed and clothe their families. Black women make up a substantial percentage of the black working force and this is true for the poorest black family as well as the so-called middle-class family." Beal shows an unwillingness to accept the idea that black women have not contributed to American society and racial progress to the same extent that men have. "This line of reasoning completely negates the contributions that black women have historically made to our struggle for liberation." Beal's words here reflect the rejection of the breadwinner ideal because it limits opportunities for women and other minorities.[45]

These women demanded their economic rights in much the same way that black men did when they connected breadwinning to family support and community uplift. The distinctions between the family roles of men and women put forth by Moynihan as well as scholars examining these trends were not as clear as previously thought. Black women did not believe in the idea that men should be the primary breadwinner for a family and they argued against that patriarchal notion. A sociological study conducted by Alan S. Berger and William Simon in 1973 sought to question the veracity of Moynihan's data and

---

[45] Frances Beal, "Double Jeopardy: To be Black and Female," Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines, eds. *"Takin' it to the Streets": A Sixties Reader,* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 438-441.

examine his conclusions by looking at more relevant data. They argue that the sources

provided by Moynihan do not support his thesis that men must subscribe to the

breadwinner ideal of providing and protecting their families to realize the economic

potential of the black family. In their introduction, Berger and Simon write of Moynihan

report: "Aside from, and possibly because of, its essentially derivative character and

unsophisticated manipulation of data, it became a particularly dramatic example of the

problems generated by the attempt to interface social research with policy formation."[46]

These authors examined new data that allowed for a quantitative analysis of Moynihan's

declarations, rather than a qualitative refutation of the report's theoretical

underpinnings. They looked at many of the report's claims but most relevant to this

chapter's arguments is the question of black family roles. A survey sponsored by the

Illinois Law Enforcement Commission provided the researchers with their questions; the

survey was presented to a controlled group of adolescent respondents aged 14-18. This

age group was chosen for its ability to reflect the "tangle of pathology" that Moynihan

found so prescient and that he described as "aberrant, inadequate, and antisocial

behaviors." Since these family structures were seen to affect child-rearing practices, the

respondents being adolescents is a worthy choice. Though they admit this to be a minor

limitation on their study, they were able to corroborate their evidence with census

records and apply their findings to a larger swath of the black community. Furthermore,

they write that "…even blacks in intact homes are subject to the same negative

---

[46] Alan S. Berger and William Simon, "Black Families and the Moynihan Report: A Research Evaluation*," Social Problems* 22, no. 2 (December 1974), 145-161.

consequences that flow (under the Moynihan theory) from the history of slavery and

weakened family structure. If this is so, then the Moynihan theory can be supported only

by major differences between the races."[47]

This chapter intends to question prevailing attitudes during the period that

establish stark contrasts between white and black conceptions of gender roles generally,

and black men and women's gender ideologies specifically. Furthermore, the differences

between black and hegemonic masculinity were not that distinct either. The idea that

black masculinity and black femininity were not so different from and consistently

influenced each other is borne out by the final question in Berger and Simon's survey. It

read: "Spouses should share the duties of raising children and being breadwinner."[48] The

researches controlled for race, class, and gender and concluded that "…it is the black

adolescents who are more likely than whites to agree…. In sum, the gender role items

show that black adolescents are more likely to have a picture of adult behavior in which

women ought to play a more active role."[49] Berger and Simon's study shows that these

black respondents were more likely than whites to accept new egalitarian gender roles

and, in so doing, diminishes the distinction of breadwinning having ever been truly

considered a masculine characteristic.

In *Reasoning from Race: Feminism, Law, and the Civil Rights Revolution,* Serena

Mayeri argues that "Beginning in the 1960s, 'second-wave' feminists conscripted legal

---

[47] Berger and Simon, "Black Families," 148.
[48] Berger and Simon, "Black Families," 159.
[49] Berger and Simon, "Black Families," 159-160.

strategies developed to combat race discrimination into the service of women's rights."[50]

In a sweeping legal history she analyzes Supreme Court cases in which litigants employed

methods of analysis that drew parallels between discrimination based on sex and that

based on race. They sought to use these "race-sex analogies" to draw connections

between the fight for racial equality and the fight for women's rights. Mayeri offers one

example that links Jim Crow-era signs that read "No Negroes Need Apply" with "Men

Only" signs that discriminated against women. These strategies became weapons in the

battle against American ideals and policies about race and sex that many considered

traditional and immutable. Can these same practices extend to the realm of gender

identity in this period? We have already seen how many black feminists and soldiers alike

constructed their gender identity in the same kinds of terms, using ideals of family

support and community economic empowerment to frame themselves as men or

women. Is it too much of a stretch to suggest that men and women employed elements

of both masculinity and femininity in their ideals for gender expression? Mayeri

continues: "Reasoning from race allowed feminists to reimagine as well as to emulate

ideas, strategies, legal precedents, and policies conceived as responses to racial injustice.

As a legal strategy, reasoning from race could be unifying as well as divisive, binding

together groups that might otherwise compete for recognition and resources in a shared

quest to win or preserve legal rights and remedies."[51] Is it possible to extend the idea of

---

[50] Serena Mayeri, *Reasoning from Race: Feminism, Law, and the Civil Rights Revolution,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 3.
[51] Mayeri, *Reasoning from Race,* 5.

race-sex analogies to include analogies of masculinity-femininity within the black

Community itself?

Granted there are plenty of differences between black soldiers' masculinity and

black feminists' ideals. But Mayeri writes that "When advocates reasoned from race, they

often engaged in more sophisticated uses of comparative analysis. Analogies illuminated

differences as well as similarities between race and sex." Obviously, the analogous

components of masculinity and femininity are not exact or conclusive and differences did

exist between black feminists' conception of the breadwinner ideal and that of men, as

we have seen above. Black male sexism and chauvinism is well-documented in this period

and these characteristics of black masculine ideology did not serve to advance community

and family ideals, limiting this argument. But these differences lead to, as Mayeri quotes

legal scholar Paulette Caldwell as saying, "important insights, which in turn may assist in

conceptualizing new approaches to challenging oppression based on either [race or sex]."

This chapter began with a traditional distinction between manhood and womanhood

(male breadwinner/female homemaker) and drew connections that limit the veracity of

that distinction. The evidence in this section has taken a (baby) step in attempting to

apply Mayeri's theory of "race reasoning" to black gender ideologies during this period.

Further research might engage more fully with Mayeri's ideas and see if they apply to

other traditionally gendered characteristics. In so doing we might be able to

"conceptualize new approaches to challenging discrimination based on either race or

sex."

CHAPTER 3

BLACK WARRIORS

Moynihan and others offered another reason for blacks to join the military in this period. The military, according to Moynihan, would provide for African American men a world away from women, one in which they could demonstrate responsibility, dedication, and warrior ideals. This is an old characteristic that places warriors at the very top of a society's masculine hierarchy. Military officials and Drill Instructors indoctrinated recruits with ideals of military violence. And many black men did subscribe to the warrior ideal and sought to use violence against enemy combatants to construct a masculine identity. Unlike the breadwinner ideal, however, these men quickly discovered that the warrior mentality did not provide a significant degree of masculine achievement. Instead, they built on an ideal of community within their military units that suggested support and defense of their local (and racial) communities. Furthermore, when soldiers and activists did employ violence, it was usually in retaliation for a wrong done to a fellow member of the black community. This defensive action in response to violent oppression was the only situation in which the use of violence was justified as a successfully masculine characteristic.

Black feminists during this period also recognized the incapability of violence to provide masculinity and organized to protest the war in Vietnam and black men's involvement in it. To these radical black women, the government and military were patriarchal institutions that sought to kill black men by sending them to war. These feminists protested black men fighting and dying for a government that had not offered

them the same protections at home. They framed their antiwar activism as a defense of the black community from the racist and imperialist oppression of the U.S. government and military. Instead of advocating for an outdated model of masculinity that saw violence toward fellow minorities on behalf of a racist regime, these women suggested that black men take pains to use violence only in self-defense from U.S. oppression against the black community.

The Brass and Warrior Masculinity

In January 1964, Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz sent to President Johnson a report entitled "One Third of a Nation: A Report on Young Men Found Unqualified for Military Service." Created by the President's Task Force on Manpower Conservation, this report found that 1/3 of all men turning 18 would not qualify for military service. Half of that 1/3 would be rejected for medical reasons and the other half for mental reasons. According to the report, President Kennedy created the task force in 1963 to combat two new social issues. The first was the fact that half (49.8%) of young men who reported for military entrance examinations were unqualified for even peacetime military service. The report projects that this lack of qualifications makes these young men equally unqualified for civilian labor markets, which is the second issues facing this task force: the rise in youth unemployment. President Kennedy stated, "that a large-scale manpower conservation operation is both feasible and urgent, and could mean large savings in lives and dollars." The report continues and contends that the Task Force "…was directed to prepare a program for the guidance, testing, training, and

rehabilitation of youths found disqualified for military service, and to submit a final report with recommendations no later than January 1, 1964."[52]

"One-Third of a Nation" described the military recruitment situation from the lens of the government. Policymakers and military brass knew that the war in Vietnam was ramping up and that, with so many young men incapable of military service, they needed a plan of action to meet recruitment quotas and wage a successful war. These young men had been subject to the crushing poverty in urban ghettos that Moynihan noted and attempted to fight against. This report sought to understand the situation regarding why these young men were being rejected and offer a plan to combat burgeoning youth unemployment statistics. Among the report's many findings are the facts that "…a major proportion of these young men are the products of poverty. They have inherited their situation from their parents, and unless the cycle is broken, they will almost surely transmit it to their children." Furthermore, 40% of mental rejectees never went beyond grammar school; 80% did not finish high school. Nine of out ten non-white mental rejectees wanted job training that would provide them with the opportunity to make money via a job in an applied skill.[53] The report focused on all men rejected for service, but does note the difference between white and black unemployment rates, with the former at around 14% in 1963 and the latter closer to 26%.[54] Preceding Moynihan's arguments put forth in *The Negro Family* a year later, *One-Third of a Nation* examined the family backgrounds of its survey sample of mental rejectees. The authors noted that "over half of the fathers of the

---

[52] President's Task Force on Manpower Conservation, *One-Third of a Nation: A Report on Young Men Found Unqualified for Military Service,* U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education (Office of Education, 1964).
[53] *One-Third of a Nation,* A-17.
[54] *One-Third of a Nation,* 6.

rejectees had never finished the eighth grade. Only 16% of their fathers had finished high school."[55] The report did not examine the impact that these statistics had on feelings of masculinity among its sampling, but is nonetheless important to this study in that, through training, education, and an eventual career, the military assumed they'd be able to provide for these men an opportunity to regain their breadwinner role within their families.

Two years later, Congress began to attempt to legislate manhood for these military rejectees. Two years after "One-Third of a Nation" and one year after "The Negro Family," Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara initiated a program titled "Project 100,000." This was an effort by policymakers to lower military recruitment standards to meet the army's burgeoning manpower needs. According to Steven Estes, who analyzed both in his book *I Am a Man! Race, Manhood, and the Civil Rights Movement,* Project 100,000 may not have been directly inspired by Moynihan's *The Negro Family,* but it would have fit in well with his beliefs. The new policy sought to add 100,000 new troops from lower socioeconomic backgrounds into the military by lowering standards for entrance examinations, accepting now candidates who previously were mentally unqualified (draft category IV) for service. But it was not only soldiers that these policymakers hoped to get out of Project 100,000. Many of them and their cohort of political leaders sought to create what they considered men through this plan as well, combining the findings from *One-Third a Nation* and *The Negro Family* into justification and template for action. Estes quotes Moynihan as having said that "Above all things, the down-and-out Negro boy needs to be inducted into the male, American society."[56] The men who

---

[55] *One-Third of a Nation,* 18.
[56] Estes, *I Am a Man!,* 124.

argued for and conceived Project 100,000 had served in the military and were firm believers in

the American tradition that held fighting men in the highest esteem. McNamara, Johnson,

Moynihan, Kennedy (who had approved the Project before he died), and many of the other

politicians who had a say in the program had served in the armed forces and all argued for the

benefits provided them through their service. These men believed in the powerful redemptive

benefits of military service; they believed in its power to transform boys into men through

character-building martial opportunities. The masculinity to which they subscribed had deep

roots in the military tradition and they combined that tradition with the new emphasis on

economic inequality and political expediency of War on Poverty programs. That domestic "war"

and the real one in Vietnam led to the need for more manpower in the armed forces and the

need for federal programs to combat poverty and inequality in the black community. Because

these policymakers' masculinities were so tied in to the military, they saw Project 100,000

through the lens of the positives of military service, rather than through the lens of inequality

that many contemporary critics observed.

Not only did the military attempt to sell manhood from the top down, but pushed it

onto recruits themselves at the local level. Another method they used in recruiting was their

posters. One read, "In the U.S. Army, you get to know what it means to feel like a man."[57] This

slogan, and others like it, are printed on U.S. military recruiting posters from the 1960s and 70s.

These posters and other recruitment tactics that appealed to masculinity were routinely used

to entice men into joining an armed force. Indeed, another black Marine remembered passing a

---

[57] Office of Policy Planning and Research, *The Negro Family. The Case for National Action,* United States
Department of Labor, Office of Planning and Research (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1965), 78.

recruiting station and seeing "…a sign that said, 'JOIN THE ARMY AND BE A MAN.'" He continued, "For some goddamned reason I believed that the U.S.M.C. made a man out of anybody. And I wanted to be a MAN more than anything in this whole goddamned world."[58] These types of posters indicated to potential recruits that their manhood lay in military service.

Boot camp was the primary vehicle by which the military indoctrinated new recruits to the violence and denigration inherent in the world of soldiering. Richard Moser, in his book *The New Winter Soldiers: GI and Veteran Dissent During the Vietnam Era* , claims that "boot camp has been the military's central socializing experience.[59] Rhetoric that advocated killing, sadistic punitive practices, and ploys that questioned recruits' sexuality were all common occurrences in basic training. The military mixed violence and intimidation with appeals to sexual and gender identity to train recruits and indoctrinate them into warrior masculinity. These DIs and military personnel used machismo, misogyny, and homophobia as exemplary ideals for men to strive for. One man said that "both gay and feminine sexuality were used as threats and negative examples… They emasculate you that way. They get you feeling totally helpless… and that's when they start the rebuilding process… basically teaching you how to be a soldier."[60] In employing these training tactics, DIs sought to break down recruits both physically and psychologically and then rebuild them in the military's masculine warrior image. Jess Jesperson, in an interview with Moser, spoke at length about the experience of boot camp:

---

[58] Brother Omar, "To My GI Brothers," *The Black Panther*, 4 October 1968, cited in Steve Estes, *I Am a Man! Race, Manhood, and the Civil Rights Movement,* (Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

[59] Richard R. Moser, *The New Winter Soldiers: GI and Veteran Dissent During the Vietnam Era*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 26.
[60] Moser, *New Winter Soldiers,* 27.

