N

NATIONALISM

Throughout American history, notions of manliness have been central to concepts of national identity, and devotion to the nation has been deemed fundamental to understandings of American manhood. Yet definitions of manliness in relation to national identity have been multiform, ranging from collectivist ideals emphasizing virtue, sacrifice, and surrender to government and the commonwealth to individualist ideals stressing individualism, pursuit of self-interest, independence, and defiance of authority. Although manhood and nationalism sometimes stand in an ambivalent relation to one another, they have also served as mutually reinforcing codes of cultural and political power in the United States.

Nationalism and Manhood in the Revolutionary Era

Concepts of manhood have been fundamental to American nationalism since the time of the nation's birth. Scholars have described the activities of the Sons of Liberty and the Minute Men (groups that helped to organize resistance against the British) as assertions of a nationalism grounded in notions of republicanism and masculinity, as a revolt against the parental authority of the "mother country," and as an antipatriarchal revolt against the authority of King and Parliament. For patriots, the manliness of their actions involved their heroic defiance of corrupt authority, the defense of liberty (portrayed as feminine), and the establishment of a nation based on republican virtue and male citizenship.

Masculine images and metaphors likewise pervaded debates on the nature of the national government at the Constitutional Convention of 1787, convened to modify the faltering Articles of Confederation. Both Federalist supporters and Anti-Federalist critics of a new and enlarged national government presented their positions as essential to the preservation of American manhood. They agreed that the government should be based on republican virtue (that citizens should cherish their independence while surrendering to legitimate national rule) but disagreed on what sort of national government was most consistent with republican manhood. Anti-Federalists, convinced that the centralized form of government proposed by the Federalists threatened virtue and independence, advocated a more decentralized system that would give freer reign to its male citizens. Federalists James Madison and Alexander Hamilton, on the other hand, favored a strong and vigorous national government and condemned the decentralized Articles government as weak. The Federalists argued that the Constitution would preserve manly virtue and independence, while also promoting national power, growth, and vitality. Fearing civic disorder, the Federalists also proposed the paternal and patriarchal authority of a strong presidency to bolster national stability by embodying national identity and unity.

The framers of the Constitution unanimously agreed that this masculine figure should be the heroic Revolutionary War general George Washington. As president, Washington sought to symbolize national unity and manly dignity by avoiding public statements on divisive national issues, and to symbolize civic order and the strength of the national government by personally leading a group of militia to quell the 1794 Whiskey Rebellion (an armed protest by settlers in western Pennsylvania against a government excise tax on corn whiskey). After his death in 1799, Washington became, in the American imagination, an embodiment of virtue and the patriarchal "father of his country." His birthday remained a major national holiday well into the nineteenth century, and the designers of the Washington Monument, begun in 1848, consciously sought a design that would represent both Washington's heroism and national strength. The monument, the man, and the presidency have remained powerful homogenizing and unifying national symbols.

National Identity and Masculinity in the Early Republic

Through the early nineteenth century, American national identity formed slowly and unevenly, but nationalism was a powerful current that was shaped by notions of masculinity. Conceptions of American national identity pivoted on the political and social ideologies (and the accompanying models of republican manhood) associated specifically with the presidencies of Thomas Jefferson (1801–09) and Andrew Jackson (1829–37). Jeffersonian ideology grounded national character and strength in the figures of the genteel patriarch, the heroic artisan, and the yeoman farmer—the first responsible for benevolent, paternalistic governance, and the latter two representing national productivity and industriousness. These figures ensured the perpetuation of republican virtue and

independence. Jacksonianism incorporated the ideals of the artisan and the small farmer, while adding a model of antiauthoritarian egalitarianism appropriate to citizenship in a democratic republic. Literary figures of the early to mid-nineteenth century, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman, similarly defined American national identity in terms of self-reliance and a celebration of the everyman. All of these models of American manhood and nationhood found symbolic embodiment in the figure of Uncle Sam, which emerged during the patriotism accompanying the War of 1812 and became a national icon thereafter.

Notions of race and whiteness reinforced this association of masculinity with nation. At a time when political citizenship was confined to white males, articulations and symbols of nationalism tended to remain firmly tied to notions of white manhood. The link between manhood, nationhood, and whiteness was most strongly visible in the idea of Manifest Destiny, which linked America's identity and future to western expansion by industrious white men, and to economic opportunity and political rights for white men. As the nation and national order became defined around the equality of white men, nonwhite males (particularly Native Americans and Mexicans) increasingly became perceived as undisciplined counterpoints to national identity and as violent enemies of the nation. Previous emphases on deference, paternalism, and patriarchy were projected onto African slaves, Native Americans, and Mexicans.

At the same time, heterogeneous local and regional identities persisted. Yet even these were couched in terms of masculine archetypes and became increasingly tied to national identities. The New England "Yankee," for example, a male figure characterized by entrepreneurial drive and ingenuity, became symbolic of American national vigor. The association between localism, nationalism, and manhood was also strong in the case of the republic of Texas (1836–44), whose founders Stephen Austin and Sam Houston couched Texas nationalism in terms of a heroic defense of republican freedom (and of African-American slavery) against Mexican authoritarianism. Perhaps the most obvious association between regional identities, nationalism, and concepts of masculinity involved the growing sectional conflict between the North and South, which defined themselves according to the respective symbolic figures of the entrepreneurial Yankee and the chivalrous "Cavalier."

