A Character and A Fame to Model Their Own: Statesmanship, Masculinity, and Honor in Northern Political Culture, 1852-1874

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Abstract

The advent of the 1850s ushered in a period great change in the United States. Finding themselves in a moment of transition punctuated with a political changing of the guard, Americans were prompted to consider what kinds of political leadership they valued in the midst of sectional conflict and crisis. By the 1870s, the ideals northerners held looked very different than those touted only two decades before. Using the eulogies of Daniel Webster, Stephen A. Douglas, and Charles Sumner, this thesis explores how changing ideals of masculinity drove the transformation of northern political culture and in particular its values regarding statesmanship and honor. It argues that as shifting gender ideals and the politics of slavery prompted northerners to reconsider what kind of manhood they believed was capable of maintaining the nation's character, voter preferences shifted from favoring statesmanship rooted in restrained manhood to statesmanship based on martial manhood.

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Introduction

On June 9, 1874, George William Curtis stood before a "great assemblage" of people gathered in Boston's Music Hall, ready to deliver his eulogy of Charles Sumner only a few months after the Massachusetts senator's death. Although a full-sized portrait, surrounded by black and white draperies and plentiful foliage, already stood at the front to remind the audience of their senator's "commanding and attractive presence," Curtis attempted to conjure an image of Sumner delivering "his first great plea for justice" in the Senate in front of Daniel Webster, his predecessor. Left with "baffled hopes and bitter disappointment" after spending years trying to "placate the implacable" Slave Power, Webster "gazed with those eyes of depthless melancholy" as Sumner began his "crusade" of "uncompromising hostility to slavery," launched by his speech against the Fugitive Slave Act in 1852. "The time required such a leader," Curtis told the crowd, "a man who did not believe that there was another side to the question; who would treat difference of opinion almost as moral delinquency; and the hour found the man in Sumner." The scene that Curtis painted with his words—the once-great Webster eclipsed by the bolder, indomitable Sumner—aimed to signal to the audience a symbolic moment in America's political history. Webster's generation of political leaders had been replaced by a "demanding dawn," embodied in Sumner, whose words were "forecasting the future, heralding the new America."[1]

Curtis' retrospective depiction of Webster in 1852 could not have differed more those actually proffered that year when, a few months after Sumner's speech, Webster had passed away. A far cry from the shattered, brokenhearted man of Curtis' eulogy, Webster's own eulogists held he had died "a great man," struck down "in the full vigor and active exercise of his

[1] George William Curtis in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner* (Boston: Wright & Potter, 1874), 94, 145, 147, 148, 145-146.

wonderful powers, while in the discharge of a great office, and at the moment when all eyes were turned upon him as the foremost man of the nation." His memory, insisted one eulogist, "is a *great memory*, sir, and will go down to posterity, as one of the country's heirlooms." After spending his last term as senator guiding the nation through "that later tempest of sectional disturbance" in 1850, his eulogists maintained that Webster ultimately died "with his fame undiminished … and regarded with anxious solicitude by a grateful country."[2] Clearly, a gulf greater than twenty years separated Webster's eulogists and Curtis.

Across the Civil War era, a number of the nation's leading politicians—figures like Daniel Webster, Stephen A. Douglas, and Charles Sumner, long involved the controversies of sectional conflict—passed away, leaving the living behind to mourn their deaths. As northerners gathered in 1852, 1861, and 1874 to "drop a tear over the new-made grave" of their former senators, they raised eulogies in tribute to the departed. Yet as Curtis' eulogy made clear, *who* was praised and *why* changed dramatically over time. The varied ways northerners chose to honor Webster, Douglas, and Sumner exposed how northern values regarding political leadership, masculinity, and honor shifted from 1852-1874. Consequently, such eulogies help illuminate how northern political culture transformed across the Civil War era and clarify why a northerner like Curtis would, in 1874, contrast the "Worn, wasted, sad" Webster with the "towering, dauntless, radiant" Sumner.[3]

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[2] Ira Perley, *Eulogy of the Hon. Ira Perley, On the Late Daniel Webster: Pronounced Before the Executive And Legislative Departments of New Hampshire, December 22, 1852* (Concord: Butterfield & Hill, 1852), 6; John Appleton and Lewis Cass in *Eulogies Delivered In the Senate And House of Representatives of the United States On the Life And Character of Hon. John C. Calhoun, of South Carolina, Hon. Henry Clay, of Kentucky, And Hon. Daniel Webster, of Massachusetts* (Washington: Foster & Cochran, 1853), 23, 10, 11.

[3] Daniel D. Pratt in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner, (A Senator of Massachusetts,): Delivered In the Senate And House of Representatives, Forty-third Congress, First Session, April 27, 1874, With Other Congressional Tributes of Respect*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1874), 29; George William Curtis in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 145.

In principle, historians have acknowledged the importance of manhood to an understanding of antebellum politics. Because both citizenship and political authority were premised on white manhood, ideas regarding masculinity were woven into the fabric of politics, providing crucial insights into the formation and operation of political culture.[4] Manhood was, as James Corbett David has argued, the "fundamental precondition for political authority" in antebellum politics.[5] Historians of the South in particular have done much to incorporate these insights into their analyses, examining how southern constructions of masculinity provided both the basis for cross-class political alliances as well as the criteria some voters used to respond to political events and public officials.[6] While historians of the North have investigated how the Liberty Party, Free Soil Party, Republican Party, and Democratic Party politicized and deployed different ideologies of gender and sexuality, they have been slower to specifically interrogate how ideas of masculinity shaped the political culture of the North. Consequently, as Michael Thomas Smith has argued, "The role of masculinity in shaping both political discourse and political reality … remains underappreciated."[7] Exploring how gender shaped northern ideals of statesmanship, though, provides an avenue for understanding how masculinity molded the expectations and desires of northern voters.

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[4] Nancy Isenberg, *Sex and Citizenship in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 8, 10-11, 22-24, 27-28.
[5] James Corbett David, "The Politics of Emasculation: The Caning of Charles Sumner and Elite Ideologies of Manhood in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century United States," *Gender & History* 19, no. 2 (2007), 324.
[6] See, for example, Stephanie McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, and the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Low Country* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Christopher J. Olsen, *Political Culture and Secession in Mississippi: Masculinity, Honor, and the Antiparty Tradition, 1830-1860* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
[7] Michael Thomas Smith, "Abraham Lincoln, Manhood, and Nineteenth-Century American Political Culture," in *This Distracted and Anarchical People: New Answers for Old Questions About the Civil War-Era North,* ed. Andrew L. Slap and Michael Thomas Smith (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 30; Michael D. Pierson, *Free Hearts and Free Homes: Gender and American Antislavery Politics* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Lauren N. Haumesser, *The Democratic Collapse: How Gender Politics Broke a Party and a Nation, 1856-1861*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2022).

Examining how masculinity shaped political culture in the North also provides an opportunity to re-evaluate the regional distinctiveness of honor. Much of the work that has long defined the historiography on honor has framed it as a standardized code of behavior unique to the South based on the premise that during the early nineteenth century, only the South had the kind of "traditional" or "premodern" social structure necessary to sustain an honor culture.[8] Recent scholarship, however, has challenged the extent to which the South had a uniform code of honor. Beyond recognizing that the South had a more "dislocated and dynamic" socioeconomic structure than earlier work conceded, scholars have also emphasized that the South as much as the North had competing versions of masculinity.[9] Because honor was a fundamentally gendered concept such that "manhood gave honor subject matter," rival models of masculinity translated into different standards of honor. Thus, as James Corbett David has argued, "what it meant to be manly or honourable was contested *within* as well as across sectional lines."[10] Acknowledging the multiplicity and flexibility of honor has allowed scholars like James McPherson, Lorien Foote, and Kanisorn Wongsrichanalai to identify how Union soldiers and college-educated New Englanders deployed concepts of honor.[11] Re-examining the role masculinity played in shaping

[8] Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), xii, xvi-xvii; for a perspective that links honor specifically to slavery, see Kenneth S. Greenberg, *Honor and Slavery: Lies, Duels, Noses, Masks, Dressing as a Woman, Gifts, Strangers, Humanitarianism, Death, Slave Rebellions, the Proslavery Argument, Baseball, Hunting, and Gambling in the Old South* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1996).

[9] Edward L. Ayers, "Foreword: Honor's Southern Journey," in *The Field of Honor: Essays on Southern Character and American Identity*, ed. John Mayfield and Todd Hagstette (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2017), xiv; Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 11; Peter S. Carmichael, *The Last Generation: Young Virginians in Peace, War, and Reunion* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 6, 11, 91-92.

[10] Anna Koivusalo, *The Man Who Started the Civil War: James Chesnut, Honor, and Emotion in the American South* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2022), 6; David, "The Politics of Emasculation," 325.

[11] James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Lorien Foote, *The Gentlemen and the Roughs: Manhood, Honor, and Violence in the Union Army* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2010); Kanisorn Wongsrichanalai, *Northern*

the values inherent in northern political culture provides an opportunity to further investigate both how northerners conceptualized and utilized honor as well as how northern honor might have changed over time.

Eulogies of political figures like Daniel Webster, Stephen A. Douglas, and Charles Sumner provide a useful lens for exploring how masculinity and honor molded the ideals of statesmanship embedded in northern political culture. Studies of political culture often turn to congressional debates, campaign speeches, and newspapers engaged in day-to-day political conversations because of their potential to reveal the "*implicit orientations* or the *taken-for-granteds* of politics," the "values and attitudes that may not always be articulated or even consciously considered."[12] Undoubtedly useful as these conventional sources are, eulogies deserve to join their ranks. After all, eulogies of political figures made explicit the usually implicit attitudes and values people held regarding political leadership, statesmanship, and political behavior. Especially when placed within the context of nineteenth-century public funeral practices, eulogies and other public commemorations of political figures provide a means of exploring the ideals of political leadership embedded in the political culture of the North.

Public funerals in the nineteenth-century United States were communal events which built upon a long tradition of using the death of prominent politicians as an occasion to stake out a shared past, present, and future. As Sarah Purcell argues in *The Spectacle of Grief: Public Funerals and Memory in the Civil War Era*, "Praising a dead hero was exactly the kind of occasion that was designed to prompt a community to reflect on memories of the past and to

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Character: College-Educated New Englanders, Honor, Nationalism, and Leadership in the Civil War Era (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016).

[12] Olsen, *Political Culture and Secession*, 9, 10.

decide on some version of agreed-upon meaning."[13] While no mourner had the final word on what that meaning ought to be, public commemorations provided a venue in which people tacitly debated their ideas on their nation's history and its future direction. Because they usually included some sort of eulogy, they also provided a space for communities to contest what characteristics they idealized in their public figures. By their nature, eulogies "were designed to emphasize the positive virtues of the deceased political figures."[14] As such, they exposed what kinds of behaviors, personalities, and political styles people thought were desirable and praiseworthy.

The size and scope of public commemorations in the Civil War era only further emphasizes the ways they encouraged communal reflection and debate. Although public funerals had long been a fixture of American culture, they began to take on new proportions in the 1850s due to technological changes and the anxieties prompted by sectional conflict. The death of Henry Clay of Kentucky in 1852 marked a particular turning point for new scales of public mourning and commemoration. Long cherished by many as the nation's "Great Compromiser," Clay's death was grieved across the United States. Congress not only bestowed him the honor of being the first government official to be laid in state at the U.S. Capitol Rotunda but also spent more to provide for his funeral and for the safe return of his remains to Kentucky than other public officials before him—an amount totaling $16,651.26 compared to the $4,861 spent four years prior on John Quincy Adams' funeral. As Clay's body traveled over 1,200 miles from Washington D.C. to his home in Lexington, scores of people gathered to see his corpse or to catch even a glimpse of the funeral train which carried it. Cities like Baltimore, Philadelphia,

[13] Sarah J. Purcell, *The Spectacle of Grief: Public Funerals and Memory in the Civil War Era* (University of North Carolina Press, 2022), 5.
[14] Purcell, *The Spectacle of Grief*, 5.

New York, Albany, Rochester, Buffalo, Columbus, Cincinnati, and Louisville held funerals for him along the way, and those that did not could still read about those services in the newspapers. All in all, millions of people memorialized his death in one form or another.[15]

When Daniel Webster, Stephen A. Douglas, and Charles Sumner died in 1852, 1861, and 1874, respectively, there were similar outpourings of grief. Across the North, the public consumed numerous reports of their last days on earth, complete with intimate conversations with the deceased and their closest loved ones. Locals and visitors poured in from all over to attend their funerals, and those unable to travel could still immerse themselves in the solemnities through newspapers that spared no detail in describing the deceased's burial clothes, their coffins embellished with botanical bouquets, the funeral procession and rites, their graves, and their burial. At public meetings throughout the country, people passed resolutions memorializing their death and promising to pay tribute by ringing bells, closing businesses, wearing black armbands, and draping towns in mourning. For months after Webster, Douglas, and Sumner's deaths, northerners delivered and listened to eulogies mourning the senators in a wide range of settings, including state and federal legislatures, towns, colleges, and even literary associations. As a whole, their deaths were highly public affairs which occasioned elaborate communal mourning and incorporated individuals from across the North.[16]

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[15] Purcell, *The Spectacle of Grief*, 12-13, 16-18, 21-23, 27-29, 33-34; Sarah Bischoff Paulus, "America's Long Eulogy for Compromise: Henry Clay and American Politics, 1854–58," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 4, no. 1 (2014), 32-34.

[16] For a small sampling, see *Daily Ohio Statesman* (Columbus Ohio), October 26, 1852, *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*, https://infoweb-newsbank-com.utk.idm.oclc.org/apps/readex/?p=EANX; *Constitution* (Middletown, Connecticut), October 27, 1852; "Last Moments of Daniel Webster," *Sangamo Journal* (Springfield, Illinois), October 26, 1852, *Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections*, https://idnc.library.illinois.edu/; Cortlandt Van Rensselaer, *New Jersey's Tribute to Massachusetts: A Eulogy Pronounced On Daniel Webster, Before the Citizens of Burlington, N.J., At the Lyceum, On November 4th, 1852* (Burlington, N.J., 1852), 33-40; *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas, Delivered in the Senate and House of Representatives on Tuesday, July 9, 1861* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1861), 5-6; "Funeral Obsequies of the Late Hon. S. A. Douglas and

As people joined in on public funerals and other commemorations, they did not merely honor the dead but also produced national conversations which evaluated Webster, Douglas, and Sumner's long careers. Through these discussions, public memorials became "politicized rituals" in which eulogists were called upon to attach meaning to the deceased's time in office and to the people's grief at their loss.[17] Responding to this invitation, eulogists asserted their own standards of statesmanship through the praise they lavished upon Webster, Douglas, and Sumner. Whether they spoke truthfully, exaggerated, or completely fabricated their accounts of Webster, Douglas, and Sumner's lives, eulogists' applause revealed what characteristics they believed their audience either *would* or *should* identify as laudable. The didactic element of eulogies only further increased these tendencies, as many eulogists spoke with the explicit goal of drawing a moral lesson on statesmanship from the deceased's life. As one eulogist remarked, they gathered to "unfold some of the lessons to be learned at his grave" in order to "make his memory a precious inheritance" that present and future generations could learn from. These lessons were intended to serve as a "beacon of light" to guide others who desired to "tread the paths of honor" like Webster, Douglas, and Sumner.[18] Both explicitly and implicitly, then, eulogists used their commentary on the deceased's life in order to expound what characteristics made them

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Oration of Rt. Rev. Jas. Duggan, D. D., Bishop of Chicago. June 6th, 1861," (Chicago: J. J. Kearney, 167 South Clark St., 1861), box 54, folder 3, Stephen A. Douglas Papers (hereafter SADP), Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library, 3-8; Resolution in Honor of Stephen A. Douglas, Jersey City Common Council, NJ, June 4, 1861, box 54, folder 3, SADP; Resolution Honoring Stephen A. Douglas from Citizens of Canandaiqua, NY, June 7, 1861, box 54, folder 3, SADP; *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 67-68; *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 8, 35-36; *Daily Inter Ocean* (Chicago, Illinois), March 14 and 17, 1874; *Trenton State Gazette* (Trenton, New Jersey), March 12, 13, and 24, 1874; *Hartford Daily Courant* (Hartford, Connecticut), March 12 and 14, 1874, April 6, 1874; *Sioux City Journal* (Sioux City, Iowa), March 12 and 13, 1874.

[17] Purcell, *The Spectacle of Grief*, 7.

[18] Van Rensselaer, *New Jersey's Tribute to Massachusetts*, 4; James W. Nesmith in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 21; Daniel D. Pratt in *Memorial Addresses*, 29.

admirable political figures. In doing so, they forged a national discourse which contested what types of political behaviors northerners sought and scorned in their elected officials.

Eulogies, then, provide a useful means to explore how the political culture of the North changed across the Civil War era and to explain why someone like George William Curtis would, in 1874, describe a powerful, unconquerable Sumner eclipsing an enfeebled, wistful Webster. Comparing the language and values used in the eulogies of Daniel Webster, Stephen A. Douglas, and Charles Sumner in 1852, 1861, and 1874 demonstrates that changing ideals of masculinity produced different ideals of political leadership in the North, impacting how voters evaluated public officials in elections. As changing gender ideals and the politics of slavery prompted debates about what kinds of masculinity could defend the moral character of the nation, ideals of political leadership in the North shifted from valuing restraint and compromise to valuing moral, principled stands, even (and especially) when it provoked conflict. Although in 1852, when Webster died, most northerners vaunted the self-control and compromise engendered by restrained manhood, antislavery proponents argued that northerners required martial manhood to beat back the Slave Power's encroaches on white masculinity. Over the course of the 1850s, as a growing number of northerners believed restrained manhood was incapable of producing the kinds of political leadership required to handle sectional conflict, northern voters increasingly turned to Republican candidates, who championed a different kind of statesmanship rooted in martial masculinity. While northerners had not completely abandoned restrained manhood when Douglas died in 1861, they showed a greater preference for a political style based upon martial manhood, such that even Democrats began vaunting political leaders who demonstrated bravery, zeal, and courageousness. Their praise of Douglas would prefigure the type of language used by

Sumner's eulogists in 1874, who believed, like Curtis, that the North needed political leaders defined by their "lofty principle and uncompromising qualities."[19]

[19] Curtis in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 156.

Chapter One

"A Man of Peace": Restrained Manhood and Honor in the Eulogies of Daniel Webster

When Daniel Webster died on October 24th, 1852, it was, for many observers, the end of an era. "The lights of the age are leaving us," remarked Edwin David Sanborn before the students of Philips Academy, "The stars of our political heavens are going down."[20] By 1852, the country had already witnessed the passing of many figures who had dominated politics since the War of 1812, a fact appreciated by a number of Webster's mourners.[21] Arriving after so many notable deaths, Webster's passing "closed up this mournful procession," as another eulogist put it, "casting back a shadow which darkens the whole firmament."[22] Charged with the task of making sense of Webster's life and death, eulogists had to interpret the long trajectory of Webster's career, parsing what made him, in the estimation of his admirers, "one of the greatest statesmen of the age."[23]

As northerners paused to commemorate Webster, they forged broader conversations about what qualities were desirable in public officials and outlined their own ideals for political leadership. Yet the specific language they used also revealed that the expectations embedded in northern political culture regarding statesmanship were intimately linked to speakers' ideals of masculinity. Regardless of party affiliation, Webster's admirers consistently drew upon an ideal of restrained manhood to praise the former senator, contending that his own self-control and tempering influence had honorably preserved the nation's character during times of crisis. Even

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[20] Edwin David Sanborn, *A Eulogy on the Life of Daniel Webster Delivered before the Students of Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts, December 29, 1852*, (Hanover: Dartmouth press, 1853), 4.
[21] Thomas H. Bayly in *Eulogies Delivered In the Senate And House of* 42; "Honors to Daniel Webster," *Daily Atlas* (Boston, Massachusetts), October 29, 1852; "Mortuary Notice," *Semi-weekly Eagle* (Brattleboro, Vermont), October 25, 1852.
[22] Roswell Hitchcock, *A Eulogy on Daniel Webster, Delivered Before the Students of Bowdoin College On Friday, Nov. 12th, 1852* (Brunswick: J. Griffin, 1852), 7.
[23] "Death of Mr. Webster," *Pittsfield Sun* (Pittsfield, Massachusetts) October 28, 1852.

at the time of his death, however, Webster's legacy did not go uncontested. Those who dared to speak ill of the dead—primarily abolitionists—judged Webster against a different standard of masculinity, insisting that the restrained manhood his eulogists so greatly admired actually threatened the moral purity of the nation. Instead, they urged that public officials should adopt a standard of martial manhood in order to combat the Slave Power's encroaches on northern masculinity and honor. Although Webster's critics remained on the fringes in 1852, their arguments indicated the beginnings of a shift in northern political culture towards an embrace of martial masculinity as an acceptable and even necessary ideal for public officials.