It started when you went into boot camp…. There's a psychological terror… and physical torture. First, they dehumanize you, totally take away your identity, and then remake you… into what they want – just a fighter.

The end result is that they want a highly disciplined, highly motivated killing machine…. There's ways to do it. One is if they are a threat to you, or if you perceive them as a threat to you.

They were pretty light on political ideology…. All we had to do was go kill them – we didn't have to understand them.[61]

Moser includes many other examples of the ways that DIs sought to indoctrinate their troops with their version of masculinity. He writes that "in the production of the fighter spirit, masculinity functioned primary as a psychological motive – essentially as a mystique. Masculinity became both a question and a quest." He goes on to quote another interviewed soldier named Joel Greenberg who said that "That's why I wanted to go into the marines. Let the marines make a man out of you – whatever that was. That was a big thing. What does it mean to be a man?... Join the marines, let them make a man out of you."[62] These appeals to machismo and misogyny implied that the only way to become real men was to become a violent warrior, dedicated to defining their masculinity through domination and dehumanization of an "other" (in this case, typically women, "gooks", or commies). This rhetoric of dehumanization led to soldiers' complicity in violence and murder. What we see here, then, is evidence of the military leadership's proclivity to advocate and use violence to build what they considered to be effective soldiers.

---

[61] Jess Jesperson, interview with Moser, quoted in Moser, *The New Winter Soldiers*, 29.
[62] Joel Greenberg, interview with Moser, quoted in Moser, *The New Winter Soldiers,* 28.

And they were successful in many of their efforts to indoctrinate young recruits into accepting the military's version of a warrior masculinity based on violence and degradation. Moser quotes another soldier as saying,

> By the time I was in Nam at eighteen, I learned my identity, through a whole dehumanizing outlook on a culture of people that I knew nothing about. I was learning to identify with people through dehumanizing them, degrading them, humiliating them, killing them. That was my identity; that's how I learned my identity. They get you in the Marine Corps.[63]

Another soldier, Stanley Goff, a black combat infantry veteran of the 196th Light Infantry Brigade, said "Once we were into the war mentality, and once we were on the base, psychologically our training got to us. Even though we didn't want to succumb to it, we couldn't help it. When you do something over and over again, you have been programmed. I didn't know it then, but the Army knew it. And I know it now. We were brainwashed. You tell me brainwashing don't work? Bullshit. It worked. No doubt about it."[64] Another soldier who spoke of his time in boot camp, Army Specialist Haywood T. Kirkland, said that the first thing that the military did upon recruit arrival was to "[t]ransform you out of that civilian mentality to a military mind." He then went on to explain the ways that the Drill Instructors spoke of the Vietnamese as subhuman animals and said that "[t]hat's what they engraved into you. That killer instinct. Just go away and do destruction."[65] Another black man, Albert French, spoke of his experience in basic training in his memoir *Patches of Fire: A Story of War and Redemption.*

---

[63] Elroy Schultz, interview with author in Moser, *The New Winter Soldiers,* 29.
[64] Stanley Goff, Robert Sanders with Clark Smith, *Brothers: Black Soldiers in the Nam,* (California: Presidio Press, 1982), 7.
[65] Terry, *Bloods*, 94.

46

On his first day in the military, he recalls his DI saying, "This is your rifle. It kills. The only reason you are here is to use this weapon."[66]

Building men into warriors was not relegated solely to the Vietnam era, however; it can be seen in countless men's remembrances of their boot camp and basic training experiences. As stated above, historically, militaries have been masculine institutions and this has led to the prevalence of hegemonic masculine ideals in armed forces, one of which is that of the military warrior. The government men who crafted these policies and reports represent a class of men dedicated to pushing that ideology onto other, more susceptible populations in order to achieve their own political and military ends. Whether this was a conscious effort or more of an unconscious belief that they took for granted is up for interpretation. What can be said is that the early to mid-twentieth century saw an enormous number of American men participate in some form of warfare, and it was through these wars that many began to define their gender identities. One historian wrote that "Military masculinity became the prism through which many understood manhood."[67]

"Combat-type Manhood"

"After a kill we would cut his finger or ear off as a trophy, stuff our unit patch in his mouth, and let him die. I collected about 14 ears and fingers.… It symbolized that I'm a killer. And it was, so to speak, a symbol of combat-type manhood."[68]

---

[66] Albert French, *Patches of Fire: A Story of War and Redemption,* (New York: Anchor Books, 1997), 4.
[67] Locke, "The Military-Masculinity Complex," 46.
[68] Wallace Terry, *Bloods: An Oral History of the Vietnam War by Black Veterans*, (New York: Random House, 1984), 251.

Born in a "hard-core neighborhood" in lower east Baltimore, Arthur E. Woodley, Jr. grew up in circumstances where he "...had to fight to survive," where he had to "defend [him]self in the streets, with fist, with bottles, or whatever." Fighting and violence were everyday parts of his upbringing that he saw as emblematic of his manhood. "It was very difficult," he said, "for us to go from one neighborhood to another without trying to prove your manhood." This did not change when he joined the military and went to fight in Vietnam. During an orientation at basic training, a colonel asked if anyone was interested in being LRRP. Pronounced LURP (the acronym stood for Long-range reconnaissance patrol), these were five- or six-man groups designated to surveying, capturing, and destroying the enemy; considered the most hardened of Vietnam combat soldiers, these units saw some of the worst of the fighting. "Bein' a macho, strong young brother," Woodley said, "I joined. I'm bad. It was exciting." After Woodley arrived in country, he quickly gained a reputation for being particularly ruthless and crazy. He began to think of himself as an animal. Not only did he mutilate corpses of his combat-kills for trophies, but he participated or was complicit in numerous instances of torture, rape, and the unprovoked murder of civilian women and children. The paratrooper remembered an old Army proverb that spoofed Psalm 23:4 from the Bible: "Yeah though I walk through the valley of death, I shall fear no evil, 'cause I'm the baddest motherfucker in the valley." Woodley added, "I figured if I'm gonna be a bad motherfucker, I might as well be the baddest motherfucker in the valley."[69]

When Arthur Woodley returned home to his mother after his service she barely recognized him. "It took her a long time to adjust to who I had changed to be," he said. "She

---

[69] Terry, *Bloods,* 243-265

was afraid of me."[70] But the Army Ranger who came back to his mother after years of enacting violence on sometimes defenseless people was unsatisfied with what he had become. Despite his proclamations and proud assertions of being an animal and committing many vicious atrocities, he noted that it was not always easy to cope with what he had become. Multiple times in his story he expresses regret and remorse for his actions, implying that his effort to achieve a symbolic manhood that he originally attached to his role as a violent warrior was ultimately unsuccessful. "At the time you are in the field you don't feel anything about what you are doin'. It's the time that you have to yourself that you sit back and you sort and ponder. What I now felt was emptiness."[71] While in country, Woodley pondered these sentiments and began to enact certain methods of coping with them. He states that he fell in love with a Vietnamese woman and attempted to bring her back to the United States with him (he was unable to do so, but the sentiment expressed reveals more about what he came to consider important).

His romantic attachment to this woman was not enough to keep him from his pursuit of manhood through violence, and he continued to commit atrocities and embrace his "animal" side. One time, Woodley's best friend handed him an axe and told him he wanted him to hit someone with it. Though the friend clearly meant an enemy combatant, Woodley immediately upon taking the axe swung it into his friend's arm. The wound needed 32 stitches. They remained best friends.[72] Another time Woodley was preparing to slaughter a chicken to cook for a barbecue. A captain came up to him and told him not to kill the chicken because he

---

[70] Terry, *Bloods,* 261.
[71] Terry, *Bloods*, 257.
[72] Terry, *Bloods,* 258.

wanted to keep it for the eggs. Woodley bent over, bit the head off the chicken, and spit it in

the captain's face.[73]

Arthur Woodley left the military in 1971 on an honorable discharge with five Bronze

Stars for valor. He had a rough time back in America. He could not deal with going to school

because he was unmotivated. He joined the Black Panthers "…basically because it was a warlike

group." He purchased $1500 worth of weapons, "…thinking we needed a revolution." [74] He

found himself unable to maintain a romantic relationship with a woman because they could not

deal with his past war experience and his PTSD when it began. He credits his mother with

bringing him back from the darkness of his Vietnam memories. "She brought me back 'cause

she loved me. And I think because I loved her. She kept reminding me what type of person I was

before I left. Of the dreams I had promised her before I left. To help her buy a home and make

sure that we was secure in life." Woodley's civilian work experience reveals another aspect of

his character. After working in drug counseling at Baltimore City Hospital, he then held

positions in the children's clinic at Johns Hopkins Hospital and as a community organizer in

welfare rights. "But I would take any human service job," he said, "especially where I could

show the black kids and the black people that ought to stop looking toward the stars and start

looking toward each other… And if we don't bring our children up to believe in themselves,

then we'll never have anything to believe in."[75]

Woodley's experience mirrors that of many African Americans who fought in the

Vietnam War. Furthermore, it is emblematic of the traditional model of manhood that, in this

---

[73] Terry, *Bloods,* 259
[74] Terry, *Bloods,* 261.
[75] Terry, *Bloods,* 262.

contemporary example as well as historically through the ages, situates a culture's warriors at

the top of the masculinities totem pole. Yet still, however eager the military was to sell

manhood for military service, in the words of Herman Graham, blacks were equally eager to

buy.[76] But what we find in these stories is that it was largely a one-way trade: African

Americans soldiers served and, in many cases, bought into the masculine warrior ideology sold

by the Army but were unable to craft a satisfactory sense of manhood and meaning from it.

Military service and its ideology of warrior masculinity did not confer an adequate feeling of

masculine accomplishment and satisfaction, but rather led to further moral and mental

deterioration until these soldiers approached something akin to, in Woodley's term, an

"animal." Obviously, this interpretation can neither excuse the many atrocities committed nor

apply uniformly to the broad spectrum of African American Vietnam experience, but some

continuities exist throughout the sources.

For example, another man interviewed by Terry, Private First-Class Reginald "Malik"

Edwards, a black marine from Louisiana, perceived the military in precisely that way. Many

scholars have discussed at length the importance of the image of movie star John Wayne in

mid-twentieth century masculine identity construction and Edwards sheds light on this topic. "I

was brought up on the Robin Hood ethic, and John Wayne came to save people…. I didn't want

to go into the Army, 'cause everybody went into the Army… But the Marines was bad. The

Marine Corps built men. Plus just before I went in, they had all these John Wayne movies on

every night."[77] Wayne, in his vast catalog of Hollywood productions, exhibited a masculine

---

[76] Graham, *The Brothers' Vietnam War,* 15.
[77] Terry, *Bloods,* 6.

image that appealed to many young military men and across the color line. It was a masculinity founded on a sort of spirit of adventure, so craved by Americans after the closing of the frontier, and was another influential factor that contributed to hegemonic masculine ideals. Exploration of new lands, maintenance of empire, and enlistment in armed forces composed this spirit of adventure, and Wayne's films exhibit these characteristics. Despite Wayne himself having never served a day in the military, due to the extensive list of movies in which he portrayed soldiers, many Americans saw Duke (a nickname carried throughout his life), as the epitome of combat manhood. Even a previous generation of men who had grown up watching his early B-Westerns went to fight in the Second World War with Wayne in mind. Indeed, many have noted the importance of the John Wayne myth to their reasons for enlistment, as did many men signing up to fight in Vietnam. Furthermore, it implies that the ideal of the manly warrior, that adventurous and brave man who travels across the world to kill enemies of his great country, was at least successfully instilled and reinforced by the military.[78]

Speaking about his time in basic training, Edwards says "The only thing they told us about the Viet Cong was they were gooks. They were to be killed. Nobody sits around and gives you their historical and cultural background. They're the enemy. Kill, kill, kill. That's what we got in practice. Kill, kill, kill."[79] Military indoctrination of this sort is widespread and has been observed in many soldiers' accounts of their training, as well as in much of the scholarly

---

[78] For more on this historiography, see: Ronald Davis, *Duke: The Life and Image of John Wayne,* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998); Randy Roberts, *John Wayne: American,* (New York: Free Press, 1995); Emanuel Levy, *John Wayne: Prophet of the American Way of Life,* (New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1988); Tobey C. Herzog, "John Wayne in a Modern Heart of Darkness: The American Soldier in Vietnam," in *Search and Clear: Critical Response to Selected Literature and Films of the Vietnam War*, edited by William Searle, 16-25, (Bowling Green: Popular Press, 1988).
[79] Terry, *Bloods,* 8.

literature. In many cases, this indoctrination relied on challenging a recruit's manhood and so

becoming the type of warrior that their superiors needed and trained them to be was a type of

manhood validation. But Edwards discusses the consequences of such beliefs. He remembers a

time in the field when he had to kill an enemy. His superior told him he was to drag the body

back to camp. "And I started thinkin'," he said, "you think about how it feels, the weight. It was

rainin'. You think about the mist and the smells the rain brings out. All of a sudden I realize this

guy is a person, has got a family. All of a sudden it wasn't like I was carrying a gook. I was

actually carrying a human being. I started feeling guilty. I just started feeling really badly."[80]

Later, his unit engaged in a raid on a village where there had been an enemy sniper. "I

remember most how hard it was to just shoot people… We went over to burn the village down.

I was afraid that there was going to be shootin' people that day, so I just kind of dealt with the

animals. You know, shoot the chickens. I mean I just couldn't shoot no people."[81] In the first

example, we see the mental degradation brought on by the killing of another human. His

feelings here can be interpreted as a failure of the warrior-masculinity ideology that he had

bought into from his military training and prior beliefs. Furthermore, as time progressed he

became less inclined to violence and sought to cultivate a satisfactory masculinity by other

methods.

In Ed Emanuel's memoir *Soul Patrol,* he discusses similar themes. Emanuel, like Woodley

above, was a LRRP (pronounced LURP), and fought in the thick of combat in Vietnam. Like

Edwards, Emanuel also cited John Wayne as an important influence on him:

---

[80] Terry, *Bloods,* 12.
[81] Terry, *Bloods,* 16-17

Like most other kids growing up as a "baby boomer" during the John Wayne World War II movie era, I would romanticize what it would be like to fight and survive a war. It was my childish thirst for adventure and unyielding lust for knowledge that steered me this way in the first place. Today a person might ask, what series of events could actually lead a person to volunteer to go fight a war? Well, for me that answer would be unequivocally, "Peer pressure and pride," plain and simple![82]

Emanuel watched John Wayne movies (or at the very least was aware of them and their themes) and began to conceive of war as an adventure, a manly quest to be undertaken and overcome. Pride sent him to fight in Vietnam, and he hoped he would be able to exert his masculinity in the face of extreme danger, triumph over it, and successfully assume an identity as a manly warrior. "I was never one who could stand on the sidelines and watch a good fight," he said, "so inevitably I joined the military to try and satisfy my passion for adventure."[83] Clearly, the yearning for adventure and manliness were interconnected for Emanuel, though he would learn soon enough the limits of that connection. Remembering one platoon of paratroopers who had been in combat before Emanuel arrive in-country, they said to him "All you John Wayne motherfuckas are gonna die in Vietnam!" While Emanuel saw the connection between adventure and manliness, many others who had experience fighting the war clearly had other thoughts about the applicability of the John Wayne myth.

