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"These Fishers of Men": The Discourse of Recruitment in the Civil War North

by

Louis William Reed-Wood

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Abstract

During the American Civil War, the military forces of the United States required an inordinate number of volunteers to fill the ranks. Historians to date have emphasized the self-motivation of the men who enlisted for duty in the Union armed forces, and as a result, have overlooked how recruiters utilized communications media to entice their service. This thesis examines the use of propaganda to promote enlistment in the Union military during the American Civil War. Throughout the conflict, political figures, military leaders, printers and publishers, prominent citizens, members of voluntary societies dedicated to recruiting, and other self-declared patriots produced thousands of documents and oratories imploring men to join the armed forces. In doing so, these individuals engaged in intentional acts of propaganda. The styles and forms taken by their efforts, however, more clearly reflect the communications culture of the antebellum era than the iconic propaganda campaigns of twentieth-century conflicts. The multiplicity of arguments recruiters made in favour of volunteering indicates that to them, their intended outcome—filling the ranks—was more important than the reasons they provided for doing so.

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Introduction

In 1887, Union army veteran John D. Billings published *Hardtack and Coffee, or The Unwritten Story of Army Life.* Billings claimed that his book was the first major effort to write a history of the American Civil War focused on the experiences of ordinary enlisted men, rather than on great generals and major battles.[1] In his chapter on enlistment, Billings described the flurry of advertisements, speeches, and songs intended to hasten recruiting that had emerged by the second year of the war. Including no less than four examples of recruiting and war meeting advertisements for his readers to review, Billings asserted that "The flaming advertisements with which the newspapers of the day teemed, and the posters pasted on the bill-boards or the country fence, were the decoys which brought patronage to these fishers of men."[2]

Billings's description of recruiters as "fishers of men" was a double entendre, cleverly capturing two distinct ways of thinking about Civil War recruiting initiatives. From one point of view, the phrase referenced a Biblical verse asserting Christian evangelism.[3] In an era marked by religious revivalism and moral reform movements rooted in Christianity, some (particularly recruiters) likened efforts at filling the ranks to spreading the gospel of Christ; both, it seemed, served a higher cause.[4] But from a different perspective, the quote asserted a more sinister interpretation of the advertisements that sought to garner enlistments. By referencing fishing, Billings suggested that men were a resource to be caught by recruiters. Describing posters and newspaper articles as decoys implied that such advertisements tricked or perhaps even misled some men into becoming soldiers. Such a description went beyond characterizing the broadsides

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[1] John D. Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee, or The Unwritten Story of Army Life* (Boston: George M. Smith, 1887), vi.
[2] Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee,* 36.
[3] "And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Matthew 4:19 (King James Version). The quote is typically interpreted as one encouraging Christians to evangelize and convert others.
[4] For background on antebellum religious revivalism, see Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 164-202.

and newspaper notices as benign advertisements, hinting that they represented an exercise of coercive power.

Although Billings's judgment of recruiting advertisements was ultimately equivocal, his assertion of their ubiquity was not. Between 1861 and 1865, political leaders, army and naval officers, printers, newspaper publishers, members of volunteer recruiting committees, and other self-declared patriots produced thousands of documents and oratories imploring men to join the armed forces. Recruiting posters coated the walls and fences of Northern towns and cities. Newspapers abounded with advertisements for regiments looking to fill their ranks, and reproduced transcripts of fiery patriotic speeches given at war meetings. Pamphlets called on men to recognize their patriotic duty, and music publishers disseminated pro-enlistment songs that rang through the streets of the Union.

This thesis contends that this body of media, although lacking many of the popular tropes associated with the category, constituted a form of propaganda. Once divorced from its non-academic connotations as sinister and state-sponsored, it becomes evident that the defining features of propaganda characterized recruiting materials for the Union army and navy; its creators employed mass communications media, intentionally sought to influence the behaviour of message recipients, and utilized information in an outcome- and objective-driven way.

Before explaining why recruiting media constituted propaganda, establishing an analytical definition of propaganda is important. Propaganda history and propaganda studies are two closely related fields of research that typically focus on the twentieth (and increasingly, the twenty-first) century. Though scholars struggle to reach a consensus definition of propaganda, they must all contend with the characteristics commonly ascribed to the term. Similarly to Clifford Geertz's effort to move past the polemical definitions of ideology in the 1970s, the

utility of propaganda as an analytical category is obfuscated by the word's popular connotations. Not unlike Geertz's effort to understand and explain ideology, propaganda scholars distance their definitions from their term's popular usage as a political pejorative that refers to an activity only existing on the fringes of normalcy.[5]

Modern propaganda studies arguably began with Jacques Ellul's seminal work *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes.* Originally published in 1962 and translated into English by 1965, Ellul was an early advocate for the idea that propaganda as a category was ethically neutral, and that negative or positive outcomes were associated with specific usages.[6] Ellul defined propaganda as "a set of methods employed by an organized group that wants to bring about the active participation in its actions of a mass of individuals, psychologically unified through psychological manipulations and incorporated into an organization."[7] Ellul further posited that modern propaganda must draw upon every possible form of media at its disposal. Propaganda, in Ellul's view, cannot allow contradictions or open discussions; the control of media must be total.[8] He also argued that propaganda does not seek to change its recipients' views and opinions, but endeavours to short-circuit individual decision-making.[9] Finally, Ellul suggested that propaganda needs to rely upon at least partially true facts, but it often uses those facts to generate misleading interpretations or inaccurate beliefs about the propagandist's intentions.[10]

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[5] Clifford Geertz, "Ideology as a Cultural System," in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays by Clifford Geertz* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 193-200.
[6] Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, Introduction to *Readings in Propaganda and Persuasion: New and Classic Essays,* eds. Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2006), xii.
[7] Jacques Ellul, "The Characteristics of Propaganda," in *Readings in Propaganda and Persuasion: New and Classic Essays*, eds. Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2006), 31. This chapter constitutes an edited excerpt from *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes.*
[8] Ellul, "Characteristics of Propaganda," 6-7.
[9] Ellul, "Characteristics of Propaganda," 16-17.
[10] Ellul, "Characteristics of Propaganda," 28-29.

Though Ellul's assertion that propaganda is not inherently good or bad has influenced later scholars, many have distanced themselves from his other ideas. Nicholas Jackson O'Shaughnessy questions Ellul's contention that propaganda is something imposed upon its audience by the propagandist, stating that "Propaganda thus becomes a co-production in which we are willing participants."[11] Scholars generally seem to disagree with the idea that control of all media forms is essential for a successful propaganda campaign.[12] And adding nuance to Ellul's definition of the relationship between propaganda and truth, Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell describe three useful subcategories: white propaganda, black propaganda, and gray propaganda. White propaganda is characterized by predominantly accurate information (albeit selective in its inclusions and omissions), and makes clear the source publicizing that information; black propaganda conceals its true source and involves disseminating false information; and gray propaganda is some combination of the other two categories. They summarize these categories by stating that "The means [employed by propagandists] may vary from a mild slanting of information to outright deception."[13]

How, then, do present-day scholars of propaganda define this contentious term? Though none agree completely, most definitions share certain similarities. Jonathan Auerbach and Russ Castronovo define propaganda simply as "publicly disseminated information that serves to influence others in belief and/or action." They posit that propagandists do not require a clear intended outcome for their work to constitute propaganda. Furthermore, they differentiate propaganda from persuasion by stating that propaganda relies upon the use of mass

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[11] Nicholas Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *Politics and Propaganda: Weapons of Mass Seduction* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 4.
[12] See an example in Jonathan Auerbach and Russ Castronovo, "Introduction: Thirteen Propositions about Propaganda," in *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies,* eds. Jonathan Auerbach and Russ Castronovo (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 8.
[13] Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda & Persuasion*, 6th ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2015), 20-31, 31 (quotation).

communications media.[14] O'Shaughnessy concurs with and elaborates on the latter point, describing persuasion as an individual process and propaganda as a social, collective one; since he contends that propaganda takes place en masse, it follows logically from his assertion that propaganda necessitates some sort of one-to-many method of communication.[15] Oliver Thomson's definition of the term is broader than most, incorporating "the use of communication skills of all kinds to achieve attitudinal or behavioural changes among one group of people or another." He sees the presence (or lack) of intent as unimportant to defining something as propaganda, and does not consider the relationship between media and propaganda an important part of its definition.[16] Randal Marlin contends that propaganda is an "organized attempt through communication to affect belief or action or inculcate attitudes in a large audience in ways that circumvent or suppress an individual's adequately informed, rational, reflective judgment." Marlin describes propaganda campaigns as deliberate, suggesting the necessity of a clear intent to influence the propagandee. Additionally, because he sees propaganda as a phenomenon requiring both a large audience and an organized campaign, his definition implicitly relies upon some form of mass communication.[17] Jowett and O'Donnell, in a similar definition to Marlin, describe propaganda as a "deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist." Their definition necessitates a specific intent on the part of the communicator.

[14] Auerbach and Castronovo, "Introduction: Thirteen Propositions about Propaganda," *Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies,* 2, 6, 10, 6 (quotation).
[15] O'Shaughnessy, *Politics and Propaganda,* 17.
[16] Oliver Thomson, *Easily Led: A History of Propaganda* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1999), 2-3, 5, 71, 5 (quotation).
[17] Randal Marlin, *Propaganda and the Ethics of Persuasion,* 2nd ed. (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2013), 12-13.

Furthermore, they argue that propagandists manage information flow by controlling communications media. Thus, mass media is integral to their definition.[18]

Of these definitions, those put forward by Marlin as well as Jowett and O'Donnell are both the most similar and the most persuasive. Thomson does not convincingly distinguish between one-on-one personal persuasion and propaganda; if any persuasive communication can be deemed propaganda, the term becomes excessively broad and rather meaningless. And if, as Auerbach and Castronovo as well as Thomson suggest, propaganda can manifest without a specific intent from the communicator, any publicly distributed piece of media can be decontextualized and act as propaganda for any potential cause—making it virtually impossible to determine whether or not that piece of media is or was propaganda.

Another assertion, put forward by O'Shaughnessy, links propaganda to ideology and political affairs. He argues that propaganda is distinct from both marketing and advocacy because of "its didacticism and its ideological fervour."[19] For O'Shaughnessy, advertising is a separate category of communication from propaganda. This is not, however, a universally accepted view. Marlin sees advertising and mass marketing as forms of propaganda, arguing that for his purposes (studying propaganda's ethics), the similarities are significant enough that omitting advertising would be logically inconsistent.[20] Jowett and O'Donnell also contend that advertising is propaganda because it seeks to use communications media to shape behaviour and attitudes for the benefit of the advertiser.[21] Overall, O'Shaughnessy's distinction between advertising and propaganda is not particularly convincing. Like propaganda, marketing is didactic because it explicitly seeks to instruct and educate the consumer on making economic

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[18] Jowett and O'Donnell, *Propaganda & Persuasion*, 7-15, 51-53, 7 (quotation).
[19] O'Shaughnessy, *Politics and Propaganda,* 4.
[20] Marlin, *Propaganda and the Ethics of Persuasion,* 12-13.
[21] Jowett and O'Donnell, *Propaganda & Persuasion,* 162-163.

choices, and it reinforces the ideological components of consumer capitalism. O'Shaughnessy's point regarding ideological fervour makes little sense when one considers how strongly ideological marketing is. Geertz argues that ideologies are culturally constructed systems of symbols that "function to mediate meanings."[22] Within a capitalist framework, discussions about financial value and economic choice are strongly rooted in metaphors, images, and connotations that allow individuals to derive meaning from those discussions. Indeed, Marlin states that "We tend to think of propaganda more in terms of ideology or political power, but the commercial world carries with it some ideological baggage."[23] Thus, while some scholars posit that propaganda is necessarily imbued with ideology, it is important to recall that even views that seem widespread and normative are ideological in some form.[24]

Upon reviewing the aforementioned literature, the definition of propaganda used in this thesis is primarily based upon the one used by Jowett and O'Donnell. This thesis defines propaganda as an individual or group's intentional use of communications media to influence the beliefs, ideas, and/or behaviour of the recipients of that communication. The communicator(s) have a specific desired outcome that they seek to achieve by using mass communications that target a large and generally impersonal audience. Because propaganda requires a desired outcome on the part of the communicator, the use of information is objective-driven; rather than using images and words to inform their audiences of various competing perspectives on a given issue, propagandists deploy information selectively for the purposes of bringing about the desired action or cognition.

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[22] Geertz, "Ideology as a Cultural System," 207-216, 208 (quotation).
[23] Marlin, *Propaganda and the Ethics of Persuasion,* 12.
[24] Jowett and O'Donnell, *Propaganda & Persuasion,* 31. Jowett and O'Donnell are examples of other scholars aside from O'Shaughnessy that tie propaganda to ideology. For a source discussing how popular systems of meaning are still ideological, even though they may claim neutrality, see Keith Jenkins, *Re-thinking History* (1991, repr.; London: Routledge Classics, 2004), 54-55, Taylor & Francis e-Library.