Civil War, Masculinity, and the Articulation of National Identity

The Civil War (1861–65), though divisive in the short term, ultimately had a homogenizing impact on definitions of manliness and nation. The war valued manly sacrifice in the name of the nation (or region), discredited Southern nationalism as a legitimate form of masculine identification, and ultimately generated an ideal of heroic (white) warrior masculinity and strenuous living, emphasizing usefulness, duty, and commitment to the nation, that both Northern and Southern men could embrace.

Jeffersonian and Jacksonian concepts of republican manhood informed both Confederate and Union definitions of manliness and nation. Confederate nationalism emphasized fierce independence and white paternalism. Union nationalism, grounded in the idea that "free soil" and "free labor" meant "free men" (an idea that became the ideological basis of Abraham Lincoln's Republican Party) —was rooted in the Jeffersonian and Jacksonian idealizations of independent landowning, heroic artisanship, and liberty.

Northern constructions of national identity and masculinity placed a particular emphasis on self-sacrifice. Julia Ward Howe's "Battle Hymn of the Republic" (1862) celebrates Christ-like sacrifice in the name of liberty and freedom, as did President Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and second inaugural address. The Gettysburg cemetery, dedicated in 1863, like other national cemeteries that would follow, starkly symbolized in its orderly arrangement of tombstones the idea that the sacrifice of one's life to the collective national whole is the ultimate expression of manliness.

The Confederate defeat discredited Southern nationalism as a manifestation of American manliness—a point reinforced by Northern claims that Confederate president Jefferson Davis had been apprehended trying to escape dressed in women's clothes. Yet the persistence of Southern nationalism, and its ongoing relationship with Southern manhood, remained apparent in Southern cultural life through the remainder of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, manifest in the 1867 rise of the Ku Klux Klan, the spectacular success of the 1915 film *Birth of a Nation*, and the continuing visibility of the Confederate flag on state houses and pickup trucks.

Abraham Lincoln, meanwhile, though assassinated in 1865 just after the Civil War, emerged as a new and powerful symbol of manliness and national identity. Having eloquently articulated the meaning of American nationhood in his Gettysburg address and second inaugural address, and having presided over the victorious Union cause, he became an iconic representative of honesty and virtue, national strength and endurance, and the abolition of slavery in the name of freedom. Lincoln's symbolic status was perhaps most apparent in the growing tendency to add Lincolnesque features to renditions of Uncle Sam, and in the design of the Lincoln

Memorial, which was intended to associate his larger-than-life figure with national ideals and strength.

In the aftermath of the Civil War, the ideal of heroic warrior masculinity, with its emphasis on duty, obligation, and the "strenuous life," became the chief model for American nationalism. The emergence of this notion of manliness and its rise to national prominence was apparent as early as 1866 in the first Grand Review of the Grand Army of the Republic. This parade, organized by Union veterans, associated manhood and nationalism with collective identity, defense of union, the Northern cause, and whiteness; it excluded Confederate veterans as well as the women and African Americans who had contributed to Union victory. By defining American national identity as masculine and white, this particular construction of the heroic warrior model helped foreclose the radical potential for social change suggested by the Reconstruction period.

Heroic warrior masculinity and the concept of the strenuous life were also encouraged by renewed western expansion after 1865, and by the growing imperialist impulse of the late nineteenth century. White men, who claimed to be fulfilling their national (as well as gender and racial) destinies, were pitted against nonwhite men along the frontier, as well as in the Caribbean, Latin America, Asia, and the Pacific, further reinforcing the postwar synchronization between manhood and nation. The ongoing definition of the United States in terms of white Anglo-Saxon manhood was further evident in late-nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century immigration legislation virtually excluding immigration from Asia and from southern and eastern Europe by 1924.

Manhood and National Identity in the Twentieth Century

In the twentieth century, two world wars, the Cold War, and growing anxiety over Middle Eastern terrorism afforded new opportunities to articulate notions of national identity grounded in constructions of masculinity. In World Wars I and II, U.S. propaganda—such as the well-known poster of Uncle Sam calling men to national military service—associated the nation and its male soldiers with a vigorous and aggressive defense against perceived threats to freedom and democracy. American soldiers, in the form of the World War I "doughboy" and the World War II "G.I. Joe," became symbols of nationalism and manliness. During the Cold War, Americans, concerned with asserting and demonstrating the superiority of American institutions to Soviet communism, anxiously defined American life in terms of masculine power, diplomatic and military assertiveness,

economic success, sexual and physical prowess, moral righteousness, and patriotism.

Yet traditional articulations of masculinity and nationalism began to shift in the aftermath of World War II. The growing power of the civil rights and racial identity movements after a war in which the defense of American institutions was linked to the defeat of white racism discredited the traditional link between nationalism and whiteness. The new emphasis on a racially inclusive nationalism was dramatically expressed in Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, "I Have a Dream" speech, delivered at the Lincoln Memorial in 1963.