In contrast, however, to the fighting spirit advocated by military leadership, the nature of combat in the Vietnam War was not conducive to establishing that Warrior Ideal. The guerilla nature of warfare in Vietnam was a new type of combat, not widely seen in America's prior wars. Previously, aggression and machismo were deemed positive characteristics for a soldier,

[82] Ed Emanuel, *Soul Patrol,* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2003), 7.
[83] Emanuel, *Soul Patrol,* 8.

but in the jungles of Vietnam, where these "John Wayne-inspired heroics" were more likely to

lead to injury or death, these tactics were condemned as disadvantageous to the war effort.[84]

Bob Sanders wrote in his memoir *Brothers: Black Soldiers in the Nam* that "You gotta have a fair

CO [commanding officer]. You got these chicken shit COs that hadn't been through any real

combat. They'd be straight out of OCS [Officer Candidate School] with all this John Wayne

bullshit. They'd come over and to read out of the book on how it should go, man. You know,

standard operating procedure. And their book would get you killed."[85] The prevalence of land

mines, booby traps, and ambushes turned this masculine aggression into potentially self-

destructive practices.[86] Greg Payton, another black soldier interviewed by Richard Moser noted

that:

> Certainly your machismo has always been equated…. In the army it's
> paratroopers and Delta Force, and Green Berets, and the crack shot – the guy
> that can shoot the best. This equates a person with their manhood. If you can't
> do this – then you're not much of a man. That's how they keep everybody lined
> up.[87]

Aggression and machismo in warfare no longer served as a source of masculinity in Vietnam;

instead, these new tactics began to emasculate men. Even if GIs did attempt to seek manhood

through traditional fighting spirit and soldierly *élan,* they found they were unable to do so.

In such a situation, soldiers had to come up with new methods of masculine

performance. Robert Smith spoke at length about the sense of community that many soldiers

---

[84] Moser, *The New Winter Soldiers*, 151.
[85] Stanley Goff, Robert Sanders with Clark Smith, *Brothers: Black Soldiers in the Nam,* (Novato: Presidio Press, 1982), 58.
[86] Graham, *The Brothers' Vietnam War*, 60.
[87] Greg Payton, interview with author, quoted in Moser, *The New Winter Soldiers*, 151

came to experience in Vietnam. In the following excerpt from the book *Brothers: Black Soldiers in the Nam*, Smith writes about the sense of community that he felt during his combat service:

> It takes tragedy to bring people together. In our particular case, that tragedy brought us so close that I felt closer to everybody in that unit at the time than I do my own blood sisters and brothers. Because it was us. We'd seen hard times. We'd seen fear. It was THE family. I mean, it was us, man. It wasn't like a regular family that may not have enough food or jobs. In our particular family, we knew that in a few minutes everybody could be dead. We was close… We was so close it was unreal. That was the first time in my life I saw that type of unity, and I haven't seen it since. And that was ten years ago. It was beautiful. It sort of chills you, brings goose bumps just to see it, just to feel it, cause the family is guys from all over the states… At first, you got all these funky types of personalities hooking up into one military unit. Everybody had their own little hatreds, their own little prejudices, biases. But after four, five, six months that disappeared. You just saw total unity and total harmony. It was really great, man. It was beautiful. That was the only thing that really turned me on in Vietnam. That was the only thing in Vietnam that had any meaning.[88]

Smith does not situate his memory in terms of gender or masculinity, but his words speak volumes about what this African American soldier valued out of his military service. The sense of meaning he felt because of his immediate military community is an extension of the way he felt about manhood. It was the love and respect that existed in the unit that paved the way for Smith to gain a satisfactory sense of manhood and meaning from his military service.

Another black GI did not speak directly of the violence inherent in warfare, but he did address the importance of a warrior tradition to him and to his family. Army Specialist Harold Bryant of Illinois spoke of his family's ritual of male ear piercing. Ridiculed in high school, he

---

[88] Goff, Stanley, Robert Sanders with Clark Smith, *Brothers: Black Soldiers in the Nam,* (Novato: Presidio Press, 1982), 60.

continued to wear his earring despite his classmates' taunts because his "[g]randmother said all the male warriors in her mother's tribe in Africa had their ears pierced… I felt in this small way I carry on the African tradition. I would go in the Army wearing the mark of the African warriors I descend from."[89] Bryant's ancestors had masculine traditions that passed down through the lines of their families' warriors. This extended down to Bryant and it was obviously important to him to continue in this tradition, despite whatever backlash he may have received from peers or authorities. This shows that Bryant's community and its African tradition influenced his masculine ideals. Bryant did not subscribe to whatever manliness his peers and military commanders offered him. Instead he thought back to what his family, his community had taught him about what it meant to be a man and only from there was he able to gain a satisfactory sense of masculine achievement.

Certain situations provided men with what they took to be justification for extralegal violence against combatants. Typically, these situations emerged when a friend or fellow serviceman was injured or killed in battle. When this happened, soldiers experienced a yearning to do violence against the enemy without thought to legality or code or masculinity. When his good friend Ruben "Sugar Bear" Johnson lost his leg in the war was the only time that Sergeant Blackwell sought to enact violence against the enemy. When last we saw Sergeant Blackwell above, he was recalling when he was asked if he joined the military to kill. The answer he gave was that he saw it as an opportunity to better himself, not so that he could kill. But he went on to clarify, saying that "[but] finding out, later on, that, I guess within less than a year, he had gotten wounded and lost his leg. And at that point, I really wanted to kill someone. Because

---

[89] Terry, *Bloods*, 20.

that was my friend. We grew up together, we came in together, we did a lot of things together, be it good or be it bad." A Marine Sergeant named Norman Smith told a story of a time when two of his friends, Jordan and Bugs, were killed while on patrol as a company in Da Nang. Later, on another patrol through a rice paddy, the company began to take fire. They located a hole in the ground in which six men were hiding. They blew the hole and killed everybody inside of it. Smith said of the experience "[i]t was the first time we were out since Jordan and Bugs were killed, and we were after blood now. We burned the village, took one of their water buffaloes, and tied it to a stake in the middle of the courtyard.... We were angry. We deprived them of whatever they had.... We destroyed the place. I can't say I'm proud of it, but we didn't initiate it, they did, so we felt justified, I guess."[90]

While examples like this were at least excessive and probably war crimes, the violence these soldiers enacted against the people that they believed had killed their friends is hardly surprising given the litany of scholarship about primary group cohesion, particularly in the Vietnam War.[91] Primary group cohesion is the idea that in combat situations, a soldier's immediate circle of comrades becomes an important psychological buttress against the horrors of war. James E. Westheider offers a detailed definition:

> The most important influence on one's behavior in a combat situation tends to be the soldier's own comrades in arms. An individual fights to preserve his own life and honor and that of the others in his unit. Teamwork is essential, and a soldier has to care about and trust his or her comrades for a squad, platoon, or even a battalion to be effective in combat. [Primary group cohesion] implies both a reliance on the individuals within the unit and a pride in the unit's collective accomplishments. In a larger sense, it means that an individual feels a sense of

---

[90] Yvonne Latty and Ron Tarver, comps, *We Were There: Voices of African American Veterans from World War II to the War in Iraq*, (New York: Amistad, 2004), 87-8.
[91] See Guy Siebold, "The Essence of Military Group Cohesion," *Armed Forces & Society* vol. 33 no. 2 (January 2007): 286-295.

belonging to the organization, a belief that all are comrades in arms, whether in the marines, navy, air force, or army.[92]

Simultaneously, these same impulses toward combat togetherness cause soldiers to push each other farther than they think they can go (in either direction, good or evil) and to continue, persevere, and survive. This reliance on the community bonds that soldiers build during war extends to the ways that the Civil Rights and Black Power movement conceived of a collective community that could withstand the harsh conditions of the race "war" in America, which we will see in chapter 4.

Antiwar Black Feminists

Black feminists protested the participation of black men in what many saw as U.S. imperialist aggression abroad. This section will examine the connections between masculine and feminine conceptions of violence, war, and gender identity. Like male and female conceptions of the breadwinner ideal, black men and women had similar ideals in terms of violence, warfare, and militancy. Masculinity and femininity informed each other of proper and acceptable ways to perform gender in these contexts.

One woman who protested the Vietnam War was Gwendolyn Patton, founder of the National Black Anti-War Anti-Draft Union (NBAWAD). Her efforts at creating this organization reflected what she saw as a need to address the intersection between American imperialism and race. In the white antiwar organizations, Patton argued, activists sought to end U.S.

---

[92]James Westheider, *Fighting on Two Fronts: African Americans and the Vietnam War,* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 67.

involvement in Vietnam but were content to leave racism and imperialism in-tact. Furthermore,

she wanted to suggest a connection between the war and black women's rights at home. She

discussed the birth control pill and compared the push toward acceptance of it as a means of

population control similar to black men being sent to the frontlines of Vietnam. She said that

the birth control must be framed as a choice that women had, rather than being pressured into

what she saw as a form of population control. Her reasonings for framing these arguments as

against population control reflect a potent desire to support her black community. She states

that her involvement in these issues meant "being responsible to a larger community and

accountable to it. It means to deal with issues in a broader way... This has to be done on an

individual basis, yet also collectively, determining how I can take my family and community to a

better place. What is the value of my making this choice? Will it benefit me, my family, my

community?"[93] Patton challenged the patriarchal gender norms she saw in her society that led

men into the military for economic reasons. She wrote that

> Black people saw that the Vietnam war was the reason why the war on poverty
> had diminished... Black people saw Black militants forced into the army because
> of inequities in the draft. Black people saw Black students forced into the army
> to become Black mercenaries because this country does not allow them enough
> economic stability to continue their college education.[94]

The fact that black people saw value in the economic benefits provided by military

service is a cause of systematic racial oppression in black communities that forces men into

positions where they need (or think they need) to live up to standards of gender expression

---

[93] https://solidarity-us.org/atc/136/p1885/

[94] SNCC, "Statement on Vietnam," *Freedomways* 6, No. 1 (Winter, 1966): 6-7 and Patton, "Black People and the War," *Liberator* 7, No. 2 (February, 1967): 11 in Amanda L. Higgins, "Instruments of Righteousness: The Intersections of Black Power and Anti-Vietnam War Activism in the United States, 1964-1972," (2013), Theses and Dissertations – History, 10, https://uknowledge.uky.edu/history_etds/10.

dictated by the white establishment. Furthermore, the economic benefits offered by military

service did not, in Patton's estimation, play out, due in part to continued capitalist exploitation

of black people. In association with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee activist

Frances Beal (seen in chapter 2), Patton, NBADAWU, and SNCC all sought to provide "a space

for women to explore leadership roles, learn gender and economic theory, and express new

forms of activism."[95]

Amanda Higgins analyzes these methods in depth in her PhD dissertation "Instruments

of Righteousness: The Intersections of black power and Anti-Vietnam War Activism in the

United States, 1964-1972." Her examination is extensive, covering a wide-range of activists and

organization in every period of the black freedom struggle. One argument she makes is related

to this paper's focus on the community-based motivations behind gendered experiences of

protest but reflects an international dimension. Frances Beal and the Black Women's Liberation

Committee (BWLC) broke away from SNCC and by 1971 had transformed into the Third World

Women's Alliance (TWWA), which represented a new emphasis on creating alliances with

women fighting for equality in other parts of the world. Higgins notes that the TWWA did not

express explicitly anti-Vietnam aims, but did seek to expand their membership and influence

beyond the political boundaries of the United States to establish these kinds of relationships

with women in third-world countries. Their newsletter *Triple Jeopardy* published antiwar

speeches and tried to draw parallels between American women experiencing racism and sexism

and women fighting similar types of capitalist and imperialist aggression (often perpetrated by

the U.S.) in developing nations such as Puerto Rico and others in Asia and central America, not

---

[95] Higgins, "Instruments of Righteousness," 179.

to mention women of native American descent. Vietnam was one such country. One article in *Triple Jeopardy* suggested that "…no matter where are [*sic*] people are geographically located, our struggle against colonialism is akin to other struggles… Our enemies are the same; our oppression is one; our similarities are greater than our differences."[96] Furthermore, the group sponsored an antiwar march in New York City. Here, these women sought to organize with other civil rights groups and establish a "socialist society free of class, race and sexual exploitation."[97] The TWWA's tactics for developing connections between women in the U.S. and living abroad suggest the important emphasis that black feminist radicalism placed on the development of the community. Rather than limiting this community to black women in America, the TWWA established methods of resistance that included women around the world.

Stephen Ward offers further examples of articles from *Triple Jeopardy* that continue to show the priorities of women in black power and antiwar activism. In his article "The Third World Women's Alliance: Black Feminist Radicalism and Black Power Politics," he shows that issues of family and gender roles were central to the TWWA's ideological foundations. These articles focused on labor market access for black women and the skills needed to pursue employment in that arena. Typically considered knowledge reserved for men, these descriptions of mechanical and technical skills (such as changing a fuse or a flat tire) suggest broadly feminist unwillingness to acquiesce to male demands for women's relegation to support roles with their families, communities, and activist organizations. Other columns discussed access to day-care facilities, women's reproductive education, and the struggles of

---

[96] "Live Like Her," *Triple Jeopardy,* ND, 14, in Higgins, "Instruments of Righteousness," 185.
[97] "Third World Antiwar March, Nov. 4," *Triple Jeopardy,* ND, 3, in Higgins, "Instruments of Righteousness," 185.

black people in the American prison system. These sorts of articles rejected traditional

hegemonic notions of male and female behaviors and instead suggested that women in general

and the TWWA in particular should develop strategies of resistance and activism that

established black women "as agents of revolutionary change."[98]

There were different levels of radicalism that influenced antiwar rhetoric from women;

not all rejected every notion of the breadwinner ideal, as we have seen. Another group of black

women in Harlem that expressed antiwar sentiment was Black Women Enraged. These women

appealed to the gender identities of young blacks in an effort to prevent them from fighting in

Vietnam. They distributed pamphlets at military recruiting stations that challenged black men

to resist the government's attempts to requisition black men to fight for an unjust cause. One

such leaflet told black men to remain in America "to protect us, their women and children, from

murder and rape of the white rapist." Another said "Black Men! Whitey's plan for you is death

in Vietnam. Choose jail. Stay here and fight for your manhood. Black women will not allow you

to stand alone in your decision."[99] They used the hegemonic masculine ideal of family and

community protector to persuade black men against military service. Graham writes in *The*

Brothers' Vietnam War that

> …Black Women Enraged argued that military service for black men often meant
> exploitation rather than self-actualization. By incorporating black nationalist themes
> into conservative gender rhetoric, the activists of Black Women Enraged sought to
> persuade African American men to forgo the warrior role. Rather than serve as
> defenders of the nation, these women invited their men to claim the traditional

---

[98] Stephen Ward, "The Third World Women's Alliance: Black Feminist Radicalism and Black Power Politics," in Joseph, ed., *The Black Power Movement,* 119-144.