"The Calm and Undisturbed Possession of His Powers": Restrained Manhood in the Eulogies of Daniel Webster

Restrained manhood, as Amy Greenberg has argued, was one of two predominant masculinities competing for hegemony in the mid-nineteenth century. Present both in the North and the South, restrained manhood was a type of masculinity which valued "being morally upright, reliable, and brave" over displays of physical aggression or strength. Restrained men prized restraint and self-control of one's mind and emotions, and they "believed that the domestic household was the moral center of the world." While the ideal of restrained manhood generally looked down upon displays of violence, men were still expected to be "firm and upright."[24] For some, this ideal took the form of "that best of all characters, a Christian gentleman," or a man who was "pious, self-controlled, [and] educated," and pursued "discipline, education, duty, and moral purity."[25] These ideals of restrained manhood—restraint, self-control,

[24] Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood*, 11-12.
[25] Edward Stanly in *Eulogies Delivered In the Senate And House of Representatives of the United States*, 43; Carmichael, *The Last Generation*, 11, 60. Although Carmichael's work discusses the Christian gentleman in an exclusively southern context, northerners who esteemed restrained manhood also occasionally drew upon the

discipline, and firmness—were the characteristics Webster's northern eulogists consistently returned to as they described his life, oratory, and political career.

Most eulogies began with commentary on Webster's early life, personal relationships, and personality, describing these facets of his life in a way that underscored how eulogists used the values of restrained manhood to determine the deceased's virtues. Colleagues in the Senate like William Seward of New York, for instance, claimed that Webster had been "earnest and sincere, as well as calm," which allowed him to be "both discriminating and comprehensive in his affections" with his friends and "unassuming and courteous, here and elsewhere, in the public councils."[26] As Robert F. Stockton of New Jersey noted, "in the performance of sacred domestic duties, and of reciprocal friendship," Webster always displayed "all those attributes that constitute a noble, generous, hospitable, high-minded, courageous man."[27] To these eulogists, Webster was cordial and discerning, allowing his relationships with family, friends, and colleagues to flourish as was expected of restrained men. Mourners outside the halls of Congress used much the same language, emphasizing the simultaneous propriety and warmth of his relationships. Cortlandt Van Rensselaer, a Presbyterian minister, told his audience in New Jersey that Webster had "dignity, and, at times, reserve" alongside "a large social heart, which beat true in its friendships, and which was generous and warm in its affections."[28] Similarly, Roswell Dwight Hitchcock, a professor of natural and revealed religion at Bowdoin College, assured his students that while Webster was not without imperfections and vices, he nevertheless had "an

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paradigm of gentility to describe their masculine ideals. See, for example, Sanborn, *A Eulogy on the Life of Daniel Webster*, 36.

[26] William Seward in *Eulogies Delivered In the Senate And House of Representatives of the United States*, 13.

[27] Robert F. Stockton in *Eulogies Delivered In the Senate And House of Representatives of the United States*, 18.

[28] Van Rensselaer, *New Jersey's Tribute to Massachusetts*, 18.

unwonted nobleness of nature" and "family affections of the greatest depths and tenderness."[29] Edwin David Sanborn, a professor of Latin at Dartmouth College, told the students of Phillips Academy in Massachusetts that his own extensive correspondence with Webster's old classmates revealed the statesman to have a "gentleness, modesty, and agreeable manners" that endeared him to all. A "man of large sympathies, of warm and honest affections," Webster "loved, as he thought, with great intensity of emotion."[30] In the view of these eulogists, Webster's courtesy, graciousness, amiability set him apart and showed that he, as a restrained man, understood the value of his domestic and personal life.

Webster's mourners extended their praise of his decorum in personal relationships to their admiration of his physical bearing and his oratory, which was so greatly famed and acclaimed throughout the country. One mourner stressed how Webster's speeches matched his physical appearance, since he had "a harmony in his presence, and in his words; in the light of his eye and the light of his thoughts; in his compact muscular form, and his arguments; in the majesty of his brow, and the full-meaning, solemn enunciations of his truth."[31] After stressing Webster as an ideal statesman, another commented that he had "such a vast breadth to him; such comprehensiveness; such solidity," yet he still carried himself "with such a serene and easy movement of his strength." This simultaneous power and poise evident in his physicality was mirrored in how he spoke and conducted himself. As another mourner remarked, he had "a dignity in public life, which never dragged its mantle in the dust … and a singular immaculateness of social and public speech, giving forth to the world no sentence, which dying

[29] Hitchcock, *A Eulogy on Daniel Webster*, 42.
[30] Sanborn, *A Eulogy on the Life of Daniel Webster*, 25, 26.
[31] Van Rensselaer, *New Jersey's Tribute to Massachusetts*, 15.

he could have wished to blot."[32] While his oratory was "sometimes full of vivacity and fire," it always fit the occasion and maintained "the highest degree of animation and force consistent with decorum and a just taste."[33] Through these descriptions of Webster's bearing and oratory, his eulogists emphasized that he had the kind of firmness and power expected of restrained men but always channeled that strength through the bounds of dignity and respectability.

To Webster's eulogists, however, the crowning jewels to all his other merits were the self-mastery, discipline, and restraint he showed in his mental life and oratory. Speaking before the New Hampshire legislature, Ira Perley for one extolled Webster for attaining "perfect mastery over the action of his mind" through diligent education and training, despite already having "the calm and undisturbed possession of his powers in every situation of excitement and difficulty" through natural temperament. Heaping onto this praise, Perley further applauded his complete "mastery" over his "naturally strong and active passions," his "controlling will, which held all his powers in due subordination," and his "steady balance and just proportion in all his faculties." These qualities, stressed Perley, enabled Webster to remain "perfectly self-possessed" at all times and to speak in the Senate with "guarded moderation of the judge" rather than "with the zeal and heat of a partisan." Perley's tribute thus framed Webster as the ideal restrained man: capable of great emotion and oratorical displays, he nevertheless exercised self-control to ensure that his speech was always "calm, deliberate, and unimpassioned … but never wanting in dignity."[34] Van Rensselaer much agreed with Perley, celebrating how Webster was "ordinarily calm and argumentative," addressing his audience's reason and only "when needful" drawing

[32] Hitchcock, *A Eulogy on Daniel Webster,* 27, 43.
[33] Perley, *Eulogy of the Hon. Ira Perley*, 19.
[34] Perley, *Eulogy of the Hon. Ira Perley*, 7-8, 10-11, 23-24, 19.

forth "reserved forces of passionate eloquence."[35] By celebrating the control Webster exercised over his mind, his passions, and his oratory, they made clear that the qualities that made his conduct and career admirable were those that were consistent with the dictates of restrained manhood.

Admirers' commentary on Webster's dying day only served to further emphasize his mental control and composure. Newspapers across the North reprinted accounts of Webster's final day on earth, stressing how he "showed an entire possession of his faculties, and composure of mind," accepting news of his imminent death "calmly" and with perfect resignation.[36] Fitting into a larger paradigm common in mid-nineteenth-century America idealizing a "good death," these death scenes served a didactic purpose, teaching their audience how to prepare themselves for the inevitability of death.[37] Yet such death scenes did not merely provide instruction on how to die well; they also reiterated the lessons eulogists drew from the deceased's life on how to live well. Webster's eulogists thus stressed that his good death was the culmination of the virtues that characterized his life, enabling him to face death itself coolly and unflinchingly. Hitchcock told the students of Bowdoin College that "His exit out of life was eminently worthy of him, both as a christian and a man," since the self-possession that had distinguished him as a restrained man in life had prepared him to "set his house in order with calmness, as though he had been merely starting on a journey."[38] Perley echoed this sentiment before the New Hampshire government, noting with approval that death found Webster "died in the calm and serene possession of his

[35] Van Rensselaer, *New Jersey's Tribute to Massachusetts*, 13.
[36] *Constitution* (Middletown, Connecticut), Oct. 27, 1852; see also *Daily Ohio Statesman* (Columbus Ohio), Oct. 26, 1852; *Sangamo Journal* (Springfield, Illinois), Oct. 26, 1852.
[37] Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008), 6-11; Mark S. Schantz, *Awaiting the Heavenly Country: The Civil War and America's Culture of Death* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), 9, 18-19, 36.
[38] Hitchcock, *A Eulogy on Daniel Webster*, 43.

mental faculties, and in the faith of a meek and humble Christian." When death found him, "he was found ready."[39] George T. Curtis put the sentiment best when he remarked that Webster's death was not only "in all respects worthy of his life" but was "the consummation of his character, the crowning glory of his whole mortal existence." Equipped for death with his customary self-mastery, Webster died "with his mind under its own entire control, as completely as it had ever been."[40] Even in death, Webster was the ideal restrained man, able to face death serenely as he ought through his life-long composure and self-control.

It was no accident that eulogists returned to Webster's restraint, self-control, firmness, and moderation in so many diverse facets of his life; rather, they sought to convey that everything admirable in Webster's life and career stemmed from his character as a restrained man. By embracing this ideal of masculinity, Webster cultivated a flourishing domestic life, warm friendships, and a dignified and revered oratory known throughout the nation. Even his death was distinguished thanks to his life-long practice of restrained manhood. Relating his inner character to the successes of his political career, his eulogists would make abundantly clear that it was his restrained manhood which also ennobled him as a statesman, serving himself and the country well by enabling to step in when the nation was in peril.

"To Stay the Tide of Disunion, and to Quell the Storms that Have Threatened": Defending National Character in Sectional Conflict

Northern eulogists' commentary on character was particularly significant in the context of the sectional conflict of the 1850s, for with it they also wove an argument about how best to maintain the character and honor of the nation amidst such turbulent seas. The nation was still badly shaken by the controversy that erupted over the status of territories acquired in the

[39] Perley, *Eulogy of the Hon. Ira Perley*, 37-38.
[40] "Honors to Daniel Webster," *Daily Atlas* (Boston, Massachusetts), Oct. 29, 1852.

Mexican-American War. Although the legislators who engineered the Compromise of 1850 hoped it would quell the discord, it proved to be little more than an armistice, with discord bubbling furiously just below the surface. Henry Clay's death in June had already meant the loss of the nation's "Great Compromiser." Now, in October of 1852, they faced the loss of "the champion of the Constitution and the Union."[41] Feeling left adrift in volatile seas, many northerners used the occasion of these deaths to reflect on how to regain the national unity they seemingly once had.[42] How could the Union be preserved? And what kind of leaders would be up to the task? Webster's eulogists, regardless of party, found answers in the peaks of his career. As they extolled the ways Webster had handled national crises in the past, his northern eulogists tacitly contended that the nation needed public officials who could maintain and defend the character of the Union—leaders who, like Daniel Webster, had the character of restrained men.

Character was an explicit part of eulogists' language, and most speakers made it clear that they sought to explicate the merits of his character.[43] A person's character, by definition, were the qualities which "distinguish him from others" or which were "esteemed and respected" and "ascribed to a person in common estimation."[44] Under this conception, character internally defined who someone was and emanated outwards through every aspect their life—in Webster's

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[41] William Preston, *Eulogies Delivered In the Senate And House of Representatives of the United States*, 29.
[42] Purcell, *The Spectacle of Grief*, 33-34.
[43] Sanborn, *A Eulogy on the Life of Daniel Webster*, 3-6; John Davis, William H. Seward, Robert F. Stockton, John Appleton, Joseph R. Chandler, and John L. Taylor in *Eulogies Delivered in the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States*, 3, 11, 18, 24, 35, 47; Hitchcock, *A Eulogy On Daniel Webster*, 11, 40; Perley, *Eulogy of the Hon. Ira Perley*, 26; Van Rensselaer, *New Jersey's Tribute to Massachusetts*, 10, 13, 18, 22-25, 30-31, 36, 37; William H. Allen, *Eulogy On the Character And Services of the Late Daniel Webster: Pronounced At the Request of the Select And Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia, January 18, 1853*, (Philadelphia: Crissy & Markley, 1853), 4; James Cooper, *Eulogy On the Life And Character of the Late Daniel Webster: Pronounced At the Request of the Pottsville Literary Society, April 27th, 1853* (Pottsville: B. Bannan, 1853), 10-12, 26, 31-33, 38; *Constitution* (Middletown, Connecticut), October 27, 1852; *New Hampshire Patriot and State Gazette* (Concord, New Hampshire), October 27, 1852.
[44] Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language; Exhibiting the Origin, Orthography, Pronunciation, and Definitions of Words*, (New York: White & Sheffield, 1841), 136-137, definitions 4 and 7.

case, through his personality, relationships, physical bearing, oratory, and statesmanship. As Sanborn told the students of Phillips Academy, perhaps hoping they would follow Webster's example, it was Webster's "character" as a "gentleman,—a high minded, christian gentleman, which is the highest style of man" that had defined him from a young age and "which marked his whole subsequent course," earning him honors of the highest kind.[45] Thus, when eulogists praised the restraint and self-mastery Webster demonstrated in each component of his life, they argued that it was his character as a restrained man which had distinguished him and made him laudable. Representative John Appleton of Maine put it most plainly when he proclaimed, "His character and his works—what he was and what he did—constitute a legacy which no sound-hearted American can contemplate without emotions of gratitude and pride."[46] Without that character, Webster would not have been the esteemed public official that the public so greatly mourned. As Hitchcock told the students of Bowdoin College, it was not possible to be "a great Lawyer, a great Statesman, or a great Orator" like Webster "without being also something more and something better than these." Instead, "power of the highest kind in any direction must have the character to underlie it. There must be private worth and manliness, social integrity, and the fear of God."[47] The qualities Webster's eulogists most admired in his life and career all came down to his character as a restrained man; consequently, they contended through their praise that public officials ought to have the character and conduct of restrained men.

Such discussions of character mattered because they were intertwined with notions of honor. Although historians have frequently defined honor as a "code" that set specific standards of behavior, it is more useful, as Anna Koivusalo points out, to think of it as a "lens" through

[45] Sanborn, *A Eulogy on the Life of Daniel Webster*, 36.
[46] John Appleton in *Eulogies Delivered In the Senate And House of Representatives of the United States*, 24.
[47] Hitchcock, *A Eulogy on Daniel Webster*, 40.

which men "observed manly behavior," since even in the South, "different people had different, even contradictory, ideas of what constituted honor."[48] This framework provides a means of understanding northern notions of honor, since concepts like character, honor, nobility, and dignity were all connected to idealized masculine behavior. A man distinguished his character through honorable or noble conduct, following his conscience and directing his actions with "dignity" toward "a just and proper end."[49] Under this formulation, the North's honor culture primarily differed from that of the South by placing an emphasis on internal rather than external characteristics, on a "person's inner self" rather than outward displays. Character mattered to northerners because that was, in essence, where honor was to be found.[50] Even so, character still had a performative aspect because of its links to masculinity. Because honor was a fundamentally gendered concept that prescribed different behavior for men and women, it intrinsically required proper performances of masculinity and femininity. In the North as much as the South, "manliness was something earned, defended, and then reasserted over and over again." Accordingly, as Christopher J. Olsen has pointed out, "a man's individual honor, like that of his family and community, required constant reaffirmation and remained open to challenge."[51]

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[48] Koivusalo, *The Man Who Started the Civil War* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2022), 6, 5.
[49] Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, 248, 416, 558. "Dignity," "honor," and "noble" were all terms defined in reference to each other, suggesting the fluidity which existed between the concepts and which northerners used when deploying the terms. Within eulogies of public officials, northern eulogists often used the terms somewhat interchangeably, in conjunction with each other, or in extremely similar contexts.
[50] Wonsrichanalai, *Northern Character*, 2, 4, 5. Wongsrichanalai argues that character was the northern variant of honor, but this framework risks drawing a clearer distinction between the two concepts than actually existed in practice. Although northerners' preoccupation with character most likely reflects their prioritization of the inner self and their conviction that behaving honorably required a person to act independently, according to their own conscience, neither "honor" nor "character" had strictly sectional uses. As work by Robert S. Levine and Timothy J. Williams points out, many northerners explicitly discussed individual, sectional, and national honor, and a number of southerners believed that a well-developed character was the key to attaining and maintaining their honor. See Robert S. Levine, "'The Honor of New England': Nathaniel Hawthorne and the Cilley-Graves Duel of 1838" and Timothy J. Williams, "Pursuits of Character: Rethinking Honor among Antebellum Southern College Students" in *The Field of Honor.*
[51] Olsen, *Political Culture and Secession*, 24.

Even if northerners generally required less ostentatious defenses of honor than the South, they nevertheless expected men to prove their character through appropriate performances of masculinity.

The link between masculinity and character is crucial, since it provides insight into precisely *how* men were expected to defend their honor. Because honor and manhood were both "Culturally created and publicly sustained," they were not standardized codes but "constantly changing cultural ideals" which could be interpreted in a variety of different ways.[52] As a result, there was no single set of rules on how honor was best defended; *within* sections as much as across them, men might differ on the kind of response an attack on honor demanded. What guided men's reaction to a breach of honor was, in large part, their notions of masculinity. Because "manhood gave honor subject matter," specific conceptions of masculinity shaped ideas about what behaviors were honorable and how best to defend one's honor.[53] Restrained men might show a "willingness to handle confrontations in a more diplomatic manner," as Peter S. Carmichael has argued was the case with one generation of Virginians who believed the "cardinal virtue" of restraint was sorely lacking in their parents' notions of masculinity and honor.[54] For these men, honor might have insisted upon a firm response, proving and reaffirming their manhood, but that reaction by no means had to be violent. Other men who also idealized restrained manhood—including men of the North—would share much in common with these Virginians regarding the defense of honor.

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[52] Koivusalo, *The Man Who Started the Civil War*, 6.
[53] Koivusalo, *The Man Who Started the Civil War*, 6; Foote, *The Gentlemen and the Roughs*, 96; Carmichael, *The Last Generation*, 91-92; David, "The Politics of Emasculation," 325.
[54] Carmichael, *The Last Generation*, 92, 91.

Such was the case with Webster's northern eulogists, who emphasized the ways Webster had reaffirmed his character throughout his career by showing restraint in his verbal duels in the Senate. Webster, they rushed to make clear, was rarely the aggressor. "He never sought controversy," remarked Edwin D. Sanborn, "From childhood to age, he was a man of peace, —national peace, —social peace, —domestic peace."[55] Cortlandt Van Rensselaer much agreed, observing that "he was not aggressive by nature. His tremendous prerogative was defence."[56] Indeed, as Ira Perley recounted, "It would be difficult to find the instance where he was the aggressor in any personal encounter."[57] Through these descriptions, northern eulogists underscored that Webster was not brash or violent, attacking others at the drop of a hat. Yet lest Webster's manhood be called into question, they also stressed that he was perfectly capable of defending himself and others—he merely did so with restraint. Webster was "a man equal to emergencies," and although he might not seek quarrels, "He was a fearful antagonist, if compelled to vindicate his own opinions, and descend into the arena of personal conflict."[58] On the occasions when a "studied personal insult, or a malignant personal attack demanded his notice," Webster responded swiftly and effectually to defend his character, but he said no more than needed to be said: "A single blow was enough." Showing his true character, he never lost his composure or decorum. Even when the "provocation there was great," Webster still disposed "the whole subject of the personal controversy" with "graceful ease," "dignified forbearance," and "scornful brevity."[59] Nor did Webster choose to fester over such skirmishes. As one eulogist claimed, "his indignation was momentary. He never treasured up the bitter memories of the past;

[55] Sanborn, *A Eulogy on Daniel Webster*, 22.
[56] Van Rensselaer, *New Jersey's Tribute to Massachusetts*, 13.
[57] Perley, *Eulogy of the Hon. Ira Perley*, 25.
[58] Van Rensselaer, *New Jersey's Tribute to Massachusetts*, 13, 15.
[59] Perley, *Eulogy of the Hon. Ira Perley*, 25.

on the contrary, he sought to efface them from his own mind and to obliterate them from the published reports."[60] By foregrounding his ability to respond to personal insults, Webster's eulogists established his firmness, his manhood, and his ability to defend his honor for their audiences. Yet by underlining the restraint he showed in those moments, they also demonstrated that he never departed from his character as a restrained man.

Webster's apparent ability to cling to his character as a restrained man even under fire was crucial to his eulogists, for they believed men's character was central to the fate of the nation. Just as one could speak of the honor of a state or a country, northerners spoke about national character. National character, too, had to be defended, but it was maintained precisely through the individual character of the nation's inhabitants; in short, "the morality and actions of individual citizens spoke to the virtues and merits of the whole nation."[61] Subscribing to a "disposition" of conservatism which ran across party lines, a majority of northerners saw "politics as a process of compromise" and held that compromise was intrinsic to the character of the Union. [62] As one eulogist put it, "the constitution was in its origin the work of concession and compromise."[63] Within this context, many northerners believed abolitionists and proslavery agitators alike posed a heightened threat, because their lack of moderation and restraint endangered the character of the nation and prevented Union-preserving compromise.[64] Restrained men like Webster, however, could bring the nation back to itself through their own firm temperance.

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[60] Sanborn, *A Eulogy on Daniel Webster*, 33.
[61] Wongsrichanalai, *Northern Character*, 45.
[62] Adam I. P. Smith, *The Stormy Present: Conservatism and the Problem of Slavery in Northern Politics, 1846-1865* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 5, 7
[63] Perley, *Eulogy of the Hon. Ira Perley*, 30.
[64] Wongsrichanalai, *Northern Character*, 54-55; Smith, *The Stormy Present*, 10-11.