The Vietnam War also challenged traditional associations between manliness and national identity. A widespread antiwar movement questioned the war's moral and democratic aims and associated manhood with a principled resistance to national policy. Furthermore, the loss of that conflict against Asian men deemed inferior and even effeminate undermined the power of the figure of the (male) soldier as a signifier of national strength. This problem was apparent in the debate over the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. The memorial committee's decision to use inscriptions on a wall rather than embodied male figures generated a controversy that ended only with the addition of a bronze sculpture of a group of American soldiers symbolizing American warrior masculinity.

A promise to restore the association between nationalism and masculinity in the aftermath of the Vietnam War and the 1979 seizure of American hostages in Iran was a significant element in the successful 1980 presidential campaign of Ronald Reagan. During his presidency (1981–89), Reagan employed the rhetoric of warrior masculinity against the Soviet Union and Middle Eastern terrorism, authorizing military strikes against a leftist government in Grenada and against Libyan leader and suspected terrorist sponsor Muammar al-Qaddafi. His example was followed by his vice president and successor, George H. W. Bush (1989–93), in his approach to Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein during the 1991 Persian Gulf War. President George W. Bush, who took office in 2001, used similar rhetoric against both Hussein and terrorist organizations deemed a threat to American security.

In the aftermath of the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani was praised in public discourse for embodying republican traditions of service and civic devotion, while New York City firefighters were upheld as inspiring symbols of manly sacrifice and national loss. These developments made it clear that longstanding associations of masculinity with national identity, sacrifice, and devotion, and the translation of local paragons

of manhood into national ones, remain powerful cultural impulses in American life.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* London: Verso, 1983.

Kann, Mark E. *On the Man Question: Gender and Civic Virtue in America.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991.

Nagel, Joane. "Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 21 (March 1998): 245–269.

Nelson, Dana D. *National Manhood: Capitalist Citizenship and the Imagined Fraternity of White Men.* Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1998.

O'Leary, Cecilia Elizabeth. *To Die For: The Paradox of American Patriotism.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999.

Rogin, Michael Paul. *Fathers and Children: Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian.* New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1991.

Sharp, Joanne P. "Gendering Nationhood: A Feminist Engagement With National Identity." In *Bodyspace: Destabilizing Geographies of Gender and Sexuality*, edited by Nancy Duncan. London: Routledge, 1996.

Waldstreicher, David. *In The Midst Of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Zelinsky, Wilbur. *Nation Into State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundations of American Nationalism.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.

FURTHER READING

Bederman, Gail. *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Glassberg, David. *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990.

Higham, John. *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925.* 2nd ed. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1994.

Lind, Michael. *The Next American Nation: The New Nationalism and the Fourth American Revolution.* New York: Free Press, 1996.

Rydell, Robert W. *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire At American International Expositions, 1876–1916.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.

Travers, Len. *Celebrating the Fourth: Independence Day and the Rites of Nationalism in the Early Republic.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997.

RELATED ENTRIES

Agrarianism; American Revolution; Citizenship; Cold War; Democratic Manhood; Emerson, Ralph Waldo; Heroism; Imperialism; Jackson, Andrew; Lincoln, Abraham; Manifest Destiny; Militarism; Nativism; Patriarchy; Patriotism; Politics; Reagan, Ronald; Republicanism; Uncle Sam; Vietnam War; War; Washington, George; Whiteness; Whitman, Walt; World War I; World War II

—Thomas Winter

THE NATION OF ISLAM

Arising amidst the segregation, racial violence, and economic disparity of the early twentieth century, the Nation of Islam (NOI) was embraced by black Americans yearning for racial pride. By proposing a model of masculinity founded upon a vigilant defense of African-American society and culture, a quest for financial independence, and a reclaiming of self-mediated identity, the NOI offered a striking alternative to extant white paradigms that devalued black men's intellects and abilities and African-American models that emphasized racial assimilation. Since that time, this movement has continued to promote a style of masculinity and a social agenda welcomed by many African Americans, particularly marginalized ones.

In the 1910s, a surge of black nationalism swept the United States. Groups such as Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association sought self-determination, economic sovereignty, and, often, repatriation to Africa. The NOI surfaced during the Great Depression to address the concerns of large numbers of southern blacks moving to northern cities. Faced with discrimination and an impoverished lifestyle, many of these individuals proved amenable to calls for black separatism and fiscal autonomy. W. D. Fard, a mysterious itinerant peddler, arrived in Detroit in 1930 and began teaching that African Americans were divinely favored by a black God. Far from adhering to strict Islamic law, Fard's eclectic NOI philosophy borrowed from earlier black nationalist movements, the Bible, and his own Afrocentric interpretation of humanity's origins, among other sources. Believed by his followers to be the Messiah who would initiate a racial Armageddon, Fard disappeared under mysterious circumstances in 1934. Elijah Muhammad then assumed leadership of the movement.

Under Muhammad's direction, the NOI accepted Fard as a manifestation of Allah, while also enhancing many of his teachings. Until apocalyptically released from bondage,