Defining the media studied in this thesis as propaganda is not simply an act of academic pedantry. The term connotes the communication of information not to inform and share truth with one's audience, but to influence their actions and beliefs in a targeted manner. Thus, calling these media propaganda suggests a relationship between communication and projections of power in Civil War enlistment. J. Matthew Gallman argues that a high degree of individual choice on matters like enlisting characterized the Civil War North; society expected men of military age to consider volunteering, but choosing not to do so could be acceptable if done for good and honest reasons.[25] While this may be true, advocates of enlistment aimed to shape those decisions. Newspaper editors, military officers, members of Union leagues, and others involved in recruiting sought to wield the influence of communications media to encourage young men to offer their service to the Union. Decisions to join the army were not made in a vacuum of outside information, but were moulded by the things men listened to and read.

The idea that language could project power is not unfamiliar to nineteenth-century American historiography. Elizabeth Varon, for instance, shows how the rhetorical use of the word "disunion" projected power over antebellum federal politics in numerous ways, such as its use as a threat to obtain concessions from one's opposition. She argues that the term's use ultimately discouraged political compromise.[26] Her argument reveals that the language used in prewar politics visibly shaped political realities. Similarly, Matthew J. Clavin argues that memory of the Haitian Revolution held powerful sway over Americans' interpretations of slavery, the possibility of a slave revolt, and the Civil War. As a result, the event became a powerful touchstone for commentators to reference—such as, for example, when abolitionists

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[25] J. Matthew Gallman, *Defining Duty in the Civil War: Personal Choice, Popular Culture, and the Union Home Front* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 129-136, 255-258.
[26] Elizabeth Varon, *Disunion! The Coming of the American Civil War, 1789-1859* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 1-2, 7-9.

cited the conflict as evidence that the Union should allow black soldiers or support the abolition of slavery.[27]

If language shaped political landscapes, then it follows logically that communications media—by distilling language into transportable and broadly consumable form—also did. David Waldstreicher makes such a case in *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820*. Waldstreicher contends that print sources directly informed behaviour, arguing that those partaking in nationalist celebrations "took their cues from printed sources" and "improvised upon events they read about."[28] Furthermore, he describes how nationalism became a tangible, lived experience for Americans of the early republic through print culture that informed them about events and news elsewhere in the country.[29] By relating communications media to the experience of nationalism, Waldstreicher cleverly demonstrates that newspapers and almanacs carried significant power.

Although early American historians acknowledge the influence of language and print culture, historians of the Civil War North neglect to discuss the use of popular media to aid recruitment. James W. Geary, Bell Irvin Wiley, and James M. McPherson recount the same narrative of enlistment. Immediately following the outbreak of war, men required little prompting to join up. They acted upon their internal motivations, which, for a given volunteer, often included a desire to uphold republican liberty, the Union, and the Constitution; a sense of duty to the United States; feelings of local, ethnic, or other forms of communal pride; a perceived debt to his Revolutionary forefathers; a desire to earn regular pay; and/or a yearning for

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[27] Matthew J. Clavin, *Toussaint Louverture and the American Civil War: The Promise and Peril of a Second Haitian Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 4-5, 11-16, 79, 99, 185.
[28] David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 11.
[29] Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes,* 108-111.

adventure. By mid-1862, federal, state, and municipal governments recognized that enlistments were waning under the existing system. In response, they both increased enlistment bounties and implemented an initial draft. The power to draft men for Union army service was first established in July 1862 by the Militia Act, and strengthened by the Enrollment Act of March 1863. From mid-1862 onward, then, enlisting (at least among white men) was defined less by patriotism and more by both men's desires to acquire bounties, and the federal government's coercive power to conscript men.[30] McPherson describes this second phase of recruiting as a "carrot and stick approach"; financial incentives encouraged men to enlist, and the threat of being drafted discouraged men from waiting too long to join up. Thus, the carrot and stick method of recruiting, including the implementation of the draft, was intended to more strongly incentivize volunteering.[31]

Though this thesis agrees with the general pattern of waning enthusiasm for enlistment over time, the histories authored by Geary, Wiley, and McPherson omit an important component of that discussion. Individuals did not make their choices to join the army in a vacuum; they made those decisions within a propagandistic environment that strove to influence their behaviour. Geary, Wiley, and McPherson all emphasize the individual motivations and rational choices made by young men throughout the Union.[32] Additionally, Gallman argues for a significant degree of individual choice present in the enlisting process.[33] And while Geary,

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[30] James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 308-310, 332, 490-492; Bell Irvin Wiley, *The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1971), 17-21, 37-44; James W. Geary, *We Need Men: The Union Draft in the Civil War* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1991), 6-9, 12-14, 47, 49, 65, 173. Wiley does very briefly mention broadsides, newspaper advertisements, and war meetings—even acknowledging in the latter case that their impact was sometimes significant—but he does not devote much focus to these elements of recruiting.
[31] McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* 492, 600.
[32] See James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* 308-312; Wiley, *Billy Yank,* 37-44; Geary, *We Need Men,* 6-9.
[33] Gallman, *Defining Duty,* 129-136.

Wiley, McPherson, and Gallman have all contributed significant works related to choice and motivations for enlistment, they by no means represent the only works on that subject, as Russell L. Johnson notes.[34] Surprisingly, none of these accounts include a detailed discussion of the projections of power exercised in the recruiting process through mass communications media.

Geary and McPherson also discuss and debate federal and state governments' use of coercive power through conscription.[35] The draft brought two types of compulsion: obligating men to join the army, and, in defiant places like Pennsylvania's lumber region, enforcing that obligation by stationing the military amongst civilians and punishing deserters and draft dodgers.[36] But Geary notes that voluntary recruitment continued, albeit less successfully, even after the adoption of the draft. Voluntary enlistments rather than conscripts accounted for the vast majority of Union soldiers who served.[37] While the draft had important implications for federal power and state formation, enticing men to join the army was statistically more significant than forcing them to do so. Though more clearly visible and easily measured in its impact, the draft was not the only exercise of power involved in filling the Union ranks.

The proliferation of recruiting media should not be surprising when one considers the magnitude of the Union army's manpower needs during the Civil War. Throughout the war, the federal government issued calls for troops that totalled nearly three million men. Scholarly estimates differ on the precise number of individuals who actually served in the army and navy. Geary summarizes these approximations by stating that once reenlistments by the same men and

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[34] Russell L. Johnson, "'Volunteer While You May': Manpower Mobilization in Dubuque, Iowa," in *Union Soldiers and the Northern Home Front: Wartime Experiences, Postwar Adjustments,* eds. Paul A. Cimbala and Randall M. Miller (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002), 30-32. According to Johnson, other major works on the subject of soldier motivation include studies authored by Gerald Linderman, Earl J. Hess, Joseph Allan Frank, and George A. Reaves (as well as McPherson).

[35] Geary, *We Need Men;* McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* 491-494, 600-611.

[36] Robert M. Sandow, *Deserter Country: Civil War Opposition in the Pennsylvania Appalachians* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), 116-138.

[37] Geary, *We Need Men,* 83.

other complicating factors are taken into consideration, scholars believe the true number falls somewhere between 1.55 million to 2.4 million individuals.[38] A more recent work by Gallman asserts that, most probably, 2.1 million white men—approximately forty per cent of white males of military age living in Union states in 1860, as well as some immigrants who arrived after 1860 and some Southerners—joined the Union forces at some point.[39] About 190,000 African-American men also served in either the army or the navy.[40] Of those (roughly) 2.3 million troops, the overwhelming majority enlisted as volunteers. Although around 775,000 men's names were drawn in military drafts, few of them ever donned a Union uniform. Most either received an exemption, were discharged, failed to report after being called, paid a commutation fee, or hired a substitute. Fewer than 74,000 men enlisted as substitutes on behalf of a drafted man, and under 47,000 men whose names were drawn in the draft were actually conscripted.[41] Thus, in terms of raw numbers, voluntary recruiting was much more important for filling the ranks of the Union army than was conscription.

In contrast to studies of Union military mobilization, scholarship focused on the Confederacy more strongly emphasizes the relationship of persuasion and coercion to volunteerism. For example, flag presentation ceremonies, as well as newspaper articles describing them, were intended to persuade hesitant Southern men to join the army. To encourage potential volunteers, flag presentations played upon Southern values to convey a community's expectation that young men should enlist.[42] In a similar use of power, in late 1861 Confederates in East Tennessee pressured men suspected of disloyalty to volunteer for military

[38] Geary, *We Need Men*, 79-80.
[39] Gallman, *Defining Duty*, 7.
[40] Brian Taylor, "A Politics of Service: Black Northerners' Debates Over Enlistment in the American Civil War," *Civil War History* 58, no. 4 (December 2012): 464.
[41] Geary, *We Need Men,* 83.
[42] Wayne K. Durrill, "Ritual, Community and War: Local Flag Presentation Committees and Disunity in the Early Confederacy," *Journal of Social History* 39, no. 4 (Summer 2006): 1108, 1110, 1112, 1117-1118.

service.[43] Additionally, Southerners employed speeches, newspaper and periodical articles, and poetry to push enlistment on those who had avoided service by hiring a substitute, finding a less demanding position in a home guard unit, or securing an exemption.[44] If uses of power and persuasion were a part of Confederate volunteerism, it should not be surprising that similar projections of power took place in the Union.

Producers of recruiting materials recognized the importance of encouraging volunteerism, warranting an analysis of how they used communications media to appeal to potential enlistees. Understanding this topic will help scholars to better grasp the forms taken by propaganda prior to the twentieth century, and the relationships between power, communication, and enlistment during the Civil War. In addition to arguing that these efforts constituted propaganda, this thesis provides analyses of both the media used and the messages conveyed to promote enlistment. Understanding the recruiters' intent and conduct, the structures of the media they used, and the messages they disseminated offers a holistic view of the discourse of recruitment for the Union army.[45] In turn, these findings offer insights into the Union cause, the history of propaganda, and the presence of power within nineteenth-century communications culture.

I have chosen not to organize this thesis chronologically due to the nature of the primary sources used. The communications media constituting recruiting propaganda in the Civil War North included posters, pamphlets, songs (typically written on song sheets), newspaper advertisements, and speeches delivered at community war meetings (often recorded, either

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[43] Robert Tracy McKenzie, *Lincolnites and Rebels: A Divided Town in the American Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 103-104.
[44] Anne Sarah Rubin, *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 68-79.
[45] Michel Foucault defined discourses as practices that, through symbols and language, create and delineate the boundaries of the subjects that they set out to define. This thesis uses his definition of discourse. See Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and Discourse on Language,* trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), 48-49.

verbatim or in summary, in newspaper articles or pamphlets). Many of the printers that created the ephemeral documents studied in this thesis, such as posters and song sheets, left their works undated. Even among the few that are dated, present-day archivists and historians often lack information about their provenance. As a result, I do not have enough information about the dates in which these documents were produced in order to make firm conclusions about how they changed (or did not) over time. Speeches pose some similar problems to a lesser extent, though amongst those I have studied, I find a high degree of continuity in their content over the course of the war.

The tendency for song sheet publishers to leave the overwhelming majority of their song sheets undated poses an additional challenge compared to other ephemeral sources. While it is difficult to imagine someone producing recruiting posters after the war, it is possible that some of the Civil War songs contained in the Library of Congress's America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Sheets Collection, the primary repository of song sheets used in this thesis, were written as remembrances of the war rather than contemporary commentary on the conflict. In some cases, Civil War Americans and/or present-day historians have described the contemporary popularity of certain songs, making it clear that those songs are from the war itself; in many other cases, I am left to make my own judgment. In these cases, I have focused my analysis on songs that seem to have a present-minded message. Rather than looking back upon the past, they seem to reflect the hopes, desires, and uncertainties of life during a traumatic war.

Another challenge posed by the sources relates to authorship and publication information. Particularly in the case of posters and song sheets, some or all of the details about authorship, location of publication, and the publisher may be missing. Even when a supposed author is listed on a poster, newspaper advertisement, or pamphlet, it is hard to tell the extent to which its

content and design was created by the author and to what extent it was edited by a publisher or editor. Similarly, speeches reported in newspapers sometimes offer full versions of the original speech's text, but sometimes only include excerpts or summaries. Like with the other documents, then, the content is partly shaped by both speaker and editor.

In general, I have drawn examples from diverse regions of the United States to illustrate the commonalities (and occasionally, the differences) in recruiting propaganda across the country. For the same reason, I have also included examples from both large cities and small communities. However, large cities are better represented in the historical record, and details about recruitment in small towns are more difficult to come by. Additionally, newspapers from, and events proceeding in, large urban centres had a stronger impact beyond their geographic boundaries. Recruiters took into account the greater cultural reach of cities. For example, one speaker at a December 1863 war meeting in New York City told his audience that "being detained in the city, he could not forego the privilege of mingling his voice with those which were to be raised here to-night in the cause of his country. And he said it the more readily, because the metropolitan press would speed the words here spoken to the patriotic people of the mountains and valleys of his dear old State, Pennsylvania."[46] Similarly, the song sheets (with known publication locations), pamphlets, and posters studied in this thesis were most often produced in major cities, especially New York and Philadelphia. A large number of the posters also came from New Jersey (particularly Camden). This geographic distribution results more from the availability of archival documents than a deliberate choice. Thus, while I have strived to show transregional trends, the geographic balance of my sources is imperfect, with somewhat greater representation of the urban east.