The fact that northern eulogists identified moments of crisis as Webster's finest hours was no coincidence, for these were junctures when they believed his character as a restrained man had worked to good effect. Eulogists returned to two episodes in particular: Webster's clash with nullification, particularly in his widely acclaimed second reply to Hayne, and his recent conspicuous role in forging the Compromise of 1850. Through these controversies, and particularly in his work in 1850, Webster had effectively defended the Union by maintaining his integrity and character as a restrained man, even at his own personal expense. Despite being "fiercely assailed by a spirit of aggression," Lewis Cass of Michigan declared, Webster had proven himself "true, and tried, and faithful," for "rejecting all sectional considerations, and exposing himself to sectional denunciations, he stood up boldly, proudly indeed, and with consummate ability." His own restraint and moderation enabled his voice to be "heard above the storm, recalling countrymen to a sense of their dangers and their duties and tempering the lessons of reproof with the experience and dictates of patriotism."[65] In "times of stormy agitation," added William Seward of New York, Webster "soothed the public mind" and prevented disunion, all while handing down an example for future generations.[66] No personal cost could dissuade him from his path, either. As John Appleton of Maine noted, Webster "risked what few men *have* to risk—his reputation, his name, his cherished friendships" in order to "extinguish those fires" of sectional conflict.[67] Through such praise, these eulogists asserted that Webster's own firmness and self-control had been crucial in saving the nation before by calling his countrymen back to moderation. His individual character as a restrained man had, in their view, maintained the character of the Union.

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[65] Lewis Cass in *Eulogies Delivered In the Senate And House of Representatives of the United States*, 10.
[66] William Seward in *Eulogies Delivered In the Senate And House of Representatives of the United States*, 15.
[67] John Appleton *Eulogies Delivered In the Senate And House of Representatives of the United States*, 26.

Other eulogists more directly used the language of honor, framing as Webster a man who leapt to the defense of the Union much in the same way as a restrained man might protect the honor and unity of his family. One set of resolutions at a meeting in New Hampshire praised Webster's efforts to "advance our country's interests and maintain her honor" both at home and abroad, and they further applauded "the boldness and wisdom with which he has labored to stay the tide of disunion, and to quell the storms that have threatened to shake the pillars to our Constitution and the foundation of our Republic."[68] Roswell D. Hitchcock was even more willing than this resolution to contend with the scorn Webster had earned through his defense of the Compromise of 1850, and he excused Webster's actions to the students of Bowdoin College by showing he had always acted as a restrained man. Before the 1850s, Hitchcock claimed, Webster had stood against slavery "on all proper occasions, with the calm determined front of a New England man."[69] Recently, he had changed tactics because he felt sectional conflict threatened the Union:

> The Constitution, at all events, he loved as a man loves his own mother, or his own child. And in his honest judgment, as he declared, he looked upon the Constitution and the Union as just ready to be crushed. He leaped down, therefore, into the breach, and … he breasted what seemed to him the impending ruin, and rolled it back. The question of Slavery he was willing to adjourn to more propitious and temperate days for a settlement. Then and there the Union of the States was menaced, and must first of all be saved and strengthened.[70]

Webster, Roswell argued, viewed the Union and the Constitution much the same way that he did members of his own family. By rushing to its aid, then, he had only acted as any man of character would, particularly because he only delayed the question when more temperate moods could prevail. Hitchcock left it to his audience and "to the judgment of History" to decide if

[68] "Meeting of Citizens," *New Hampshire Patriot and State Gazette* (Concord, New Hampshire), October 27, 1852.
[69] Hitchcock, *A Eulogy on Daniel Webster*, 32.
[70] Hitchcock, *A Eulogy on Daniel Webster*, 33-34.

Webster was right; yet he nevertheless remarked that if Webster's judgement was "wholly right, conscientious and patriotic, it was the most gallant chapter in his life."[71] Comparing Webster's preservation of the Union to a man who safeguarded his family, his northern eulogists argued that he had acted as a man of character, well within the bounds of honor. He had, notwithstanding, still played the part of the restrained man, for he always acted as a *defender*, reining aggressors back into the proper bounds of moderation and restraint.[72]

By focusing on the ways Webster had proven his own manhood and honor, his northern eulogists argued that he had the type of character capable of defending the character of the Union. As ever though, they reiterated that he had defended personal and national honor by responding as a restrained man would. Viewing him as an ideal for political leadership, they articulated their preference for a political style that valued compromise, moderation, and restraint. By tempering each section of the nation and pulling them back from the brink of ruin, he preserved the unity and character of the Union, which was founded on compromise. His eulogists, then, maintained that what the Union needed most were more leaders like Webster, who acted in all things with the character of restrained men.

"Upon His Character We Can Bestow No Eulogy": Dissenting Views of Manhood and Honor in Webster's Career

Of course, not everyone believed Webster was so worthy of praise. Although many in the North were grateful for his efforts to uphold the Union, a significant number were appalled by the contours of his late career. His support of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 before and after its passage earned him the disapproval of many northerners, who became alarmed at the reach of slavery as they saw how the law impacted their local communities. Enslaved people who

[71] Hitchcock, *A Eulogy on Daniel Webster*, 34.
[72] Sanborn, *A Eulogy on the Life of Daniel Webster*, 34.

continued to make their bids for freedom by escaping to the North helped ensure that the thorny issue of the Fugitive Slave Law did not go away any time soon. Abolitionists in particular continually denounced Webster's course of action, branding him a traitor to the North and the base tool of slaveholders.[73] When he died in October of 1852, they refused to offer Webster any praise. Instead, they used the occasion to once again condemn his deeds in Congress. As they criticized Webster's support of the Compromise of 1850 and especially of the Fugitive Slave Act, they revealed that they applied a different standard of masculinity and accordingly of honor than that of his eulogists. Whereas Webster's admirers lauded him for defending the nation through his restrained manhood, his critics argued that his character as a restrained man actually threatened the moral character of the nation. Instead, they called for a principled and forceful defiance of the Slave Power more consistent with a paradigm of martial manhood.

If restrained manhood was a common standard of masculinity by the mid-nineteenth century, so too was its competitor of martial manhood. As Amy Greenberg has argued, martial manhood was a version of masculinity practiced throughout both the North and the South that "celebrated martial values, strength, bravery, and idealized the adventurous outsider." Some martial men may have emphasized the "masculine qualities of strength, aggression, and even violence," but others channeled the martial manhood's adoration of courageousness and valor into an embrace of chivalric ideals.[74] For these practitioners of martial manhood, strength for strength's sake was not enough; instead, it must be accompanied by "pure and noble gallantry, honor, courtesy, and disinterested devotion to the cause of the weak and oppressed." Under this

[73] Robert V. Remini, *Daniel Webster: The Man and His Time* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 706-708, 723-724; R. J. M. Blackett, *Making Freedom: The Underground Railroad and the Politics of Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 3-4, 44-45, 52-54, 64-67; "Daniel Webster in a Dilemma," *Pennsylvania Freeman* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), January 22, 1852.
[74] Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood*, 12-13.

paradigm, true men were "heroic defenders of the weak," no matter the personal cost they might incur.[75] Many abolitionists used this ideal of masculinity to rebut claims that their men were feminized, instead maintaining that "the true man was an outspoken social reformer." Marrying strong morals, an unconquerable will, and a devoted resistance, their men displayed "Christian manliness" and a "manly stand" in the face of the godless immorality of slaveholders.[76] This brand of martial manhood was eminently compatible with northern notions of honor or character, particularly since character placed an emphasis on acting according to one's conscience.[77] As abolitionists spoke about Webster's support of the Compromise of 1850 and the Fugitive Slave Act, they would apply this standard of masculinity to his actions, implicitly embedding a critique of restrained manhood's inability to defend an individual, sectional, or national character in the face of slavery.

Even before Webster's death, abolitionists had criticized his support of the Fugitive Slave Law by characterizing him as a man lacking honor. Abolitionist newspapers deployed the same language of submission, weakness, and degradation used in southern honor culture to challenge a man's honor and masculinity in order to malign Webster's morality and thus his character.[78] The *Pennsylvania Freeman* declared only a few months before Webster's death that he remained "resolute in his treachery" with "no purpose of repentance." In the "thick gloom of his own mind and conscience," he showed no remorse for "his defection to the Slaveholders" two years prior. Like the fallen angels of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Webster was a "fallen statesman," content

[75] Nancy Isenberg, *Sex and Citizenship in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 141.
[76] Kristin Hoganson, "Garrisonian Abolitionists and the Rhetoric of Gender, 1850-1860," *American Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (1993), 586.
[77] Wongsrichanalai, *Northern Character*, 62, 67-68.
[78] Olsen, *Political Culture and Secession*, 49.

to languish in his own immorality.[79] Several months later, when Webster died, their tune was much the same. "We yield to no one in our admiration of his giant intellect and majestic eloquence," the *Pennsylvania Freeman* remarked, "but upon his character we can bestow no eulogy. With the capacities of an angel, he was yet a fool." Once the pride of New England and an advocate for freedom, he had lately "listened to the voice of the tempter … and lent himself to do the work of the slaveholders" in a base attempt to seize presidential office. Devoid of all morality and honor, he had "debauched and stultified New England and the North" by forcing the region to submit to the Fugitive Slave Act. In no way could such a man be a man of character: he was fickle, office-seeking, and even worse, threatened the moral purity of the region. *Frederick Douglass' Paper* used similar language, taking note of Webster's death only to make clear that he had no "moral character" and that he "died a *virtual* defender of slavery." The only part of his death more lamentable than Webster's defection was "that the Slave Power should have possession of the pulpit," as evidenced by the many preachers who praised and made excuses for "the defender of Slavery." A few months later, *Frederick Douglass' Paper* added to these charges by denouncing Webster as "a great *apostate* and a great *villain*," in the vein of Judas, Benedict Arnold, and other traitors of history, whose life was marked by the eventual triumph of his "depravity."[80] The message of these newspapers was clear. Though political admirers, preachers, and the press admired Webster as "a model statesman … a noble man and a Christian," his critics realized that he died "ignobly," disgraced and dishonored by his abandonment of conscience and his submission to slaveowners.[81]

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[79] "Daniel Webster in a Dilemma," *Pennsylvania Freeman* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), January 22, 1852.
[80] *Frederick Douglass' Newspaper* (Rochester, New York), December 31, 1852 and January 21, 1853, *Accessible Archives*, https://www.accessible-archives.com/collections/african-american-newspapers/frederick-douglass-paper/.
[81] "Death of Daniel Webster," *Pennsylvania Freeman* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), October 30, 1852.

Other abolitionists would repeat the refrain in public speeches, deeming Webster's defection to the Slave Power and his compromise of morals for the sake of gaining public office to be utterly lacking in character. A sermon delivered by Theodore Parker and reprinted in the *Pennsylvania Freedman* and *Frederick Douglass' Paper* declared Webster the "advocate of Slavery" and a mere "tool of the slaveholder," no principled man in his own right. In his seventh of March speech defending compromise and the Fugitive Slave Act, he had "revoked the noblest words of his whole life, throwing over his interpretation of the Constitution his respect for State rights, for common law, his own morality, his own religion, and his God," all for the sake of boosting his odds in the 1852 presidential election. Abandoning conscience and glory alike, Webster not only dishonored himself but his nation by his lack of character. "No event in the American Revolution was half so terrible," Parker shuddered. "We lost battles again and again, lost campaigns—our honor we never lost. … we were never without conscience, never without morality."[82] Samuel J. May much agreed with this assessment in a speech given in Syracuse and Auburn, New York and reprinted in *Frederick Douglass' Newspaper*. Lamenting that so many "idolators" would shout from the pulpits that Webster was a "model man" and an "illustrious Christian," May announced that "As a preacher of the justice, the mercy, the temperance, the chastity which the Gospel inculcates, I must protest, that Daniel Webster should not be set on high before my countrymen as a pattern statesman, or an exemplary man." Webster had fallen from grace, proving his "*apostacy* to the liberty and rights of man" through his "humiliating" March 7th speech. Like Parker, May held that Webster dishonored his region and his country through his own lack of morality. Far from maintaining the North's dignity, he and the

[82] *Pennsylvania Freeman* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), November 11, 1852; *Frederick Douglass' Newspaper* (Rochester, New York), November 26, 1852.

"advocates of the infernal Compromise" were "stultifying the people of the North; quenching the light of liberty in their sons; [and] eradicating their most cherished sentiments" all for the sake pleasing slaveowners. With the sting of personal betrayal, May expressed "sorrow and shame" that someone who could have "led our nation up to the acme of her greatness" would bring himself and his country so low.[83] By compromising his morality Webster destroyed the eminence and honor that once attended himself, his region, and his country. No man of character himself, Webster could hardly be expected to defend the character of his region or his nation.

These critics fit into a broader trend of antislavery proponents suggesting that public officials should incorporate a more aggressive, martial manhood into their political style. In the 1830s and 1840s, political abolitionists urged congressmen to attack the "Slave Power" through speeches and antislavery legislation. More than just a rhetorical device, embedded in the Slave Power argument was a critique of how slavery corrupted the American political system, with both parties bowing and scraping to placate the interests of slavery. Throughout debates on the censorship of abolitionist mail, congressional gag rules, and the annexation of Texas, political abolitionists emphasized that "servile" and "doughface" northern congressmen enabled slaveholders' dominance in national parties and the federal government, emasculating themselves and their constituents by making them the "white slaves" of demanding southerners. For these activists, an "upright and manly course" of "agitation," and not restraint, was the order of the day. [84] Tackling the issue on two fronts, political abolitionists urged voters to support antislavery candidates who would refuse to cave to the Slave Power and also lobbied potential

[83] *Frederick Douglass' Newspaper* (Rochester, New York), January 21, 1853.
[84] Corey Brooks, *Liberty Power: Antislavery Third Parties and the Transformation of American Politics*, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 20, 37, 49, 51, 2-3. On the term "slave" as an emasculating political insult, see David, "The Politics of Emasculation," 331-332.

allies in Congress, pressing them to fight for northern rights. Though they still remained on the political fringes, the gag rule debates in particular would help them to gain more friendly ears in the North. Tired of southern congressmen bullying northern representatives into silence, representatives like John Quincy Adams, Joshua Giddings, and John Parker Hale took up the gauntlet against congressional rules prohibiting the introduction of antislavery petitions, spurred on not only by political abolitionists but also constituents who praised their courageous and manly fight to uphold their rights of petition, representation, and free speech.[85] For these individuals and their constituents, a more martial type of manhood seemed necessary to repel the encroachments of southern slaveowners.

Political abolitionists' call for a martial masculinity would receive reinforcement in the 1850s, as abolitionists previously willing to work within a framework of moral suasion became increasingly convinced of the morality and necessity of more aggressive tactics. The enactment of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 in particular gave rise to a "moral crisis" among many radical abolitionists, who found themselves forced to choose between active resistance or adherence to a law that required their complicity in re-enslaving those who sought freedom in the North. Refusing to participate in a law they deemed immoral, many radical abolitionists began to embrace more combative strategies as "moral indignation gave way to a conscious theory and practice of confrontation."[86] Although nonresistance had never gone unchallenged among Black abolitionists, it "all but collapsed" as the Fugitive Slave Law "made violence a necessary alternative." Black leaders within the abolition movement became pivotal in convincing white

[85] Brooks, *Liberty Power*, 27-29, 49-55; Joanne B. Freeman, *The Field of Blood: Violence in Congress and the Road to Civil War* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018), 116-121, 126-128, 132-141.
[86] Jane H. Pease and William H. Pease, "Confrontation and Abolition in the 1850s," *The Journal of American History* 58, no. 4 (1972), 926, 927.

allies of the urgency of embracing resistance and violence as means of dismantling slavery and protecting Black rights.[87] As radical abolitionists shifted away from the pacifism of previous decades, they began drawing upon the values of martial manhood to urge northerners towards a forceful defiance of the Slave Power, as Webster's detractors demonstrated. Theodore Parker was a part of this shift, calling New Englanders to embrace a "militant manhood" that would "reinvigorate northern blood" and uphold the legacy of the American Revolution by revolting against slavery.[88] Critiquing Webster through this lens, abolitionists emphasized that restraint in Webster's career had led to a shameful and disastrous compromise of conscience and made him a puppet of the Slave Power; better for northerners to embark on a path of resistance and stand as independent men of character.

Antislavery advocates of all different stripes would build upon these appeals by framing the conflicts of the 1850s as challenges to white manhood and honor that required a direct and unflinching response. Stoking the fires of outrage in the North, rhetorical attacks launched against the Slave Power emphasized the threat slavery posed to democracy and self-governance in the North. The negation of local authority sanctioned by the Fugitive Slave Act, stolen elections in Kansas, Preston Brooks' brutal caning of Charles Sumner, the proslavery Lecompton constitution thrust upon Kansans—all were used to argue that the rights of northern white men were crucially imperiled at the hands of a moneyed aristocracy.[89] Because citizenship was based upon masculinity, though, political rights were in themselves a sign of manhood. For northern

[87] Kellie Carter Jackson, *Force and Freedom: Black Abolitionists and the Politics of Violence* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019), 6, 49, 9.
[88] Michael Fellman, "Theodore Parker and the Abolitionist Role in the 1850," *The Journal of American History* 61, no. 3 (1974), 672, 673.
[89] Larry Gara, "Slavery and the Slave Power: A Crucial Distinction," *Civil War History* 15, no. 1 (1969), 14-15; Smith, *The Stormy Present*, 80-82, 84-87, 113-118; Nicole Etcheson, *Bleeding Kansas: Contested Liberty in the Civil War Era* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 1-2.

men, who shared a sense of masculinity "based upon personal independence [and] political self-determination," such infringements upon their rights of political self-rule and free speech placed their manhood under attack.[90] As Joanne Freeman has argued, "having one's rights within the Union challenged was a form of degradation that required resistance; fighting for those rights was a test of manhood."[91] To preserve their manhood and honor, northern men would have to respond. Antislavery advocates would further heighten the stakes of the Slave Power's apparent threat to northern manhood and honor through evocative language. Much as Theodore Parker denounced Webster for debauching the North through his support of the Fugitive Slave Act, so too would Charles Sumner decry the expansion of slavery in the territories as the "rape of a virgin Territory" in his infamous "Crime Against Kansas" speech.[92] Using the imagery of sexual violation to stand in for the moral debasement of northern regions, such rhetorical devices "reminded men of their duties as men" and demanded that men of the North "assume the role of the hero in a chivalric drama." Inaction in this context could only imply "a vacuum of true manhood."[93] By framing the advance of slavery as an attack on white manhood and the purity of the North, antislavery critics suggested that true men would stand up and fight the Slave Power, not cower in unmanly submission.

When the Republican Party came into being, many Republicans would be elected on their promises to be exactly the kind of martial men northerners needed, adopting a more aggressive and bold political style in order to confront the Slave Power. Through an embrace of martial

[90] Lauren N. Haumesser, *The Democratic Collapse*, 41.
[91] Freeman, *The Field of Blood*, 11.
[92] Charles Sumner, *The Crime Against Kansas: The Apologies for the Crime. The True Remedy* (Boston: J.P. Jewett & Company, 1856), 5. Notably, Theodore Parker was actually among the individuals who encouraged Sumner to take a bolder stand in Congress shortly before he gave his speech. See Michael D. Pierson, "'All Southern Society Is Assailed by the Foulest Charges': Charles Sumner's 'The Crime against Kansas' and the Escalation of Republican Anti-Slavery Rhetoric," *The New England Quarterly* 68, no. 4 (1995), 541-542.
[93] David, "The Politics of Emasculation," 330, 326.

manhood, they came to Congress quite literally ready to fight Southern bullies, uncowed and undeterred by violence. Their message struck a chord with many northern constituents, who encouraged their representatives to battle for their rights through mass meetings, letters, petitions, and elections. Although northerners had traditionally frowned on congressional violence, many now suggested that their representatives should show up to Congress armed and ready to fight to ensure northerners would no longer be intimidated and silenced by the Slave Power. Especially after the twin outrages of Bloody Sumner and Bloody Kansas, indignation at the violation of northern rights fueled a "militarization of northern political rhetoric" in which northerners increasingly demanded a more bellicose masculinity from their public officials.[94] Republicans would attempt to capitalize on these gains in the 1856 election by preaching the need for "fierce popular resistance" and by presenting John C. Frémont as a "warrior with cause" who offered "a virile refusal to truckle before the Slave Power." Democrats, meanwhile, still promoted Buchanan using the ideals of restrained manhood, whose "manly, disinterested statesmanship" and "conservative temperament" would soothe sectional passions. While Republicans remained unable to capture the presidency in 1856, their appeal was still reflected in northern polls, which granted them significant footholds in Congress that would only grow in later elections.[95] Even by 1856, Republicans had established enough sway to win the House speakership for Nathaniel P. Banks, an antislavery representative from Massachusetts. When the 35th Congress convened in 1857, Republicans had added around 70 seats; by the beginning of the

[94] Freeman, *Field of Blood*, 208-213, 228-230, 235-236, 240-241, 71-72; Michael E. Woods, *Emotional and Sectional Conflict in the Antebellum United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 151, 133-134, 150-152, 159-162.