[99] Jacques Nevard, "Black Power Seen in Two Shadings," *New York Times,* July 23, 1966, 9, quoted in Graham, *The Brothers' Vietnam War,* 28.

male role as protectors of the black family. They further opposed hegemonic masculinity by positioning resistance as the honorable choice and military service as the cowardly one.[100]

These women made conscious appeals to traditional notions of masculinity in their attempts to prevent black men from joining the military. They sought to bring "nuance to the discussion and [show] that black men's manhood needed to be tied to their ability to protect their families at home, not by dying for a racist war in a foreign country."[101] Other antiwar groups include the Black Women's Organization Against the War and Racism. This group also released fliers that challenged black men's role in the war. One such flier read "It takes a man to say 'hell no' to McNamara and a slave to blindly and silently refuse to make the decision as to who or when he should kill innocent people that never called him nigger."[102] While these women held in disdain the idea of military service for black men due to that institution proclivity for patriarchal gender norms that engendered violence, they nonetheless appealed to certain of these norms that served as successful strategies for their antiwar activism.

Women in the antiwar movement protested the violent nature of the conflict, and many were still willing to practice self-defensive violence to protect property, family, and community. The story of Marian Johnson, a black mother of four from Baltimore, sheds light on this employment as a strategy of gender identity. When Johnson and her children moved into a white-only public housing complex, they received a less than warm welcome. "Seeking to

[100] Graham, *The Brothers' Vietnam War,* 28.
[101] "Black Women!," n.d., Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Files, 1954-1972, University Microfilms International, Reel 52, in Higgins, "Instruments of Righteousness," 194.
[102] "Black Men Stay Home!" April 1967, Social Movement Vertical File, Black Women's Organization Against War and Racism, Wisconsin State Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin, in Higgins, "Instruments of Righteousness," 195.

intimidate black residents who broke the color barrier, white supremacist organizations staged

protests at Brooklyn Homes, burned crosses, and handed out hate literature." Johnson's

mother begged her to leave for the evening during one of these such struggles but she refused.

She said, "I just will not be scared or intimidated by a bunch of bigots in white sheets." The

article in the *Baltimore Afro-American* that featured this story included a photograph that

connected Johnson to the militant image associated with black power groups like the Panthers.

She had a shotgun in her lap as she sat guarding her public housing apartment. The byline for

the article read "The Ku Klux Klan had better think twice before attempting to march on the

home of Mrs. Marian Johnson in the Brooklyn Homes housing project."[103]

---

[103] Marian Johnson as told to Michael Davis, "Mother of 4 with Shotgun Vows to Stand Up to KKK," *Baltimore Afro-American,* May 2, 1967, in Rhonda Y. Williams, "Black Women, Urban Politics, and Engendering Black Power," in *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era,* ed. Peniel E. Joseph, (New York: Routledge, 2006), 82.

CHAPTER 4

MASCULINITY IN THE CIVIL RIGHTS – BLACK POWER DEBATES

Many scholars have suggested a fundamental divide between two periods in the black

freedom struggle of the 1960s. The first is typically defined by its nonviolent approach to

activism and more traditional notions of family life and gender. Historians call this period the

"classical Civil Rights movement" and it lasted roughly from the *Brown vs. Board* decision in

1954 to the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964.[104] After that year, black power defined the

struggle by advocating for militant self-defensive action and political action over protest. Rustin

noted this shift and questioned whether it was the "right course." This final chapter will ask a

different question: namely, were the ideological distinctions between civil rights and black

power as clear as Rustin laid them out to be? The chapter will try to connect the roots of Black

Power to those of the Civil Rights movement through the thread of their masculine ideologies

during this period.

This section will focus on the most popular and renowned leaders of each movement. In

that way, the scope of these observations and evidence is limited. However, it does stand to

reason that the leaders were the ones that set the ideological guidelines that influenced their

respective movements' policies and practices. In the Civil Rights movement, Martin Luther King,

Jr. must be that leader and this paper will examine his (as well as other prominent leaders')

speeches and other documents that offer his view on masculinity, what it means, and how to

achieve it. After his death, however, the Black Power movement began to pick up steam, with

---

[104] Bayard Rustin, *From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement,* (New York: Commentary Magazine, 1965),

the Black Panther Party at the helm. The BPP's newspaper offers much in the way of evidence for their masculine ideology, as do the speeches and writings of the Party's founding members. Other black power organizations will supplement the focus on this lone group. In their ideas on masculinity, these leaders advocated for a family-based manhood that provided masculine identity through support of one's immediate family and community. This chapter will conclude that many more similarities than differences were evident in their masculine ideologies and that the fundamental criteria that characterized these masculine identities was a focus on one's community.

Finally, were these characteristics even masculine at all? The last section of this chapter will show that black women participated in both movements. Women called for economic egalitarianism in family roles, as well as engaged in self-defensive violence in defense of their communities. This suggests that the divisions separating men's and women's gender identities were fluid and responded to shifts in the other.

On Breadwinning

Black power advocates as well as civil rights activists earlier had argued for economic empowerment and jobs training as an integral part of masculine achievement. This would produce men who were better equipped to provide and protect their families and communities. With black power, they came to reject the notion that these opportunities should be tied to military service, but they maintained the idea that the economic and educational tools could help advance the black community. The activists examined in this section will show a

connection between the two movements' beliefs on family and community, a connection that will diminish the idea of two separate movements with different ideals on masculinity.

Speaking at the University of Chicago in January 1966, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. responded to (but does not name) Moynihan's recent publication. Early on, he addresses recent studies done on the negro family and notes that he endorses these conclusions. He says he is particularly concerned with the Negro family and a recent study that "…offers the alarming conclusion that the Negro family in the urban ghettos is crumbling and disintegrating." King does not, however, agree that the problem lay solely with the particularities of the black family experience; after all, for hundreds of years African Americans have fought against the forced destruction of their families and in some cases succeeded. King instead states that "At the root of the difficulty in Negro life is pervasive and persistent economic want. To grow from within the Negro needs only fair opportunity for jobs, education, housing and access to culture." He did not in this speech address the benefits or demerits of military service, but he did speak of the importance of jobs for the black male. "When you deprive a man of a job, you deprive him of his manhood, deprive him of the authority of fatherhood, place him in a situation which controls his political life and denies his children adequate education and health services, forcing his wife to live on welfare in a dilapidated dwelling, you have a systematic pattern of humiliation which is as immoral as slavery and a lot more crippling than southern segregation." This systemic humiliation associated with being unable to provide for a family is at the heart of the African American male's "crisis of masculinity" that many civil rights leaders sought to combat. King noted this fact, suggesting that while he might have agreed with the idea that

black men needed jobs to reach equality and fulfillment, he did not necessarily agree that those jobs must be connected to military service. [105]

Another example of King's stance on breadwinner manhood appeared during the Memphis Sanitation Worker's Strike in March 1968. Over 700 black men protesting the appalling conditions of garbage collectors in Memphis picketed through the streets, bearing signs that read "I am a Man!" NAACP President Roy Wilkins criticized the city for not providing enough pay for men to be able to fulfill their roles as breadwinner.[106] When MLK came to support the strike, he reiterated the call for manhood through payment of a living wage. He said, "We are tired of our men being emasculated so that our wives and daughters have to go out and work in the white lady's kitchen, leaving us unable to be with our children and give them the time and attention that they need." The ability of men to provide for their families has been a cornerstone of masculinity theory and acts of one of the most prominent methods by which men are able to attain a sense of gender identity. King supported the striker's right to fair working conditions and accurate compensation and framed such demands as calls to a breadwinner form of masculinity. King, as a representative of the Civil Rights movement, saw the notion of breadwinner as an important and positive force in the struggle for African American men to regain a sense of manhood.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was an enormous presence during the Vietnam War and his words reached audiences across the country and beyond. Many black soldiers believed in King

---

[105] Martin Luther King, Jr., "Speech on the Negro Family," (address at the University of Chicago on 27 January 1966), 26, accessed via *The King Center,* 21 April 2016, <http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive/document/mlk-address-university-chicago#>.

[106] Timothy Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

and adopted his messages. A black marine said, "Why should I come over here when some of the South Vietnamese live better than my people in 'the world'? We have enough problems fighting white people back home."[107] This was a similar statement to how King conceived of the war. After his assassination, racial unrest in the military reached a boiling point and many blacks became fed up with the idea of fighting in a war abroad when there was real injustice to fight closer to home. Graham quotes Don Browne, an air force staff sergeant, as saying "how I could be trying to protect foreigners in their country with the possibility of losing my life wherein in my own country people who are my hero, like Martin Luther King, can't even walk the streets in a safe manner."[108]

On black power, Martin Luther King "recognized that the term had both 'assets and liabilities'" and 'acknowledged that Black Power was an understandable 'cry of disappointment' at how slow white America was to instigate change in response to black demands." Furthermore, he "understood Black Power's 'psychological call to manhood' after years of white domination and oppression." King goes on to quote Stokeley Carmichael's response to this claim: "Carmichael replied by saying that the question of violence versus nonviolence was irrelevant. The real question was the need for black people to consolidate their political and economic resources to achieve power." After recalling a bit more back and forth from the conversation King agrees that "We must use every constructive means to amass economic and political power. This is the kind of legitimate power we need. We must work to build racial pride and refute the notion that black is evil and ugly. But this must come through a program,

---

[107] "Black Power in Vietnam," *Time* 94, no. 12 (September 19, 1969): 24, *Academic Search Complete,* EBSCO*host* (accessed May 28, 2017).
[108] Graham, *The Brothers Vietnam War,* 65.

not merely a slogan." These two men, representatives of the two movements, seemed to

disagree about some specifics, but agreed that the principal focus should be on equal

employment and political power, not violence or nonviolence. King did cede a little ground in

his allowance for the denotative meaning of black power and the Panthers, for their part and as

seen above, only ever defined their violence as a defensive action against oppression.

     Malcolm X represents the black power side of the debate. He too decried what he saw

as the violent imperialism of the United States, but did believe in many of the principles

preached by government and military personnel regarding appropriate masculine principles.

See the following quote:

> It is imperative that a man works. Get off welfare, get out of that compensation
> line. Be a man, earn what you need for your family will respect you. They are proud
> to say that's my father, she is proud to say that's my husband. Father means you
> are taking care of those children. Just because you made them doesn't mean you
> are a father. Anyone can make a baby, but anyone can't take care of them. Anyone
> can go get a woman, but anyone can't take care of a woman. Husband means you
> are taking care of your wife, father means you are taking care of your children….
> You are accepting the responsibilities of manhood.[109]

Malcolm here speaks to many of the same manly characteristics examined above. Work was an

important institution in the quest for civil rights and Malcolm saw its function in crafting

manhood as well. Welfare and the compensation line, he says, are preventing blacks from being

true men who command the respect of their families by providing for them through their

wages. The ideal man, both to Malcolm and to Moynihan, was he who provided financially for

those under his protection. Having a wife and having children are not the same as *being* a

---

[109] "Malcolm X - The Responsibilities of Manhood," *YouTube*, YouTube, 9 Feb. 2013,
www.youtube.com/watch?v=OzZ7ne8T1Yc.

husband and a father. The point here is that even though Malcolm X advocated violence in defense of the family, he did not condone the imperialist violence of the Vietnam War or the use of indiscriminate violence. As a black nationalist, Malcolm also spoke about the priorities of black men regarding political activism. To him, "The political philosophy of black nationalism means that the black man should control the politics and politicians in his own community; no more. The black man in the black community has to be reeducated into the science of politics so he will know what politics is supposed to bring him in return." This emphasis on black male involvement in the community speaks to this paper's arguments that the black community lay at the foundation of black power. Furthermore, while he did not agree with King's integrationist rhetoric and spoke often about its futility, Malcolm did call for African Americans to adhere to the same patriarchal gender and labor norms that situated the man at the head of his family. It becomes more difficult at this point to distinguish between MLK's version of manhood and Malcolm's and thus to generate a hypothesis as to which was more accepted among the black community.

Malcolm X had an important impact on another young black man named Cassius Clay. Clay said "My first impression of Malcolm X was how could a black man talk about the government and white people and act so bold, and not be shot at? How could say these things? Only God must be protecting him."[110] Clay soon after joined the Nation of Islam, changing his name to Muhammad Ali in the process. Ali would go on to cause a stir in the 1960s with his own version of masculinity. The heavyweight boxing champion of the world was a third public figure who contributed to contemporary notions of manhood and masculinity during the Vietnam

---

[110] Graham, *The Brother's Vietnam War,* 69.

War period. His historic draft refusal made headlines and continues to inspire modern studies

of his life as an activist and icon. As seen above, the predominant voices in white America said

that military service was conducive to manhood, while prominent black voices claimed the

opposite. As Herman Graham put it, "Muhammad Ali's draft refusal was particularly important

to African American GIs because it suggested that they could define their manhood with

militant antiwar politics rather than the hegemonic warrior role."[111] When he refused the draft

despite the repercussions he knew he would face, he became a martyr for the cause of black

racial militancy. His status as a fighter was already indicative of a warrior and, to many, he was

the best of the best. But he did not need to prove that on the battlefield. Ali said, "No, I am not

going 10,000 miles to help murder and kill and burn other people simply to help continue the

domination of white slavemasters over the dark people the world over. This is the day and age

when such evil injustice must come to an end."[112] During the media firestorm that accompanied

his draft refusal, many people questioned how Ali could claim moral exemption from military

violence while simultaneously pursuing a career in combat sports. To him, there was a world of

difference between boxing and warfare. He said that in war, "you kill babies and you kill old

ladies and men and there's no such thing as laws and rules and regulations."[113] *Freedomways*

magazine printed an editorial titled "Muhammad Ali – The Measure of a Man." In the article,

the editorial board wrote that "…the world heavyweight champion may be giving up a small

fortune, but he has undoubtedly gained the respect and admiration of a very large part of

---

[111] Graham, *The Brother's Vietnam War,* 67.