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[46] "The Great War Meeting," *New-York Daily Tribune,* December 4, 1863.

I have organized this thesis into three chapters. Chapter One offers an analysis of the efforts and motives behind the communications media. It ultimately argues that the use of communications media for recruiting purposes meets this thesis's definition of propaganda. Using documents written by and about recruiters, it shows that they specifically intended to use the media at their disposal to garner troops. These findings show that the use of coercion in filling the Union army's ranks came in other forms than the draft, and that historians have overemphasized the individual's rational decision to enlist.

Chapter Two assesses the cultural precedents that recruiters drew upon. Rather than foreshadowing the iconic propaganda campaigns of the twentieth century, advocates of enlistment drew upon cultural traditions firmly rooted in nineteenth-century culture. Audiences' familiarity and recognition of these communications media helped to make recruiters' efforts seem more mundane and ordinary. Furthermore, recruiting propaganda suggested that by enlisting, Americans could benefit individually while serving the collective good. These findings reveal that rather than following a standard model, propaganda manifests in very different ways depending on its historical and cultural context. They also show that powerful communication methods were already present in American culture prior to the Civil War.

Chapter Three surveys the messages conveyed by recruiting propaganda. Broadly, recruiting messages fell into three major categories: patriotic appeals, claims upon potential soldiers' identities, and practical considerations that were often (but not exclusively) financial. Within these categories, the specific arguments for enlistment varied widely, demonstrating that the objective of securing volunteers was more important than the reasons for doing so. The chapter also speaks to connections between various discourses and American patriotism, and posits that some recruits may have internalized recruiters' messages.

Chapter One: Wartime Recruiting and the Problem of Propaganda

On August 13, 1862, the *Boston Investigator* reported on a war meeting held recently in the town of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. At the meeting, Philadelphian newspaper magnate and politician Morton McMichael called upon the men of Pennsylvania to defend their state. He declared that "if there be not at least 600,000 men placed in the field before the first frost, Pennsylvania will undoubtedly be invaded! … I believe that the foe … will, unless prevented, be upon us." The *Boston Investigator*'s report questioned the genuineness of McMichael's declaration, commenting that his assertions "may have been said as a judicious means of frightening those who heard it into enlisting, or it may have been said because Mr. McMichael really believed it."[1] Though the *Boston Investigator*'s comments on McMichael's speech were ultimately equivocal, the newspaper's uncertainty is telling. It suggests an awareness that recruiters would exaggerate, embellish, or maybe even lie, saying what they thought would prove compelling to potential recruits.

This chapter contends that the efforts of individuals like Morton McMichael constituted purposeful propaganda. Definitive measurements of the impact of these recruiting appeals are impossible to construct. Widespread consumption of the media used by recruiters, the agenda set by the media, and the North's high literacy rate indirectly suggest that their impact was strong. What is certainly and provably clear, however, is that recruiters believed they could use communications media to encourage enlistment. By the amount of money they spent, the volume of materials they produced, and the comments they and their contemporaries made, Northern advocates for enlistment demonstrated confidence that they could wield print media, speeches, and music as tools to influence potential soldiers. Their belief in the efficacy of their efforts is

[1] "Frightening or Frightened," *Boston Investigator,* August 13, 1862.

significant independent of whether or not they were correct because it reveals their attitude that recruiting involved exercising power over eligible men.

As discussed in the introduction, this thesis defines propaganda as objective-driven, intentional use of mass communications media to influence members of a large, impersonal audience and thereby achieve a particular desired outcome. Although this constitutes the analytical definition of propaganda used in this thesis, and I argue that the print and nonprint media studied in this thesis fit that definition, it is important to note that these media do not fit many popular conceptions of the characteristics of propaganda. With some exceptions, creating these media was generally not a state-directed activity. Sitting politicians were often involved with recruiting, but there was no single, central bureau, either public or private in nature, that coordinated campaigns. Rather, production of these media was usually taken up by individuals or small groups that conducted their small-scale campaigns autonomously. Furthermore, rarely did these prints, speeches, and songs explicitly deceive their consumers. Although often guilty of omitting information on why enlisting might be a poor choice, the claims made were almost never verifiably false. The source of the information was also often provided. Thus, the subcategory of white propaganda (described by Jowett and O'Donnell) is generally the best fit for these materials. However, in some cases, gray propaganda is a more appropriate classification—usually due to a lack of clarity about the source of the recruiting appeal, rather than inclusion of false information. And as will be addressed in Chapter Two, few of the approaches taken to recruiting by Billings's "fishers of men" were particularly novel.[2] Many of the methods used and the documents distributed shared significant continuity with conventional

[2] John D. Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee, or The Unwritten Story of Army Life* (Boston: George M. Smith, 1887), 36.

political rhetoric, antebellum advertising, and evangelical Christian revivalist practices, making these media stylistically very different from twentieth-century propaganda.

The applicability of this definition of propaganda to the media studied in this thesis is, in most cases, self-evident. The media to be discussed hereafter—newspaper articles and advertisements, pamphlets, posters, songs, and speeches—all represented means of communication through which recruiters appealed to a wide audience.[3] Furthermore, the desired behavioural outcome of getting readers to enlist was typically obvious. The newspaper advertisements and broadsides of the day made their purpose clear when they explicitly told their readers to join the army. When New Jersey army recruiters declared on their posters "VOLUNTEERS WANTED! FOR THE OLD NEW JERSEY REGIMENTS!" or their counterparts in Maine told men to "Fall in the PORTLAND COMPANY! … Now is your time to enlist," the author's desired outcome was made plain in the document itself.[4] The goals of newspaper articles and notices were similarly evident when they advertised that "A few more able bodied young men [were] wanted to complete Company A of this fine regiment," or when they reproduced the governor's call exhorting "serious consideration of every patriotic heart that claims a hearthstone in Illinois, to … send … every man who may volunteer, or be employed as a substitute, or designated by draft for the service."[5] William D. Kelley had no hidden purpose when he asked black Philadelphians if they were content to hold occupations of low status "when

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[3] Public speeches warrant inclusion in this chapter because, like other forms of media, they constitute a method of communicating to a large, impersonal audience. Nathan O. Hatch considered speech acts a communications medium alongside print and music when he wrote *The Democratization of American Christianity.* See Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 133-141.
[4] *Halt!* (Camden, NJ: D.W. Belisle, n.d.), item ac03070s, Civil War Treasures Collection: Civil War Posters, 1861-1865, New-York Historical Society, http://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16694coll47; *Fall in the Portland Company!* (Portland, ME: n.p., n.d.), item ac03001s, Civil War Treasures Collection: Civil War Posters, 1861-1865, New-York Historical Society.
[5] "Now is the Time," *New York Herald*, August 8, 1862; "The New Call for Troops," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* August 11, 1864.

the profession of arms—the terrible but glorious work of war—invites you to acknowledged manhood, freedom and honor?"[6] Contemporaries also understood that speeches delivered at community war meetings were intended to encourage volunteering. In typical fashion, recruiters invited Bostonians in mid-1862 to attend a meeting "to institute measures for the prompt enlistment of troops," and an 1864 war meeting in Washington, Vermont was described in the *Vermont Watchman & State Journal* as an event "held for the purpose of raising bounties, and to secure enlistments."[7]

It is also quite clear that these speeches and documents employed objective-driven use of information. Recruiters did not include possible arguments against enlisting that would allow men to make an informed, rational, and dialectical choice. Their notices selectively deployed information—including appeals to emotion, arguments rooted in material want, and communicative iconography—as a tool for persuading men to join the military. The content of these publications and orations will be explored further in subsequent chapters, but it is enough for now to summarize and state that they meet this thesis's criteria for propaganda.

Not all recruiting propaganda told readers to enlist as overtly as posters, speeches, and notices in newspapers did, however. Taken at face value, some of the songs and pamphlets discussed in this thesis imparted patriotic sentiments without explicitly encouraging enlistment. When read without context, they could be interpreted as simply expressions of their authors' views on the war, rather than intentional efforts to recruit. Establishing that context, then, is key to demonstrating that they warrant inclusion in this thesis. Although information about the

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[6] W.D. Kelley, Anna E. Dickinson, and Frederick Douglass, *Addresses of the Hon. W.D. Kelley, Miss Anna E. Dickinson, and Mr. Frederick Douglass, at a Mass Meeting, Held at the National Hall, Philadelphia, July 6, 1863, For the Promotion of Colored Enlistments* (n.p., n.d.), 2.
[7] "War Meeting in Faneuil Hall," *Boston Daily Advertiser,* July 12, 1862; "Washington War Meeting," *Vermont Watchman & State Journal* (Montpelier, VT), August 19, 1864. Nothing in the second article explicitly identifies Washington as the town in Vermont, but it seems strongly implied.

creation of these documents is only sporadically available, the pieces that do exist suggest a strong desire on the part of their creators to help fill the Union army's ranks.

Because propaganda was not widely associated with sinister connotations until the First World War, some authors of recruiting materials took pride in their contribution to the war effort.[8] Their attitudes differed markedly from British propagandists following the First World War, who lived in a society that deemed their work unseemly at best, and who therefore found little reason to brag about their efforts.[9] Social judgment did not seem to impact Civil War propagandists in the same way. In 1902, for instance, the Union League of Philadelphia (ULP) boasted about the significance of the pamphlets and posters it had produced forty years before. Founded in November 1862 to support the Union cause and promote loyalty to the government, by February 1863 the elite social club's activities included printing and distributing patriotic literature.[10] The ULP's pamphlets rarely told readers to join the army in explicit terms, instead arguing for a general devotion to the Union. Yet decades later, the Union League published its own history in which members crowed about the organization's involvement with recruiting:

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[8] Jonathan Auerbach and Russ Castronovo, "Introduction: Thirteen Propositions about Propaganda," in *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies,* eds. Jonathan Auerbach and Russ Castronovo (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 2.

[9] David Monger, *Patriotism and Propaganda in First World War Britain: The National War Aims Committee and Civilian Morale* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012), 268-270; M.L. Sanders and Philip M. Taylor, *British Propaganda During the First World War, 1914-18* (London: Macmillan Press, 1982), 248-250. Monger asserts that these propagandists' use of atrocity propaganda led to "the permanent assumption that propaganda was an activity based upon lies and deception." Interestingly, from the American perspective, a brief review of George Creel's *How We Advertised America*—a book published in 1920 describing the efforts of the Committee on Public Information, which he chaired—reveals that Creel expressed pride in his wartime propaganda efforts in a similar way to the Union League of Philadelphia. Perhaps Creel's writings were defensive in nature, intended to protect or restore the reputation of the Committee on Public Information.

[10] Melinda Lawson, *Patriot Fires: Forging a New American Nationalism in the Civil War North* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 103-105, 114-115.

> Those devoted loyalists realized to the full the imperative necessity for stimulating a healthy national sentiment among the class from which recruits were chiefly to come. Mere bounty-giving would have been a poor makeshift for genuine enthusiasm in the cause of the Union. They desired to help the Government to a higher quality of soldier than a mercenary.[11]

Members clearly saw the League's publications as assisting with the recruiting process. Indeed, through a campaign of "wise and lavish propagandism, at the right moment and in the right way," the ULP believed that "The Union League men were makers of loyalty."[12]

Similarly, songwriters wrote patriotic music to aid recruitment. George Frederick Root, for instance, described his efforts to aid enlistment in his 1891 autobiography. Root was one half of Root and Cady, a wildly successful song publishing house based in Chicago. He authored many of the Union's most popular songs, including "The Battle Cry of Freedom." According to Christian McWhirter, Root was the preeminent publisher and writer of songs in the Union during the Civil War.[13] It is therefore significant that Root saw at least some of his songs as political tools to persuade. "I tried to help the enlistments by 'Come, brothers, all, 'tis Columbia's call,'" wrote Root in his recollections. That song was by no means Root & Cady's only published song intended to spur enlistment. Root similarly expressed the recruiting significance of music performed at public rallies while he taught in Ohio for part of 1862, writing that "We were deeply interested in the struggle, and always ready to help at the war meetings. The new war-songs contributed not a little to rouse the enthusiasm of the people and help the recruiting."[14]

Root was not alone in his confidence in the recruiting power of music. Songs resounded at war meetings and along city streets, making music an integral part of the enlisting process.

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[11] Union League of Philadelphia Committee on History and Oliver H.G. Leigh, *Chronicle of the Union League of Philadelphia 1862 to 1902* (Philadelphia: Wm. F. Fell, 1902), 103.
[12] Union League of Philadelphia and Leigh, *Chronicle of the Union League,* 103-104.
[13] Christian McWhirter, *Battle Hymns: The Power and Popularity of Music in the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 16-17, 20-21.
[14] George F. Root, *The Story of a Musical Life: An Autobiography by George F. Root* (Cincinnati: John Church, 1891), 137, 144; McWhirter, *Battle Hymns,* 50.

Audiences strongly associated some songs, such as “We Are Coming Father Abraham, 300,000 More,” with recruiting.[15] Recruiters hired bands to play patriotic music in places as diverse as rural Maryland and the streets of New York City.[16] Though music is not conventionally grouped with print sources like newspapers, pamphlets, and broadsides, it was an important communicative medium employed by those who worked to find more soldiers for the army.