[95] Matthew Karp, "The People's Revolution of 1856: Antislavery Populism, National Politics, and the Emergence of the Republican Party," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 9, no. 4 (2019), 526, 530, 537-538; Joshua A. Lynn, "A Manly Doughface: James Buchanan and the Sectional Politics of Gender," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 8, no. 4 (2018), 593.

36th Congress in 1859, they seized the House majority from Democrats.[96] A reciprocal relationship developed between martial manhood in northern political culture and sectional conflict: as northern resentment of the Slave Power and its encroaches upon white manhood in the North swelled, northerners began electing public officials who promised to shed restrained manhood for martial manhood. Predisposed and encouraged to fight rather than compromise, these representatives stoked sectional conflict with southerners, whose extreme reactions and demands only seemed to confirm the necessity of martial manhood in the eyes of affronted northern voters. Republicans promised to reassert northern manhood by shedding the restrained manhood of Webster's generation and by struggling for the rights of northerners in Congress against the threats of the Slave Power; as the 1850s went on, this was exactly what many northerners wanted.

Such appeals were crucial, for they not only mobilized northerners who would not have cared about slavery otherwise but also induced them to embrace a more martial version of manhood in political leadership. Much like Webster's eulogists, northerners across party lines who embraced a spirit of conservatism had once lauded "an ethic of self-discipline and self-restraint" in politics, believing that such values were coupled to "the integrity, manliness, and wisdom of an individual." Yet as northerners increasingly contemplated "how best to preserve their honor, their manhood, and their Union" in the face of perceived assaults from the Slave Power, they came to believe "that conservatism now demanded a different stance," one more compatible with the paradigms of martial manhood than the restrained manhood of Webster's

[96] Brooks, *Liberty Power*, 1-2, 207-211; Michael J. Dubin, *United States Congressional Elections, 1788-1994: The Official Results of the Elections of the 1st through 105th Congresses* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 1998), 174, 180, 185.

eulogists.[97] Webster's abolitionist critics might have been on the fringes when they spoke and wrote in 1852; but as sectional conflict wrought its changes on the North, their positions on the ability of martial manhood to preserve honor would come to occupy an integral place in the political culture of the North.

[97] Smith, *The Stormy Present*, 5, 6, 88-89. Smith's account of shifts in northern conservatism does not explicitly analyze masculinity or honor, but both feature prominently in the way Smith frames his argument and in the evidence he uses throughout the text. See *The Stormy Present*, 48, 66, 77, 84, 88-89, 122, 134, 140, 143, 154, 187, 225.

Chapter Two

"The Fervent Patriot and Pure Statesman": Masculinity and Honor in the Eulogies of Stephen A. Douglas

By the time Stephen A. Douglas died on June 3, 1861, northerners had already been rocked by a series of unprecedented events. After Abraham Lincoln's election, South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas had seceded within a matter of months; after violence broke out at Fort Sumter, Virginia, Tennessee, Arkansas, and North Carolina followed suit. The Union was rent apart, and nation found itself at the beginning of a long-feared Civil War.[98] As contentious as Douglas' career had been, the fact that his death came upon the heels of such crises only added to many northerners' sense of grief. Surrounded an "immense throng from city and country," James Duggan, Bishop of Chicago, began Douglas' funeral eulogy by recognizing the "irreparable loss" felt not only by the crowd but also by the whole country. "Trusted, esteemed and honored as he was in life," Duggan observed, "never was he more necessary to the nation, than when it lost his distinguished services forever."[99] Despite vigorously opposing much of Douglas' work, some Republicans shared much the same sentiment. Eulogizing before Congress, Isaac N. Arnold, a Republican representative from Illinois, remarked that Douglas had died "at a moment when he had the ability and the disposition to have rendered the greatest services to his country." "Had he lived," Arnold declared, "he would have led this grand, sublime uprising of the people" in their fight "between government and anarchy—between law and lawlessness—between liberty and slavery—between

[98] Russell McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War: The Northern Response to Secession* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 105, 114, 251.
[99] Duggan, "Funeral Obsequies," SADP, 8.

civilization and barbarism."[100] Although northerners held contradicting opinions of Douglas' politics in his death as much as they had in his life, those that gathered to mourn him still agreed on one thing: the loss of his leadership was yet another blow to the North in a moment of crisis.

Just as they had done when Daniel Webster died, northerners of all parties gathered to commemorate Douglas, generating conversations across the North about what qualities made him admirable as a statesman. The language they used, however, revealed just how much political culture had shifted in the intervening years. When Webster had died in 1852, his eulogists consistently drew upon the values of restrained manhood, contending that it was his own character as a restrained man that had preserved the Union. Republicans and other antislavery activists, however, had pushed for northerners to embrace martial manhood in their public officials, arguing that northern manhood and honor could only be preserved through a defiant resistance of the Slave Power. As Douglas' eulogists would reveal, however, their tactics proved effective not only in fueling the growth of the Republican Party but also in prompting a larger shift in northern political culture, prompting their opponents to also begin leveraging martial masculinity. While northern eulogists still occasionally utilized the values of restrained manhood to commend the Illinois senator, the values of martial manhood were far more prevalent in their praise, which emphasized his boldness, vigor, and zeal. Whereas Webster's eulogists lauded him for preserving the nation's character through self-restraint, temperance, and compromise, Douglas' eulogists applauded his character as a martial man, which enabled him to honorably serve the country as a courageous and unintimidated man of principle.

[100] Isaac N. Arnold in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas,* 75.

"He was Always in Earnest, Ever on Fire": Restrained and Martial Masculinity in the Eulogies of Stephen Douglas

Like Webster's eulogists, Douglas' eulogists had the task of untangling his career and identifying what made him, in the words of one eulogist, "a statesman of highest rank, fit for calm or storm."[101] As they commented on Douglas' relationships, personality, physicality, and oratory, they used language that once again underscored how ideals of masculinity shaped how his admirers praised him. In contrast to Webster's eulogists, however, Douglas' eulogists did not draw from a single standard of masculinity. Instead, they drew from both restrained manhood and martial manhood, even utilizing elements of each ideal within the same eulogy. In part, such mixed language reflected the ways in which men more generally "chose from a spectrum of options when they pieced together the component parts of their manly identities."[102] Yet, the degree to which eulogists utilized martial manhood to praise Douglas' personality, physicality, oratory, and career demonstrated the extent to which northern political culture had shifted to embrace it as an ideal for political leadership, even among Democrats. Praising Douglas' physical and mental strength, his courage, and his ability to dominate others, Douglas' eulogists suggested that martial manhood was his primary virtue as a statesman.

Douglas' eulogists clung most closely to the values of restrained manhood in the way they described his relationships with others. Praising Douglas for his "genial nature," a number of eulogists framed his ability to maintain warm relationships with family and friends as a strength of character.[103] Douglas was well-known for his "innumerable social gifts and virtues," as fellow Illinois Democrat John A. McClernand put it, and he always had a "gravity and dignity

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[101] Samuel S. Cox in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*,
[102] Foote, *The Gentlemen and the Roughs*, 4; see also Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood*, 10-11, 14.
[103] Philip B. Fouke, John Law, and Lyman Trumbull in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 89, 82, 8.

of his manner, ever softened by cordial warmth and urbanity." Throughout his life, he maintained an "unwavering kindness as a husband, father, and friend."[104] Samuel S. Cox, a Democrat from Ohio, agreed with this assessment, noting that the "same gentle demeanor" and "pure respect and tenderness" Douglas showed to his wife and children had also enabled the amiable relationships he held with friends and colleagues. No eulogy of Douglas, Cox declared, would be complete without comment "upon the singular magnetism of his personal presence, the talismanic touch of his kindly hand, the gentle amenities of his domestic life, and the ineradicable clasp of his friendships."[105] By emphasizing the warmth and geniality of his relationships with his wife, children, and friends, Douglas' eulogists drew upon the values of restrained manhood, which held that it was a virtue for men to root their identities first and foremost in their bonds with family and friends.[106]

Some eulogists added to this portrayal by emphasizing that the "uniformly kind and courteous" disposition he showed towards friends also engendered cordial relations with colleagues and rivals. Orville Browning, a former Whig and Republican from Illinois, spoke of how he and Douglas always sought to preserve "the dignity which ought to characterize the deportment of gentlemen aspiring to high positions of trust and honor" when coming head to head on the election trail, and neither permitted "any ardor or excitement of debate to betray us into coarse and unmanly personalities."[107] Another Illinois Republican, Isaac N. Arnold, made similar observations, describing how "the people will linger with pleasure" on the "cordial and friendly" relations which Douglas and Lincoln maintained during their 1858 senatorial contest,

[104] John A. McClernand in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 51.
[105] Samuel S. Cox in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 58, 59.
[106] Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood*, 11.
[107] Orville Browning in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 27.

which were "alike honorable to the departed Senator and the living President."[108] By vaunting Douglas on the basis on his warm relationships with his wife, children, friends, and opponents, these eulogists drew from some of the values of restrained manhood to portray Douglas as an admirable public official.

More often, though, Douglas' eulogists lauded qualities which fit within a paradigm of martial manhood, emphasizing his strength, boldness, and courageousness. Republicans in particular easily slipped into the language of martial manhood, for even if they disagreed with Douglas' politics, they nevertheless found Douglas estimable for displaying many of the qualities they continually called northern political leaders to adopt. Although Arnold had praised Douglas for his decorum on the election trail, he was far more impressed with Douglas for being a "bold and self-relying man—a leader by nature." Browning, likewise, admired Douglas for a "vigorous and capacious intellect of great versatility and exhaustless resources; an indomitable and exacting will, which subordinated, or sought to subordinate, all others to its control; [and] a copious eloquence distinguished more for strength and earnestness than for grace and beauty."[109] Other Republicans, like Lyman Trumbull, Eliakim P. Walton, and Henry B. Anthony, used similar language to express their esteem for his "strong," "unyielding," and "indomitable" will, which enabled "his rapid march to success."[110] As Republicans told it, Douglas' vehement will was only to be matched by his "fearlessness" and "indomitable energy," which fueled his stubborn persistence and "audacity of bravery which distinguished him in every conflict."[111]

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[108] Isaac N. Arnold in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 72-73.
[109] Isaac N. Arnold and Orville Browning in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 71, 23.
[110] Lyman Trumbull, Eliakim P. Walton, and Henry B. Anthony in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 7, 77, 32.
[111] Lyman Trumbull, Jacob Collamer, Henry B. Anthony, Orville Browning, and Eliakim P. Walton in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 7, 16, 32, 23-24, 77.

Douglas, they stressed, was not a man who would bend to the will of others; rather, he demonstrated the kind of physical and mental "strength and ability to dominate" expected of martial men.[112]

Republicans were not the only ones to embrace martial language, however. Many Democrats would adopt the same language, framing Douglas as the bold, relentless champion of their cause, the "gallant chieftain and party leader, under whose proud banner [they] fought and followed."[113] James A. McDougall of California remarked that Douglas "possessed commanding talents" accompanied by a "naturally bold and self-reliant character" that set him apart. Characterized by a "boldness and energy in conduct [that] would have made him a leader of men in any age or nation," Douglas had displayed a "capacity for action" and "the promptitude and courage of a great leader" throughout his career.[114] Samuel S. Cox of Ohio used similar language to portray Douglas, emphasizing that Douglas had a "defiant power" and a "will which had no conqueror, save in the grave." Undaunted by the challenges of office, Douglas "never shrank from the dust and heat of active life" and "most desired to live when dangers were gathering thickest."[115] A courageous man, Douglas distinguished himself through his tenacity and fearlessness. John A. McClernand echoed this assessment, describing Douglas as a "brave, strong man" who fought "zealously" for the interests of his constituents and his country. Being "prompt, enterprising, and persistent," his was a "persevering statesmanship" which earned him the honor of Illinois as "the champion of her rights in the councils of the nation."[116] Concurring with this sentiment, John Law of Indiana insisted that Douglas walked down the "path of fame

[112] Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood*, 12.
[113] James W. Nesmith in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 22.
[114] James A. McDougall in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 13.
[115] Samuel S. Cox in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 66, 56, 68.
[116] John A. McClernand in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 43, 46-47.

and honor" thanks to his "zeal," "spirit," and "energy."[117] By praising Douglas for his strength, force of will, and courage, these Democrats tacitly signaled that they, too believed martial manhood could be admirable in public officials.

Douglas' eulogists would reiterate these themes in their depictions of his physical bearing. Orville Browning, for one, described how Douglas possessed a "physical organization of great endurance and unremitting labor" and a "temperament peculiarly ardent and impetuous" which "qualified him in an eminent degree for a great political leader."[118] James W. Sheahan agreed with this sentiment in a eulogy delivered at Chicago University. As he told the crowd, Douglas' "power of endurance, both physical and mental, were truly surprising," enabling him to distinguish himself even amidst the most difficult campaigns.[119] Physically capable of extraordinary feats of perseverance, Douglas had the kind of raw strength admired by martial men. Other eulogists added to this commentary by utilizing Douglas' physicality to emphasize other martial traits, like his boldness, courage, and strength of will. John A. McClernand lamented that Douglas' "strongly marked Jove-like head, with its lion mane" would no longer grace Congress to "shake defiance at beleaguering assailants."[120] The Reverend C. H. Taylor took such imagery further in a eulogy in Alton, Illinois, painting an image of "The broad, dome-like head, set back with proud, martial bearing—uplifted! as if for any conflict with mortal or immortal beings" and the "lips and broad-based chin, with their intimations of resolution, firmness, and power." These physical features were, as Taylor told his audience, "but an outward expression of the mind which reigned within … of the fame which rests upon it, and of the

[117] John Law in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 82, 81.
[118] Orville Browning in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 23.
[119] James W. Sheahan, "Eulogy on Stephen A. Douglas, Delivered before the Chicago University, Chicago, July 3, 1861," (Chicago: "Post" Printing Establishment, 82 Dearborn Street, 1861), box 54, folder 4, SADP, 20.
[120] John A. McClernand in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 43.

character it expresses." Douglas' whole physique, in fact, told of the "terrible energy" within, giving the impression "there is power in the man to *dare, do* and *endure* anything … [and] that he will break down all the opposition he may ever meet—as, indeed, it seemed but destiny for him to do."[121] Housing vast reserves of power and strength, Douglas' physicality was an outward sign of his inward character as a martial man. Defiant, bold, and unassailable, they admired the power he wielded as a sign of true manhood.

Eulogists' embrace of martial manhood shaped their eulogies in ways that stood in stark contrast to eulogies of Webster in 1852, including in their descriptions of Douglas' oratory. Webster's eulogists stressed that while Webster was a powerful orator, he always kept his speeches within the bounds of dignity and decorum, never exceeding what the occasion required. Douglas' eulogists, on the other hand, praised him for exercising the full extent of his powers. Douglas was a "powerful as well as just reasoner," sporting a "simple, vigorous, and correct" rhetoric that suited his "large and powerful mind."[122] Through the strength and zeal demonstrated in his speeches, Douglas proved himself to be an exemplary martial man even in his oratory. His eulogists held these traits had served him well as a senator, as they underscored how he successfully prevailed over rivals by deploying the full force of his oratory. Exhibiting an "*easy* mastery of the mind," Douglas first entered Congress "bursting the trammels which had circumscribed less original minds," and he "trampled beneath him the gingerly and apologetic argumentation of his opponents." Even in his earliest speeches, Douglas "struck boldly out,"

[121] C. H. Taylor, *Funeral Oration on the Death of S. A. Douglas; By the Rev. C. H. Taylor. Delivered at the City Hall, Alton, June 7, 1861* (Alton, Illinois: Telegraph Book and Job Office, 1861), 8-9.
[122] James A. McDougall in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 13.

challenging other congressmen with his "masterly, exhausting, and unanswerable" oratory.[123] To his eulogists, the Senate became "the great arena of glory," where his "great power was shown in all its force" and where Douglas "stood without a successful rival."[124] Whatever Douglas lacked as an orator was "more than made up by the earnestness and vehemence of his delivery." As John A. McClernand told the House of Representatives, "… he was always in earnest, ever on fire. His power over his hearers was often demonstrated by his success in swaying Senators and controlling the violence of the populace," who were often carried away through the "storm of his eloquence."[125] Whereas Webster's eulogists had declared him a brilliant orator because he showed restraint, Douglas' eulogists in and out of Congress vaunted him for overcoming his listeners with sheer zeal and force of will. In doing so, they contended that it was martial manhood, not restrained manhood, which made Douglas an exemplary orator.

The kind of language Douglas' eulogists used to describe the political debates of the 1850s made clear why they found virtue in martial manhood: sectional conflict made Congress a theater of war that left little place for restrained men. Adopting overtly martial metaphors to describe Douglas' participation in the Senate, eulogists made clear that Douglas was an accomplished fighter worthy of acclaim. As Henry B. Anthony told the Congress, Douglas was "Inexhaustible in resources, fierce and audacious in attack, skilful and ingenious in defense," such that "he parried every thrust, and he struck, with irresistible fury, at the weak point of his adversary." Jacob Collamer agreed that there was no doubting Douglas' skill in "forensic gladiatorship," for as an "advocate and champion of the Democratic party … His persistence was

[123] Taylor, *Funeral Oration*, 10; William W. Harsha, "Proceedings of the Citizens' Meeting, In Honor of Judge Douglas," pamphlet, June 8, 1861, box 54, folder 3, SADP, 12.
[124] Sheahan, "Eulogy on Stephen A. Douglas," SADP, 22.
[125] John A. McClernand in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 48-49.

unrelenting, very seldom convinced of error, and never betraying a consciousness of being vanquished."[126] An adroit speaker, his aggressiveness and relentlessness proved to be strengths as he joined in the verbal spars of Congress. Douglas always came well-armed to such fights, for as John A. McClernand described, he used his powerful mind to "invent and forge the terrible weapons with which he was wont to subdue his adversaries." Samuel S. Cox concurred in this sentiment, telling Congress that "His logic had the reach of the rifled cannon, which annihilated while it silenced the batteries of his opponents."[127] Accomplished in the art of verbal war, Douglas' martial manhood made him a fearsome opponent that friends and rivals in Congress alike respected and admired. By recalling Douglas' performance in the Senate in martial terms and praising him for his defiant fighting spirit, his colleagues revealed the extent to which martial manhood underscored how they thought about political leadership.

Other eulogists outside the halls of Congress used similar language, likening words to weapons and politics to a battle. John W. Forney, a Democrat and soon-to-be Secretary of the Senate, told his audience at the Smithsonian Institute that Douglas was skilled in "parliamentary skirmish" and "protracted battle" alike, able to lead "in a sudden dash, or a long siege, with equal success." Both fearless and deft in senatorial engagements, Douglas "would plunge into the billows of the debate, dashing every obstacle aside, and generally coming out the victor" with ease. A master of debate in and out of the halls of Congress, "He was as original as he was daring, … never allowing his opponent to recover time from one surprise, before turning his

[126] Henry B. Anthony and Jacob Collamer in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 32,
[127] John A. McClernand and Samuel S. Cox in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 43, 62.

flank with another and taking his batteries." [128] Utilizing language that framed Douglas' oratory as military engagements, Forney applauded Douglas not for restraining combatants but for being an expert fighter himself. James W. Sheahan also praised Douglas using martial terms in his eulogy at Chicago University, employing an extended metaphor of war to describe the debates of 1850. As he recalled the old scene, he remarked that Congress "seems to me as one general battle field, in which every possible engine of war is playing its noisy and destructive part." Placing his audience within the spectacle, he described the cast of senators engaged in the debate, likening each senator's voice to a different weapon. "The din is fearful," he told the crowd, "The clouds of battle lower over all; the drums beat the charge with eternal rattle … and during all, the booming of cannon, and the sharp clang of small arms go on constantly." Amid this terrifying scene, Douglas "thunders over the field; he charges boldly upon the square and solid array of bayonets before him, breaks the line, tramples down the living mass, rides through the host, dealing death on all sides." Rushing his opponents with "the force of ten thousand horse," Douglas "continues his course, until the foe is silenced, and victorious friends greet, with deafening cheers, the mighty champion of the people."[129] Through their use of language that framed Douglas' oratory as if they were battles, these eulogists revealed how the values of martial manhood permeated northern political culture far more than it had when Webster died.