[112] Muhammad Ali, quoted in *The Black Panther Community News Service,* 20 June, 1967, vol. 1, no. 3, 8, accessed 28 January 2018,
<http://freedomarchives.org/Documents/Finder/DOC513_scans/BPP_Paper/513.BPP.ICN.V1.N3.June.3.1967.pdf>
[113] Quoted in Graham, *The Brother's Vietnam War,* 75.

humanity. That, after all, is the measure of a Man."[114] In his analysis of this quote, Herman

Graham wrote that the magazine through its commentary had "embraced a model of manhood

that valued honor and concern for community over income."[115]

When the champion of the world refused the draft, he shone a light for black soldiers to

follow. Specialist Richard Swann suggested that Ali be counted among other "real black men"

such as Adam Clayton Powell, Elijah Muhammad, and Eldridge Cleaver. Writing to *Sepia,* he said

that Ali was a real black man because he "refuses to be bullied or tricked into this war. Also,

he's showing the white man that he doesn't have to jump every time he moves his finger."[116]

To this soldier and many others, Ali represented a new kind of manhood that did not look to

military service as a method of gender-building.

Others, however, did not agree with Ali's defiance of the U.S. government. In his book

The African American Experience in Vietnam: Brothers in Arms, James E. Westheider writes that

"While many Americans praised Ali, he also had his detractors. Among them were black soldiers

in Vietnam, most of whom disapproved of the antidraft movement."[117] Early in the war, black

soldiers did not feel that Ali was making a noble choice. Instead, they disapproved of his refusal

to enter the draft, citing it as assort of dereliction of duty. Many chided the fighter for being a

coward and not standing up to do his duty when so many other young black men had taken up

the call and fought for their country. An army staff sergeant named Clyde Brown said that Ali

"gave up being a man when he decided against getting inducted."[118] As an NCO (Non-

---

[114] "Muhammad Ali – The Measure of a Man," *Freedomways* (Spring 1967): 101-2.
[115] Graham, *The Brothers' Vietnam War,* 80.
[116] *Sepia,* May 1971, 80.
[117] James A. Westheider, *The African American Experience in Vietnam: Brothers in Arms,* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008), 31.
[118] "Democracy in the Foxhole," *Time,* May 26, 1967, 19.

Commissioned Officer), this black serviceman had built his own identity around his military service and would not suffer the attempts of Ali to question that identity. These are but two examples of a much wider debate that centered on Ali's draft refusal and questioned the fighter's manhood for his refusal to do violence that he saw as immoral. The violence was not the issue; rather, it was the reasoning behind the violence that was more important to Ali and many other black soldiers in this period. In the ring, just as in the jungle, one could be a manly warrior, but Ali made it apparent that it mattered more for what cause you fought. Actor Harry Belafonte perhaps put it best when he said that Ali:

> …brought America to its most wonderful and its most naked moment. 'I will not play in your game of war. I will not kill in your behalf. What you ask is immoral, unjust, and I stand here to attest to that fact. Now do with me what you will,' he said. I mean he was, in many ways, as inspiring as Dr. King, as inspiring as Malcolm. Cassius was a black, young American. Out of the womb of oppression he was our phoenix, he was the spirit of our young. He was our manhood…. He was the vitality of what we hoped would emerge…. The perfect machine, the wit, the incredible athlete, the facile, articulate, sharp mind on issues, the great sense of humor, which was out of our tradition.[119]

Belafonte was a popular actor during this period and his words can be seen to reflect a general belief that Ali represented a new era of black manhood in America.

The rise of the Black Panther Party (BPP) in 1966 offers another perspective. The Panthers were a political party formed in Oakland in response to the racism and inequality that civil rights legislation and nonviolent protest had been unable to quell. Closely tied to their mission and methodology was their interpretation and practice of masculinity. In the first issue of their newspaper, *The Black Panther,* they say of themselves that they are "the cream of Black

---

[119] Harry Belafonte, interview in *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s,* Ed. Henry Hampton and Steve Fayer with Sarah Flynn, (New York: Bantam Books, 1990), 322-323.

Manhood… there for the protection and defense of our black community."[120] There are two

different ways to observe the masculinity exhibited by this group and both are important and

distinct. First, as an organization, the BPP advocated for African American empowerment just as

did all the activists above. In their institutional rhetoric, they displayed many positions on the

important aspects of black manhood and masculinity, focusing on the male's obligation to

respond to violent oppression with violent defensive action. (Indeed, the Party's original name

had been "The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense," the final three words having been

removed from the title in 1967 to avoid a reputation as a paramilitary organization.) Typically,

this defense would be not of himself, but of the family and the larger black community. Their

organization sought freedom, employment, food, clothing, shelter, and equality for their people

and, in some cases, to begin a militant revolution to achieve those goals. This revolution would

be violent and, once completed, would result in the formation of a new and fair society in

which black men would achieve true manhood. But they made clear distinctions between

justified and unjustified types of violence.

While Panther ideology did advocate for a militant response to U.S. injustices, they did

not agree with what they considered the government's imperialistic and violent foreign policy

objectives in Vietnam. They were opposed to that type of violence. Instead, the group engaged

in many "Community Survival" programs locally that provided breakfast to school children,

educational services, clothing/coat giveaways, free prison busing programs, free ambulance

services, free health clinics, and many others. These programs indicate that, while the BPP may

have called for revolutionary violence in pursuit of its political, economic, and racial goals, the

---

[120] *Black Panther* 1, no. 1, 1967.

group as an institution did not believe in indiscriminate violence as an appropriate route to manhood.

One Black Panther spoke about these programs. In an interview Charles E. Jones, editor of *The Black Panther Party [Reconsidered],* Black Panther Jimmy Slater said that "...we began to understand the positive community programs that the Panthers had going on throughout the community... The Party placed an emphasis on education and always tried to persuade every individual around us to pursue higher education... We had a free health clinic and a free breakfast program in Cleveland... We also had a free clothing program."[122] These programs show the BPP's commitment to providing medicine, clothing, and food to underprivileged black people in their communities.

But many individuals associated with the BPP did practice these "unacceptable" forms of violence, both in the military and domestically. This provides the second lens through which we must understand the masculinist rhetoric of the Black Panther Party: we must observe the organization as made up of individuals, with all the nuance that accompanies human behavior outside the realms of ideological belief. The militant defensive rhetoric that underlay much of the BPP's ideology is clear and understandable given the historical circumstances in which they operated, but institutionalized gender ideologies are easily corrupted and subject to nefarious interpretations. Many of the Panthers exhibited behavior that would have run contrary to the purported masculine imagery the organization projected. Huey Newton, founder of the party, was charged with and convicted of multiple counts of violent activity throughout his life. He spent six months in prison for assault with a deadly weapon after he repeatedly stabbed Odell

---

[122] Charles E. Jones, *The Black Panther Party [Reconsidered],* (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1998), 147-152.

Lee with a steak knife in 1964. In 1968, Newton was convicted of voluntary manslaughter in the death of police officer John Frey in Oakland. After his conviction followed two retrials that ended in hung juries, leading the district attorney to drop the charges and not to pursue a fourth trial.[123] Lower-level party members were involved in a wide array of violent crimes, including the attempted murder of a witness in a case against Huey Newton as well as the torture and murder of Alex Rackley. In the latter case, one of the party officers accused of the murder claimed that Bobby Seale, one of the party's founding members, gave the orders to carry out the murder. And this does not even mention the blatant misogyny, chauvinism, and homophobia practiced by many of the party leaders and members. The party originally advocated for a restoration of traditional gender roles that saw the male as protector and breadwinner and the woman as revolutionary support system for her man. Granted, these policies did shift (at least theoretically) with the development of the group and eventually came to advocate for a better distribution of gender roles and taking (somewhat) seriously the role of female activists. Kathleen Cleaver and others did hold prominent positions within the organization and they continue to speak and organize for black empowerment. Elaine Brown became the chairperson of the BPP in 1974, but left when she could no longer abide by the gender inequities in the organization. "A woman in the Black Power movement was considered, at best, irrelevant," she said. "A woman asserting herself was a pariah. If a black woman assumed a role of leadership, she was said to be eroding black manhood, to be hindering the

---

[123] For a scholarly account of Huey Newton's crimes (both alleged and proved), see: Hugh Pearson, *The Shadow of the Panther: Huey Newton and the Price of Black Power in America,* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 1994). For Newton's account, see his autobiography: Huey Newton, *Revolutionary Suicide,* (New York: Penguin Books, 1973).

progress of the black race."[124] While many women participated in the movement, many gender-related injustices remained within the organization. The Party did continue to display sexist rhetoric that did not exemplify the organization's belief in a new revolutionary black identity and manhood. Many women came forward to call out the hypocrisy of certain Panthers and make accusations of sexually inappropriate behavior within party ranks. This hypocrisy in the Panther's version of masculinity is important to note because it shows that even within a particular institution, ideologies can become corrupted and the people who follow (or even created) them led astray from the initial positive attributes of that belief system.

On Violence

The rise of an ideologically distinct Black Power movement in 1966-68 had a significant impact on black soldiers fighting in Vietnam. This is the same period that saw a more fervent anti-war attitude strike the country and many GIs, as well as civilians, began to voice their opposition to the conflict. These soldiers heard the leaders from back home speaking out and many began to feel uneasy about fighting in a war abroad when "the real war was back home," as many very aptly put it. In Graham's *The Brother's Vietnam War,* he details this shift in terms of a change in what black soldiers took to be manly. While he does note that economic factors still played into soldiers' motivations to serve, his argument is that the shift to radical antiwar sentiment was indicative of a shift from hegemonic to what he calls "Black Power Manhood." No longer, argued Graham, did these soldiers try to define their gender identities as men

---

[124] Brown, *A Taste of Power,* 444.

79

through military masculinity and its associated violence, but instead these soldiers began to speak out, choosing a new route to manhood paved not with violence but instead with antiwar activism black racial consciousness. These men watched from Vietnam as the Black Power movement ramped up and they began to sympathize with some of the unrest that was simmering back home.

This section does not seek to refute Graham's argument on this point, but instead attempts to add nuance by observing different source material and framing the argument in a way that diminishes the stark line he drew between Black Power Manhood and previous iterations of black masculinity. Many of these soldiers did begin to reframe their manhood in terms of black power militancy, but even more did not, as this section will show. Many wrote letters back home to black magazines and organizations detailing their opinions on black power, the military, and manhood. Others offered their stories to interviewers and oral historians, who collected them and displayed their attitudes on these and other topics. Still others wrote their own stories down and published them as memoirs or autobiographies. These sources show the black experience in Vietnam regarding the new militancy of the Civil Rights movement, the military, and manhood. Black soldiers voiced support and condemnation simultaneously, further blurring the lines between the Civil Rights and Black Power movements' masculine ideologies.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was obviously well-known among black soldiers in Vietnam and many believed in his message of equality and manhood. King was an ardent proponent of nonviolent protest at home and he extended that message abroad in his speech entitled "Beyond Vietnam." In it, Dr. King clarified his anti-war stance and condemned the government's

handling of the conflict in Southeast Asia. When challenged by young black men regarding the

benefit of nonviolence to the larger Civil Rights movement while the government used violence

to achieve its objectives abroad, King noted that "[t]heir questions hit home, and I knew that I

could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without

having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today: my own

government. For the sake of those boys, for the sake of this government, for the sake of the

hundreds of thousands trembling under our violence, I cannot be silent."[125] Like many other

contemporary observers, King was opposed to the idea that black men should be sent around

the world to fight for human rights for the Vietnamese when they did not receive those same

rights at home. His speech marked a break with the Johnson administration, for it was the first

hardline stance the civil rights leader had taken against the War in Vietnam. It was clear that

King did not support the war effort nor the use of violence at large. While he did not address

the concept of violence as it applies to feelings of masculinity, it is apparent from King's

speeches and the generally nonviolent approach to his activism that he would not have

believed in the military's pushing of a warrior masculinity. In his opposition to Moynihan's

prescriptions, he showed that it was not through military service that the black family would

achieve its. King always argued for peaceful, nonviolent resistance and a return to family values

but did not see a path toward these goals through the military.

Another interesting case is that of the debate between King and Robert F. Williams,

President of the Monroe, North Carolina chapter of the NAACP. Williams built "the most

[125] Martin Luther King, Jr., "Beyond Vietnam," (speech given at Riverside Church, New York, New York, 4 April 1967), accessed 21 April 2016 via *The King Center,* <http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive/document/mlks-speech-civil-rights-and-vietnam#>.

militant chapter of the [NAACP] in the United States" and, though he was not a Panther, his book *Negroes with Guns* had a large impact on Huey P. Newton.[126] Williams was more militant than King and many times called for blacks to "defend their women and children," indicating his belief in the value of family to manhood and a tie to the importance King placed on the breadwinner ideal. Timothy Tyson, who wrote *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power,* said that "[Williams's] defiance… testifies to the fact that, throughout the 'civil rights' era, black Southerners stood prepared to defend home and family by force. The life of Robert F. Williams illustrates that the 'civil rights movement' and 'the Black Power movement' emerged from the same soil, confronted the same predicaments, and reflected the same quest for African American freedom."[127] In response to Williams' cries to meet violence with violence, MLK added nuance. King believed a position that encompassed legitimate self-defense was the only practical stance. "Violence exercised merely in self-defense, all societies from the most primitive to the most cultured and civilized, accept as moral and legal… When the Negro uses force in self-defense, he does not forfeit support – he may even win it, by the courage and self-respect it reflects."[128] Clearly, King did not begrudge the use of defensive violence against active and violent terror. What this, as well as Williams's own militancy, shows is that the origins of violent rhetoric in the black power community can be found much earlier and in an organization (the NAACP) generally considered to be a supporter of nonviolence. While Williams was not a member of the BPP, his story, his debate with King, and King's

---

[126] Timothy Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 2.

[127] Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie,* 3.

[128] Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie, 214.*

response offer important evidence that shows that the Civil Rights and Black Power movements were not as different as many believe.

Malcolm X also contributed to the conversation regarding military service and masculinity, albeit from a slightly more militant perspective. Malcolm, like King, did not agree with U.S. foreign policy objectives in southeast Asia and was a vociferous opponent of sending black men to fight on behalf of a racist and oppressive government. Where Malcolm diverges from King's analysis of the situation is in his positions on violence. This divergence is part of a historiographic debate that examines the distinctions between the latter's message of nonviolence and the former's militant black masculinity. The argument among scholars asks how distinctive was the break between MLK's nonviolent movement and Malcolm's more militant one. Traditionally, historians have separated the Civil Rights and Black Power movements from each other and analyzed the two as distinct phases of the larger Black Freedom Struggle. Some new scholars, however, seek to address the two periods as one in the same and discuss their similarities instead of their differences. Manhood and masculinity can be addressed in these terms as well.