At the most basic level, communications media promoting enlistment made eligible men aware that the Union’s armed forces were looking for recruits. The president’s calls for volunteers would have been relatively powerless without newspapers to announce them, posters to alert passers-by, or songs to call out to those listening. Indeed, the Union League of Philadelphia took great pride in its contributions to extending the reach of the government: “the voice of Presidential authority was swelled into a mighty chorus by the vocal pleadings on the Union League platforms. The messages, entreaties, and proclamations from the seat of power were grandly strengthened and borne right home by the Union League’s remarkable cannonade of pamphlets.”[17] Soldiers, too, noted this phenomenon. In his account of the formation of the 149th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment, one veteran of the regiment illustrated the power of print to draw attention to the issue of recruiting. George K. Collins described the *Syracuse Daily Standard*’s publication from August 5, 1862, which reported Secretary of War Edwin Stanton’s recent call for volunteers and announcement of a coming draft in jurisdictions that failed to meet quota. Collins further explained that the same newspaper had also published the prior month’s presidential call for volunteers. After mentioning the newspaper’s efforts at

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[15] McWhirter, *Battle Hymns,* 57.

[16] Union League of Philadelphia and Leigh, *Chronicle of the Union League,* 111; Ernest Duvergier de Hauranne, *A Frenchman in Lincoln’s America; Huit Mois en Amérique: Lettres et Notes de Voyage, 1864-1865,* vol. 1, ed. and trans. by Ralph H. Bowen (Chicago: R.R. Donnelley & Sons, 1974), 122.

[17] Union League of Philadelphia and Leigh, *Chronicle of the Union League,* 73.

publicizing both calls for troops, he stated that "Under this first call the County of Onondaga had raised only a portion of the regiment … it was apparent to every one, on the publication of the second order, that it was not only necessary to fill the regiment recruiting, but still another must be raised in that county."[18]

Collins's account clearly indicates that the press wielded the power to draw attention to a given subject. At minimum, mass media encouraged people to think about recruiting and recognize it as an issue. Present-day scholarship on agenda-setting theory explains this power. Communications scholars Werner J. Severin and James W. Tankard, Jr. describe agenda-setting as a process in which news outlets, through discussing a given issue, draw public attention to that subject.[19] Similarly, Maxwell McCombs asserts that news media, by choosing the issues to make salient, conveys to the public the range of issues that are presently important.[20] Agenda-setting theory suggests that by focusing on a subject, mass media strongly encourages members of the public to think about that subject and form some sort of view on it. In the context of Civil War recruiting, agenda-setting theory means that by publishing calls for troops and appeals to potential volunteers, the media induced potential soldiers to at least think about whether or not they should enlist. This was a basic power possessed by virtually all pieces of recruiting-related media—even terse, simple notices that merely informed readers that a given company or regiment was looking for a few more men.

Communications media certainly seemed to set a patriotic, pro-enlistment tone. Robert M. Sandow posits that newspapers early in the war (at least in the lumber region of

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[18] George K. Collins, *Memoirs of the 149th Regt. N.Y. Vol. Inft. 3d Brig., 2d Div., 12th and 20th A.C.* (Syracuse: published by the author, 1891), 1-2. Collins indicates his own enlistment on pages 3-4.
[19] Werner J. Severin and James W. Tankard, Jr., *Communication Theories: Origins, Methods, Uses,* 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1988), 264.
[20] Maxwell McCombs, *Setting the Agenda,* 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014), 1-2.

Pennsylvania) focused coverage on visible acts of patriotism, and concealed underlying reservations about the conflict.[21] By mid-1862, Secretary of War Stanton authorized legal authorities to imprison those who disseminated communications that were thought to hinder volunteerism.[22] Not only did the media publicize enlistment, it typically did not, and often could not, offer counter-arguments for doing so.

Beyond the basic power projected by discussing enlistment, recruiting propaganda was aided by the fact that mid-nineteenth century Americans were interested in, and actively read, advertisements. In his study of the *New York Herald*, James L. Crouthamel posits that the newspaper's varied advertisements were key to its antebellum popularity. The *Herald*'s editor, James Gordon Bennett, saw advertisements as another form of news. Bennett made it known that his newspaper renewed its advertisements daily—leading to high turnover, and therefore more interesting reading.[23]

Nineteenth-century Americans also paid attention to posters. David Henkin offers two contrasting examples from New York that illustrate the influence of broadsides during the Civil War. In 1863, John Hughes, the Archbishop of New York, had posters put up around the city to advertise a speech he was giving the next day. Though the advertisements only gave New Yorkers a single day's notice, Hughes's speech drew a crowd of between three and four thousand.[24] Hughes's experience strongly indicates that mid-nineteenth century Americans actively engaged with notices they came across on the street. The year before, however,

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[21] Robert M. Sandow, *Deserter Country: Civil War Opposition in the Pennsylvania Appalachians* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), 47.
[22] William A. Blair, *With Malice Toward Some: Treason and Loyalty in the Civil War Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 107-108.
[23] James L. Crouthamel, *Bennett's New York Herald and the Rise of the Popular Press* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1989), 52-54, 159.
[24] David M. Henkin, *City Reading: Written Words and Public Spaces in Antebellum New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 85-86.

opponents of Horace Greeley and Henry Ward Beecher put up posters to advertise a public meeting; antislavery activists tore the notices down within the hour, and the meeting was poorly attended.[25] The effort spent by antislavery activists to remove their opponents' posters reveals their view that broadsides were communicatively consequential. The fact that they observed them so rapidly also demonstrates their attentiveness to notices plastered onto walls around the city. And finally, the fact that the antislavery activists' meeting was poorly attended after their posters were removed, whereas the Archbishop's event was well-attended after his advertisements were left visible, suggests (albeit somewhat superficially) that perhaps advertising influenced crowd size.

According to the *New York Herald,* the outbreak of war heightened attention to such notices. On April 18, 1861, the *Herald* published the following account:

> The recruiting flags and banners, which have waved on the breeze every day these twelve months, without attracting more than cursory glances, have suddenly become objects of interest. Staid and solid men point to them as they pass, with the remark, "See, there's another rendezvous;" while the handbill on the door, giving information as to the pay, &c., of a soldier, might be an exciting despatch from Washington or Pensacola, judging by the number and eagerness of the readers.[26]

Generalizing for the entire war based on this quote would be unwise; public excitement to read war-related advertising likely waned over time as the enthusiasm for, and the novelty of, the conflict faded. Still, this example—when contextualized by Crouthamel and Henkin's assertions of the public's interest in, and the impact of, advertisements—shows that newspaper notices, posters, pamphlets, and other recruiting documents had the potential power to entice an audience and draw their attention.

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[25] Henkin, *City Reading,* 85.
[26] "Recruiting for the Army," *New York Herald,* April 18, 1861.

The popular reach of print media was bolstered by the North's high literacy rate.[27] In 1840, the Census Bureau found that most Northern states had literacy rates in the mid- to high-90s. Union border states had higher rates of illiteracy, partly due to the presence of slaves whose masters denied them access to reading. The literacy rates of free states somewhat declined between 1840 and 1860 due to the arrival of many immigrants who lacked formal education, but scholars agree that literacy rates remained quite high.[28] By 1860, the national rate of illiteracy was around 8.3 percent—with a presumably lower rate in Northern states.[29] The impact of the written word in Civil War America was carried further by reading aloud and through conversations about the reading material one had come across, both of which were common practices.[30]

Recruiting music was, of course, somewhat distinct from print media in that one had less control over whether or not he or she consumed it. Recruiting songs could be difficult to avoid in Northern cities. In a section of his diary that discussed recruitment practices, Connecticut volunteer Charles H. Lynch described the presence of music: "During the spring and summer of 1862 the war fever was running very high … Drums and fifes were heard continuously being paraded through the streets and followed by men and boys."[31]

One unnamed veteran of the Nineteenth Illinois Volunteer Infantry recalled music as the immediate prompt that convinced him to enlist. J. Henry Haynie relayed the former soldier's

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[27] J. Matthew Gallman, *Defining Duty in the Civil War: Personal Choice, Popular Culture, and the Union Home Front* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 6; Henkin, *City Reading,* 21.
[28] Richard F. Selcer, *Civil War America 1850 to 1875* (New York: Facts on File, 2006), 301.
[29] Harvey J. Graff, *The Legacies of Literacy: Continuities and Contradictions in Western Culture and Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 343.
[30] Gallman, *Defining Duty,* 6.
[31] Charles H. Lynch, *The Civil War Diary 1862-1865 of Charles H. Lynch, 18th Conn. Vol's* (Hartford, CT: Case, Lockwood & Brainard, 1915), 5.

account in his history of the regiment.[32] The young man had just arrived at his place of work one day in April 1861 "when he heard the sound of a fife and drum close by, and with that sound came an echo of the question, 'Well, young gentlemen, what do you think about this grave issue?'"[33] The narrator went on to describe how that music prompted thoughts of the young man's duty to his country, his desire to emulate his father (who had served in the United States army), and the debt he owed to those who had fought in the American Revolution: "The sound of that fife and drum was meanwhile ringing loudly in his ears, and the notes seemed like the voice of one standing at a threatened post calling, 'Help! help!' … It was then that the young man, hardly more than a boy, saw his duty clearly and he acted promptly."[34] The narrative concluded with the young man hastily abandoning his work for the nearest recruiting office. This volunteer's story of joining the army reveals that music had an effect beyond simply stirring up patriotic emotions. Its communicative power had the ability to induce action among those eligible for military service.

Public attention to advertising, a high literacy rate, a tendency by the media to focus attention on enlistment, and unavoidable consumption of patriotic music make it very likely that recruiting notices and songs had a strong impact on eligible men. Yet this constitutes only indirect evidence, and cannot prove that this body of media persuaded men to enlist en masse. Accounts like that of Haynie's unnamed veteran, which directly state that a piece of communications media caused a given soldier to volunteer, are extremely rare; very few men left records describing how a particular poster, song, or pamphlet convinced them to join the army.

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[32] J. Henry Haynie, ed., *The Nineteenth Illinois: A Memoir of a Regiment of Volunteer Infantry Famous in the Civil War of Fifty Years Ago For its Drill, Bravery, and Distinguished Services* (Chicago: M.A. Donohue, 1912), 30. The veteran is described as "a still living member of the Regiment" residing in Chicago at the time of joining up, whose "account of how he happened to volunteer … is herewith presented."
[33] Haynie, *Nineteenth Illinois,* 30.
[34] Haynie, *Nineteenth Illinois,* 31.

This does not necessarily mean that these documents were powerless, however. Men may have forgotten or failed to fully realize the impact these media had on their decisions, or may have wanted to portray themselves as self-motivated, manly patriots. Additionally, while identifying a single piece of media that led to an enlistment proves difficult, the collective body of recruiting propaganda likely had a cumulative effect. But whatever the reason for this gap may be, explicit evidence for the impact of these documents is largely absent from the historical record.

However, recruiters—as well as members of the wider public—evidently believed that the men of the North could be persuaded to join the armed forces through the use of popular media. Army officers, newspaper publishers, Unionist citizens, politicians, and others demonstrated confidence in the power of communication to effect change in the beliefs and actions of potential soldiers. They made this view clear through the quantity of recruiting documents produced and distributed, the amount of money spent on creating and disseminating them, and comments expressing belief in their abilities to influence.

Recruiters' faith in their ability to prompt enlistment through print, song, and speech is significant. It means that filling the Union army's ranks was not simply about rational, individual decision-making. Those with the means and motives to produce recruiting material sought to interject in the individual's process of self-reflection and push a particular decision upon that individual. Though scholars have often defined Union recruiting by discrete periods of strong self-motivation (through the voluntary enlisting process) and coercion (through conscription), the presence of recruiting propaganda suggests a less well-defined distinction between the two major forms that recruiting took in the North during the Civil War.

The amount of money that recruiters spent on advertising initiatives demonstrates their confidence in such advertising's effectiveness. Receipts for posters, newspaper advertisements,

and even musicians litter archival collections of organizations and committees involved with finding volunteers for the army. The Committee of the National Union League for Recruiting was one such group willing to spend money to publicize recruiting. Receipts indicate that in late June and early July of 1863 alone, an officer affiliated with the National Union League named Captain G.C. Steinbach bought advertising space in Philadelphia's *Public Ledger,* the *Philadelphia Democrat,* the *Philadelphia Inquirer,* and *Die Freie Presse.* Steinbach's advertisements were simple, terse notices that his National League Rifles were looking for more volunteers, rather than verbose appeals explaining to men why they should go off to war. The captain also hired small bands to play "martial music for Recruiting Purposes."[35] Steinbach submitted his receipts to the National Union League, who reimbursed his expenses. The National Union League evidently saw value in listing their recruiting initiative in Philadelphia's local press and in hiring musicians to hasten enlisting.