Even if not completely unequivocal, the persistent use of the values of martial manhood in Douglas' eulogies pointed to an important shift in northern political culture: even many of those who defended or approved of Douglas' more notorious attempts at settling sectional

[128] John W. Forney, "Eulogy Upon the Hon. Stephen A. Douglas, Delivered at the Smithsonian Institute, Washington, July 3, 1861," (Philadelphia: Ringwalt & Brown, Printers, 34 South Thirdstreet, 1861), box 54, folder 4, SADP, 26, 23.
[129] Sheahan, "Eulogy on Stephen A. Douglas," SADP, 23-24.

conflict turned to martial manhood over restrained manhood. Webster's eulogists emphasized that he had saved the Union and achieved compromise through his character as a restrained man, tempering each side and bringing them back within the bounds of peace and reason. Douglas' eulogists, on the other hand, had a greater tendency to claim that his ability to quell the violence of sectional conflict was due to his character as a *martial* man, which allowed him to dominate and overcome others. Speaking at a citizens' meeting at Dixon, Illinois, Reverend William W. Harsha told his audience how Douglas had defended the Compromise of 1850 with "unflinching courage and uncompromising fearlessness." Douglas rushed into the "terrible storm of indignation" brewing in the North, "demanding to be heard before he was condemned," and gained a hearing with the people "when almost any other man would have failed."[130] John A. McClernand made comparable remarks about Douglas' defense of the Compromise of 1850, observing that "amid the blazing effigies of his own person, and regardless of the threats of the enraged populace," Douglas still "melted the savage fury of the rabble."[131] Thanks to his undaunted bravery and defiance as a martial man, Douglas had been willing to stand by compromise when few others would. Sheahan expounded this theme even more clearly when he described Douglas' motivations for introducing the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854. Realizing that western lands could not be settled without "waking the sleeping Demon" of slavery, Douglas decided to "make one grand struggle, to seize the monster, to invite both North and South to unite in chaining it; and having it in chains, to remove it forever beyond the limits of national legislation." Refusing to be cowed by northern and southern extremists alike, Douglas "resisted

[130] Harsha, "Proceedings of the Citizens' Meeting," SADP, 14-15.
[131] John A. McClernand in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 50.

the aggressive claims of slavery, and with equal power the aggressive aims of abolitionists."[132] By applauding Douglas' attempted wrestling match with slavery and his bold confrontation of the nation's extremists, Sheahan implicitly contended that Douglas' display of martial manhood was a virtue. Even Samuel S. Cox, who praised how "A word from him made calm from tempest," still believed Douglas' successes were owed to his "sturdy strength" and "indomitable persistence," which "swayed the tides of public opinion as vassals to his will."[133] Emphasizing Douglas' strength, boldness, and ability to dominate others, those eulogists willing to praise Douglas' attempts at effecting compromise and quelling sectional conflict still largely valorized him through the values of martial manhood, not restrained manhood.

As a whole, eulogies of Douglas demonstrated how northern political culture had shifted since Webster's death. Webster's eulogists had held him up as an exemplar of political leadership on the basis of his restrained manhood. While Douglas' eulogists occasionally drew upon a paradigm of restrained manhood, the bulk of their admiration was reserved for Douglas' traits as a martial man. Celebrating his bravery, boldness, and relentless persistence, they tacitly argued that martial manhood provided a noble ideal for political leadership that should be modeled by others. Although Republicans had been at the forefront of pushing northerners to embrace martial manhood in the years preceding Douglas' death, they were not the only ones to admire Douglas' more martial traits. Rather, many of the Democrats who eulogized their fallen leader praised him on the basis of martial manhood as well.

These differences between the eulogies of Webster and Douglas reflected broader changes in northern political culture. Republicans' appeals to martial manhood had been so

[132] Sheahan, "Eulogy on Stephen A. Douglas," SADP, 17,
[133] Samuel S. Cox in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 60, 61.

effective that they not only fueled the party's meteoric rise but also put pressure on Democrats to adopt the same standard of masculinity in their political rhetoric. Accusing northern Democrats who compromised with southerners on slavery of being cowardly "doughfaces," Republicans questioned their manhood and thus their fitness for political leadership.[134] Lacking the backbone required to stand up to the Slave Power, they placed the rights and manhood of the North at risk through their submissiveness. As Republicans targeted northern Democrats through such gendered attacks, they undermined the viability of restrained manhood as an ideal in northern political culture by characterizing that model of manhood, with its emphasis on compromise and diplomacy, as a type of effeminacy. These tactics placed northern Democrats in a difficult position, since a willingness to compromise with their southern allies increasingly brought their own manhood and ability to lead into doubt. Northern constituents who bought into the Slave Power conspiracy added to the strain northern Democrats faced, calling upon their representatives to stand up to southerners or face the consequences at the polls. Both Republicans and northern constituents more broadly, then, placed pressure on Democrats to demonstrate martial masculinity and to be bolder and more defiant in their positions regarding slavery.

When both the Buchanan administration and southerners pushed for the proslavery Lecompton constitution to be recognized as legitimate, many northern Democrats found the opportunity they had needed to frame themselves as lionhearted martial men. Outraged at being asked to validate the flagrantly undemocratic practices that produced the Lecompton constitution and that trampled on the rights of white Kansan men, many northern Democrats, Douglas included, chose to defy the administration and spoke out against it. In refusing to support

[134] Lynn, "A Manly Doughface," 606-607; Haumesser, *The Democratic Collapse*, 108-109.

Lecompton, they signaled to their constituents that they, too, were martial men who could demonstrate courage and defiance when circumstances called for it, and they like Republicans benefited from northern indignation at the encroachments of the Slave Power.[135] Northern Democrats would repeat their shows of defiance in their refusal to allow southern Democrats dictate the 1860 party platform or party candidate, running Douglas as their candidate and framing their refusal to bend as a virtue. During the election campaign, they made clear that Douglas would be a bold champion for the rights of northern white men, defending their manhood against the encroachments of both the Republican Party and the Slave Power. Even those that worked for compromise during secession winter recognized the need to avoid the appearance of weakness, capitulation, or submission to the South at the cost of northern honor and manhood.[136] Democrats, then, increasingly worked within a model of political leadership that vaunted martial manhood, and they tried to frame their positions as consistent with a manly stand, even when they advocated for compromise. Douglas' eulogists had demonstrated this when they described Douglas' attempts at bridging sectional discord in overtly martial terms. Across the north then, amidst Republicans and Democrats alike, there was a greater embrace of martial manhood as an ideal of political leadership.

"The Character of an Uncompromising Patriot": Martial Manhood and Honor on the Brink of the Civil War

As it had with Webster's eulogists, the immediate historical context of Douglas' death shaped eulogists' commentary as they attempted to use his life's example to chart a path forward.

[135] Smith, *The Stormy Present*, 115-118; Woods, *Emotional and Sectional Conflict*, 174-178.
[136] Smith, *The Stormy Present*, 131, 140, 144-146, 158-159, 174; Haumesser, *The Democratic Collapse*, 102-105, 114; McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 87, 104, 115-116.

Finding themselves in the opening act of the Civil War, northern eulogists used Douglas' death as an opportunity to reflect on the kind of leadership the country required in a time of crisis. What kind of leadership should statesmen exhibit? And how could northerners maintain national and sectional honor as they faced the reality of a divided nation? Once again, northern eulogists found answers in Douglas' conduct as a statesman and especially in the final months of his life, when, in "the darkest hour of distress in gloom, he arose, the star of hope to a distracted nation."[137] In doing so, they revealed how shifting ideals of masculinity had not only altered ideals of political leadership but also reshaped northern honor culture. Through their praise of Douglas' conduct in the ups and downs of his career, northern eulogists implicitly argued that the North needed men who shared Douglas' character—that of a martial man—to maintain national and sectional honor.

When northern eulogists commemorated Douglas, their commentary on his character was once again intertwined with notions of honor, and they considered which particular qualities made his conduct worthy of imitation. Northerners believed that men of character distinguished themselves through honorable or noble conduct, which proceeded "from an upright and laudable cause" or was "direct to a just and proper end."[138] Yet because concepts like character, honor, and nobility were fundamentally notions prescribing idealized masculine behavior, northerners' shift away from restrained manhood and towards martial manhood reshaped what conduct they considered honorable. Those who, like Webster's eulogists, preferred restrained manhood tended to describe compromise and negotiation as honorable and noble, since these behaviors matched restrained manhood's embrace of moderation and its disdain for violence. Accordingly,

[137] Duggan, "Funeral Obsequies," SADP, 8.
[138] Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, 416; Wongsrichanalai, *Northern Character*, 2, 4, 5.

Webster's eulogists stressed that his conduct as a statesman had been honorable since he used his own character as a restrained man to help temper the nation and negotiate a peaceful compromise. Douglas' eulogists, on the other hand, drew largely from martial manhood, which placed a greater emphasis on the "masculine qualities of strength, aggression, and even violence." Consequently, they valorized men who demonstrated fidelity towards their conscience by boldly and defiantly adhering to their principles, even in the face of ostracization or violent opposition.[139] As Douglas' eulogists discussed his career, they foregrounded how his character as a martial man brought honor to himself, his state, and his nation by providing him with the strength, fearlessness, and determination needed to be a man of principle who would fight for his cause come hell or high water. Cherishing his strength of conscience, Douglas' eulogists argued that as the North prepared for war, they needed the example of the man who had "the character of an uncompromising patriot" more than ever. [140]

As Douglas' eulogists analyzed which aspects of his character were most honorable and laudable, they held up his moral courage as the foremost of his virtues, since they believed his courage had enabled him to nobly stand his ground against the ire of the North following his defense of the Compromise of 1850 and his introduction of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill in 1854. Speaking before a citizens' meeting in Dixon, Illinois, William Harsha praised Douglas for the mettle he had displayed upon his return to Chicago, which "required no ordinary courage." Both then and in 1854, Douglas displayed a "Luther-like courage and determination" as he faced the "thunders of thousands of pulpits" and the "terrible and scathing attacks" of Republicans. Even in the face of such overwhelming hatred, though, he did not "hesitate or … tremble in a single

[139] Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood*, 12, 11-13; Isenberg, *Sex and Citizenship*, 141; Wongsrichanalai, *Northern Character*, 62, 67-68.
[140] Duggan, "Funeral Obsequies," SADP, 8.

nerve." Instead, as Harsha told his audience, Douglas stayed his course "like some great rock, amid the surges of the storm-tossed ocean," delivering speeches which were full of "forcible logic, scathing rebuke, withering sarcasm and bold defiance." Harsha hinted that even opponents had to find such conduct honorable, for it required "a courage more true and grand than him who storms a fortress bristling with bayonets, or marches amid the excitement of the battle field to the cannon's mouth."[141] Other eulogists spoke in Douglas' efforts in 1850 and 1854 in similar terms, considering his labors to be "gallant" as well as "noble and heroic."[142] By describing Douglas' moral courage in language strongly associated honorable conduct, Douglas' eulogists contended he had ennobled himself through his character as a martial man.

Commentary on Douglas' moral courage underscored the praise of most eulogists, since they used it to contend that Douglas was a man of steadfast integrity and principle, animated by an honorable fidelity to his convictions before all else. In his eulogy of Douglas before the House of Representatives, William A. Richardson of Illinois asserted that "No power could intimidate him, no patronage corrupt him" because Douglas "looked only to great principles, and cared nothing for details."[143] Faithful to his conscience, neither threat nor bribery could sway him from the path of principle and integrity. James W. Sheahan echoed this sentiment in his eulogy at Chicago University, stressing that Douglas always proceeded from his own beliefs. "Looking at all questions from an immovable stand point of principle," Sheahan told the crowd, "he could neither be coaxed nor driven into an approval of what he deemed to be wrong." Always either "the firm and persevering and ardent advocate" or the "firm and persevering and ardent

[141] Harsha, "Proceedings of the Citizens' Meeting," SADP, 15.
[142] John A. McClernand in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 50; Forney, "Eulogy Upon the Hon. Stephen A. Douglas," SADP, 9.
[143] William A. Richardson in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 39.

opponent," Douglas could never be charmed "by thought of personal advantage." Instead, he "rejected everything and all things that would not survive the severe test and crushing pressure of fixed and imperative principle."[144] John W. Forney much agreed with this assessment, noting that "although bitterly assailed for his opinions, no opponent could make and maintain an accusation affecting his personal integrity." Douglas, "planting himself upon his principles," left no doubt that he was driven by only the noblest motives: a firm dedication to his beliefs and a strong conviction of conscience.[145] As John Law of Indiana put it, Douglas "hazarded all, he suffered all, because he believed he was right."[146] Characterizing Douglas as a man of principle, northern eulogists contended that he had acted honorably, in accordance with his conscience, thanks to his courageousness as a martial man.

Some eulogists more sympathetic towards Douglas' politics expounded this theme further by claiming his more controversial stands reflected an honorable fidelity to principle. Samuel S. Cox emphasized that Douglas' devotion to popular sovereignty in the territories was animated by a belief in the people's capacity for self-government, which he would have followed "to any logical conclusion, having faith in it as a principle of repose, justice, and union." Cox believed that although his loyalty to popular sovereignty earned him enemies, his principled stand was still ennobling and led to the moments of his career when his nature shone "with its loftiest grace and courage."[147] Resolutions passed at a citizens' meeting in Dixon, Illinois likewise commended Douglas for the defense of that "great principle," noting that they gathered to honor

[144] Sheahan, "Eulogy on Stephen A. Douglas," SADP, 18-19, 6-7.
[145] Forney, "Eulogy Upon the Hon. Stephen A. Douglas," SADP, 22, 24.
[146] John Law in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 83.
[147] Samuel S. Cox in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 63.

him precisely for his dedication to the cause.[148] Extoling Douglas for the constancy of his convictions, these eulogists contended that his faithfulness to conscience made him an ideal statesman. James W. Sheahan echoed these characterizations as he countered those who had charged Douglas of "truckling to the slave interest." Drawing upon "a sense of white manhood that was based on personal independence [and] political self-determination," Sheahan instead characterized Douglas as "an independent statesman" and a "FREEMAN in the fullest sense of the term" who was more to likely be found "seeking and provoking hostility than truckling or yielding to it."[149] Underscoring his independence and his refusal to submit to anything but his own conscience, Sheahan like other eulogists insisted that the boldness and moral courage inherent in Douglas' character made him a man of principle and honor.

Though northern eulogists believed there was plenty of evidence of Douglas' moral courage earlier in his career, they were particularly impressed by his performance in the last several years of his life, when they believed his character as a martial man gleamed brightest. Beginning with his stand against the Lecompton constitution in 1857, northern eulogists praised his willingness to ostracize himself from party leadership rather than abandon his principles, and they contrasted Douglas' manhood and honor with Buchanan's weakness and dishonor. James W. Sheahan, for one, described Buchanan in feminizing terms, telling his audience how "The Lecompton fraud was taken to the executive bosom, [and] nursed into life" by the "bachelor President" before being thrust upon Congress.[150] Douglas, however, "acknowledged a higher

[148] "Proceedings of the Citizens' Meeting," SADP, 7.
[149] Sheahan, "Eulogy on Stephen A. Douglas," SADP, 8, 18, 9
[150] Sheahan, "Eulogy on Stephen A. Douglas," SADP, 18. The phrase "bachelor President" is likely meant to be as feminizing as the suggestion that Buchanan nursed Lecompton, since, as Joshua A. Lynn points out, bachelorhood implied a lack of manhood to many mid-nineteenth-century Americans. See Lynn, "A Manly Doughface," 594-595, 607-608.

fealty to the people, a stronger obligation to his own conscience" and thus refused to "overturn popular liberty" or to "falsify every act and speech of his life." Instead, as Sheahan told the crowd at Chicago University,

> He spurned executive smiles when those smiles were invitations to crime, and with giant arm, he struck to the dust the slaves who sought to bind him with the chains of executive despotism. Standing almost alone in the Senate House, he met the storm, and sustained the shock unmoved, and never laid down his arms until the foul monster—LECOMPTON—lay dead and prostrate beneath his feet.[151]

Juxtaposing Douglas' strength, independence, and manhood with the weakness, subservience, and effeminacy of his opponents, Sheahan contended that Douglas vanquished Lecompton and overpowered his enemies and served his country well through his character as a martial man. John W. Forney eulogized in similar terms, describing Douglas as the leader of a "noble little band" of congressmen who "took up arms against their party." Men of "iron nerve and conscientious convictions," they defied the administration despite the risk it posed to their political careers. Douglas in particular "refused to stultify himself" or to "desert the truth and degrade his manhood." Through "heroic fortitude and persistence," he honorably and manfully refused to bend to others over his own conscience.[152] To William Harsha, as well, Douglas was a "man of iron [who] could not be made to yield." No matter the assaults launched by the administration, "the blows given were returned with a tenfold power by the indominable senator," who was, as ever, "bold, masterly, independent, and defiant." It was, according to Harsha, a "sublime display of high, invincible, determined moral courage."[153] Even Republicans like Jacob Collamer of Vermont admired that when Douglas' "cherished principle" was threatened by Buchanan's support of the Lecompton constitution, he "met and exposed it with

[151] Sheahan, "Eulogy on Stephen A. Douglas," SADP, 19.
[152] Forney, "Eulogy Upon the Hon. Stephen A. Douglas," SADP, 26, 27, 9.
[153] Harsha, "Proceedings of the Citizens' Meeting," SADP, 16.

the frankness and decision of a just and high-minded patriot."[154] By praising his independence of will and his forceful defiance, Douglas' eulogists underscored that he was the exemplar of a martial man, whose bold character gave him the moral courage necessary to remain true to his conscience.

Douglas' Democratic eulogists would repeat this refrain as they recounted the recent 1860 campaign. Far from repudiating him for splitting the Democratic vote, they glorified Douglas and his supporters for waging a "heroic campaign" despite the personal betrayal they suffered at the hands of southern Democrats or the odds stacked against them in the election.[155] Speaking at the Smithsonian Institute, John W. Forney celebrated how Douglas "boldly threw himself among the Southern people" for the campaign, defying those who claimed he was too afraid to promote his positions in the South. Although "servile politicians" attempted to "seduce him from his duty" on the campaign trail, Douglas nevertheless "maintained his onward march," garnering the applause of Republicans and northern Democrats alike for his "extraordinary exhibition of moral courage."[156] Once again, Forney highlighted Douglas' strength of character as opposed to the weakness of those that tried to dissuade him. Other eulogists echoed Forney, adding commentary on how Douglas' character as a martial man was paralleled by that of his voters. James W. Sheahan described Douglas and his voters as soldiers who charge into battle with "the indomitable energy and bravery of a forlorn hope." Inspired by Douglas' own moral courage, his supporters "hesitated not, they faltered not" despite being "conspicuously adorned for the shots of the enemy." Instead, "with an unfailing constancy, a devotion and a heroic fidelity to their cause, [they] marched up to the polls and voted for STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS!"

[154] Jacob Collamer in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 18.
[155] Samuel S. Cox in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 60.
[156] Forney, "Eulogy Upon the Hon. Stephen A. Douglas," SADP, 10, 11.

Using overtly martial language, Sheahan valorized Douglas and the "gallant hosts" that voted for him, stressing that their fidelity to their cause despite the odds they faced were both noble and heroic. C. H. Taylor made similar remarks in a eulogy delivered in Alton, Illinois, claiming that the election left the courage of Douglas and his voters beyond all doubt. "Through the whole of the last campaign," he told the crowd, "Douglas was charging upon his foes at the head of his Spartan band, in a style of dashing, fearless bravery … as if death and danger were not among them." Although "Battalions of Northern infantry," "Squadron of Southern cavalry," and "'The Administration' batteries" all mounted against them, Douglas' followers showed no less bravery than their "gallant chieftain." Instead, their own integrity and manhood "forbid them to submit to an unjust proscription, and they refuse[d] to yield … *preferring defeat and death, under his banner, to life, and victory, under any other*."[157] Taylor, like Forney and Sheahan, extolled Douglas and his followers for refusing to surrender their manhood, holding that their dedication to their cause even to the point of defeat was more honorable than shamefully yielding to their opponents. In doing so, they vaunted martial manhood as a standard for noble political leadership.

