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RELATED ENTRIES

American Revolution; Citizenship; Class; Crisis of Masculinity; Cult of Domesticity; Democratic Manhood; Feminism; Immigration; Imperialism; Industrialization; Labor Movement and Unions; Manifest Destiny; Market Revolution; Marriage; Masculine Domesticity; Men's Movements; Men's Studies; Military; Nationalism; Patriotism; Politics; Postmodernism; Promise Keepers; Race; Religion and Spirituality; Republicanism; Sexual Harassment; Sexual Revolution; Slavery; Suffragism; Television; Violence; War; Washington, George; Western Frontier; Whiteness; White Supremacism; Work; Working-Class Manhood

—*Thomas Winter*

PATRIOTISM

Patriotism and definitions of manliness have a shared history in the United States. While the pressure to be "patriotic" has been especially strong in times of national crisis or war, patriotism in general has been perceived as a significant component of manliness. Although women have been called upon to be patriotic as well, women's patriotism has been linked to the private realms of home, family, and motherhood, whereas men's has been connected to public politics and the military.

Revolutionary and Early National America

American patriotism first appeared with intensifying resistance to British colonial policies in the 1760s and 1770s. American opponents of British laws identified themselves as "Patriots" and, defining their cause as a heroic defense of liberty, formed organizations such as the Sons of Liberty. An association between manliness and patriotism thus underlay the formation of national identity in the United States.

Still, patriotic devotion to an abstract concept of American nationhood took form only gradually and unevenly. During the debates surrounding the writing of the Constitution, devotion to the nation was identified with the civic virtue that early Americans considered essential to liberty under a republican form of government. Yet there were differences over the implications of manly patriotism: Both Federalist supporters of the Constitution and a strong national government and their Anti-Federalist critics associated their positions with republican manhood and the true fulfillment of Revolutionary patriotism. In light of such divisions, the figure of General George Washington (soon to be President Washington) served as both a powerful masculine symbol for national integration and a focus for patriotic sentiment. His birthday remained an important occasion for public celebrations of manly patriotism through much of the nineteenth century.

The Antebellum Period

Patriotic devotion to the American nation intensified during and after the War of 1812—sometimes considered a second war for independence—and again during the 1830s and 1840s as white Americans linked westward expansion to Manifest Destiny, patriotic duty, and masculinity. In this context, the independence of Texas and the unsuccessful 1836 defense of the Alamo by so-called freedom fighters such as Davy Crockett served as symbols for masculine patriotic perseverance. Many white Americans regarded geographic expansion in the Pacific during the 1840s and the nation's expansionist war against Mexico as a fulfillment of a patriotic continental vision of the United States as a nation. At the same time, opponents of the Mexican War, such as transcendentalist Henry David Thoreau, regarded resistance to the war as an expression of American ideals and a mark of manly patriotism.

Race, ethnicity, and religion figured implicitly, yet prominently, in antebellum definitions of patriotism and manliness. Western expansion carried a promise of free land and economic opportunities for white men. The removal of nonwhite,

non-Protestant men (Native Americans and Mexicans) from western lands was justified by a race-coded, patriotic manliness. Similarly, nativists defined their opposition to Irish immigration in terms of a race-coded manly patriotism: They portrayed the Roman Catholic Irish as nonwhite, devoted to an authority outside the United States (the pope in Rome), and therefore incapable of undivided patriotism.

Antebellum patriotism ultimately fractured along sectional lines and became entwined with conflicting concepts of American manhood. Northerners associated their patriotic devotion to the nation with a vision of manliness grounded in independent farming, "free soil," and free labor; many of them regarded John Brown's violent resistance to slavery and his 1859 execution as an act of patriotic and heroic martyrdom. Southern notions of patriotic manliness relied on commitment to a patriarchal social order, racial hierarchy, slavery, and regional identity. These conflicting definitions of patriotism, manliness, and nation contributed to secession and Civil War (1861–65) and became bases on which both sides rallied their populations and armies.

The Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

In the aftermath of the Civil War, Americans, from both North and South, redefined notions of patriotism and manliness as they tried to reconstruct the nation. Northern men were inclined to view Abraham Lincoln (assassinated in 1865 after the end of the Civil War) as a patriotic martyr to freedom and national unity. White Southerners, meanwhile, retained a regionally based patriotic manhood expressed in celebrations of the "Lost Cause." African Americans associated the cause of emancipation with a manly, patriotic commitment to national ideals of liberty. Black Union-army veterans celebrated Emancipation Day and articulated a vision of patriotic manliness based on racial equality. However, in the name of national reconciliation, white Americans eventually elevated Southern soldiers from traitors to loyal sons of the nation. Notions of patriotic manliness thus acquired a racial dimension, for the military valor of white men eclipsed loyalty to the nation as a mark of manly patriotism. The Civil War came to be perceived as a heroic cause that had strengthened national bonds and joined Northern and Southern men in shared patriotic resolve.

Race and class became increasingly significant dimensions of U.S. patriotism and masculinity in the late nineteenth century. The Spanish-American War (1898), the Philippine-American War (1902), and the founding of the Boy Scouts of America (1910) reinforced notions of martial valor and Anglo-Saxonism as appropriate expressions of manly patriotism and

fused them to a commitment and devotion to the nation. After 1880, meanwhile, an influx of immigrants from southern and southeastern Europe and from Asia—perceived as nonwhite and alien to U.S. society and culture—further reinforced white Americans' belief that patriotism belonged properly to white men. Emerging national trade unions such as the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of Labor associated working-class pride, equality, and economic justice with manly patriotism. Yet these same ideals also led trade unions to advocate the exclusion of Asian workers, who were perceived as unmanly. Working-class definitions of manliness and patriotism thus became linked to notions of race.

The World Wars

The two world wars of the twentieth century sparked strong expressions of patriotic masculinity in American culture. In both wars, patriotic devotion to the United States was portrayed as the highest expression of manliness, whereas war resisters were depicted as unmanly, effeminate, and unpatriotic. During this period the figure of Uncle Sam became one of the most visible and powerful symbols of manly patriotism.

These years also witnessed the creation of several other icons embodying patriotic manhood. The Lincoln Memorial, dedicated in 1922 in Washington, D.C., and featuring a larger-than-life statue of President Lincoln as the "Great Emancipator," stands as a tribute to patriotic sacrifice and unity of the nation. Likewise, the presidential monument at Mount Rushmore, South Dakota (dedicated in 1927 and completed in 1939) features the busts of Presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln, a grouping that, to some, associates patriotism and nation with white patriarchy.