Malcolm's "militancy" is evident in his approach to the practice of masculinity, a topic on which he spoke loudly and frequently. Examining Malcolm X from this angle does not take much imagination or as it might with other activists who spoke about manhood abstractly because Malcolm broached the subject with some specificity, as did commentators who knew him closely and from afar. In Estes's *I am a Man!,* chapter 4 includes an epigraph attributed to "Ossie Davis, actor/activist/friend of Malcolm X" in which he says "It seemed to me that Malcolm spoke directly to the emasculation of the black male in particular. And Malcolm

wanted to heal that emasculation. He wanted to teach us how, in spite of that, to be men

again…."[131] At Malcolm's funeral, Davis spoke first what would later become a sort of mantra:

"Malcolm was our manhood, our living, black manhood! This was his meaning to his people."[132]

Another commentator, the poet Sonia Sanchez, said that Malcolm embodied the masculinity

that many young black men saw and wanted to emulate. Furthermore, he was emblematic of

the masculinity that women wanted their husbands to embody. Malcolm, she said, "assumed

the responsibility of father, brother, lover, man…. He became the man that most African

American women have wanted their man to be: strong."[133] He was a lot of things to a lot of

people, but no one can say he didn't influence the way masculinity was perceived among the

black community.

His speeches exemplified his theories and ideas about manhood and masculinity. He

spoke both about what it meant it to be a man in America and about what it did not mean. To

Malcolm, one thing that manhood was not, was unnecessarily violent. While he did not

advocate passive resistance to affronts by oppressive persons and institutions, he did not

advocate military violence as a positive route toward manhood or to freedom in general.

Speaking on foreign wars and America's draft system, he said "If violence is wrong in America,

violence is wrong abroad. If it is wrong to be violent defending black women and black children

and black babies and black men, then it is wrong for America to draft us, and make us violent

abroad in defense of her. And if it is right for America to draft us, and teach us how to be

[131] Estes, *I am a Man!,* 87.

[132] Ossie Davis, "Eulogy," Faith Temple Church of God, February 27, 1965, accessed January 13, 2018, http://malcolmx.com/eulogy/.

[133] Sonia Sanchez, interview in *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s,* Ed. Henry Hampton and Steve Fayer with Sarah Flynn, (New York: Bantam Books, 1990), 254-55.

violent in defense of her, then it is right for you and me to do whatever is necessary to defend our own people right here in this country."[134] Malcolm, as Dr. King, did not think that the military had a justifiable claim to the legitimate use of violence, arguing that if black people could be sent to wage war in a foreign country to protect others, then the defense of their own communities should be justified as well.

Furthermore, antiwar activism was a trait that MLK and Malcolm X shared with the Black Power movement and its leaders. While King joined black power in its calls against black soldiers going to Vietnam, he did not, however, subscribe to their calls for violent revolution, maintaining his belief in peaceful change until his death. In his final book, *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?,* he said that Black Power had a denotative meaning and a connotative one, and that the term's connotation was negative because it invoked the idea of violence. "While the concept of legitimate Black Power might be denotatively sound," he said, "the slogan 'Black Power' carried the wrong connotations."[135] This shows that King did not wholly oppose black power's message, just the parts that seemed to advocate for violence as a masculine strategy.

But while King was certainly an icon in the black community, not all supported his new (-ly revealed) position on the war. The idea that it was impossible for King to back the war while maintaining nonviolence at home is one that King expressed in his speech from chapter 2 of this paper. In that speech, entitled "Beyond Vietnam," he broke "officially" with the Johnson administration in its views on the conflict in Southeast Asia. Attempting to marry civil rights and

---

[134] Malcolm X, *Speech,* 10 November 1963, New York City, accessed Jan. 10, 2018, < http://malcolmx.com/quotes/>.
[135] Martin Luther King, Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?,* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), 30.

antiwar activism into a cohesive front against both racial and military violence did not, however, immediately succeed in its stated aims. See this passage written by John A. Kirk in *Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement:*

> Reaction to King's speech was far more negative than he had anticipated." On April 6th, the *Washington Post* summed up the prevailing sentiment when it announced that King 'has done a grave injury to those who are his natural allies… Many who have listened to him with respect will never again accord him the same confidence.' *Life* magazine called the speech 'a demagogic slander that sounded like a script for Radio Hanoi'. John P. Roche, special assistant to the President, told Johnson in a memo that 'King… has thrown in with the communists' and 'is destroying his reputation as a Negro leader'. Black columnist Carl T. Rowan bemoaned 'Martin Luther King's Tragic Decision' to speak out on Vietnam in America's most widely read magazine, *Readers Digest.*[136]

Not only did these media outlets voice concern over the civil rights leader's decision but there were also many soldiers in Vietnam who felt that King had betrayed them in his condemnation of the war they were fighting and dying in.

Soldiers themselves expressed many feelings about black power. In an article by William M. King in *Vietnam Generation* entitled "'Our Men in Vietnam': Black Media as a Source of the Afro-American Experience in Southeast Asia," many black soldiers offered their opinions on the subject. Many of the quotes used by the author were originally published in *Sepia,* a popular black magazine that many soldiers in-country used as a valuable source of information about the civil rights situation back home, and this author collected them in his article. One of the author's first sentences in this article is a quote from James William Gibson's *The Perfect War* that states that the soldiers' lived experiences as evidenced in their writings and oral histories

---

[136] John A. Kirk, *Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement,* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 120.

"contradicts the war-managers at virtually every level."[137] This applies to the ways that black

GIs conceived of their masculinities in that they did not believe whole-heartedly in the

masculinity purported by the white establishment and the military. They expressed much

discontent with the situation in Vietnam, racially, militarily, and politically. One soldier writing

to *Sepia* referred to the story of Private First-Class Milton L. Olive III, who received a

posthumous Congressional Medal of Honor for falling on a grenade to save the lives of his

comrades. This soldier then said "Do you think that Negro men should look up to this as a good

thing or should they ask why this young man died? Did he die for the freedom of all or did he

die for the freedom of the white man only? How does the Negro really feel about this?"[138] This

soldier at least questioned the morality of the war, by extension questioning the moral

authority of the governing classes that promoted military sacrifice as another aspect of its

particular brand of masculinity. Another soldier, however, expressed support of the war and its

goals. He said "It's time to call all men to fight for their country. It is time to stop the cause of

aggression before it erupts any further, and it is time to distinguish the men from the boys."[139]

This soldier believed in the military's message of war as a deterrent to future aggression by the

Communists and also believed in the military's masculinity-hawking.

In William King's article he examined Black soldiers' letters to *Sepia* magazine to

determine what impact black power had on these servicemen. These soldiers discussed the

movement in detail, though somewhat less than the racial morality of the war overall. One PFC

---

[137] William M. King, "'Our Men in Vietnam': Black Media as a Source of the Afro-American Experience in Southeast Asia," *Vietnam Generation* 1, no. 8 (1989): 1.
[138] Quoted in King, "Our Men in Vietnam," 96.
[139] Quoted in King, "Our Men in Vietnam," 96.

in October 1966, just a few months after Stokely Carmichael first cried "black power" during the

Meredith March in Mississippi, wrote that he loved black power with all his heart and that he

believed it was "the only way the American black man can achieve equality in the home of the

red man. How else can one deal with the white power structure? The strong never has to bend

for the weak, but two strongs must and will come to a medium – power vs power."[140] He clearly

expressed a belief in black power's ability to fight the white power structure and was

apparently not opposed to the use of violence to meet that which was being practiced against

black people.

But many others expressed disinterest and did not approve of the new militant

movement. One soldier responded to the above writer and said that person

> …has every right to express his narrowed opinion, however, none of your
> readers should take his views to be that of any significant number of servicemen
> here. Frankly, I am as confused as most people are concerning the meaning of
> the phrase 'Black Power.' Opinions differ as to the meaning of it, however, if it
> does mean social and economic equality it's a fine thing. I think many people
> regard this phrase simply as a war or battle cry to be used for the purpose of
> spurring on restless and dissatisfied people to violence.[141]

Regarding black power, this soldier did not agree with the idea that the movement should

utilize violence to meet its goals, but he did express support for the social and economic

motivations of the term. He continued to say that he did not believe that the previous writer

would make a valuable compatriot in combat. These soldiers wanted to work and fight with

other similarly minded people, who believed in the moral status of the war and wanted to

support democracy and freedom in Vietnam. He closed his piece with a dig at that writer,

---

[140] Quoted in King, "Our Men in Vietnam," 97.
[141] Quoted in King, "Our Men in Vietnam," 98.

saying "God bless [name of the previous writer redacted], Carmichael and all other such people [who support black power over the war], as I pray that He'll bless all mentally ill persons in our society."[142] Humor aside, this is evidence that not all soldiers in Vietnam supported the Black Power movement.

Bobby Seale, an Air Force veteran and co-founder of the Black Panther Party, speaking to soldiers via the *Black Panther* newspaper noted that "[y]ou went into the service for the same reason I [did]... 'cause it wasn't no jobs... And you feel you'd go into the army and some guy'd sell you some insidious notion about being a man, and all that kind of crap. And you were already a man... [G]oing out trying to prove how many colored peoples you can kill in a foreign land. That's not being a man..."[143] Here Seale notes not only the fact that economic considerations played into his (and presumably others') motivations, but also attests to the manhood-hawking of the U.S. military.

Many black servicemen also responded to the Black Panther Party and their calls for blacks to respond militantly to racism at home and abroad. The BPP was one of the most well-known groups advocating equality for African Americans and expressed both radical antiwar sentiment and a call for black men to reclaim their manhood. The masculinity advocated by the BPP is complicated in its relation to this study. The Black Panthers argued for armed self-defense and militant rejection of all ideas that white society prescribed to black society; conversely, however, the BPP spoke out openly against Vietnam and the violence of the war. Indeed, in the party's Ten Point Program, published in the group's newspaper *The Black*

---

142 Quoted in King, "Our Men in Vietnam," 99.
143 Bobby Seale, "Black Soldiers as Revolutionaries to Overthrow the Ruling Class," *Black Panther*, 20 September 1969, 1, cited in Estes, *I Am a Man!,* 166-7.

Panther, the sixth point reads "[w]e want all black men to be exempt from military service." The

BPP continues to lambast military service in its section entitled "What We Believe":

> We believe that black people should not be forced to fight in the military service
> to defend a racist government that does not protect us. We will not fight and kill
> other people of color in the world who, like black people, are being victimized by
> the white racist government of America. We will protect ourselves from the
> force and violence of the racist police and the racist military, by whatever means
> necessary.[144]

The BPP called the Vietnam War racist and imperialist and opposed black men going to fight for

Vietnamese freedom from oppression while their own government refused to acknowledge the

same rights for African Americans. The fact that directly below these pronouncements was an

image of a shotgun and in bold black lettering the words "Guns Baby Guns" might seem

contradictory; but the BPP was simply calling for a different kind of warrior, one removed from

the military's ideals of warrior masculinity. To be sure, the BPP's original name was "The Black

Panther Party for Self-Defense"; it was clear that they did not condone violence except in the

defense of their black community.

Many black GIs embraced the BPP's ideals and wrote to the organization from Vietnam,

asking for literature, advice, and providing the Party with anecdotes from their service. One

soldier wrote that "I want to be a Black Panther and hold a position as one who will tell you

how phony the swine is… Please send me your Code of Ethics, and some Black literature, and

buttons. Please, I need your help and you need mine."[145] Another wrote "I have been keeping

up with your literature and politics. And would like to know a little more about your projects… I

---

[144] "What We Want" and "What We Believe," *The Black Panther,* 23 November 1967, vol. 1, no. 6, 3.

[145] Paul Isaac Murray, "GI Letters," *Black Panther*, 27 September 1969, reprinted in James E. Westheider, *The African American Experience in Vietnam: Brothers in Arms,* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008), 138.

am interested in getting involved with your organization."[146] In addition to pleas and support,

some men even sent money to aid in the cause: "I'm sending my money to help in the struggle.

I would like you to send me the Black Panther News as soon as you can. I made the mistake of

coming in the service, thinking that maybe it's better being in the Navy… But when we get out…

I will put to good use the training that the White man has taught me. I need some written

support from YOU to help me teach my Black brothers on the ship."[147] These letters show the

impact that BPP ideals had on black GIs, ideals so potent and powerful and resonant they could

travel the vast geographic distances that separated soldiers in Vietnam from their brothers in

America.

 While many black GIs did support black power, an article in *Time* magazine from 1969

listed many statistics that suggest a more limited vision of the movement's impact. These

statistics shed light on some of the numbers associated with black men's beliefs about the

military, manhood, and black power. The author admits that these numbers were compiled

after interviewing 400 black enlisted men in Vietnam and do not represent a scientific sample

but the numbers are revealing nonetheless. Fewer than half of these men (45%) said they

would use arms to gain their rights when they return to "the world" (meaning the U.S.). The

percentages were equal when asked whether they would join a riot when they returned, 41%

saying they would and 40% saying they would not. In Vietnam, 53% of the black men

interviewed said they would NOT join a militant group such as the Black Panthers back home.

---

[146] Lionel Anderson, "GI Letters," *Black Panther*, 27 September 1969, reprinted in James E. Westheider, *The African American Experience in Vietnam: Brothers in Arms,* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008), 139.
[147] Thomas F. Walker, "GI Letters," *Black Panther*, 27 September 1969, reprinted in James E. Westheider, *The African American Experience in Vietnam: Brothers in Arms,* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008), 138-9.

These numbers show that not all black soldiers in Vietnam believed in the militancy of the Black Power movement, if they did indeed agree with its social and economic goals.

This means that the lines between Black Power and Civil Rights is not as stark as much of the historiography would have us believe. There are a wide-range of opinions on the matter of black power manhood during the Vietnam War and the debate is not as simple as for or against. Many people supported certain aspects of black power and opposed others. This section has shown that many black soldiers and other commentators did not think that black power macho would provide the sense of gendered identity and masculine meaning that many thought it would.

Black Feminists in the Debate

Finally, this section asks whether we can categorize breadwinning and the use of violence as masculine at all. Establishing the connection between black women and soldiers shows the complex intersections between masculinity and femininity. The fact that both sexes in this period developed similar strategies to perform gender suggests that neither ideal was fixed and that both influenced and responded to changes in the other. Furthermore, these masculine strategies of gender development can be traced even farther back than the mid-60s when black power began to take hold. Women employed these strategies in earlier iterations of the black freedom struggle, furthering this paper's argument that the Civil Rights and Black Power movements were not wholly distinct.