New York's Committee to Recruit the Ninth Army Corps made similar appropriations. Established on January 30, 1864, the voluntary committee consisting of "influential citizens" soon went to work assisting General Ambrose Burnside's efforts to recruit 50,000 more men from the city.[36] On February 18, 1864, the organization paid a local printing house seven dollars for "100 Large Recruiting Showbills."[37] The same day, it paid for a prior order at John W. Oliver's printing establishment that included 300 circulars and 300 showbills, and the next day, the committee disbursed $4.50 for a prior order of 250 circulars printed by Wm. C. Bryant &

[35] Receipts, 1863-1866 Union League Committee on Enlistments, Union League Military Committee (1863-1866)/Silver Medal Presentations (1863-1865) Collection, The Abraham Lincoln Foundation of the Union League of Philadelphia Archives, Philadelphia. The comment about the terseness of Steinbach's ads assumes that examples found in two papers, the *Public Ledger* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer,* were similar to the others.
[36] John Austin Stevens, Jr., *Report of Committee to Recruit the Ninth Army Corps: February to August, 1864* (New York: John W. Amerman, 1866), 3-4.
[37] Baker & Godwin receipt, February 18, 1864, box 1, Records, 1864 [of the Committee to Recruit the Ninth Army Corps], Manuscripts Collection, New-York Historical Society, New York. Collection hereafter cited as Committee to Recruit Ninth Corps.

Co.[38] The previous week, it had paid the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* to advertise that "Recruits [were] wanted."[39] The committee's financial records and receipts reveal that it made numerous small purchases for posters, handouts, and advertising space over the course of its existence. In the month of February 1864 alone, the organization spent over $160 on printing and advertisements.[40]

Although recruiting committees in major cities probably commanded larger budgets than those in smaller towns, local recruiting initiatives in the country's less populated regions were also active. The Ward Four Union Recruiting Association, based in the city of Lynn, Massachusetts, was established in late June of 1864. By the end of September, the association had spent $100 on "Printing and bill posting."[41] No small sum in the 1860s, the decision to spend $100 suggests confidence that printing produced results.

Even the United States War Department recognized the value of spending on communications media for recruiting purposes. Though recruiting media was generally produced by the private sector during the Civil War, the government occasionally dabbled in its creation. In 1863, the Adjutant General's Office published a document outlining regulations for the recruiting service of the Union army. In those regulations, the government specified that "A recruiting party will consist generally of one lieutenant, one non-commissioned officer, two

[38] John W. Oliver receipt, February 18, 1864, box 1, Committee to Recruit Ninth Corps; Wm. C. Bryant & Co. receipt, February 19, 1864, box 1, Committee to Recruit Ninth Corps.
[39] *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* receipt, February 11, 1864, box 1, Committee to Recruit Ninth Corps. Based on the price and wording of the receipt, it seems more likely that the committee paid for advertising space in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* rather than paying for a run of posters or handbills. However, the receipt is not entirely clear.
[40] Stevens, *Report of Committee to Recruit Ninth Army Corps,* 13. Note that this total includes payment for printing done in January, and also includes general printing—which is likely not just expenditures on recruiting notices, but also on things like receipt books.
[41] James S. Lewis, George H. Chase, and George T. Newhall, *History of the Ward Four Union Recruiting Association of Lynn 1864-1865* (Lynn, MA: Thos. P. Nichols, 1881), 6-8, 18-19, 19 (quotation).

privates, and a drummer and fifer."[42] The fact that the United States government believed a full one-third of recruiting parties should be composed of musicians indicates the value it placed on music as a recruiting tool. By late 1861, the United States government had begun to grapple with the issue of funding the war effort; the fact that, by 1863, it still prioritized paying for two musicians in each recruiting party speaks to its expectation that music would help raise troops.[43]

The War Department also funded recruiters' advertising expenses. The government permitted recruiting officers to "advertise for recruits in not more than two English and, where necessary, two German daily papers" for an upcoming rendezvous, and produce "in cities, not more than two hundred posters or handbills for each company, and one-fourth of that number for the country."[44] The regulations also included a generic poster template for recruiters to use.[45] The United States army's willingness to pay for posters, newspaper advertisements, and handbills endorsed their efficacy as a state-sanctioned belief.

Of course, significant spending on recruiting media resulted in a vast number of documents distributed around the country that appealed to the North's potential soldiers. Unfortunately, the design and ephemeral nature of many of these advertisements creates difficulties for present-day researchers interested in tracking their origins and distribution. Many do not identify an author or date of creation, so estimating the output of a single recruiter or recruiting organization is typically very challenging. Still, production of these notices, pamphlets, and other materials was obviously high.

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[42] War Department, Adjutant General's Office, *Regulations for the Recruiting Service of the Army of the United States, Both Regular and Volunteer* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1863), 5, in "[A Bound Collection of Military Pamphlets Issued By or Through the U.S. War Dept. During the American Civil War]," Offsite holdings, New-York Historical Society, New York (hereafter cited as *Regulations for the Recruiting Service*).
[43] James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 442.
[44] War Department, Adjutant General's Office, *Regulations for the Recruiting Service,* 18, 82.
[45] War Department, Adjutant General's Office, *Regulations for the Recruiting Service,* 32-33.

One well-documented example is the ULP's 1863 pamphlet *About the War: Plain Words to Plain People by a Plain Man*. The pamphlet primarily argued for citizens to offer unquestioning obedience to the government in its time of crisis, but the author also made numerous comments that could be, and likely were, read as implied calls to enlist. "And what can honest and true-hearted citizens now do but defend the national authority?" asked the author. "Now the only true way for us to do in our present emergency is to make everything yield to the support of the government AS IT IS … We should … [learn from the Confederates, who] concentrate all their moral and physical strength upon the issue before them."[46] While mostly focused on persuading Northerners to unyieldingly support the war effort, the comments clearly called upon Northerners to commit more strongly to, and sacrifice for, the Union cause.

The Union League proceeded to not only print numerous copies of the pamphlet, but distribute them around the country. In March of 1863 alone, the organization sent 65 packages containing a total of over 7,847 copies of the pamphlet to various recipients throughout the United States. Averaging over 120 pamphlets per package, the ULP presumably expected recipients of these packages to locally distribute the individual pamphlets. It sent many orders to Philadelphia addresses, but distributed plenty further afield. The Union League mailed numerous copies to New York and Washington, D.C., as well as smaller numbers to Harrisburg, Hartford, New Haven, and Salem (New Jersey). The organization sent packages to many smaller communities as well, mostly in Pennsylvania—including Milton, Altoona, Hatboro, Bethlehem, and Norristown. It addressed packages to individuals, as well as private businesses and institutions including iron works, a hospital, and even a farmer's market. The League also

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[46] Union League in Philadelphia, *About the War: Plain Words to Plain People by a Plain Man* (Philadelphia: Henry B. Ashmead, 1863), 12, 14. Chapter Three will further address the theme of indirect recruiting appeals that did not directly call on men to enlist, but asserted the importance of defending the country at all costs.

ordered over 830 pamphlets for its own committee room, which it likely made available to members and other locals.[47]

The prior example constitutes only a single month's efforts at distributing a single pamphlet. The lengths the ULP went to in order to proliferate *About the War* demonstrate its confidence in the power of that piece of literature. And while few pieces of recruiting media were distributed as broadly as Union League of Philadelphia pamphlets, local recruiters still had to work to disseminate their messages. Recruiters went to such lengths that, at least in the North's major cities, bills and signs encouraging enlistment were difficult to avoid. One French visitor to New York during the Civil War described seeing "a majestic array of signs all alike: 'We need ten thousand volunteers,'" in such a way that suggested he considered it a representative experience of his time in the city. For Ernest Duvergier de Hauranne, recruiting notices constituted a common type of poster in a city where "advertisements … overflow into the street, on the edge of the sidewalks, between the gutter and the feet of the passers-by."[48] Even as late as July 1864, he noted (with some comic exaggeration) the unreserved recruiting efforts of the city's Republican newspapers: "The *Times* and the *Tribune* are exhorting all citizens, old and young— and even women—to swell the ranks of the army, [and] appealing to the rich to send in their own places one, two or even three substitutes."[49]

But the clearest evidence that Civil War era Americans believed they could use communications media to garner troops were the actions taken and statements made by wartime

[47] Union League of Philadelphia Publication Committee, "Union League of Philadelphia Publications Distribution Lists, 1863 February 28-1863 July 4," 1-14, accessed November 21, 2017 via Penn State University Libraries: Digital Collections, https://collection1.libraries.psu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/ulp/id/292/rec/2. The total number of pamphlet orders in March 1863 was 75, totalling 8683 pamphlets; nine of these orders (totalling 536 pamphlets) were clearly sent to the Union League's committee room, and one ambiguous order for 300 pamphlets was either sent to their committee room or George Templeton Strong in New York. I have grouped this ambiguous order with the orders sent to the League's committee room, though this could be incorrect.
[48] Hauranne, *Frenchman in Lincoln's America*, 21-22.
[49] Hauranne, *Frenchman in Lincoln's America,* 122.

Northerners in support of that idea. Both recruiters and ordinary civilians expressed confidence in the power of persuasive media. "If the masses understand the struggle, they will not falter – in its prosecution," wrote one of the founding members of the Union League of Philadelphia to the organization's Board of Publication. Of course, in order to induce the masses to comprehend the war, he deemed it necessary to print more pamphlets.[50]

Union army recruiter James T. Ayers, a former Methodist preacher, described his own use of posters in his work. While recruiting for the United States Colored Troops outside Huntsville, Alabama in May 1864, Ayers came upon a plantation where the slaves had not yet heard of the Emancipation Proclamation. After informing them, Ayers encouraged them to enlist by using a poster: "'Well children see here' getting off of my horse then handing them one of my Recruiting Pictures 'here is what Father Abraham is doin for you.'" Ayers carefully described the details of the poster in his diary, in addition to enclosing a copy. One side featured a large illustration depicting an enlisted black man waving an American flag, soldiers removing chains from slaves' wrists, and a public school for black children in operation. On the reverse side, the poster declared in text that "All SLAVES were made FREEMEN BY ABRAHAM LINCOLN … Come, then, able-bodied COLORED MEN … and fight for the STARS AND STRIPES!"[51]

Ayers stated that if readers had not been present to see his audience's reaction, they could never comprehend the happiness they felt after seeing his poster. Pushing for enlistments, Ayers spoke to his audience: "'Well now Children' said I 'Father has been good haint he.' … 'Well

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[50] Minutes, March 3, 1864, Union League of Philadelphia Publication Committee, "Union League of Philadelphia Publication Committee Meeting Minutes, 1863 February 26-1876 January 25," accessed April 10, 2018 via Penn State University Libraries: Digital Collections, https://collection1.libraries.psu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/ulp/id/109/rec/1; Adam I.P. Smith, *No Party Now: Politics in the Civil War North* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 74.

[51] James T. Ayers, *The Diary of James T. Ayers: Civil War Recruiter,* ed. John Hope Franklin (Springfield, IL: Illinois State Historical Society, 1947), xi, 24-29. The quotation of the text comes from a copy of the poster included in the volume between pages 28 and 29, rather than a direct quote from Ayers (Ayers also quotes from the text but misspells some of the words).

now he wants you who are able to fall in Ranks and help us A little.'" After very little further prompting, and after Ayers offered assurance to his listeners that their former master could not punish them for joining the Union army, four of the seven men in his audience agreed on the spot to enlist.[52]

Ayers's choice to use a poster while recruiting illustrates his trust in the medium's efficacy. As he was recruiting in person, Ayers could have verbally explained the Emancipation Proclamation to his audience. But by using a poster, he could show them an uplifting and motivating visual representation of the Union cause. In so doing, Ayers demonstrated recruiters' faith in posters generally, and communicative images specifically. But perhaps even more significantly, Ayers's poster shows how recruiters tailored their message and medium to the audience they addressed. Since most Civil War broadsides were laden with text, and used small and sporadic images, Ayers's choice to use visual artwork reveals that he put thought into choosing a medium to which his audience would respond. His message also ignored issues like patriotism and the importance of preserving the Union that were common in appeals to white Northerners. Instead, he emphasized emancipation—an issue that he knew would resonate with his audience, and one that recruiters rarely presented as a reason to fight when they sought white volunteers. Ayers's account indicates that recruiters imposed meanings on the act of enlistment that they thought would appeal to onlookers and listeners.

Those involved with recruiting paid similar attention to how print media portrayed their enterprise. When a Union officer read in the *New York Herald* that county bounties would not be paid to soldiers who reenlisted if their term expired after July 4, 1864, he concernedly wrote to

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[52] Ayers, *Diary of James T. Ayers,* 28.

another officer that "This will prove fatal to reenlistments."[53] The officer seemed to mean that the policy of not paying bounties to men who reenlisted would be detrimental, but given that he learned of the policy through the newspaper, his words suggest that popular representations of recruiting policies in the media impacted enlistment rates.