For Douglas' eulogists, the moral courage and nobility he demonstrated earlier in his career reached its peak after the election, when he joined those who thought war with the South was unavoidable after the attack on Fort Sumter. After it became clear that compromise would not avert secession or war, Douglas pledged to support the Lincoln administration in order to preserve the Union and the Constitution, encouraging other northern Democrats to do likewise. Returning to Illinois, Douglas gave several speeches including at the state legislature which urged northerners to put aside partisanship in order to conduct a bipartisan response to southern

[157] Taylor, *Funeral Oration*, 12, 16.

rebellion.[158] Republicans, unsurprisingly, vaunted his efforts to unite the North behind the war effort shortly before his death, praising him for placing patriotism before party. Jacob Collamer of Vermont commended Douglas for "laying aside the party differences which separated him from the executive, promptly, and with frank, patriotic devotion," offering the Lincoln administration and his country "his usual devotion, activity, and eloquence" until the time of his death. This singular act was, in the estimation of Collamer, "the crowning glory of his earthly career."[159] Henry B. Anthony much agreed with this assessment, claiming that though Douglas "was a party man … he loved his country better than his party," and "rose to the full height of the occasion, and appeared in the full proportions of an American Senator" when he called upon northerners to defend the Union.[160] Orville Browning, Douglas' replacement in the Senate, likewise celebrated how "the patriot triumphed over the partisan" after Fort Sumter and how he "threw the entire weight of his great influence on the side of his country in the hour of her greatest need." As he remarked in Congress, there was something "heroic in the promptitude, fearlessness, and decision with which he rent asunder strong and personal party ties … and something almost sublime in the terrible energy with which he denounced the treason" of secessionists.[161] Using language that emphasized how Douglas deployed his strength, energy, and zeal as a martial man on behalf of a righteous cause, Collamer, Anthony, and Browning all claimed that Douglas acted as an ideal statesman, honorably defending his country from those who would dare attack it. Other Republicans repeated this refrain while also suggesting others

[158] Robert Walter Johannsen, *Stephen A. Douglas* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1973), 862-870; Michael E. Woods, *Arguing Until Doomsday: Stephen Douglas, Jefferson Davis, and the Struggle for American Democracy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020), 220-223.
[159] Jacob Collamer in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 18, 19.
[160] Henry B. Anthony in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 33.
[161] Orville Browning in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 29, 30.

emulate his noble example. Leaving the Congress with the assertion that had Douglas lived, "there would have been hear in these Halls no voice louder, clearer, more emphatic than his, demanding action—*action—prompt, vigorous, decisive action*," Isaac N. Arnold of Illinois implicitly called upon his listeners to heed Douglas' call across the grave.[162] Lyman Trumbull of Illinois made the point more clearly, attributing the "sublime spectacle" of northerners "rising as one man in vindication of constitutional liberty and free government" to Douglas' "magnanimous and patriotic course." Contending that those actions were the "crowning act of his life," Trumbull held that they would "ever remain an enduring monument to his fame, and an example worthy of all imitation of the sacrifice of pride to principle, of self to country, and of party to patriotism."[163] Vaunting Douglas' actions as patriotic and magnanimous, these Republicans emphasized that other northerners should emulate Douglas' character as a martial man and honorably fight for their country in its time of need.

Republicans, however, were not alone in valorizing Douglas' support of the Lincoln administration at the outset of the Civil War; many of the Democrats who eulogized their fallen leader also praised him for putting aside party for the sake of country. Although some Democrats commended Douglas for trying "every honorable expedient" to conciliate the South, they nevertheless held up his work uniting the northern war effort as one of his greatest moments, which ought to be emulated by other northerners. In this vein, James W. Nesmith applauded how Douglas "rose above the partisan" and, when "forbearance ceased to be a virtue … appealed in patriotic language to the gallant sons of his own State and the great Northwest to rally in defence of the Union, the Constitution, and the laws." Nesmith contended that Douglas' example was so

[162] Isaac N. Arnold in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 75.
[163] Lyman Trumbull in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 7-8.

"noble" that it would be held up for the "millions yet unborn … as a beacon light to guide them in the pathway of honorable usefulness and patriotic renown."[164] Lauding how Douglas "sent forth a war" that "communicated faith and strength to millions," James A. McDougall likewise held that the "majesty and power" of Douglas' final efforts "secured for his memory the love and admiration of all men who love freedom here, everywhere, and forever."[165] Emphasizing Douglas' nobility, gallantry, and strength, Nesmith and McDougall argued that Douglas' willingness to muster his character as a martial man in defense of the Union was honorable conduct. Other Democrats made similar remarks, maintaining that Douglas' example should not only be remembered but emulated. John A. McClernand of Illinois praised Douglas for always being able to "subordinate party feelings and purposes to the higher dictates of public duty." His assistance to the Lincoln administration in service of the Constitution and the Union was, as McClernand remarked, "Noble conduct—all worthy of imitation!"[166] John Law of Indiana similarly called on his fellow Democrats in particular to "demonstrate our devotion to [Douglas], as well as to our country, by sustaining the 'Constitution, the Union, and its flag,' regardless of all former differences of political opinions—of party politics."[167] Holding Douglas up as an exemplar of honorable and noble conduct, they contended that other northern leaders ought to emulate his own character as a martial man, laying aside partisan loyalties in order to fight for the Union on point of principle.

These messages were echoed in the accounts of Douglas' last day which circulated in eulogies and newspapers. As with Webster's eulogies, these "good death" scenes were framed so

[164] James W. Nesmith in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 20-21.
[165] James A. McDougall in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 11-12.
[166] John A. McClernand in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 50-51.
[167] John Law in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 85.

that they served a didactic purpose, reiterating the lessons observers had already drawn from the deceased's life.[168] Yet because northerners' attitudes on which types of masculinity underscored ideal political leadership had changed, these good death accounts were also imbued with a martial language not present in Webster's death scenes. Thus, James W. Nesmith of Oregon expressed gratitude that the "manly courage and heroic fortitude which so eminently characterized our friend in life, did not forsake him in the hour of his greatest trial." If Douglas had faced death with resignation and "courage," it was because of a "consciousness of his own rectitude of purpose," a knowledge that he had never abandoned his principles.[169] Claiming that Douglas "fought the battle of life bravely," Orville Browning of Illinois contended Douglas had shown the same character in death, when he passed away "in the full vigor and maturity of his mental and physical energies … with his patriotism unseduced, and with no stain upon his loyalty."[170] As John A. McClernand plainly put it, "Glorious in life, he was also glorious in the extremity of death."[171] For both Nesmith, Browning, and McClernand, Douglas' disposition in death was merely a reflection of the character he had displayed in life—a courageous and honorable man of principle.

Other eulogists took this point further by repeating Douglas' message to his sons—to "obey the laws, and support the Constitution of the United States"—as his "final" words. Although these words were not necessarily Douglas' last utterances, eulogists chose to remember them as such because they served the didactic purposes of their deathbed narratives, stressing

[168] Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 6-11; Schantz, *Awaiting the Heavenly Country*, 9, 18-19, 36.
[169] James W. Nesmith in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 22.
[170] Orville Browning in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 31.
[171] John A. McClernand in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 52.

"meaning" over "unvarnished historical truth."[172] Thus, just as eulogists claimed that Douglas' bravery in death mirrored his courageousness in life, so too did they argue his final words paralleled his principled patriotism in life. Northern eulogists made this point explicitly clear to their audiences, calling his final words the "grand epitome," the "fit climax," and "fitting conclusion" to his life, emblematic of "the exalted principles of the patriot and statesman" he always espoused. No one prior to Douglas, claimed one eulogist, had "more impressive, more grandly patriotic" final words, which "inculcate the duty of every citizen." Eulogists considered these words a "glorious legacy" which ought to be passed down for other generations as a lesson in "patriotism, honor, and a brave manly faith."[173] Through their glorification of Douglas' final words, northern eulogists once again contended his character as a principled martial man was honorable.

Of course, because Douglas' death came only a few months after Fort Sumter, eulogists' praise of Douglas as a patriotic, fearless man of principle served a very specific purpose: to rally northerners in a united front as the Civil War commenced. Yet, the specific kind of leadership they called for at that moment of crisis revealed the extent to which northern ideals of masculinity had shifted in favor of martial manhood. Douglas may not have been able to stay disunion; nevertheless, his eulogists contended that he brought the nation honor through his character as a martial man, which had provided him the fearlessness, boldness, and strength of will to stay true to his conscience and to put country above all else. Now that the Union was unquestionably at risk, the North needed men who would show the same type of leadership,

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[172] Schantz, *Awaiting the Heavenly Country*, 21, 21-23; Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 10-11.
[173] William Richardson, Samuel S. Cox, John A. McClernand, Philip B. Fouke in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 41, 60, 53, 88; John Dement, "Proceedings of the Citizens' Meeting," SADP, 8; Taylor, *Funeral Oration*, 21.

nobly fighting for their country without counting the cost. By and large, Douglas' eulogists demonstrated a preference for martial manhood over restrained manhood as a means of honorably serving their nation in the midst of crisis.

Particularly revealing was the fact that Douglas' Democratic eulogists joined Republicans in promoting a model of political leadership based on martial manhood. Their praise of Douglas' apparent character as a martial man not only indicated the ways Democrats responded to northerners' increasing push for political leaders who would demonstrate a decisive, manful, unyielding stance but also demonstrated how martial manhood provided Democrats with a means of uniting (if temporarily) with their political rivals without feeling they abandoned their party. After all, they could claim, as they did of Douglas, that they had always struggled nobly and bravely for the preservation of the Union and the Constitution; now that the Union was unquestionably under attack, a manful and honorable response required them to join Republicans in going to war. Particularly for War Democrats like John A. McClernand, who was appointed as a general by Lincoln and supported the administration throughout the war, "there was something manly and ennobling about physical violence in pursuit of a moral goal—in this case liberty and Union." Recognizing the "injury to national honor posed by the assault on Sumter and by secession itself," many Republicans and Democrats joined in nonpartisan cooperation early on in the war on the basis of courageously defending the Union and the Constitution.[174]

Democrats' partial embrace of martial manhood would contribute to their disunity as the war went on, however. Although they remained committed to a manful defense of the Union and

[174] Smith, *The Stormy Present*, 178, 178-181; McClintock, *Lincoln and the Decision for War*, 260; Joel H. Silbey, *The Democratic Party in the Civil War Era, 1860-1868* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1977), 39-45; Jennifer L. Weber, *Copperheads: The Rise and Fall of Lincoln's Opponents in the North* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 13-16.

the Constitution, they increasingly disagreed about what that meant in practice. While a minority of Democrats would continue working closely with Republicans, a considerable number of Democrats, including Samuel S. Cox, adopted the mantle of an opposition party, believing that Republicans shrewdly took advantage of the war to promote their own partisan ends. According to these Peace Democrats, Republicans' passage of emancipation in Washington, D.C., support for the Emancipation Proclamation, and encroachments upon northern liberties were all signs that they posed a threat to white manhood and more broadly the Union. Co-opting much of the language of martial manhood that Republicans had pioneered, these Democrats tried to position themselves as the bold and courageous defenders of white manhood against the "party of miscegenation," who followed the revolutionary tradition of manfully resisting "tyranny." [175] Peace Democrats, they claimed, were the loyal champions of the Constitution and the Union as envisioned by the founding fathers, not Republicans.[176] While Peace Democrats were divided on the degree to which they should support war efforts, they clearly demonstrated an understanding of how martial manhood had worked its way into northern political culture. More moderate Peace Democrats, like Cox, insisted on the importance of avoiding the appearance of vacillation on the issue of the war itself, which could be viewed as unmanly cowardice and treason. More hardline Peace Democrats, on the other hand, urged it was "better to be beaten in a bold and uncompromising defense of principle and a fearless maintenance of honor than to be successful

[175] Silbey, *A Respectable Minority*, 47-53; Weber, *Copperheads*, 160-162, 4-6.
[176] Matthew Warshauer, "Connecticut Copperhead Constitutionalism: A Study of Peace Democratic Political Ideology During the Civil War," in Sandow, Robert M., ed. *Contested Loyalty: Debates over Patriotism in the Civil War North*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018), 54-55; Jonathan W. White, "'I Do Not Understand What the Term 'Loyalty' Means': The Debate in Pennsylvania over Compensating Victims of Rebel Raids," in *Contested Loyalty*, 88-90; and Julie A. Mujic, "'We Are Setting the Terms Now': Loyalty Rhetoric in Courtship," in *Contested Loyalty*, 116-120.

in a contest where either principle or manly courage are bartered for victory."[177] Thus, while Peace Democrats would not completely abandon the values of restraint and compromise praised in Webster's eulogies, they also clearly understood the need to frame such values within a paradigm of martial manhood if they were to appeal to the electorate. Although divided on what political stance martial manhood required, each faction within the Democratic Party evinced a clear grasp of its importance to voters.

Democrats' willingness to frame their varied positions within a language of aggressive, forceful masculinity indicated the clear shift northern political culture had made since the death of Webster: northerners generally valued statesmanship based on martial manhood, not restrained manhood. To be viewed as a desirable and viable candidate, it was crucial for public officials to demonstrate to the electorate that they had the noble character of martial men. Opponents, on the other hand, had to show that their rival was "weak, hesitant, and vacillating." Throughout the Civil War, both parties evinced a recognition of these political realities as they spoke about Abraham Lincoln, since both Democratic and Republican critics alike sought to frame Lincoln as feeble and potentially subservient to one of his cabinet members, while allies doubled down on his image as an independent rail-splitter whose physical prowess was matched only by the strength of his moral character.[178] Evidently, a model of statesmanship based upon martial manhood had made a strong foothold in northern political culture.

[177] Silbey, *A Respectable Minority*, 95-99, 106-109, quotation on 108.
[178] Smith, "Abraham Lincoln, Manhood, and Nineteenth-Century American Political Culture," in *This Distracted and Anarchical People*, 29, 30-34, 37-41.

Chapter Three

"The Unrelenting Foe of Compromise": Martial Manhood and Honor in the Eulogies of Charles Sumner

When Charles Sumner died on March 11, 1874, the landscape which surrounded northerners had changed significantly since Daniel Webster and Stephen A. Douglas' passing. Having survived the ravages of a bloody Civil War, the country found itself in the midst of the increasingly fraught work of Reconstruction. Yet when northerners paused to commemorate the passing of the Massachusetts senator, they praised him with language no less exalted than that of Webster and Douglas' eulogists in the decades prior. He was "One of the greatest of American statesmen," as one paper proclaimed, knowing no equal since the days "Webster, Clay, Calhoun, Chase, and Seward disappeared from the Senate."[179] Thomas N. Stone of the Massachusetts legislature agreed heartily with this sentiment. To him, Sumner had long been "a model statesman, towering high above his fellows," such that when he died, he left "no superior behind in his chosen field." Though Stone mourned that Sumner no longer stood as a living beacon of ideal political leadership, he noted that the departed senator had nevertheless "left to posterity a character and a fame after which, it is to be hoped, future statesmen will model their own."[180]

Much like Stone, Sumner's other eulogists hoped that his life and career might serve a didactic purpose, instructing listeners on which characteristics were desirable in public officials. As they forged a broader conversation on what political leadership ought to look like, they revealed how central martial manhood had become in northern political culture across the past two decades. Eschewing the restrained manhood vaunted by Webster's eulogists and using a more unequivocally martial set of vocabulary and values than Douglas' eulogists, Sumner's

[179] "Charles Sumner," *San Francisco Bulletin* (San Francisco, California), March 11, 1874.
[180] Thomas N. Stone in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner,* 31, 32.

eulogists insisted that national honor had been preserved through the 1850s and beyond because of a more aggressive, courageous, and uncompromising style of politics. As Sumner's eulogists constructed discourses about what qualities were admirable in public officials, they revealed that values regarding statesmanship ingrained in northern political culture had shifted from using restrained manhood to using martial manhood, setting the tone for Reconstruction politics and beyond.

"The Will and Courage of a Man": Martial Manhood and Character in the Eulogies of Charles Sumner

Like other eulogists before them, Sumner's eulogists were charged with the task of evaluating his life and career. Because he had figured so prominently in events leading up to the Civil War though, his passing also served as an occasion for northern eulogists, and in particular Republicans, to interpret the meaning of the turbulence of the last couple decades. In the 1850s, Republicans had led the call for a style of political leadership undergirded by martial masculinity; now that one of the original vanguard had fallen, they had ample opportunity to take stock in 1874 of the legacy of that leadership. As Sumner's eulogists discussed what qualities had made him an admirable statesman, they reaffirmed their admiration for martial manhood, drawing from a similar vocabulary as Douglas' eulogists to frame him as a courageous man of principle. They differed, however, in thoroughly repudiating compromise, associating it with the weakness and lack of principle that they believed characterized restrained manhood. Contrasting Sumner's generation of political leaders to that which proceeded him, his eulogists forged a narrative in which the nation's honor and moral character depended on martial manhood displacing restrained manhood as an ideal of political leadership.

Sumner's eulogists often began with a tribute to his personality that vaunted him in unmistakably martial terms, stressing his belligerent, unyielding stance in politics. Massachusetts' surviving senator, George S. Boutwell, extolled Sumner for being "self-reliant, self-asserting, and aggressive," by nature "imperious" and unafraid of "controversy."[181] Unafraid of a fight, he often found one in the Senate. Adding to this acclaim, Daniel D. Pratt of Indiana celebrated Sumner for his "unflagging zeal and an energy that never tired," which allowed him to pursue his work courageously and relentlessly. Demonstrating "perseverance," "energy," "zeal," and "eloquence," nothing could deter Sumner from his purpose.[182] For Nathaniel P. Banks of the Massachusetts Senate, Sumner was the epitome of boldness, remaining "unmoved by assault and insensible to fear" even in the most trying of circumstances. Although more experienced senators warned Sumner "that his sharp methods of controversy were impolitic and perhaps unsafe," he nevertheless "did not desist," instead returning "denunciation for denunciation and scorn for scorn."[183] In the Massachusetts House of Representatives, Willard P. Phillips similarly applauded how Sumner had "applied himself untiringly" to his fight against the Slave Power, "regardless alike of labor and of personal danger."[184] For these eulogists, Sumner's unrelenting, undaunted courage and combativeness signaled that he displayed the highest standards of martial manhood. Lest their listeners miss this crucial point, many eulogists explicitly drew upon the language of manhood to praise Sumner's valor. Aaron A. Sargent of California declared in the Senate that to speak of how Sumner "boldly announced persistently applied eternal truths" was to "speak of his courage and his manliness." It was, for Sargent, "his courage, his manliness, his

[181] George S. Boutwell in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner,* 14.
[182] Daniel D. Pratt in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner,* 30, 31.
[183] Nathaniel P. Banks in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 21, 37.
[184] Willard P. Phillips in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner,* 43.

singleness of purpose, his high achievements," which distinguished Sumner from all others.[185] Nor was Sargent alone in explicitly emphasizing Sumner's "untrammelled manhood" or his "manliness and unflinching courage."[186] Enamored with his courage, strength, and aggression, Sumner's eulogists applauded him on the basis of martial manhood, not restrained manhood.

The very language Sumner's eulogists utilized signaled how thoroughly martial manhood permeated their values, for much like Douglas' eulogists, they consistently deployed martial language to narrate the greatest moments of his career. Sumner was no mere statesman; he was an "apostle, martyr, and finally conqueror" for the cause of liberty, the "great champion of freedom, the defender of justice, the advocate of equal right," unbowed and undefeated.[187] Avowed enemy of the Slave Power, he "waged unrelenting, unceasing war" by attacking slavery in its "citadel" or "stronghold" in Washington, D.C. despite the odds, going forth "like David against Goliath, to battle against the colossal power of Slavery."[188] In the Senate, "his weapons were words, and, however rough and affronting, for the right," landing "well-directed blows" for the cause of liberty and equality.[189] Never shying from the "contest," Sumner lived long enough

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[185] Aaron A. Sargent in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 40.
[186] George B. Loring, Francis Hayes, and John Greenleaf Whittier in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 25, 30, and 100 respectively; Charles Sedgwick May, *Charles Sumner: A Eulogy Delivered From the Faculty And Societies of Kalamazoo College* (Kalamazoo: "Daily Telegraph" Printing House, 1874), 11.
[187] George S. Boutwell in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 13; Willard P. Phillips in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 43; see also W. B. Washburn, Henry S. Washburn, Charles R. Codman, John Greenleaf Whittier, Carl Schurz, Robert B. Elliot, and Henry W. Foote in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 17, 24, 45, 47 103, 193, 198, 233, 235, 246, 262, 277, 299; Aaron A. Sargent, E. R. Hoar, G. F. Hoar, and Omar D. Conger in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 39, 57, 100, 104, 106, 107; May, *Charles Sumner*, 12, 13, 19, 21, 22; Cyrus Augustus Bartol, *Senatorial Character: A Sermon In West Church, Boston, Sunday, 15th of March, After the Decease of Charles Sumner* (Boston: A. Williams & Co., 1874), 4, 12, 13.
[188] May, *Charles Sumner*, 12, 25; Daniel D. Pratt in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 30, 31; see also Justin S. Morrill, Aaron A. Sargent, Allen G. Thurman, and G. F. Hoar in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 24, 42, 44,102; and George William Curtis, Robert B. Elliott, and Henry W. Foote in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 147, 163, 276, 302.
[189] Bartol, *Senatorial Character*, 13, 14; see also J. B. Smith, Carl Schurz, Robert B. Elliott, and Henry W. Foote in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 60, 208, 281, 285, 304; and Aaron A. Sargent in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 40.

to become an "aged veteran" who could look with pride on "his hard-earned victories."[190] Even when Sumner was "the subject of a brutal and cowardly assault" at the hands of Preston Brooks of South Carolina in response to his infamous "Crime Against Kansas" speech, Sumner was no victim—he was a "champion and martyr of free speech and the sacred right of parliamentary debate," choosing to risk his life and health rather than be cowed.[191] By using language explicitly associated with warfare, Sumner's eulogists signaled how they embraced the fighting spirit of martial manhood, vaunting Sumner for his bellicose career through ubiquitously warlike words.