Muriel Snowden and her Freedom House organization sought to improve the lives of black people in their Roxbury, Massachusetts community through direct involvement and elements of black power protest. From its inception in 1949, "Freedom House focused on what the leaders called a program of 'self-help' to restore 'a positive feeling of belonging in the people who live in Roxbury." Snowden and her organization originally dedicated themselves to the civil rights ideals of nonviolent, moderate protest and integrationist tactics. However, in her article on Snowden and Freedom House, Ashley Farmer writes that "…the complex dynamics of urban decay, unemployment, and overcrowding challenged Freedom House's moderate approach to race relations and the Snowdens' commitment to integration."[148] In the very next sentence, Farmer establishes the connection between this organization's support for militant protest and the community that it was meant to protect and support. "Increasing numbers of black Bostonians turned to more radical measures and methods, including those called for by black power, to achieve greater access to community resources."[149] When she experienced backlash to her support for school desegregation in Boston, Snowden began to question whether her moderate and integrationist methods of activism were the best way to reach her goals. After this and other setbacks at the hands of white liberal counter-protesters, she began to embrace the methods of black power as "a way to transition into more direct community action."[150] Many of her organization's programs were dedicated to this ideal. One such program called "Blacks Helping Blacks" sought to quicken the process of "'black communities trying to

---

[148] Ashley Farmer, "Working toward Community is our Full-time Focus: Muriel Snowden, Black Power, and the Freedom House, Roxbury, MA," *The Black Scholar* 41, no. 3 (2011): 17-25, *Opposing Viewpoints In Context*, http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A301964251/OVIC?u=txshracd2679&sid=OVIC&xid=1b774fee. Accessed 1 Apr. 2018.
[149] Farmer, "Working toward Community," 17
[150] Farmer, "Working toward Community," 22.

achieve self-determination' through community-based employment and referral services.

Programs like this showed Snowden's commitment to community development and black

power in various forms."[151] Furthermore, Snowden was able to bridge the gap between

masculinity and femininity in her calls for black power in Boston. Farmer writes that Snowden

and other African American women of the period "contributed to communal definitions of

black pride, black power, civil rights, and community." She goes on: "Equally notable, they did

so without explicit concerns for gender constraints or dichotomies… In the process, women like

Snowden defied popular characterizations of black power as a working-class and male-

dominated political ideology."[152] Snowden obviously bridged the gaps that separated the Civil

Rights – Black Power divide, as well as that between masculinity and femininity.

A significant debate exists around the activism of one black feminist in particular. Gloria

Richardson, a civil rights activist who organized the Cambridge Nonviolent Action Committee

(CNAC), has generated a large amount of scholarship on her life and work, one primary focus of

which has been whether she was a militant defender of armed resistance, or a nonviolent,

passive protester. Jenny Walker, in her article "The 'Gun-Toting' Gloria Richardson: Black

Violence in Cambridge, Maryland," argues for the latter interpretation. She claims that

Richardson was an "unfaltering advocate of nonviolent direct action" and that historical

accounts of her life have "distorted, rather than illuminated, what she did and what she

represented."[153] In her analysis of several protest events which spiraled out of control and led

---

[151] Farmer, "Working toward Community," 23.
[152] Farmer, "Working toward Community," 24.
[153] Walker, Jenny, "The 'Gun-Toting' Gloria Richardson: Black Violence in Cambridge, Maryland," in *Gender and the Civil Rights Movement,* edited by Peter J. Ling and Sharon Monteith, (New Brusnwick: Rutgers University Press), 169-70.

to violent clashes in Cambridge between 1962 and 1964, Walker argues that much of

Richardson's militant image is based on erroneous or inaccurate media coverage of the events.

In much of this coverage, Richardson and CNAC were never satisfactorily established to have

had anything to do with the violence that erupted. In addition, Richardson expressed a belief in

nonviolence: "There was something real, something direct in the way the kids waged

nonviolent war."[154] She then suggests that there were many different levels of nonviolence and

that even Martin Luther King, Jr. advocated defensive violence against threat to home and

community, a similar approach and analysis to this paper. Richardson, and many others, took a

pragmatic view of violence that endorsed it in response to certain stimuli. Analyzing this

evidence as indicative of a rejection of nonviolent principles is misleading and "critically

different from the image of a 'gun-toting' leader."[155] Historians like Paula Giddings, she argues,

who projected this militant, feminist image onto Richardson have operated with explicitly

political agendas and, while she notes the important impact of this history, cautions against its

tendency to represent them inaccurately.

While Walker questions the veracity of Giddings' interpretation, Sharon Harley

champions it. In "'Chronicle of a Death Foretold:' Gloria Richardson, the Cambridge Movement,

and the Radical Black Activist Tradition," the author restores her subject's image as militant

protestor. Harley addresses Walker's piece directly, noting that in disputing this interpretation

the author "…failed to examine Richardson's connections with other 'civil rights militants' and

---

[154] Walker, "The 'Gun-Toting' Gloria Richardson," 180.
[155] Walker, "The 'Gun-Toting' Gloria Richardson," 183.

organizations that were part of the black radical tradition in the United States."[156] The author

then cites a number of instances in which Richardson clearly expressed a willingness to engage

in alternate methods of protest like self-defensive violence. She attended Malcolm X's famous

"Message to the Grass Roots" speech and at the same event publicly declared her support for

these types of strategies and tactics. Her support did not extend to advocating the use of

firearms, but she clearly backed his calls for armed self-defense.[157] While she concedes the

point to Walker that Richardson at this time had never even shot a gun, Harley criticizes

Walker's neglect of Richardson's attendance at the Northern Negro Leadership Conference

where she expressed clear support for militant strategies that rejected nonviolence.

The debate over this question is far from complete – probably will not ever be complete

for, as this thesis has shown, the dichotomies created between such ideas as black power and

civil rights are largely imaginary. However, certain aspects of this question remain relevant. For

example, in her piece on Richardson, Harley credits Joyce Ladner, a Mississippi SNCC activist,

with suggesting that "the reluctance of male leaders and writers to accord courageous black

female activists a greater place in histories of civil rights struggles might have been due to these

women exhibiting characteristics defined as exclusively male." This section has argued that

black feminists expressed in their activism the same gendered ideals that men did. Richardson,

and many other powerfully militant women, exhibit the fact that the lines that divide us, might

not be lines at all.

---

[156] Sharon Harley, "'Chronicle of a Death Foretold:' Gloria Richardson, the Cambridge Movement, and the Radical Black Activist Tradition," in *Sisters in the Struggle: African American Women in the Civil Rights-Black Power Movement,* edited by Bettye Collier-Thomas and V.P. Franklin, (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 176.
[157] Harley, "Chronicle of a Death Foretold," 190.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

African American ideals of masculinity during the mid-twentieth century black

freedom struggle were varied constructions that interacted with other social and cultural

trends of the period. When the white, liberal establishment attempted to blame the

failure of black manhood on the matriarchal structures of their families, and prescribed

military service as the cure, men and women responded in many ways. The economic

benefits of service certainly motivated and guided black GIs to accept their role as

breadwinner as they joined the ranks of real military men. Early in the war, before

aggressive antiwar activism had much traction, many black GIs did exhibit a willingness to

express themselves in these terms, and many wanted to take advantage of all that service

had to offer. With the introduction of black power, however, some of these ideals began

to shift away from the breadwinner ideal to the militant posturing practiced by the Black

Panther Party and other radical black nationalist groups of the period. Sexism and

misogyny are highly visible in these moments, but, in most of these organizations, black

women fought back against these gender roles and demanded economic and political

autonomy equal to that of black men. They even adopted more traditionally masculine

methods and strategies of activism and were more than willing to use self-defense to

protect their families and communities - a job reserved, according to Moynihan and other

masculine traditionalists, for the male sex. In both men and women, however, we see a

willingness and desire to protect and provide for one's immediate family/community, a

foundational aspect of masculinity in this period.

The military itself made appeals to this gender ideology in its recruitment and training tactics of black soldiers. In addition to economic incentives, military service offered men the chance to prove their bravery, strength, and valor on the battlefield. This has been a method of masculine identity formation for hundreds of years, made even more potent by the media landscape in America that saw John Wayne's military persona(s) as the exemplar of masculine achievement. Black men's responses to opportunities for violence against enemy combatants varied. Some men were eager for this chance, others accepted it grudgingly, and still others did not subscribe to the military's ideal of the violent manly warrior. In any case, they found that indiscriminate violence was not a characteristic they wanted to embrace. Or, if they did, they quickly found it an unsatisfactory marker of masculine identity. Women contributed a great deal to the antiwar protest movement and, in so doing, made efforts to frame masculine achievement in a way that rejected the military's version of the violent warrior and replaced it with a radical black community soldier, committed to defense of his family and community. Not only did these women suggest the use of self-defensive violence for men but many took up the mantle themselves, indicating an inherent fluidity in the conceptions of black gender performance in this period and context.

Finally, this thesis has discussed a burgeoning historical subfield that examines the distinctions between the "heroic" Civil Rights movement and the "militant" Black Power movement. Typically, historians have placed the line dividing the two movements in the period between 1966 and 1968, when black power began to make headlines and dominate the national conversation on racial equality. However, the new field of Black

Power Studies seeks to complicate this division and examine how the two periods compared. Some argue that, instead of two movements, historians should observe the mid-century quest for African American equality as one "Long Civil Rights Movement."[158] This thesis underscores links between the movements that show similar ideals, strategies, and applications of gender performance in the black community well before 1966. The methods and manner of black activism in the Vietnam war period exhibit many more similarities than differences between men and women's gender performances in their calls for economic empowerment, self-defensive violence, and community protection.

Daniel Barnes' argument for the communal aspects of black motherhood offers another interesting lens through which to examine this process. She notes in her research that black women often made their own choices about how to negotiate space for themselves between the constantly rotating spheres of work, family, and motherhood. Barnes calls this process "strategic mothering," by which women made choices about mothering and womanhood that were informed by how those choices served her family and, by extension, her community. Barnes' anthropological examination of middle-class professional black women provides an interesting theory to explain the process by which men (and women) made choices about appropriate methods of establishing gender. Is it possible that men made these kinds of strategic choices for their masculine identities in a

---

[158] Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *The Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (March, 2005): 1233-63. https://libproxy.library.unt.edu/login?url=https://libproxy.library.unt.edu:2165/docview/224901784?accountid=7113.

wartime environment? Could we borrow from Daniel Barnes and go so far as to say that these men practiced a kind of "strategic masculinity?"

Like the women in her study, though from a variety of different socioeconomic backgrounds than Daniel Barnes' subjects, black soldiers and sought to negotiate elements of masculine identity for themselves within the changing dynamics of race, gender, work, and politics produced by the Vietnam war. The links between the ways that men established masculinity in this period and the ways that black women employed strategic mothering are evident to some degree and show that many men considered the needs of the black community at large when determining which elements of masculinity to pursue. In the case of the breadwinner ideal, soldiers had already accepted much of what military service meant regarding providing for a family. Soldiers accepted service for its ability to provide job training, education, and benefits to a man so that he may do better by his family. As the antiwar and feminist movements took on greater national prominence, however, black men began to believe that economic and political justice should not be tied to their military careers. They began to demand both exemption from service and more access to the economic and social benefits only previously granted in exchange for their induction. The methods undertaken by black men during this period were numerous and varied and, while not every element of this masculinity building process was positive or successful, there were certainly men who were able to separate the good from the bad. A strong focus on one's family and community served as an important indicator of what African American men found manly and important in this period.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Online Archives

Historical African American Newspapers Available Online – James A. Cannavino Library, Marist College, Poughkeepsie, New York

The King Center Digital Imaging Project – The King Center Archive, Atlanta, Georgia

The Vietnam Center and Archive Oral History Project – Texas Tech University

WGBH Media Library and Archives

Newspapers

Chicago Defender
Ebony
Freedomways
Indochina Newsletter
Jet
Liberation News Services
Muhammad Speaks
Negro Digest
New York Times
Sepia
The Baltimore Afro-American
The Black Panther
Time
Triple Jeopardy

Government Documents

National Advisory Commission of Selective Service. *In Pursuit of Equality: Who Serves When Not All Serve?* National Advisory Commission of Selective Service. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1967.

Office of the Secretary of Defense, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower and Reserve Affairs). *Project One-Hundred Thousand: Characteristics and Performance of 'New Standards' Men.* United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

President's Task Force on Manpower Conservation. *One-Third of a Nation: A Report on Young Men Found Unqualified for Military Service.* United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Office of Education, 1964.

United States Bureau of the Census, <u>Current Population Reports</u>, Series P-60, No. 68, "Poverty in the United States: 1959 to 1968." Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1969.

United States. Congress. House. Committee on Internal Security: *The Black Panther Party, its Origin and Development as Reflected in its Official Weekly Newspaper "The Black Panther Black Community News Service."* Staff study, Ninety-First Congress, Second Session. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1970.

United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Commerce Department's Bureau of the Census. *Social and Economic Conditions of Negroes in the United States,* by Herman P. Miller and Dorothy K. Newman. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1967.

United States Department of Labor, Office of Policy Planning and Research. *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action,* by Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Office of Planning and Research. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1965.

Movement Documents

Beal, Frances. "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female." In Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines, eds. *"Takin' it to the Streets": A Sixties Reader.* New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. 438-441.

"Black Men Stay Home!" April 1967, Social Movement Vertical File, Black Women's Organization Against War and Racism, Wisconsin State Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin. In Higgins, "Instruments of Righteousness," 195.

"Black Women!," n.d., Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Files, 1954-1972, University Microfilms International, Reel 52. In Higgins, "Instruments of Righteousness," 194.

Marian Johnson as told to Michael Davis. "Mother of 4 with Shotgun Vows to Stand Up to KKK." *Baltimore Afro-American,* May 2, 1967.

Patton, Gwendolyn. "Black People and the War," *Liberator* 7, No. 2 (February 1967): 11.

SNCC, "Statement on Vietnam," *Freedomways* 6, No. 1 (Winter, 1966): 6-7.

Memoirs/Autobiographies

Brown, Elaine. *A Taste of Power: A Black Woman's Story.* New York: Pantheon Books, 1992.

Carmichael, Stokely. *Ready for Revolution: The Life and Struggles of Stokely Carmichael (Kwame Ture).* With Ekwueme Michael Thelwell and Introduction by John Edgar Wideman. New York: Scribner, 2003.

Cleaver, Eldridge. *Soul on Ice.* New York: Delta Publishing, 1968.

Emanuel, Ed. *Soul Patrol.* New York: Ballantine Books, 2003.

French, Albert. *Patches of Fire: A Story of War and Redemption.* New York: Anchor Books, 1997.

Goff, Stanley, and Robert Sanders with Clark Smith. *Brothers: Black Soldiers in the Nam.* Novato: Presidio Press, 1982.

Hilliard, David and Lewis Cole. *This Side of Glory: The Autobiography of David Hilliard and the Story of the Black Panther Party*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1993.

hooks, bell. *Ain't I a Woman?* Boston: South End Press, 1981.

Johnson, Lyndon. *The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963-1969.* New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1971.

McDaniel, Norman. *Yet Another Voice*. New York: Hawthorn Book, 1975.

Newton, Huey. *Revolutionary Suicide*. 1973; reprint, New York: Penguin, 2009.