Edward King Wightman similarly believed the press could stimulate enlistments. Writing in September 1862 to his mother and sisters, Wightman said that "although debarred from the field as a soldier I was able through the press to exert an influence favorable to the Government … I could have raised a company with little exertion with machinery at my disposal."[54] By machinery, Wightman referred to printing equipment. He had a history of working for, and contributing to, newspapers and industry journals in New York; at the beginning of the Civil War, he worked for the *Shoe and Leather Reporter.*[55] Whether in relation to the *Shoe and Leather Reporter* or his connections to other papers and periodicals, Wightman's confidence that his printing press would have made light work of recruiting shows the perceived power of advertising to yield recruits. Connecticuter Charles H. Lynch lent credence to Wightman's confidence; in August 1862, Lynch made up his mind to enlist with local newspaper editor Isaac H. Bromley's company after Bromley ran an advertisement in his *Norwich Morning Bulletin.*[56]

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[53] J. Fred Pierson to Col. George Bills Jr., [January?] 4, 1864, Executive War Committee to Promote Volunteering in the City of New York Collection, Manuscripts Collection, New-York Historical Society, New York. Also, further investigation has not revealed whether Pierson was an active officer at the time of writing this letter, or had been discharged due to injury—but regardless, Pierson had strong ties to the military.
[54] Edward King Wightman to Mother and Sisters, September 1, 1862, in *From Antietam to Fort Fisher: The Civil War Letters of Edward King Wightman, 1862-1865*, ed. Edward G. Longacre (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1985), 23-24.
[55] Longacre, preface to *From Antietam to Fort Fisher,* 13.
[56] Lynch, *Civil War Diary 1862-1865,* 5. Though Lynch does not explicitly state that he enlisted after seeing the advertisement, he mentions the advertisement in one paragraph and describes his decision to enlist with Bromley in the next—implying that the advertisement prompted his enlistment.

Speeches possessed a similar capacity to draw a reaction. On September 17, 1862, Judge Charles P. Daly gave a speech at a war meeting in Albany, New York.[57] Speakers at war meetings took advantage of their platform to exhort men to consider the various reasons to enlist, and on that day, one onlooker was so mesmerized by Daly's speech that felt the need to describe his awe to his friend, the judge's wife: "I never in my life, during the hour which his address lasted, - felt so powerfully the spell of true eloquence, - nor witnessed so distinctly its magic influence over others." The man further remarked on "the electric effect produced on the twelve thousand men congregated," indicating that the patriotic speech captivated and inspired its audience.[58]

Staff at the *New York Herald* echoed (in another context) the man's response to Daly's speech. Reporting on another war meeting held in Philadelphia in late July 1862, the *Herald* described the speeches, oral resolutions, and publicly-announced donations to the war effort that took place at the event. The *Herald* concluded that "The enthusiasm was extraordinary … The influences of this meeting will undoubtedly have great effect in stimulating recruiting."[59] Good orators proved critical to filling the Union ranks.

Contemporaries also firmly believed in the ability of music to influence potential soldiers' decision-making. Despite not being an American himself, Ernest Duvergier de Hauranne observed music's ability to prompt patriotic feelings. Describing a procession of militiamen marching with a band and noting the joy of other observers, he wrote that "I found myself sharing in it, willy nilly, so deeply does the sound of the bugle and drum stir a man's

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[57] "War Meeting in Albany," *New-York Times,* September 18, 1862.
[58] B. O'Reilly S.J. to Mrs. [Maria Lydig] Daly, September 18, 1862, Charles P. Daly Papers, Series II, Box 11, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library, New York.
[59] "Enthusiastic War Meeting in Philadelphia," *New York Herald,* July 27, 1862.

heart!”[60] Ohioan volunteer Osborn H. Oldroyd believed that music went beyond simply a way to prompt patriotism, and actually aided efforts to fill the ranks. When he encountered a Confederate prisoner in mid-1863, Oldroyd learned that the Confederacy employed “conscription and terrorism” to fill its armies. Oldroyd noted that “With the North it is not so, for the old song, ‘We are Coming, Father Abraham, Three Hundred Thousand More,’ is being sung there yet, with good will, and volunteers are still pouring in.”[61] Of course, “We are Coming, Father Abraham, 300,000 More” was a popular Civil War song about Americans responding to President Lincoln’s call for additional volunteers, and was so closely linked to recruiting that Christian McWhirter refers to it as “the theme song of northern enlistment.”[62] If Oldroyd meant his comment literally, he demonstrated his belief that the song attracted volunteers. And if he meant it abstractly to convey that patriotism and enthusiasm still prevailed over the recruiting process, his comment suggests that he considered music and recruiting to be intimately connected. In either case, his comment indicates that music was integral to the recruiting process.

Even decades after the Civil War, those who had worked to gather volunteers for the Union army recalled the potency of music for their cause. Abraham Barker, who had been a member of both the ULP as well as Philadelphia’s Supervisory Committee for Recruiting Colored Regiments, relayed such an account in the Union League’s 1902 self-published history.[63] Barker claimed that, according to Congressman Henry Winter Davis, recruiting music had been so influential that it brought about slavery’s demise in Maryland:

> The [Supervisory] Committee asked Secretary Stanton’s permission to recruit in that State with a brass band, which he granted. Before this the Maryland

[60] Hauranne, *Frenchman in Lincoln’s America,* 35.
[61] Osborn H. Oldroyd, *A Soldier’s Story of the Siege of Vicksburg, From the Diary of Osborn H. Oldroyd* (Springfield, IL: H.W. Rokker, 1885), 69.
[62] McWhirter, *Battle Hymns,* 55-57, 57 (quotation).
[63] Domenic Vitiello and George E. Thomas, *The Philadelphia Stock Exchange and the City It Made* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 98.

> Legislature had offered $300 compensation for each liberated slave, which the owners refused. When the Union League's musical missionaries went on their recruiting expedition, the plantations began to empty so rapidly that the slave-owners started as quick a rush to get their $300 grant per head from the Legislature before it was too late.[64]

A former recruiter's assertion that recruiting music brought about statewide emancipation due to mass enlistments is no minor comment. It indicates deep trust in its effectiveness to yield results.

Although it is difficult to determine the impact of the recruiting materials produced in the Civil War North, supporters of the Union cause clearly believed they bore efficacy. Popular consumption of the particular print and nonprint communications methods employed by recruiters, a high literacy rate, the recruiting agenda set by these media all suggest, albeit indirectly, that posters, songs, pamphlets, and newspapers significantly aided recruiting campaigns. But more concretely, the money spent, the quantity of documents disseminated, and the expressed faith of recruiters, soldiers, and civilians all demonstrate a firm collective conviction that communicative practices could foster enlistment. This confidence in the power of print and nonprint media to shape behaviour is important. It means that, rather than allowing potential soldiers to make their own self-motivated choices, recruiters attempted to exert power over them by influencing their decisions. And since they intentionally sought to shape decisions regarding enlistment, drew upon mass communications media, and deployed information in a manner intended to achieve their desired outcome, these messages can and should be characterized as propaganda.

Recognizing the presence of propaganda in Union recruiting efforts encourages us to reconsider some of the conventional characterizations, narratives, and debates within Civil War

[64] Union League of Philadelphia and Leigh, *Chronicle of the Union League,* 111. Note that there is one potential inaccuracy in this story—the band appears to have been sent by the Supervisory Committee to Recruit Colored Regiments, and were not "the Union League's musical missionaries"; though there was significant overlap in the two organizations' memberships, they were technically distinct groups.

historiography. Firstly, recruiting propaganda challenges the prevailing narrative of exercises of power in Civil War enlistment. As previously discussed, the classic account of Northern recruiting describes a process that began with relatively minimal uses of power, since early recruits were self-motivated volunteers, and transitioned by the end of the war to a system of state coercion through conscription. If historians insert recruiting propaganda into that narrative, however, the narrative no longer looks like a transition from a vacuum of power to a use of power. Rather, recruiting propaganda reveals the presence of coercion throughout the war. Propaganda operates through a different style of power—through persuasion, agenda-setting, and social pressure—than the heavy-handed exercise of authority represented by the draft. But although conscription is an act of power more visible to historians than cognitive processes brought on by communications media, the differences between voluntary enlistment and conscription are less clear-cut than historians often think.

Secondly, recruiting propaganda detracts somewhat from the centrality of the individual's rational choice in typical narratives of volunteering. Though the personal decision to enlist was obviously important, the presence of external forces that attempted to mould that choice evidences that, to some, finding enlistees was a collective affair. Additionally, groups of patriotic citizens saw it as their responsibility to contribute to recruiting through communications media. The Union League of Philadelphia's immense pride in its recruiting efforts, for instance, illustrates a view that garnering soldiers was a collective responsibility of the community, not one to be left up to the whims and choices of eligible men. This importance of external projections of power on individual decisions during the Civil War is already noted to some degree in the literature. Jonathan W. White, for instance, argues that Republicans employed

coercion and intimidation to hamper Democrat soldiers' efforts to vote in the election of 1864.[65] As we have seen, Southern Confederates often employed coercive tactics to get men to go off to the war. And although Bell Wiley focuses primarily on individuals' decisions to enlist, he mentions very briefly that many soldiers enlisted while under pressure to do so at community war meetings.[66] This scholarship collectively indicates that decisions to enlist or vote—commonly viewed as individualistic, independent, and rational choices—were often subject to strong external pressures and powers during the Civil War. The history of recruiting propaganda builds upon this strain of historiography.

Thirdly, recruiting propaganda contributes to ongoing debates about the relationship between the Civil War, modernity, and other wars of the long nineteenth century. Caught in the middle between conflicts like the American Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars on one side, and the First and Second World Wars on the other, historians frequently debate whether the Civil War can be fittingly classified as a modern, total war.[67] More recently, historians have challenged the place of the Civil War in a master narrative of modernizing conflict; Wayne Wei-Siang Hsieh, for example, argues that many of the characteristics that Civil War historians have deemed modern were also present in prior and contemporary wars.[68]

The presence of recruiting propaganda, a phenomenon strongly associated with the total wars of the twentieth century, would seem to constitute further evidence that the American Civil

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[65] Jonathan W. White, *Emancipation, The Union Army, and the Reelection of Abraham Lincoln* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2014), 117-125.
[66] Bell Irvin Wiley, *The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1971), 21.
[67] For examples of sources contributing to this debate, see Mark E. Neely Jr., "Was the Civil War a Total War?" *Civil War History* 50, no. 4 (December 2004): 437-438, 458; Mark Grimsley, *The Hard Hand of War: Union Military Policy Toward Southern Civilians, 1861-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 2, 219; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* 857. Note that McPherson's view changed by the time he published *This Mighty Scourge: Perspectives on the Civil War,* in which he expresses support for Mark Grimsley's argument.
[68] Wayne Wei-Siang Hsieh, "Total War and the American Civil War Reconsidered: The End of an Outdated 'Master Narrative,'" *Journal of the Civil War Era* 1, no. 3 (September 2011): 394-405.

War belongs in a modernizing narrative. But it is not that simple. Recruiters predominantly built on antebellum precedents in the ways that they deployed communications media. As a result, recruiting materials featured few innovations upon prewar communications culture, and bore strong continuity with antebellum advertising, religious revivalist practices, and political communications. Though the existence of recruiting propaganda may seem forward-looking, its form was decidedly rooted in preexisting cultural traditions. In this regard, the nature of Civil War recruiting propaganda supports the contention that the Civil War did not uniquely catalyze modern conflict, and that seeking to place it in such a narrative pursues teleology at the cost of acknowledging historical complexity.

Chapter Two: Selling a National Gospel: The Cultural Roots of Civil War Recruiting Media

On August 8, 1862, the *Cleveland Morning Leader* reported on a large war meeting that had taken place in the nation's capital two days before. Present and former generals, congressmen, senators, and governors gave fiery patriotic speeches that included calls for more troops. "If we can only throw 100,000 fresh men in the field, we can crush the rebellion and forever," declared one general.[1]

The next page featured a very different type of recruiting appeal. In amongst a section of advertisements sat a column titled "Volunteers Wanted." While some of these advertisements made more high-minded appeals for men to enlist in their regiment, they mostly focused on the material benefits one would reap by joining a particular unit. One such notice announced that men would receive a $50 bounty as soon as they enlisted (with an additional $5 premium—"$3 more than is paid by any other Recruiting Officer"); would immediately begin receiving wages, rations, and clothing; and that men who worked on farms could have a furlough to help with the harvest.[2]

Only a single page apart, the *Cleveland Morning Leader* offered two extremely different approaches to recruiting for the Union army. One employed impassioned language and eloquent arguments to persuade men to enlist; the other borrowed from contemporary advertising practices to emphasize the economic benefits of soldiering. Though diverse in their method and in their style, these two texts shared the same essential purpose and appeared within the same document. Why, then, were their messages so different? The answer is found by looking to the origins of their distinct media with an eye to their shared goal. Though the media of the two

[1] "War Meeting," *Cleveland Morning Leader,* August 8, 1862.
[2] "Recruits Wanted! For the 103d Regiment!" *Cleveland Morning Leader,* August 8, 1862.

messages shaped their specific arguments, they ultimately formed constituent parts of a single discourse that argued military service allowed one to serve both the needs of the national collective and the wants of the individual.