Cold War America

The onset of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union created a new framework for patriotic manliness. Politically, the anticommunist position exemplified by Republican senator Joseph R. McCarthy of Wisconsin was perceived by many as an expression of patriotic manhood—a perception that McCarthy himself articulated explicitly and, sometimes, bombastically. Conversely, dissent from U.S. Cold War policies was construed as unpatriotic and unmanly—and was often associated with homosexuality. A true man, according to Cold War American ideology, showed his patriotism through his dedication to the capitalist system in his work, and by giving proof of his heterosexuality by fathering offspring within the confines of marriage. Another outlet for patriotic manliness in the 1950s included "preparedness" for possible
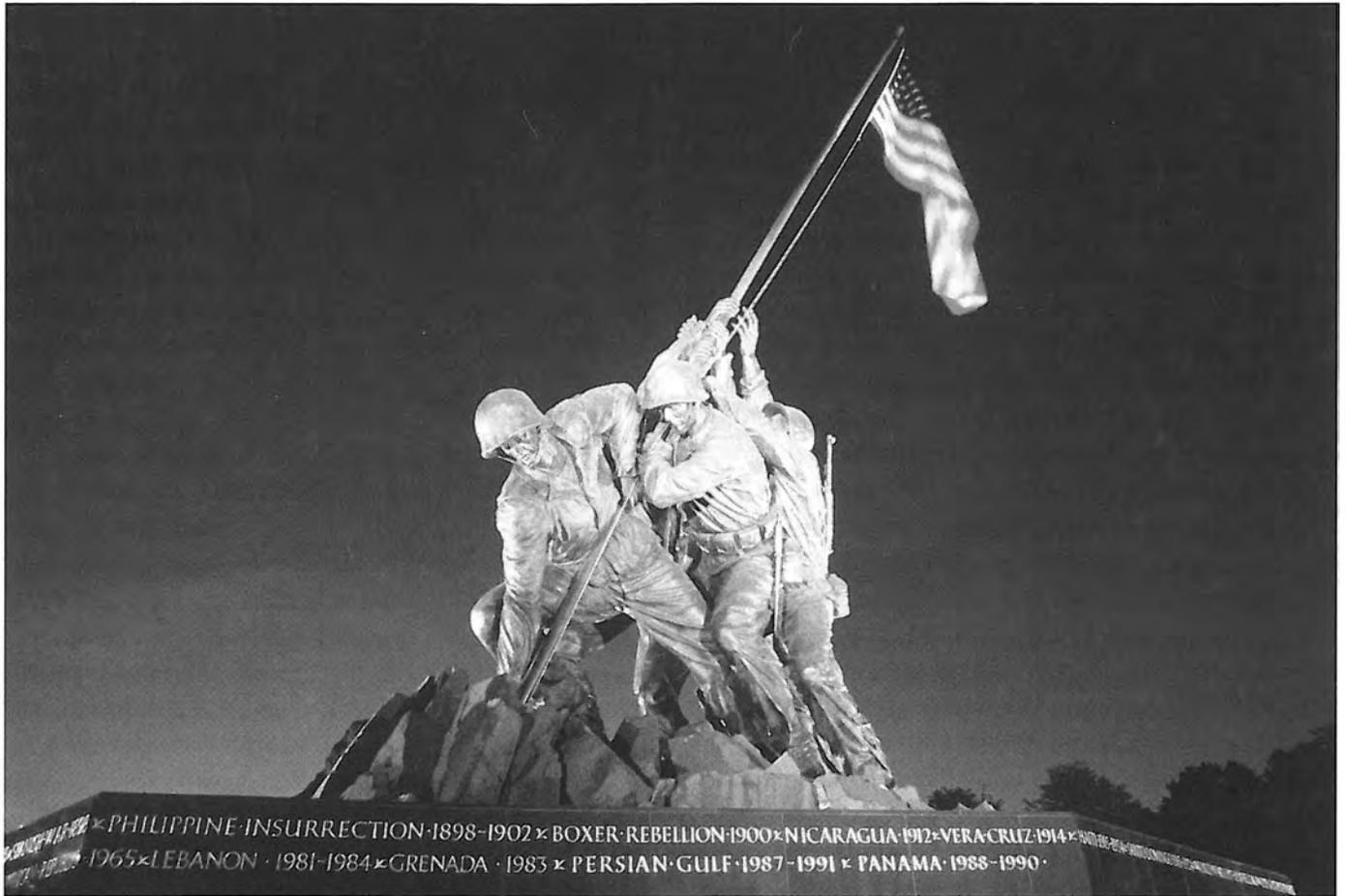
The U.S. Marine Corps memorial statue Iwo Jima *symbolizes the close association in American culture between masculinity, patriotism, military service, and national identity. (© William Manning/Corbis)*

nuclear conflict, such as the installation of a bomb shelter for the protection of one's family in one's backyard.

By the 1960s, ideas of what constituted manly patriotism became contested both at home and abroad. Movements for social justice, such as the civil rights, Chicano, and American Indian movements (with nonwhites and sometimes women in positions of leadership), successfully challenged the idea that patriotic dedication to liberty and equality is the sole purview of white men. Support of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War was initially portrayed as patriotic, yet as resistance to the war mounted, antiwar activists argued that manly patriotism required a commitment to social justice rather than unquestioning support of government policy.

Post–Cold War America

The end of the Cold War problematized previous definitions of patriotism and manliness. But Americans applied the rhetoric of bellicose patriotism and masculinity to newly identified enemies, such as Japan, perceived during the 1990s as an economic competitor to American commercial prowess, and Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, a target of American military attacks in 1991 and 2003. In the absence of a rival superpower, even the American government itself became the target of domestic militia groups such as the Montana Freemen, who identified themselves as manly patriots defending liberty against overreaching federal power. Timothy McVeigh, who led the bomb attack on the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in 1995, certainly saw himself as an exponent of a patriotic masculinity—and he viewed his 2001 execution as a form of martyrdom. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, definitions of, and reverence for, manly patriotism gained new currency, as exemplified in widespread accolades for New York City police officers and firefighters.

Conclusion

Associations between patriotism and manliness as key components of citizenship have played a significant role in American culture, both contributing to definitions of national identity and serving at times as powerful foci of