Sumner's eulogists believed these qualities of martial manhood had been crucial, for they had enabled Sumner to be a paragon of character who donned the mantle of the "adventurous outsider" rather than abandon his principles.[192] During the 1850s, even when he stood in the minority, he was "a man pre-eminently true to his convictions of right … anxious to be right; to plant himself upon principles that would not change," as Pratt of Indiana described it. In a "grand" act of bravery, he renounced his position, broke with the Whig Party, and devoted himself to the cause of freedom and equality, despite the "persecution," "odium," and "contempt" he attracted.[193] Sargent of California spoke with a similar awe as he encouraged his listeners to imagine Sumner at the beginning of his political career. Standing in front of the Senate, "uttering what his associates deemed not merely heresies, but blasphemies," Sumner fearlessly exposed himself to "political and social ostracism" in Congress, the nation at large, and even at home amongst his friends. Through all trials, Sumner persisted, going "where his

[190] George S. Boutwell and Allen G. Thurman in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 14, 18.
[191] Robert B. Elliott in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 227.
[192] Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood*, 13; Wongsrichanalai, *Northern Character*, 64-65.
[193] Daniel D. Pratt in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 30, 31-32.

convictions led, through obloquy, hate, unpopularity, and deadly assault."[194] As these colleagues in the Senate stressed, Sumner exemplified martial manhood by standing boldly upon principle, refusing to give up the fight no matter how much hatred, scorn, and violence he faced. Through such commitment to his conscience, he had proven himself a man of character beyond all doubt.

Outside of Congress, Sumner's other admirers accentuated the same theme, relaying how Sumner had long endured scorn for his positions. In the Massachusetts legislature, Nathaniel P. Banks remarked that although "Undoubtedly the great majority of the people were against him, regarding him as a disturber of the public peace," Sumner still "conceded nothing," staying true to his convictions. In a display of bravery and fortitude few men could match, Sumner had "endured for ten long years the hostility" of his adversaries, self-assured that "when he stood alone, with scarcely a man to back him, and with a whole country against him, he had judged justly and advised them wisely." [195] Officiating the prayer at a commemorative observance in Massachusetts, Reverend James Freeman Clarke also clearly approved of such courage, since he thanked God for helping Sumner "through weary day and weary year, so that he did not heed the stinging bolts of scorn, or the words of fools who accounted his life madness, but fought the good fight to the end."[196] Repeating this theme, Charles Sedgwick May noted how for years, Sumner "received no political or social recognition" but instead faced daily "the scornful and defiant glances of an enraged Senate" full of slaveholders and their allies. Yet, in a testament to his character, he "was true to Freedom and the Union, never losing heart or hope," demonstrating

[194] Aaron A. Sargent in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 40.
[195] Nathaniel P. Banks in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 36, 37, 42.
[196] James Freeman Clarke in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 96.

a "sublime fidelity and courage" of an almost providential nature.[197] For May, no feat could be worthier of praise. As he told his audience at Kalamazoo College in Michigan,

> [Sumner's courage] was as rare as it was grand and heroic. It was the chivalry of statesmanship. The courage of war and the battle field pales before it. What is mere physical bravery in comparison! … to stand alone, if need be, against the world, for a cause or an idea, to endure the sneers, the scorn and the scoffs of men; to put reputation, character, prospects all at a hazard for a principle—this is moral courage, this is courage which is Godlike and sublime![198]

As May made clear, Sumner deserved the highest acclaim because he epitomized a chivalrous martial manhood, braving the contempt and disdain of all without hesitation rather than compromise his morals. For Sumner's eulogists, it was this type of martial manhood, and not any kind of restrained manhood, that made Sumner an admirable man of honor.

Although Sumner's eulogists' admiration of the senator as a fearless man of principle echoed northern eulogies delivered on Douglas thirteen years prior, they differed crucially in their treatment of compromise, associating it with a moral weakness and submissiveness they perceived in restrained manhood as contrasted with the strength of will and moral courage of Sumner's martial manhood. Forging a narrative which evaluated the political landscape of the 1850s, Sumner's eulogists contended he was precisely the kind of public official the country had needed—bold, principled, aggressive, unrelenting, and above all, unwilling to compromise with slavery. A poem written by John Greenleaf Whittier for a commemoration of Sumner asserted approvingly that "The subtlest scheme of compromise / Was folly to his purpose bold."[199] Speaking in similar terms, Charles Sedgwick May also extolled Sumner for the unyielding stances that had characterized his career in the Senate. "He became the champion of imperiled

[197] May, *Charles Sumner*, 10, 11.
[198] May, *Charles Sumner*, 25-26.
[199] John Greenleaf Whittier in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 99.

freedom and the unrelenting foe of compromise," May recalled to his audience. "'FREEDOM NATIONAL—'SLAVERY SECTIONAL'—'NO COMPROMISE WITH SLAVERY'—these were his watchwords." Not only did Sumner refuse to compromise with slavery himself, he heartened and bolstered others to show the same kind of bravery, firmness, constancy, and manhood that he exemplified. As May told it, "When the hearts of other men grew faint in the long contest … and there was talk of compromise or surrender, the great leader never faltered or turned aside but kept straight on, his face to the foe, and his clarion voice ringing out words of lofty encouragement."[200] By using the language of boldness, bravery, and firmness, these eulogists emphasized that Sumner had followed the path of martial manhood over that of restrained manhood. Yet, this was precisely what endeared Sumner to his eulogists. Restrained manhood, after all, had only led to compromise after compromise with slavery. With each concession, the nation came closer to abandoning its fundamental principles of liberty and thus its character. Sumner's martial manhood, however, had broken the cycle. Through his own strict adherence to conscience and his adamant refusal to compromise with slavery, he urged the nation back towards fidelity to its principles, allowing it to protect its character and regain its honor. In short, Sumner refused to sell the "jewel of the soul," both personally and nationally.[201] In contrast with Douglas' mourners, Sumner's eulogists believed that a willingness to compromise with slavery was symptomatic of a feebleness and subservice they linked to restrained manhood, while maintaining that a refusal to compromise moral principle was evidence of the strength of will bred by martial manhood.

[200] May, *Charles Sumner*, 12-13, 24.
[201] George William Curtis in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 139.

Several of Sumner's eulogists further emphasized the virtue of his character as a martial man by comparing his style of statesmanship to that of Webster's generation. Speaking in Boston Music Hall at the invitation of the city government, Carl Schurz painted men like Daniel Webster and Henry Clay in a somewhat sympathetic light yet emphasized their willingness to compromise their morals as their fatal flaw. They may have been amongst the "foremost rank of public men" in their era, but their generation was that of the "statesmanship of expedients." While such statesmanship had served well enough to organize and build the nation, because the slavery issue was, at its root, "a conflict grounded deep in the moral nature of men," it had "stubbornly baffled the statesmen of expedients." Such a crisis needed men of conscience like Sumner, not men of expedients like Webster. Indeed, as Schurz told it, Webster had missed a chance for an even greater place in the annals of history by sacrificing his conscience for the sake of expediency. For although he was "a huge Atlas, who carried the Constitution on his shoulders," Schurz held that "He could have carried there the whole moral grandeur of the nation, had he never compromised his own." That task, though, would fall to the ever-resolute Sumner, embodied in that "remarkable scene" in 1851 when Clay left the Senate for the last time on the same day Sumner entered as Webster's successor, prepared "to fight out the great conflict, and to open a new epoch of American history."[202] Encapsulated in that moment was, for Schurz, a symbolic shift in leadership that spoke to the deepest needs of the country in the 1850s. The compromising restrained manhood of Clay and Webster's generation had failed to preserve the

[202] Carl Schurz in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 196, 199-200, 207. Webster's seat in the Senate was actually filled temporarily by Robert C. Winthrop and Robert Rantoul Jr. before Sumner was elected into it. Whether Sumner's eulogists were unaware of this fact, had forgotten, or purposefully omitted it to heighten the dramatic symbolism of Sumner's election to the Senate, they tended to speak of Sumner as the direct successor to Webster's old seat. See Remini, *Daniel Webster*, 706-707 and David Donald, *Charles Sumner and the Coming of the Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960), 185, 189, 201-204, 233.

nation's honor in the face of the Slave Power. Rather, it had taken men of true character—martial men like Sumner—who remained true to principle no matter the risk to set the nation right.

George William Curtis would iterate similar themes a few months later in front of another Boston crowd. Like Schurz, Curtis selected Sumner's entrance into the Senate as an allegorical moment in American history. Imagine, he told the audience, how "Henry Clay, Compromise incarnate—feebly tottered out of the chamber as Charles Sumner, Conscience incarnate, came in." It was a triumphant moment, laden with meaning, for as Curtis relayed it, the man for the hour had arrived. "Here at last," he told the people of Boston, "was the North, the American conscience, the American will … the spirit that would not wince, nor compromise, nor bend" but instead "pledged only to cry *Delenda est Carthago*" until slavery was at last defeated. Contrasted to this paragon of strength and vitality was once-great Webster, who Curtis claimed gazed down from the gallery with a "broken heart," recognizing in Sumner perhaps that which he himself could have been had he not compromised with the Slave Power.[203] Like Schurz, Curtis praised Sumner's relentless fighting spirit and used his entrance into the Senate as a symbol of a shift in leadership in northern politics. No longer would restrained men of the previous generation threaten national character by compromising all of its cherished principles for the sake of the Slave Power. Exemplars of martial manhood like Sumner had taken their place, proving their ability to preserve the nation's moral soul.

Other eulogists added to this theme by vaunting Sumner's refusal to compromise in the secession crisis of 1860-1861. Returning to his hometown to deliver a eulogy at the invitation of

[203] George William Curtis in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 133-134, 140, 143. *Delenda est Carthago* or "Carthage must be destroyed" is a phrase which Cato the Elder allegedly used to end each of his hawkish speeches in the Roman Republic. The implication here is that Sumner no less adamantly or consistently called for the end of slavery.

Boston's Black citizens, Robert B. Elliott, an African American Representative of South Carolina, praised Sumner for facing the crisis "without hesitation and without alarm." Even when his usual allies against slavery "shrunk back from the gulf of war and disunion," Sumner remained as resolute as ever. "His only anxiety," Elliott remarked, "had been to keep the North clear of the deadly Spirit of Compromise." Unlike most others, Sumner realized that compromise with slavery "would have robbed Freedom of all her advantage and left the Slave to his hopeless bondage," resulting in a "*loss of our principles*" far more devastating to the nation than the loss of any federal holdings.[204] George William Curtis and Charles Sedgwick May likewise celebrated how Sumner, "rising to his lofty height," refused to grant "the last concessions which slavery demanded of the North as the price of peace."[205] For these eulogists, Sumner had saved the nation from a dangerous lapse of character by staying true to his own character as a martial man, eschewing compromises which would sacrifice the nation's fundamental principles.

Whether they highlighted Sumner's entrance into the Senate or his response to secession, eulogists repeatedly used the language of honor to extoll Sumner's abhorrence of compromise. Through the rhetoric they deployed, they implied that the compromises brokered by restrained men like Webster had forfeited the nation's honor and emasculated the North. As George William Curtis commented, slavery had demanded "the most absolute subserviency" of the North, and thus compromise was, at its root, to "yield" or to be "conquered."[206] For Carl Schurz, as well, compromise was "yielding," equivalent to "submission."[207] Because northern white manhood was frequently defined "in opposition to submission, disfigurement, blackness, and

[204] Robert B. Elliott in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 280-281.
[205] George William Curtis in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 142; May, *Charles Sumner*, 16.
[206] George William Curtis in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 132, 138.
[207] Carl Schurz in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 205.

enslavement," Schurz and Curtis' use of these racialized and gendered terms suggested to their audiences that slavery had degraded and feminized the North, echoing earlier arguments made by Republicans in the 1850s.[208] Robert B. Elliott likewise thought compromise was "timid," unbecoming of a man of honor, and he urged the Black citizens of Boston and all Americans to always remember that "Charles Sumner never sullied his lips with degrading compromise."[209] The terms these eulogists deployed—subserviency, yielding, conquered, submission, timid, sullied, degrading—were all commonly used in honor culture to indicate a lack of masculinity and honor.[210] By associating compromise with a dearth of honor, Sumner's eulogists contended that public officials who had peddled compromise—particularly restrained men—lacked true character and masculinity. Martial men who abstained from demeaning compromise, however, had brought honor to themselves and their country. Charles Sedgwick May made this contrast between dishonorable restrained manhood and honorable martial manhood particularly evident through his comparison of James Buchanan and Charles Sumner during the secession crisis. As he told his audience at Kalamazoo College,

> [Sumner] refused to compromise, and demanded that the government assert its just authority. Right again, clearly right. Concession would have been national humiliation, and peace thus purchased would have been national shame. Let the dishonored memory of James Buchanan, loaded down with the record of his criminal weakness, in a great crisis which demanded the will and courage of a man, testify to the clear, courageous, and lofty statesmanship of Charles Sumner, at this supreme moment of our history.[211]

As May told it, Buchanan had failed the test of the secession crisis, bringing dishonor upon himself and jeopardizing the nation's character through his unmanly weakness. Sumner, on the

[208] David, "The Politics of Emasculation," 333, 329-333.
[209] Robert B. Elliott in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 282, 281.
[210] Olsen, *Political Culture and Secession*, 49.
[211] May, *Charles Sumner*, 16.

other hand, had protected the nation from a shameful loss of honor through a statesmanship characterized by his own willful, courageous, and unyielding masculinity. It was martial manhood, not restrained manhood, that had preserved the nation's character through sectional conflict and Civil War by rejecting any compromise with slavery.

The way Sumner's eulogists described his personality, career, and political triumphs reflected the ways Republicans' use of martial masculinity differed in crucial ways to that of their Democratic rivals. Although Republicans had spearheaded the incorporation of martial masculinity into northern political culture, by the end of the 1850s, many northern Democrats had begun to recognize the potency of such appeals and attempted to frame their positions in similar terms in order to leverage the political legitimacy granted by martial masculinity. Stephen Douglas' Democratic eulogists exemplified these tactics when they emphasized that his willingness to resort to "every honorable expedient to avert … the horrors of sectional strife" was every bit as "noble and heroic" as his support of war in 1861. Both positions, they argued, had stemmed from his character as a martial man, which led him to follow the dictates of conscience and principle despite the opposition he faced. As Samuel S. Cox declared in a remark likely aimed at Republicans who only praised Douglas for his support of the war, "The Douglas of 1861 was the Douglas of 1850, 1854, and 1858. The patriot who denounced this great rebellion was the patriot in every fold and lineament of his character. There is not a page of his history that we can afford to blot."[212] By the start of the war then, even Democrats calling for compromise or peace attempted to dress their policy in the mantle of martial manhood. The efficacy of this approach was impeded, however, by the fact that northerners already closely

[212] James W. Nesmith, John A. McClernand, and Samuel S. Cox in *Addresses on the Death of Hon. Stephen A. Douglas*, 21, 50, 65.

associated compromise with restrained manhood, as evidenced by Webster's eulogists in 1852. Republicans' rhetoric had only served to reaffirm the connection between restrained manhood and compromise, since the association between the two allowed them to draw a clearer distinction between their own political leadership and that offered by their political rivals. Compromise, they argued, was inextricably linked to restrained manhood, which was no manhood at all; it had, after all, led to the repeated subjugation and submission of the North. Those who peddled compromise were thus no true men, whatever else they might claim. By contaminating compromise with the stain of effeminacy, dishonor, and weakness, Republicans rebutted Democrats' attempts to co-opt martial masculinity.

The onset of the Civil War only allowed Republicans to double their offensive, since hesitancy to support the war could be framed as unmanly cowardice or disgraceful treason. Republicans, after all, had popularized a version of political leadership that called for men of character, whose martial masculinity would enable them to fight for their principles boldly and fearlessly. As northerners increasingly embraced this model of masculinity, they placed greater value in men who displayed the "sublime" virtue of "moral courage," valiantly and honorably directing their actions in accordance with their conscience towards a "just and proper end," even in the face of violent opposition.[213] Republicans were able to use this emphasis on "masculine morality" to discredit Peace Democrats, since a reluctance to support the war, with its undertones of potential treason, could easily be construed to reveal either a cravenness unbecoming of a man or a damning lack of moral character. Whether too weak or too degraded to support the Union's

[213] Harsha, "Proceedings of the Citizens' Meeting," SADP, 16; May, *Charles Sumner*, 26; John Stauffer, "Embattled Manhood and New England Writers, 1860-1870" in *Battle Scars: Gender and Sexuality in the American Civil War*, ed. Catherine Clinton and Nina Silber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 128; Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, 416; Wongsrichanalai, *Northern Character*, 2, 4, 5.

righteous cause as they ought, those who critiqued Republican-led war efforts or who called for compromise and peace could be branded by Republicans to be "effeminate and morally corrupt" and thus unfit for office.[214] Such tactics would persist after the war in the form of "waving the bloody shirt," which in part reflected a continued effort on the part of Republicans to claim political legitimacy on the basis of masculinity. Framing themselves as the party of "military men, heroes who had crushed a slaveholders' rebellion and upheld the nation's honor," Republicans contrasted their manful refusal of compromise and rejection of secession to the wartime record of their Democratic rivals. Having offered the moral courage, martial manhood, and character the nation had desperately needed in the past, Republicans stressed that they alone offered the kind of leadership required to preserve the sacrifices of the war going forward.[215]

The way Sumner's eulogists described his personality and early political career in the 1850s typified these strategies. Presenting Sumner as the "unrelenting foe of compromise," his eulogists emphasized that Sumner and other Republicans ushered in a new era of political leadership defined by a principled martial manhood. Possessing an abundance of moral courage and a strength of will becoming of a man of character, Sumner had brought honor to the Union by refusing to concede to slaveholders' demands. To his primarily Republican eulogists, his belligerence had proved to be a virtue at a time when diplomacy was a vice. Relegating compromise to the weakness of restrained manhood, his eulogists forged a narrative which

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[214] Stauffer, "Embattled Manhood and New England Writers," 123.

[215] Rebecca Edwards, *Angels in the Machinery: Gender in American Party Politics from the Civil War to the Progressive Era* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 34; Janney, Caroline E. *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 126-128; A. James Fuller, *Oliver P. Morton and the Politics of the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Ashland: The Kent State University Press, 2017), 198, 202-205; Mark Wahlgren Summers, *The Era of Good Stealings* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 213-214, 270, 283-285; Brian Matthew Jordon, "'Our Work Is Not Yet Finished': Union Veterans and Their Unending Civil War, 1865–1872," *Journal of the Civil War Era* 5, no. 4 (2015), 484-486, 488-489.

implicitly denied Democrats' claims to martial masculinity and which reaffirmed the value of martial masculinity.

"His Aims Were High, His Purposes Were Pure": Martial Manhood and Character in Reconstruction Politics

Admiring Sumner for his martial manhood, his eulogists contended that his brand of statesmanship was exactly what the nation had needed in the 1850s. Refusing to allow the nation's character to be degraded and dishonored by shameful compromise, Sumner had kept the country true to its principles and battled the Slave Power until it was at last defeated. Yet Sumner's eulogists did not only think of the past when they sung his praises. As they vaunted him as an ideal statesman, they also argued that his brand of masculinity could answer the challenges of Reconstruction. The issue of corruption began looming large in politics, and a "grammar of corruption" established well before the Civil War took on new proportions in novels and illustrated magazines alike as authors expressed a growing cynicism in politics. Only two years prior to Sumner's death, the personal character—or lack thereof—of the presidential candidates had featured prominently in the election, and news of the Crédit Mobilier railroad construction scandal had further served to break down public confidence in the government. [216] For others, northerners' waning commitment to protecting the sacrifices of the Civil War or to safeguarding Black equality proved equally alarming.[217] As northern eulogists surveyed these dismal scenes, Sumner's eulogists suggested that the martial manhood and incorruptible

[216] Mark Wahlgren Summers, *The Ordeal of Reunion: A New History of Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 279-280, 295-297; Summers, *Era of Good Stealings*, xi, viii-xi, 20-22, 154-159, 254-255; Glen C. Altschuler, and Stuart M. Blumin, *Rude Republic: Americans and Their Politics in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 188-189, 191-194, 196-204.
[217] Jordon, "'Our Work Is Not Yet Finished': Union Veterans and Their Unending Civil War," 484-486, 488-491, 493-494; Janney, *Remembering the Civil War*, 126-128.

character that had served him so well in his fight against slavery could still prove useful even in a post-emancipation political landscape.

Sumner's eulogists might have depicted him as an exemplar of martial manhood, but equally important to them was their assertion that he was a man of character. Placing a high value on moral integrity, the northern conception of character expected honorable men to act according to their conscience, regardless of the outcome. Neither the fear of ostracism nor the promise of personal gain should lure the true man of character from the path of moral integrity.[218] Sumner's eulogists claimed that he had walked that straight and narrow path, earning himself the honor and admiration that accompanied it. Henry B. Anthony of Rhode Island remarked that Sumner was "beloved for the graces and virtues of his personal character," which included the "fidelity with which he adhered to his convictions."[219] Agreeing with this sentiment, Allen G. Thurman of Ohio likewise offered a "humble tribute to [Sumner's] personal character" which highlighted Sumner's loyalty to his convictions as his foremost virtue. To Thurman, it was admirable that Sumner's views were always "in accordance with a lofty ideal that was satisfactory to himself, and from which he would not willingly depart."[220] Building upon these remarks, Daniel D. Pratt remarked that Sumner had many qualities which could serve as a model for those "who would tread the paths of honor," the most notable being Sumner's tendency to be "pre-eminently true to his convictions of right." Never concerned with public appearance, Sumner "was only anxious to be right; to plant himself upon principles that would not change." In this aim, Pratt declared, "he conquered."[221] For Anthony, Thurman and Pratt, Sumner's

[218] Wongsrichanalai, *Northern Character*, 62, 67-68.
[219] Henry B. Anthony in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 3.
[220] Allen G. Thurman in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner* 16,17.
[221] Daniel D. Pratt in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 29, 30.

fidelity to his conscience was the crowning jewel of his character. Public officials in the Massachusetts state legislature concurred with these senators. Governor William B. Washburn and Representative Albert Palmer both maintained that Sumner's "moral integrity" was "sublime" and would "inspire universal homage and love." Simply put, "His character was monumental; pure, white and unstained, from pedestal to capstone."[222] Through such descriptions, Sumner's eulogists asserted that Sumner was a man of moral integrity, only ever acting on conscience. To them, this fidelity to principle had distinguished him as a man of honor who would (and should) be remembered beyond his death.