This chapter focuses on the media used and forms taken by recruiting propaganda. It offers some general comments on these advertisements, speeches, pamphlets, and songs, but ultimately makes an argument about their cultural heritage. Though the category of propaganda might seem to suggest that these materials were somehow futuristic or advanced, little about their styles and approaches was particularly innovative. Rather, recruiting propaganda borrowed heavily from antebellum traditions of commercial advertising, religious revivalism, and electoral party politics. Recruiters discursively framed their approaches through these pre-existing practices; they borrowed stylistic forms of argumentation from advertisers, evangelists, and politicians (and their surrogates); and they deployed media in similar ways. Ultimately, these approaches made volunteering seem more ordinary, deemphasized the frightening and morally questionable elements of soldiering, and shaped recruiting messages to conform to those pre-existing genres.

These conclusions offer further findings for communications history. Firstly, this chapter shows that instead of conforming to a single style, propaganda takes on very different qualities depending on its specific historical context. Rather than fitting a twentieth-century model, Civil War recruiting propaganda was born of its era and culture. Secondly, this chapter suggests that by the Civil War, powerful means of communicating already existed within seemingly democratic cultural practices. Historians and popular audiences alike have often regarded electioneering, market capitalism, and evangelism as elements of American culture that value and enhance the autonomy of the individual, as opposed to centralizing power in the hands of a

few. This chapter's findings indicate that even within these characteristically republican political, economic, and religious patterns, communications media facilitated exercises of power.

From the late eighteenth through the early nineteenth centuries, the United States underwent a communications revolution. The Post Office Act of 1792, which enabled people to mail newspapers and periodicals cheaply through the United States postal system, contributed to the rapid growth of these forms of print media and the expansion of their geographical distribution.[3] The period saw technological changes that catalyzed greater and wider dissemination of print, including increasing mechanization in papermaking, the development of stereotyping, and transportation developments that benefitted the paper trade (both paper coming to printers, and papers that printers then distributed). Newspapers became increasingly affordable to a mass readership, and circulation for many papers increased significantly. Whether formal or informal, literacy education allowed a large and broad public audience to engage with and consume this growing genre of media.[4] Visual media also became easier to disseminate after American printers and artists began adopting the time-saving printing method of lithography in the 1820s.[5]

Commercial advertising emerged as an important use for this burgeoning body of print media. The rise of the penny press in the 1830s yielded a timely way to transmit advertisements and business notices to a general, non-elite audience; indeed, doing so was part of Benjamin

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[3] Richard R. John, *Spreading the News: The American Postal System from Franklin to Morse* (1995; repr., Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 31-41, 156.

[4] Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 226-229, 449-455. Howe argues for a communications revolution that brought dramatic changes to American public and private life. He contends that the communications revolution impacted American religion, commerce, and politics, among other things. Thus, the key antecedents of recruiting propaganda described in this chapter were closely related to some of the main outgrowths of the communications revolution identified by Howe.

[5] Erika Piola, "The Rise of Early American Lithography and Antebellum Visual Culture," *Winterthur Portfolio: A Journal of American Material Culture* 48, no. 2/3 (Summer/Autumn 2014): 125-137.

Day's expressly stated purpose for establishing his daily newspaper, the *New York Sun,* in 1833.[6] Frequently updating one's advertisements drew in readers, and doing so became a central part of operating newspapers like James Gordon Bennett's *New York Herald*.[7] Visual advertisements also became increasingly popular from the late 1840s onward, when advances in lithographic printing combined with steam printing methods.[8] Due to both technological and cultural changes, then, advertisements became an even more integral part of the antebellum era's communications media.

The communications revolution in antebellum America both contributed to, and was further promoted by, a contemporary cultural movement—the Second Great Awakening.[9] In the decades that followed the American Revolution, Christianity in the United States grew rapidly. As Americans became increasingly suspicious of hierarchical institutions—viewing them as conflicting with their republican values—they found themselves drawn to religious sects and practices that were more populist, enthusiastic, and "keeping with the values and priorities of ordinary people."[10] The new evangelicals crucially relied upon communications to spread their message. They did so through speeches that employed rhetorical styles aimed at a mass (rather than an elite) audience, a deluge of widely distributed printed media, and an emerging genre of folk religious music that went uncontrolled by religious authorities.[11]

Beyond religion and advertising, the communications revolution impacted antebellum American political culture. At times termed "Jacksonian Democracy," "white male suffrage,"

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[6] Donald K. Brazeal, "Precursor to Modern Media Hype: The 1830s Penny Press," *The Journal of American Culture* 28, no. 4 (December 2005): 405, 407.
[7] James L. Crouthamel, *Bennett's New York Herald and the Rise of the Popular Press* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1989), 52.
[8] Piola, "Rise of Early American Lithography," 136-137.
[9] Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 452.
[10] Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 3-11, 10 (quotation); Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 186-192.
[11] Hatch, *Democratization of American Christianity,* 125-161.

and "*Herrenvolk* democracy," historians characterize the period between the end of the War of 1812 and the early 1820s by an expansion of voting rights for white men.[12] Though formal political rights remained sharply circumscribed for women and racial minorities, Americans increasingly treated suffrage as a universal right for all white male citizens. With the ascendancy of universal white male suffrage came two new mass political parties, the Democrats and Whigs. Historians are increasingly doubtful that the contests between these parties represented a novel break from the past in American political life, positing that they simply revived many methods pioneered by turn-of-the-century politicians. Historians have also begun to challenge the narrative of democratization in the Jacksonian era; Reeve Huston argues that Jacksonian party politics actually constrained the political power of ordinary people to the franchise. Still, these partisan conflicts created an atmosphere in which parties and their representatives, like evangelists and advertisers, sought to sway potential converts and mobilize supporters through communications media. Through publicly visible ballots, speeches, parades, other events, and partisan publications, community and communication were crucial to American politics.[13]

The three communicative traditions of advertising, evangelism, and partisan politics, all themselves shaped by the communications revolution of the nineteenth century, moulded the way that recruiters approached and interpreted their craft. Few of their approaches to recruiting

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[12] Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 4-5, 489-492, 497-498; Alvin B. Tillery Jr., "Tocqueville as a Critical Race Theorist: Whiteness as Property, Interest Convergence, and the Limits of Jacksonian Democracy," *Political Research Quarterly* 62, no. 4 (December 2009): 639-652.

[13] Frank Towers, "Party Politics and the Sectional Crisis: A Twenty-Year Renaissance in the Study of Antebellum Political History," in *The Routledge History of Nineteenth-Century America,* ed. Jonathan Daniel Wells (New York: Routledge, 2018), 112-113; Reeve Huston, "Rethinking 1828: The Emergence of Competing Democracies in the United States," in *Democracy, Participation and Contestation: Civil Society, Governance and the Future of Liberal Democracy,* ed. Emmanuelle Avril and Johann N. Neem (London: Routledge, 2015), 13-22; Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* 390, 488-498; John L. Brooke, *Columbia Rising: Civil Life on the Upper Hudson from the Revolution to the Age of Jackson* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 210, 382-384.

propaganda were fundamentally new. Rather, they built upon established practices that had a history of success for garnering converts and clients.

The choice on the part of recruiters to pursue traditional rather than innovative approaches had several key consequences for their propaganda. Firstly, doing so eschewed the notion that recruiting was an abnormal activity. The communications concept of framing, initially theorized by Gregory Bateson, describes how audiences understand individual messages within the context of a broader, overarching message; that broader message, or "metacommunicative message," informs how the audience understands and interprets the individual piece of communication.[14] By framing their activities in familiar forms, recruiters could make volunteering seem more familiar—at times, even mundane. In turn, their chosen approaches help explain why Civil War recruiting propaganda did not take on the sinister connotations that a later generation ascribed to propaganda during and after the First World War.[15] Recruiting propaganda came across as a nonthreatening enterprise because its creators grounded it in recognizable styles, and associated it with three activities (advertising, politicking, and evangelizing) that Americans generally perceived as normal, even positive activities. Secondly, and relatedly, the appropriation of commercial, political, and religious communication styles trivialized the grave and unseemly aspects of becoming a soldier. Instead, it enabled recruiters to privilege the economic and emotionally uplifting dimensions of enlistment. Thirdly, the cultural antecedents of recruiting propaganda constrained the types of appeal that recruiters

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[14] Deborah Tannen, introduction to *Framing in Discourse,* ed. Deborah Tannen (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 3.
[15] Jonathan Auerbach and Russ Castronovo, "Introduction: Thirteen Propositions about Propaganda," in *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies,* eds. Jonathan Auerbach and Russ Castronovo (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 2.

could make. The media used, and the manners in which recruiters chose to use them, were more conducive to certain types of arguments than others.

The way contemporary Americans described and discussed recruiting propaganda reveals how they understood its origins. Contemporaries commonly referred to recruiting broadsides and newspaper notices as advertisements. Massachusetts veteran and formerly active Grand Army of the Republic officer John D. Billings called them "flaming advertisements" in his history of the war.[16] When the Captain G.C. Steinbach placed orders for newspaper notices, the receipts he received described his orders as transactions "To Advertising in the PUBLIC LEDGER" or "For Advertising in the Philadelphia Inquirer."[17] New York's Committee to Recruit the Ninth Army Corps similarly denoted advertisements as a category of expenditures.[18] Both recruiters themselves (Steinbach and members of the Committee to Recruit the Ninth Army Corps) and observers of recruitment (Billings) interpreted these notices as part of the existing culture of commercial advertising, rather than as part of a novel genre of communication.

These ways of thinking about recruiting propaganda impacted the forms it took. Like advertisers, recruiters often considered the stylistic choices that went into designing their notices. The size of their broadsides and posters were particularly important to them, since many of them were unusually and conspicuously large. Recruiters commonly canvassed their communities with

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[16] John D. Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee, or The Unwritten Story of Army Life* (Boston: George M. Smith, 1887), 36. A perusal of Direction of the Department Encampment of 1892, *Early History of the Department of Massachusetts G.A.R. From 1866 to 1880 Inclusive* (Boston: E.B. Stillings, 1895) reveals numerous references to Billings as an active post commander for Canton, Massachusetts. In *Hardtack and Coffee*, though, Billings is described as a former department commander, indicating that he had stepped away from the organization by 1887.
[17] Receipts, 1863-1866 Union League Committee on Enlistments, Union League Military Committee (1863-1866)/Silver Medal Presentations (1863-1865) Collection, The Abraham Lincoln Foundation of the Union League of Philadelphia Archives, Philadelphia.
[18] John Austin Stevens, Jr., *Report of Committee to Recruit the Ninth Army Corps: February to August, 1864* (New York: John W. Amerman, 1866), 13-14.

posters sized two or three feet in length, and one or two feet in width; some were even larger.[19] In March of 1864, the Committee to Recruit the Ninth Army Corps purchased "1000 mammoth posters, [with] colors" in addition to its ordinarily less expensive advertising.[20]

The discourse of commercial advertising similarly affected recruiting notices transmitted through newspapers. Aside from the articles themselves, newspapers conveyed recruiting messages through classified-style advertisements. In the August 6, 1862 issue of the *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel,* for instance, the editorial staff situated an advertisement notifying readers of ongoing recruiting in a section of other wanted ads.[21] Depending on the newspaper and the specific period of the war, there might be enough recruiting notices to warrant an entire section of advertisements. The *New York Herald* had a section of advertisements that its editors at one point titled "MILITARY AND NAVAL," and at another titled "THE REBELLION," but in each iteration the section contained a multitude of entries with similar goals and text.[22]

The medium of newspaper advertisements confined recruiting messages to relatively terse, text-heavy notices with little space for iconography. Unlike posters, which had additional room that recruiters often used to include images, slogans, or more verbose appeals, newspaper advertisements did not have many lines in which to convey a message. The most basic of them simply notified readers that a given unit was seeking volunteers; more complex advertisements typically emphasized the financial gains made by volunteers, occasionally alongside a patriotic slogan and/or image. Alongside instruction for readers to "Stand by the Flag!" and an image of

[19] A general perusal of the posters included in the New-York Historical Society's Civil War Treasures Collection: Civil War Posters, 1861-1865 reveals that these sizes were commonplace. Though digitized, the descriptions provided by the New-York Historical Society include the original posters' measurements.
[20] Stevens, *Report of Committee to Recruit Ninth Army Corps,* 13.
[21] "First Regiment! Wisconsin Volunteers," *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel,* August 6, 1862.
[22] See, for example, *New York Herald,* June 25, 1862; *New York Herald,* September 2, 1864. Note that not all notices in these sections were recruiting notices; some promoted draft insurance, for instance. However, recruiting advertisements were very common in such sections.

an eagle holding an American crest, for example, an October 1861 advertisement in a Bangor newspaper for the 12th Maine Regiment outlined the rate of pay and the bounty payment that enlistees could expect.[23] Presumably, messages of this variety attempted to benefit from the intertextual sphere of patriotic and recruiting messages that men would encounter elsewhere.

Styling recruiting propaganda in the manner of contemporary advertising had the effect of portraying enlistment as a mundane, everyday financial transaction. Notices in this tradition very frequently emphasized the economic side of volunteerism: how much money soldiers would make in wages, the financial value of a given regiment's bounty, and what other benefits (such as high-quality uniforms or rations that the regiment would begin distributing immediately upon enlistment) a particular unit would provide. Though posters had slightly more room than newspaper advertisements and, therefore, more often included non-financial forms of recruiting messaging, economics proved central to the appeals laid out in both media. To some degree, the emphasis on personal economic gain for volunteers resulted from the fierce competition between units seeking to find enough men to meet their quotas.[24] Many of the other perceived benefits of enlisting—which for a given recruit might include defending the Union, enjoying the social status that accompanied military service, or contributing to the destruction of slavery—varied little depending on which unit one enlisted with; thus, economic appeals were arguably the most effective way for a unit to mark itself as unique and entice potential soldiers to choose it above other options.