Newton, Michael. *Bitter Grain: Huey Newton and the Black Panther Party.* Los Angeles: Holloway House Publishing Company, 1980.

Wells, Ida B. *Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells.* Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1970.

Speeches

Davis, Ossie. "Eulogy." Faith Temple Church of God. February 27, 1965. Accessed January 13, 2018. http://malcolmx.com/eulogy/.

Johnson, Lyndon. "To Fulfill These Rights" - Commencement address at Howard University, June 4, 1965. Accessed January 13, 2018, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=27021.

King, Jr., Martin Luther. "Beyond Vietnam," (speech given at Riverside Church, New York, New York, 4 April 1967), accessed 21 April 2016 via *The King Center,* <http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive/document/mlks-speech-civil-rights-and-vietnam#>.

King, Jr., Martin Luther. "Speech on the Negro Family," (address at the University of Chicago on 27 January 1966), 26, accessed via *The King Center,* 21 April 2016, <http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive/document/mlk-address-university-chicago#>.

X, Malcolm. "Speech*."* 10 November 1963. New York City. Accessed Jan. 10, 2018. http://malcolmx.com/quotes/.

Published Primary

Belafonte, Harry. Interview in *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s.* Edited by Hampton, Henry and Steve Fayer with Sarah Flynn. New York: Bantam Books, 1990. 322-323.

Davis, Angela Y. *Women, Culture, and Politics.* New York: Vintage Books, 1990.

Greenberg, Joel. Chicago, Ill. Mar. 17, 1990. Vietnam veteran, member of the VVAW. Interview by Richard Moser in *The New Winter Soldiers: GI and Veteran Dissent During the Vietnam Era*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996.

Jesperson, Jess. Milwaukee, Wis. Mar. 21, 1990. Vietnam veteran, member and current Midwest regional coordinator of the VVAW. Interview by Richard Moser in *The New Winter Soldiers: GI and Veteran Dissent During the Vietnam Era*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996.

King, Jr. Martin Luther. *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* Boston: Beacon Press, 1967.

Latty, Yvonne, and Ron Tarver, comps. *We Were There: Voices of African American Veterans from World War II to the War in Iraq*. New York: Amistad, 2004.

Payton, Greg. Irvington, N.J. Dec. 1, 1989. Vietnam veteran, member of the VVAW. Interview by Richard Moser in *The New Winter Soldiers: GI and Veteran Dissent During the Vietnam Era*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996.

Sanchez, Sonia. Interview in *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s.* Edited by Hampton, Henry and Steve Fayer with Sarah Flynn. New York: Bantam Books, 1990. 327-28.

Schultz, Elroy. Two Rivers, Wis. Mar. 21, 1990. Vietnam veteran, member of the VVAW. Interview by Richard Moser in *The New Winter Soldiers: GI and Veteran Dissent During the Vietnam Era*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996.

Rainwater, Lee and William L. Yancey. *The Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy.* Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1967.

Scott, Benjamin. *The Coming of the Black Man.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1969.

Terry, Wallace. *Bloods: An Oral History of the Vietnam War by Black Veterans*. New York: Random House, 1984.

Secondary Sources

Abu-Jamal, Mumia. *We Want Freedom: A Life in the Black Panther Party.* Cambridge: South End
    Press, 2004.

Alt, William E. and Betty L. Alt. *Black Soldiers, White Wars: Black Warriors from Antiquity to the
    Present.* Westport and London: Praeger Publishers, 2002.

Arkin, William, and Lynne R. Dobrofsky. "Military Socialization and Masculinity." *Journal of
    Social Issues* 34, no. 1 (1978): 151-68.

Austin, Curtis J. *Up Against the Wall: Violence in the Making and Unmaking of the Black Panther
    Party.* Arkansas: University of Arkansas Press, 2006.

Bambara, Toni Cade, ed. *The Black Woman: An Anthology.* New York: Washington Square Press,
    1970.

Baptist, Edward E. "The Absent Subject: African American Masculinity and Forced Migration to
    the Antebellum Plantation Frontier." In *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity
    in the Old South*, edited by Craig Thompson Friend and Lorri Glover. Athens: University
    of Georgia Press, 2004.

Bederman, Gail. *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United
    States, 1880-1917*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Berger, Alan S. and William Simon. "Black Families and the Moynihan Report: A Research
    Evaluation*." Social Problems* 22, no. 2 (December 1974): 145-161.

Binkin, Martin and Mark J. Eitelberg with Alvin J. Schexnider and Marvin M. Smith. *Blacks and
    the Military.* Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institute, 1982.

Bloom, Alexander and Wini Breines, eds. *"Takin' it to the Streets": A Sixties Reader.* New York
    and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Bloom, Joshua and Waldo E. Martin Jr. *Black Against Empire: The History of the Black Panther
    Party*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013.

Borchert, Susan Danziger. "Masculinity and the Vietnam War." *Michigan Academician* 15, no. 2
    (Winter 1983): 195-207.

Bowker, Lee H., ed. *Masculinities and Violence.* California: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1998.

Brown, Scot. *Fighting for US: Maulana Karenga, the US Organization, and Black Cultural
    Nationalism.* New York: New York University Press, 2003.

Brown, Wilmette. *Black Women and the Peace Movement*. Bristol, England: Fallingwall Press, 1984.

Collier-Thomas, Bettye and V.P. Franklin*,* ed. *Sisters in the Struggle: African American Women in the Civil Rights-Black Power Movement*. New York: New York University Press, 2001.

Collins, Patricia Hill. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment.* New York: Routledge, 2000.

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

Daniel Barnes, Riché J. *Raising the Race: Black Career Women Redefine Marriage, Motherhood, and Community.* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2016.

Davis, Ronald. *Duke: The Life and Image of John Wayne.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998.

Dong, Cheryl Xue. "Black Power Soldiers: How the Rising Storm of Radical Black Masculinity in the Vietnam War Shaped Military Perceptions of African-American Soldiers." Master's Thesis, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, 2013.

Eagles, Charles W. "Toward New Histories of the Civil Rights Era," *Journal of Southern History*. Vol. 66, No. 4 (Nov. 2000), 815-848.

Estes, Steve*. I Am a Man! Race, Manhood, and the Civil Rights Movement.* Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005.

Evans, Sara. *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in America.* New York: Vintage Books, 1979.

Fairclough, Adam. "Martin Luther King, Jr. and the War in Vietnam." *Phylon* 45 (1984): 19-39.

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth.* New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1963.

Faris, J.H. "The Impact of Basic Training: The Role of the Drill Sergeant." In *The Social Psychology of Military Service*, edited by Nancy L. Goldman and David R. Segal. Beverly hills, Calif.: Sage, 1976.

Fleming, Cynthia Griggs. "Black Women Activists and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee: The Case of Ruby Doris Smith Robinson," *Journal of Women's History* 4:3 (Winter 1993): 64-82.

Fry, Joseph A. *The American South and the Vietnam War: Belligerence, Protest, and Agony in Dixie*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2015.

Garrow, David J. "Picking Up the Books: The New Historiography of the Black Panther Party." *Reviews in American History* 35 (2007): 650-670

Geary, Daniel. *Beyond Civil Rights: The Moynihan Report and Its Legacy.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015.

Gerzon, Mark. *A Choice of Heroes: The Changing Face of American Manhood*. Boston: Haughton Mifflin, 1982.

Giddings, Paula. *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*. New York: Bantam Books, 1984.

Gilmore, Glenda Elizabeth. *Defying Dixie: Radical Roots of Civil Rights, 1919-1950*. London: W.W. Norton and Company, 2008.

Gore, Dayo F., Jeanne Theoharis, and Komozi Woodard, eds. *Want to Start a Revolution?: Radical Women in the Black Freedom Struggle*. New York: New York University Press, 2009.

Gottlieb, Sherry Gershon. *Hell No, We Won't Go: Resisting the Draft During the Vietnam War*. New York: Viking, 1991.

Graham, Herman III. *The Brothers' Vietnam War: Black Power, Manhood and the Military Experience*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003.

Guistainis, J. Justin. *American Rhetoric and the Vietnam War.* Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1993.

Hampton, Henry, and Steve Fayer, with Sarah Flynn, comp. *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s.* New York: Bantam Books, 1990.

Hampton, Isaac. *The Black Officer Corps: A History of Black Military Advancement from Integration through Vietnam.* New York and London: Routledge, 2013.

Hare, Nathan. "The Frustrated Masculinity of the Negro Male." *Negro Digest* (August 1964): 5-9.

Harper, Phillip Bryan. *Are We Not Men? Masculine Anxiety and the Problem of African-American Identity.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Herzog, Tobey C. "John Wayne in a Modern Heart of Darkness: The American Soldier in Vietnam." In *Search and Clear: Critical Response to Selected Literature and Films of the Vietnam War*, edited by William Searle, 16-25. Bowling Green: Popular Press, 1988.

Higgins, Amanda L. "Instruments of Righteousness: The Intersections of Black Power and Anti-Vietnam War Activism in the United States, 1964-1972." 2013. Theses and Dissertations – History, 10, https://uknowledge.uky.edu/history_etds/10.

Hill, Lance. *The Deacons of Defense: Armed Resistance and the Civil Rights Movement*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.

Hilliard, David, ed. *The Black Panther Party: Service to the People Programs.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008.

Hilliard, David, and Donald Weise, eds. *The Huey P. Newton Reader.* New York: Seven Stories Press, 2002.

Hoch, Paul. *White Hero, Black Beast: Racism, Sexism, and the Mask of Masculinity.* London: Pluto Press Limited, 1979.

Hunter, Andrea G., and James Earl Davis. "Hidden Voices of Black Men: The Meaning, Structure, and Complexity of Manhood." *Journal of Black Studies* 25, no. 1 (1994): 20-40.

James, Tarah Elise. "Sisters in the Struggle: The Development of Black Feminism in SNCC" (MA thesis, Sarah Lawrence College, 2000).

Jeffries, Judson L., ed. *Black Power: In the Belly of the Beast.* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006.

Jeffries, Judson L., ed. *On the Ground: The Black Panther Party in Communities across America.* Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010.

Jeffords, Susan. *The Remasculinization of America: Gender and the Vietnam War*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989.

Jones, Charles E. *The Black Panther Party [Reconsidered].* Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 1998.

Joseph, Peniel E., ed. *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era.* New York: Routledge, 2006.

Joseph, Peniel E. "The Black Power Movement: A State of the Field." *The Journal of American History* 96, no. 3 (December 2009): 751-776.

Karst, Kenneth L. "The Pursuit of Manhood and the Desegregation of the Armed Forces." *UCLA Law Review* 38, no. 3 (February 1, 1991): 499. Accessed February 9, 2016. LexisNexis Academic.

Kimmel, Michael. *Manhood in America: A Cultural History.* New York: Free Press, 1996.

King, William M. "'Our Men in Vietnam': Black Media as a Source of the Afro-American Experience in Southeast Asia." *Vietnam Generation* 1, no. 8 (1989).

Kirk, John A. *Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement.* London and New York: Routledge, 2013.

Lazerow, Jama and Yohuru Williams, eds. *In Search of the Black Panther Party: New Perspectives on a Revolutionary Movement.* Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006.

Lears, T. J. Jackson. "The Destructive Element: Modern Commercial Society and the Martial Ideal." In *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920.* New York: Pantheon Books, 1981.

Levy, Emanuel. *John Wayne: Prophet of the American Way of Life.* New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1988.

Ling, Peter J. and Sharon Monteith, eds. *Gender and the Civil Rights Movement.* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1999.

Locke, Brandon T. "The Military-Masculinity Complex: Hegemonic Masculinity and the United States Armed Forces, 1940-1963." (Master's thesis, University of Nebraska, 2013).

Loeb, Jeff. "MIA: African American Autobiography of the Vietnam War." *African American Review* 31, no. 1 (1997).

Mayeri, Serena. *Reasoning from Race: Feminism, Law, and the Civil Rights Revolution.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011.

McGuire, Danielle L. *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance—A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010.

Moser, Richard R. *The New Winter Soldiers: GI and Veteran Dissent During the Vietnam Era*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996.

Mullen, Robert W. *Blacks and Vietnam.* Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1981.

Murray, Rolland. *Our Living Manhood: Literature, Black Power, and Masculine Ideology.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007.

Newton, Judith. *From Panthers to Promise Keepers: Rethinking the Men's Movement*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005.

Ogbar, Jeffrey O.G. *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.

Pearson, Hugh. *The Shadow of the Panther: Huey Newton and the Price of Black Power in America.* Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 1994.

Pendergast, Tom. *Creating the Modern Man: American Magazines and Consumer Culture, 1900-1950.* Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 2000.

Roberts, Randy. *John Wayne: American.* New York: Free Press, 1995.

Robnett, Belinda. *How Long, How Long: African American Women in the Struggle for Civil Rights*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Rojas, Fabio. *From Black Power to Black Studies: How a Radical Social Movement Became an Academic Discipline*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007

Schrock, Douglas and Michael Schwalbe, "Men, Masculinity, and Manhood Acts," *Annual Review of Sociology* Vol. 35 (2009): 277-295.

Self, Robert O. *All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy Since the 1960s*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2012.

Sexton, Patricia Cayo. *The Feminized Male: Classrooms, White Collars and the Decline of Manliness*. New York: Random House, 1969.

Siebold, Guy. "The Essence of Military Group Cohesion." *Armed Forces & Society* vol. 33 no. 2 (January 2007): 286-295.

Smethhurst, James Edward. *The Black Arts Movement: Literary Nationalism in the 1960s and 1970s.* Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2005.

Spencer, Robyn Ceanne. "Engendering the Black Freedom Struggle: Revolutionary Black Womanhood and the Black Panther Party in the Bay Area, California*." Journal of Women's History* 20, no. 1 (2008): 90-113.

Staples, Robert. *Black Masculinity: The Black Male's Role in American Society.* San Francisco: The Black Scholar Press, 1982.

Strain, Christopher B. *Pure Fire: Self-Defense as Activism in the Civil Rights Era.* Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2005.

Summers, Martin. *Manliness and its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity, 1900–1930*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.

Terry, Wallace. "Bringing the War Home," *Black Scholar* 2, no. 3 (1970): 6-18.

Tyson, Timothy. *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.

Van Deburg, William L. *New Day in Babylon: Black Power and American Culture, 1965-1975.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Ward, Stephen. "The Third World Women's Alliance: Black Feminist Radicalism and Black Power Politics." In *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era.* Edited by Peniel E. Joseph. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Westheider, James E. *The African American Experience in Vietnam: Brothers in Arms.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008.

———, *Fighting on Two Fronts: African Americans and the Vietnam War*. New York: New York University Press, 1997.

Worsencroft, John Christian. "Salvageable Manhood: Project 100,000 and the Gendered Politics of the Vietnam War." Master's thesis: University of Utah, 2011