The admiration Sumner's eulogists expressed for his unshakeable devotion to conscience had naturally underscored their discussion of his fight against the Slave Power back in the 1850s. Yet for many, it also spoke to his ability to resist corruption in the present day, even when many other public officials fell prey to the temptations of personal gain. In the Senate, his colleagues remarked that Sumner was "wholly unassailable by corruption," a "man of pure purposes in private and public affairs." An "honest man by nature," Sumner "hated deceit fraud, peculation, and corruption in all their forms."[223] As Bainbridge Wadleigh of New Hampshire put it, Sumner's career had been characterized by an "incorruptible honesty and steadfast devotion to the cause of freedom."[224] Justin S. Morrill of Vermont went so far to claim that even Sumner's opponents could not help but "respect his fairness of purpose" and his "unflinching integrity." When all was said and done, no one could deny the "absolute purity of his private or public

[222] William B. Washburn and Albert Palmer in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 18, 56.
[223] Allen G. Thurman, George S. Boutwell, and Daniel D. Pratt in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 12, 30.
[224] Bainbridge Wadleigh in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 49.

character."[225] To these senators, Sumner had the utmost moral integrity and purity, making him a man of character beyond repute. Eulogists in the Massachusetts legislature showered him with much the same praise. Francis B. Hayes described Sumner as a "thoroughly honest man" who was unafraid to stand alone so long as "he believed his cause was right." Whatever others might say about him, all recognized and respected that his opinions "were founded upon his honest convictions," such that "Even calumny, so ready to destroy the character of good men, dared not breathe a suspicion against the integrity and the purity" of Sumner.[226] Andrew Jackson Bailey likewise commended Sumner for having a "high purpose," for following "the imperative call of conscience," and for "the lofty scorn of party dictation which marked his course." He stood, to Bailey, as an example "of what can be accomplished by the American statesman whose honesty and devotion secure the confidence of the people, and whose heroism and courage command their admiration."[227] Resolutions presented by Nathaniel P. Banks expressed these sentiments quite plainly: "Against the allurements of power and corruption, in every form, [Sumner] stood a tower of adamant," acting always out of duty and conviction.[228] To these eulogists, the qualities of martial manhood that had given Sumner the strength and courage to stand up to the Slave Power had also given him the steadfastness to shun corruption against every temptation.

Some eulogists built on these comments by juxtaposing Sumner's moral integrity to other public officials' moral depravity. Daniel D. Pratt of Indiana remarked that it stood as a testament to Sumner's "lofty and transparent character" that although "Suspicion fell from time to time upon many names … his integrity was never called in question in his public or private relations."

[225] Justin S. Morrill in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 26, 29.
[226] Francis B. Hayes in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 30.
[227] Andrew Jackson Bailey in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 27.
[228] Nathaniel P. Banks in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 21.

So unchallenged was Sumner's "perfect rectitude of motive" that "No lobbyist ever approached him with doubtful propositions." Unlike others in Congress, a vote from Sumner was a vote honestly gained. Pratt claimed that Sumner's integrity was so undeniable that no one, not even his critics, had "ever ventured to assail the purity of Sumner's public or private life."[229] Mourners at commemorative observances back in Massachusetts similarly praised Sumner's integrity amidst the ubiquitous corruption they perceived in politics. A poem written by John Greenleaf Whittier for the occasion chose not to dwell on the corruption of the age but still commented on it in passing:

> Suffice it that he never brought
> His conscience to the public mart;
> But lived himself the truth he taught,
> White-souled, clean-handed, pure of heart.[230]

With his principles unable to be bought and sold, Sumner stood out amongst other public officials as a true man of character. Leading the prayer at the same commemoration, Reverend James Freeman Clarke's prayer echoed this theme even more directly. Thanking God that Sumner had outlived "all calumny, all censure, all evil report," Clarke further prayed that Massachusetts might "be saved from the cunning of the selfish politicians, who care only for personal triumph … from those who make party success the highest good; from the corruptions of avarice and ambition," lest the work of "wise and generous souls" like Sumner be wasted.[231] For these eulogists, Sumner's character stood as a shining example of that rarest of things—an honest politician. By praising Sumner's integrity while simultaneously criticizing the general

[229] Daniel D. Pratt in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 33.
[230] John Greenleaf Whittier in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 100.
[231] James Freeman Clarke in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 96.

lack of morality in politics, they suggested that the kind of character they admired in Sumner still had a crucial place in politics.

Several eulogists very explicitly used the language of honor to applaud Sumner's moral integrity and to criticize corruption. Governor William B. Washburn contended that it was nothing less than remarkable that "no stain of suspicion" had ever fallen on Sumner when "the atmosphere around him was foul with corruption." Comparing moral abasement to sexual impurity, he emphasized that while other public officials "prostituted their positions for selfish ends," Sumner was never "smirched"; throughout his career, "His aims were high, his purposes were pure." According to Washburn, this feat alone was "enough to crown him with glory."[232] Having avoided the degradation that accompanied corruption, Sumner had won true honor through a committed character. Willard P. Phillips of the Massachusetts similarly held that Sumner's "pure and honest life, unsullied by any wrong act" was not only unique in an age that seemed to teem with corrupt public officials but also "an honor to the State and Country."[233] Once again linking personal character to state or national character, Phillips suggested that public officials like Sumner could bring honor to the regions they represented simply through steadfastly guarding their own character. Charles Sedgwick May's commentary further underscored the notion that moral corruption was dishonorable and integrity honorable by contrasting those "wrecks of character" in office who lay "broken, dishonored, and disgraced" to Sumner, the "purest and greatest of our statesman." Rising above the depravity that surrounded him, Sumner had "stood like a rock in the midst of the sea, giving his countrymen assurance still that all honor and integrity were not gone from the high places of the Republic." Characterizing

[232] William B. Washburn in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner,* 18-19.
[233] Willard P. Phillips in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner,* 44.

Sumner's "great, pure life" as a "constant rebuke to the average smallness and meanness of politicians," May's only lament was that Sumner would no longer be there to stand as an example of honorable character where he was needed most. [234] As they described Sumner's integrity using the language of honor, Washburn, Phillips, and May all suggested that Sumner's brand of character—shaped by an unyielding martial masculinity—still had a place in preserving the honor and integrity of the country.

Northern eulogists' ubiquitous commentary on Sumner's moral integrity reflected a growing preoccupation with corruption in national politics. Neither corruption itself nor corruption as an issue were new in American politics, but since the corruption issue could be made to serve partisan ends, it became an increasingly useful tactic for Republicans' beleaguered opponents. Democrats had struggled to regain their footing in national politics, and after their loss in the 1868 election, many were looking for an issue that might rejuvenate the party's political hold. By the 1870s, it seemed that the corruption issue might be just what they were looking for. Not only did the corruption issue allow Democrats to paper over internal divisions through a revitalization of old party doctrines against the abuse and expansion of federal power, it also allowed them to distance themselves from wartime disputes and reputations.[235] By moving public attention away from the issues of the war, Democrats could disassociate themselves from the charges of weakness, effeminacy, moral depravity, and treason that reemerged every time Republicans waved the bloody shirt. At the same time, the corruption issue allowed them to seize the mantle of character—and thus the political legitimacy granted by manhood—away from Republicans. How principled could the Republican Party be, Democrats asked, if its leaders

[234] May, *Charles Sumner* 22, 25.
[235] Summers, *Era of Good Stealings*, 28-29, 201-203.

willingly prostituted their consciences for the sake of money or power? If voters wanted true men of character, men whose martial masculinities produced a disinterested and rigorous adherence to conscience, they would have to look elsewhere.

Look elsewhere they did. Although Democrats' alliance with reform-minded Liberal Republicans in the presidential election of 1872 might have gone poorly, they did succeed in fixing public attention on the corruption issue as a whole. Such public scrutiny only intensified in 1873, when news of the Crédit Mobilier scandal was quickly followed by legislation that retroactively increased congressmen's pay. With apparent scores of politicians lining their pockets at the public's expense right as an economic panic hit, the public was not disposed to be forgiving in the coming midterm elections. Democrats would ride the reform issue to victory in 1874, the year Sumner died, with the congressmen most associated with the recent scandals taking the biggest hits—only 24 of the 102 incumbents who took back pay were even renominated, and half of those renominated lost their seat in the end anyways. No wonder Sumner's eulogists sung the virtues of his character and his moral integrity—as one of the few who refused to accept any back pay, he must have seemed downright saintly.[236] If the corruption issue had made moral purity appear hard to find, it nevertheless made it seem all the more necessary—perhaps martial men of unyielding character like Sumner were what the nation needed most.

While many eulogists focused on tailoring Sumner's character as a martial man to the issue of corruption, several others encouraged mourners to emulate his character in order to carry on the fight for racial equality which Sumner had supported. These eulogists urged northerners to adopt Sumner's brand of statesmanship to push the passage of his Civil Rights Bill, which he had

[236] Summers, *Era of Good Stealings*, 227-228, 237-243, 255.

re-introduced to Congress two years prior but which remained stalled at the time of his death.[237] Narrating Sumner's dying day as a didactic "good death" scene, they deemed his admonition to "Take care of the Civil Rights Bill" to be his final words in order to stress that Sumner demonstrated an unwavering dedication to the principles of liberty and equality in death as much as in life.[238] To these eulogists, these final words encapsulated the kind of martial virtue he had displayed as a political leader and that his survivors should adopt in life. As George William Curtis remarked, Sumner's "dying words" were a reflection of the "unflinching persistence" he exhibited during the entirety of his career, in which he was "a born warrior with public injustice."[239] Cyrus Augustus Bartol praised Sumner's death in similar terms, likening him to "a soldier who will not leave the field for loss of blood" but rather dealt "well-directed blows for his race of every color and tribe till the instant the final stroke came to cut body and spirit apart." Suggesting that "the halo of angelic glory" hung about such a death, Bartol like Curtis implied that others ought to emulate Sumner's principled character as a martial man. Echoing these sentiments, Charles Sedgwick May pronounced Sumner's Civil Rights Bill to be "the crowning measure of reconstruction and of his glorious career as a statesman," one which "put to shame" the "quibbling evasions and hollow compromises" of so-called "practical" statesmen. May held that in contrast to these weak and dishonorable men, the "grand old warrior of Freedom," would be "crowned with immortal honor" because he always "stood upon uncompromising truth."[240]

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[237] Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Perennial Classics, 1988), 532-533.
[238] *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 12. As with other eulogies, these "final" words were not Sumner's last utterances but those which best conveyed the moral lesson drawn by eulogists. On good death scenes and the symbolism of final words, see Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, 6-11; Schantz, *Awaiting the Heavenly Country*, 9, 18-19, 21-23, 36.
[239] George William Curtis in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 157, 163-164.
[240] May, *Charles Sumner*, 17.

By praising Sumner for the valor he exhibited even on his deathbed, his eulogists hinted that other statesmen would do well to mimic Sumner's character as a martial man.

Other eulogists' depictions of Sumner's last day were even more explicitly didactic, directly calling their audiences to adopt the example Sumner left behind in his death. Once again insisting that Sumner's death reflected the virtue he exhibited in life, Governor William B. Washburn of Massachusetts noted that Sumner had fallen, as he always wanted, "while at the post of duty … still pleading, as he had so often and so eloquently plead through many years of vigorous manhood, for the down-trodden and oppressed." Though Sumner was dead, Washburn declared that his character as a martial man "yet speaketh" through the "recollection of his virtues," and he urged northerners to "guard most tenderly the memory he hath left to us."[241] Willard P. Phillips of the Massachusetts legislature emphasized a similar point, remarking that even in "his dying hours he was true to the cause to which he had devoted his life." Vaunting Sumner's devotion to his principles, Phillips called upon his fellow legislators "to emulate his example of devotion to every duty, and thus to show that we have not forgotten his teaching" by ensuring Sumner's bill passed.[242] Albert Palmer of Boston neatly summarized these appeals by avowing that the best way to "honor and cherish the memory of Charles Sumner" and thus to "commend his great example to the world" was to "cherish and defend the civil and equal right of all."[243] Celebrating the relentless intrepidness and dedication to principle Sumner demonstrated in his death, Washburn, Phillips, and Palmer all used the senator's good death to rally other northerners to the fight to pass the Civil Rights Bill.

[241] William B. Washburn in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner,* 19.
[242] Willard P. Phillips in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner,* 45.
[243] Albert Palmer in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner,* 57.

African American mourners in particular held up the character Sumner displayed on his dying day as a model for imitation, linking his final plea on behalf of civil rights to his more widely admired fight against slavery. A resolution passed by the Black citizens of Logansport, Indiana presented in Congress by Daniel D. Pratt proposed that Sumner's "ever-memorable words" be memorialized in the capital, while simultaneously promising to teach their own children "to emulate his virtues and uprightness of character."[244] To them, his character had driven his unceasing commitment to equality and justice and thus deserved to be remembered both in the family and in the U.S. capitol. Others pushed back against eulogists who depicted Sumner's crusade against slavery as complete, for they contended that the fight for civil rights was connected to this longer struggle. Reverend Malone told a meeting of Black citizens at Olivet Church in Chicago, Illinois, that the civil rights bill was the "key-stone" crowning Sumner's opposition of slavery, and he called upon his audience to carry on this work themselves, keeping "the name and memory of Charles Sumner green in their hearts" as they worked to secure "their rights—their perfect rights."[245] Another meeting of African American citizens in the Mount Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church in Trenton, New Jersey passed a resolution which commended Sumner for his "uncompromising hostility to slavery and its might concomitents," which they contended was embodied in his final request "that this last relic and vestige of American slavery might be destroyed by the passage of the 'Civil Rights Bill.'" They pledged to "cherish in our memories" the "character of this great, good, wise man," suggesting

[244] Daniel D. Pratt in *Memorial Addresses On the Life And Character of Charles Sumner*, 35-36.
[245] "Charles Sumner Resolutions of Condolence Adopted by Our Colored Citizens," *Daily Inter Ocean* (Chicago, Illinois), March 17, 1874.

that others should also learn from his example.[246] Each of these meetings hit upon the same message: that in remembering Sumner, they should don his mantle and carry on his fight against slavery through action that countered racial injustice, using his unconquerable character as a source of inspiration.

Whether focused on corruption in politics or the unfinished promises of Reconstruction, Sumner's eulogists contended that his character as a martial man still had a place in northern political culture. Rather than turn back towards a model of statesmanship based upon restrained manhood, northern eulogists used Sumner's example to suggest how martial manhood might be adapted for contemporary political challenges. Although Sumner's eulogists were animated by a variety of political concerns, they shared a common language of martial manhood which reflected the rhetoric of northern political culture as a whole. Maintaining that statesmen ought to emulate the kind of honorable conduct that stemmed from Sumner's character as a martial man, his northern eulogists reaffirmed their preference for a type of statesmanship rooted in martial manhood.

[246] "Action of Colored Citizens on the Death of Charles Sumner," *Trenton State Gazette* (Trenton, New Jersey), March 24, 1874.

Conclusion: Masculinity and Honor in Northern Political Culture, 1852-1874

As George William Curtis addressed the Boston crowd, he sought to leave no doubt regarding the significance of Charles Sumner's statesmanship. The hour that Sumner had entered public office was a time when Whigs and the Democrats alike were each a party "which tolerates corruption, which trusts unworthy men, which suffers the public service to be prostituted to personal ends." That hour was "the darkest of our history," Curtis told them, one that left even the great Daniel Webster "Worn, wasted, [and] sad," with nothing to show for his long career but "baffled hopes and bitter disappointment and a broken heart." How fitting, then, that at the moment Webster sat in the Senate for the last time, his "towering, dauntless, radiant" successor should enter the Senate, "heralding the new America." A new type of statesman, Sumner's career was defined by "the incalculable weight of his commanding character," which refused to compromise conscience for the sake of political or personal gain and which acted with relentless zeal and courage. Distinguished by an unwavering, unconquerable manhood, "dishonor fled his face," and Sumner "said no unworthy word; he did no unmanly deed" over the course of his career. Even in death, Curtis declared, Sumner's "towering form" provided a "great legacy," one that was worthy of emulation.[247]

The way eulogists like Curtis described Sumner's personality, career, and political triumphs exposed significant shifts in northern political culture in the twenty-two years since Webster's death. Ideals of masculinity, character, and honor were crucial to the eulogists of Daniel Webster, Stephen A. Douglas, and Charles Sumner alike, and across the Civil War era, northern eulogists believed there was a relationship between individual men's character and national character. Yet their attitudes on what political styles were most admirable and on how

[247] George William Curtis in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner*, 130, 127, 145-146, 147, 125,176, 174.

statesmen should defend national honor changed drastically from 1852 to 1874. What separated and shaped northerners' viewpoints on these issues were the kinds of masculinity they idealized.

Because Webster's eulogists idealized restrained manhood, they believed honor was best preserved without violence and aggression. Maintaining self-mastery over their minds and emotions, restrained men proved their character by solving conflicts diplomatically and had little need of violence to prove their honor. Even when provoked though, they maintained decorum and showed restraint in their response. Those who admired restrained manhood translated these values into a political style which made compromise its cornerstone. According to this ideal, public officials who exemplified restrained manhood would temper those who fell in excess, preserving national character through careful negotiation.

By the time Stephen Douglas died in 1861, northern eulogists had shifted to prefer martial manhood as a better standard of masculinity, and as a result they held very different ideas about honor and statesmanship. Valuing strength, bravery, and a certain combativeness, martial men proved their character by absolute fidelity to their conscience, even if that meant they stood alone. For these men, honor was won through unconditional moral integrity, even (and especially) when it provoked conflict. Those that admired martial manhood held that dogged persistence in the right would preserve national honor by ensuring the country stayed true to its fundamental principles. Although many Democrats would attempt to make compromise compatible with this political style by portraying as a type of principled stand, the Republicans who first championed statesmanship based on martial manhood held that compromise was a type of dishonorable submission and thus anathema to the martial man. The best public officials, in their view, were those that showed an unyielding fidelity to principle and conscience.

Between these two concepts of statesmanship—one based on restrained manhood, one based on martial manhood—lay some continuities, particularly in how they linked individual and national character. Yet their different standards of masculinity had altered the contents of honor and accordingly countenanced two very different types of political styles. Changing gender ideals thus lay at the heart in shifting ideals of statesmanship in the North. When Webster died in 1852, the politics of slavery had already prompted serious debates over what kind of masculinities were up to the task of defending national and sectional honor from the assaults of the Slave Power. Webster's eulogists maintained that restrained manhood would provide the kind of statesmanship needed to temper the excesses of each section, facilitating compromises which would preserve the character of the Union. His antislavery critics, however, argued that by forcing the nation to abandon its fundamental moral principles, compromise would shorn both the North and the nation of its character. Eschewing restrained manhood, they embraced martial manhood as a form of masculinity that would stand up to the onslaughts of the Slave Power. When the Republican Party came into being, they would adopt these arguments as their own as they attempted to rouse northern voters against the Slave Power and as they attempted to build political legitimacy on the basis of martial manhood. As the 1850s unfolded, more and more northerners became convinced that white democracy and thus manhood was under attack; feeling that restrained manhood could no longer defend the honor of the nation, many began to embrace political styles shaped by martial manhood instead. Voters increasingly turned towards Republican candidates who championed martial masculinity, simultaneously fueling sectional conflict while also forcing Democrats to reevaluate how they positioned themselves within northern political culture. Although northerners had not completely abandoned restrained

manhood when Douglas died in 1861, the language they used to describe his virtues as a public official had a distinctly martial tenor, one that prefigured the kind of language that would be used by Sumner's eulogists in 1874. By vaunting political leaders who demonstrated strength, bravery, zeal, and an unyielding will, northerners ensured that martial manhood became a key facet of northern political culture across the Civil War era. Even after the fight against the Slave Power and the war itself was over, northern eulogists returned to martial manhood as an ideal model for statesmanship, as reflected in eulogies of Charles Sumner. To these northerners, martial manhood had produced, as Thomas N. Stone remarked, "a character and a fame after which, it is to be hoped, future statesmen will model their own."[248]

[248] Thomas N. Stone in *A Memorial of Charles Sumner,* 31, 32.

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