Whatever the reasoning, the effect of this emphasis on economics ultimately trivialized the gravity of choosing to volunteer. By placing recruiting on the same plane as selling goods

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[23] "Gen. Butler's Division," *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier,* October 2, 1861.
[24] James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 492; James W. Geary, *We Need Men: The Union Draft in the Civil War* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1991), 65.

and hiring more ordinary types of employees, advertisements omitted information on the hardship, suffering, and risk of death and/or dismemberment that soldiers faced. Commenting on his observations of New York's culture of advertising in June of 1864, Ernest Duvergier de Hauranne noticed how this approach to recruiting avoided discussing the more serious elements of military life:

> There isn't enough room for the advertisements and they overflow into the street, on the edge of the sidewalks, between the gutter and the feet of the passers-by … Then I came upon this emphatic advertisement: "Books at Tremendous low prices;" then a majestic array of signs all alike: "We need ten thousand volunteers," with details of the bounties offered and the drinks promised, or else a big flag upon which the picture of a fantastic battle is displayed in brilliant colors. Everything is done in this way, even serious things, even the purchase of human blood![25]

Hauranne's comments came from his observations of his first full day in America. In addition to noting the advertisements, he observed the hustle and bustle of New York's business community, and even commented on P.T. Barnum's entertainment. Taken together, Hauranne seemed to interpret recruiting advertisements as but one component of America's rampant, individualistic commercialism.[26]

Like Hauranne's musings, the folk song "The Bill-Poster's Dream, or Cross Readings" reflected the view that recruiting constituted another component of the same discourse as tawdry advertising. The song's comedic value came from misreadings of bills pasted around New York City; according to the author, the bills "Being posted o'er each other" created phrases that "will

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[25] Ernest Duvergier de Hauranne, *A Frenchman in Lincoln's America; Huit Mois en Amérique: Letters et Notes de Voyage, 1864-1865,* vol. 1, ed. and trans. By Ralph H. Bowen (Chicago: R.R. Donnelley & Sons, 1974), 21-22.
[26] Hauranne, *Frenchman in Lincoln's America,* 16-25.

read strange."[27] The song treated recruiting notices as any other form of commercial (or political) poster:

> "Now on exhibition at the" "Rogue's gallery,"
> "A portrait of Gen. Fremont with his" "Black-horse Cavalry;"
> "Forrest" "the tight rope dancer at Niblo's to night,"
> "Will volunteer" "to eat a horse" "in the Great Prize Fight."
> "Read Napoleon's life of Caesar" "in this week's Police Gazette."
> Go to "The Winter-Garden" "cheap groceries to get."
> "American Bible Society" "at the Gaities to-night;"
> "Dr Chever and" "the Waiter girls" "will address the" "Drummont light."
>
> "Highest bounties paid for substitutes" "and gents' cast off clothes."
> "Lubin's extract of" "Turtle soup," "Bergamot and Rose;"
> "At auction sale this day, A. J Blecker, auctioneer,"
> "Forty barrels of Irish" "Lager" "and snyders" "whisky" "beer.["]
> "For Mayor" "the Hippopotamus" "regulation Union nomination."
> "Five hundred dollars reward for the" "President's Proclamation."
> "Sons of temperance this evening will" "try Woolf'shedam schnaps.["]
> "Purge the blood with Helmbold's extract" "and Military Maps."[28]

For the author of this song, notices calling for volunteers and substitutes were fundamentally similar documents to posters peddling remedies and promoting shows. Though not going as far as criticizing recruiting, the author presented recruiting advertisements as but another component of tawdry commercial culture.

The second major cultural precedent for Civil War recruiting propaganda, evangelical practices, most visibly impacted the nonprint forms that recruiting took. During the Second Great Awakening, Christian revivalists learned various techniques that proved highly successful for converting large audiences. Among the most characteristic developments of this movement was the widespread use of songs and speeches that addressed an audience in amusing and

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[27] "The Bill-Poster's Dream, or Cross Readings" (New York: H. De Marsan, n.d.), America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Sheets Collection, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/resource/amss.as101070.0. Collection hereafter cited as LCAS.
[28] "The Bill-Poster's Dream, or Cross Readings" (New York: H. De Marsan, n.d.), LCAS, https://www.loc.gov/resource/amss.as101070.0.

unpretentious terms. The songs written by evangelicals had fun and catchy tunes that entertained listeners. The speeches the evangelists gave employed colloquial language and humour. Together, these approaches made the message of Christ something that audiences easily understood and took delight in. Evangelists frequently deployed these ways of communicating at camp meetings—the mass gatherings where attendees revelled as meeting leaders disseminated the Christian gospel. Notably, camp meetings produced powerful emotional responses on the part of audience members.[29]

Contemporaries interpreted recruiting though language that referenced evangelism and revivalism. In the very same sentence as the aforementioned quote, Billings described commercial recruiting advertisements as "decoys which brought patronage to these fishers of men."[30] As described in Chapter One, the phrase "fishers of men" evoked notions about spreading Christianity and converting others. The theme of conversion also appeared in the Union League of Philadelphia's description of recruiting. The organization characterized a band sent to recruit slaves in rural Maryland as "musical missionaries."[31] Further, it described the "movement for recruiting and caring for negro soldiers" as "essentially philanthropic."[32] Philanthropy and moral reform were, in this period, closely tied to evangelical Christianity.[33] Indeed, the Union League interpreted recruiting as a Christian cause:

> Without the makers of its powder and shot, the gun would be a toy, and its man would lack the thrill of patriotic courage if there had been no brave souls in the rear-guard, whose steadfast toil in the in the days and nights of the anxious waiting-time was to inspire him with fiery loyalty and the confidence that comes

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[29] Hatch, *Democratization of American Christianity,* 50-56.
[30] Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee,* 36.
[31] Union League of Philadelphia Committee on History and Oliver H.G. Leigh, *Chronicle of the Union League of Philadelphia 1862 to 1902* (Philadelphia: Wm. F. Fell, 1902), 111.
[32] Union League of Philadelphia and Leigh, *Chronicle of the Union League,* 111.
[33] Kathleen D. McCarthy, *American Creed: Philanthropy and the Rise of Civil Society 1700-1865,* paperback ed. (2003; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 6-7.

> with the assurance of trusty friends who will be his human Providence in the day of need.[34]

Given the self-aggrandizing nature of this account (an institutionally self-authored history of the Union League of Philadelphia [ULP]), it appears the ULP sought to claim some of the glory otherwise reserved for veterans. Regardless, the passage clearly associates recruiting with religion. By referencing providence, the Union League defined its activities during the war as a moral, Christian form of guidance.

Harry S. Stout argues that members of the clergy played a key role in propagating American civil religion—an almost holy, spiritual view of the American nation-state—during the Civil War. He contends that, in both the Union and the Confederacy, ministers contributed to sanctioning their side's involvement in the war as a morally just endeavour. In so doing, they defined the war as a war for Christian as well as patriotic principles.[35] Given Stout's findings, it should not be surprising that recruiting initiatives benefitted from the view of military service as a Christian enterprise. During the war, some camp meetings held patriotic services that included prayers, songs, or sermons for the country. In rare cases, religious ceremonies involved a very explicit recruiting message.[36] Reverend H. Vincent recalled such a case in his 1870 history of a Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts camp meeting. In 1862, the state's governor, John A. Andrew, made a clear connection to evangelical religion as he attempted to recruit members of the audience:

> The place, the occasion, and the day, were very appropriately recognized as suggesting the taking of a Christian view … Such a view he took of the present state of the country, and the history of our liberties. He spoke of the cause of our

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[34] Union League of Philadelphia and Leigh, *Chronicle of the Union League,* 102-103.
[35] Harry S. Stout, *Upon the Altar of the Nation: A Moral History of the Civil War* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), xvi-xxii, 37-41.
[36] Sarah Jean Mount Elewononi, "Converting Rituals: The Worship of Nineteenth-Century Camp Meetings and the Growth of the Methodist Episcopal Church in New England" (PhD diss., Boston University, 2015), 353-358.

troubles, Slavery, which he believed it was God's design to destroy before giving us peace, and urged it as a religious duty to hasten to the rescue.

This quote shows that Governor Andrew appropriated the Christian discourse that prevailed in the camp meeting setting where he was speaking; essentially, his message conformed to the communications medium he used. The account continued: "These ministers of the gospel were here laboring to enlist volunteers for the Son of God. He was here the head enlisting officer for the war, and did not think it wrong for men to enlist in this cause on the Sabbath. He urged the duty, and hoped the Old Bay State would never have a man raised by conscription." This portion of the account makes clear that onlookers understood the connection between religious devotion and patriotic service. The audience's response to Andrew's exhortation for troops similarly reflected his speech's Christian associations as well as their own religious interpretation of his comments, as they "repeatedly greeted [Andrew's address] with true Methodistic shouts and 'Amens.'" Vincent noted that Governor Andrew's speech was "calculated to promote 'the truth,'" a phrasing that also connotes the gospel of Christ and indicates that Andrew carefully considered what ideas would have the strongest impact.[37] Ultimately, the example of Governor Andrew's recruiting efforts at the Wesleyan Grove camp meeting shows how closely religious and recruiting language could, at times, overlap during the Civil War.

While recruiting messages at camp meetings specifically were relatively uncommon, clergymen often acted as recruiters outside that setting. They frequently spoke at war meetings around the country. Connecticuter (and eventual Union soldier)

[37] Rev H. Vincent, A.M., *History of the Camp-Meeting and Grounds at Wesleyan Grove, Martha's Vineyard, For the Eleven Years Ending with the Meeting of 1869, With Glances at the Earlier Years* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1870), 95-96.

Charles H. Lynch noticed that in mid-1862 when "the war fever was running very high," the need for men to fight "was preached from the pulpits."[38] If incorporating nationalist and recruiting elements at religious events and in sermons was not uncommon, then it should not be surprising that events promoting wartime patriotism and volunteering appropriated elements of religious language and rituals. A number of the Union League of Philadelphia's pamphlets, for example, were adapted from writings, sermons, or other comments given by religious leaders—such as Reverend William B. Stewart's *The Nation's Sins and the Nation's Duty* and Reverend Charles S. Porter's *A Fast Implies a Duty.*[39]

War meetings were frequent occurrences, even in communities of relatively small size. In 1860, the village of Brockport in western New York was home to fewer than 2,300 residents, and fell within a larger town of just over 4,000 people. Despite the community's small size, the area around Brockport hosted over 30 war meetings from the outbreak of war until October 1864—averaging nearly one meeting per month. The author originally compiling this data, William G. Andrews, notes briefly that war meetings bore similarities to Christian revival meetings. Recruiting was not the only purpose of war meetings. Among their other functions, they boosted morale and, later in the war, solicited donations for community bounty funds in order to meet recruiting quotas. Their purpose to stir volunteerism, however, was obvious.[40]

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[38] Charles H. Lynch, *The Civil War Diary 1862-1865 of Charles H. Lynch, 18th Conn. Vol's* (Hartford, CT: Case, Lockwood & Brainard, 1915), 5.

[39] Union League of Philadelphia and Leigh, *Chronicle of the Union League,* 154-160. Both of the pamphlets were sermons given on the national fast day of April 30, 1863. Both emphasize the importance of Americans' duty to remain loyal to the government, and both feature portions that imply the importance of fighting/enlisting.

[40] William G. Andrews, *Civil War Brockport: A Canal Town and the Union Army* (Charleston: The History Press, 2013), 15, 40. The author's account is unclear as to whether the 31 war meetings in the Brockport area include war meetings held elsewhere in the town of Sweden, or in nearby communities of Clarkson and Hamlin (both of which had very similar populations to Brockport).

One key similarity between camp meetings and war meetings was the presence of powerful collective emotions. Camp meetings famously incited near-hysteria in their attendees. One reverend posited that to the unfamiliar eye, camp meetings "exhibited nothing … but a scene of confusion." The author offered examples of the audience's strong emotional responses amid or following the din of sermon and song, which included shouts of religious fervour, people crying and trembling, visible expressions of dread, and even audience members falling over.[41] In short, emotional enthusiasm in a communal environment was a key element of spreading the Christian gospel at camp meetings.

Perhaps unconsciously, but more likely intentionally, Civil War recruiters copied this element of Christian camp meetings. Through upbeat music and impassioned oratory, organizers of war meetings worked to produce strong emotional responses that would lead to enlistments. Billings illustrated this process: "Musicians and orators blew themselves red in the face with their windy efforts … Sometimes the patriotism of such a gathering would be wrought up so intensely by waving banners, martial and vocal music, and burning eloquence, that a town's quota would be filled in less than an hour." Billings described how once one man volunteered, the hero's reception he received often led to "a perfect stampede…to sign the enlistment roll, and a frenzy of enthusiasm [that] would take possession of the meeting." Billings's book features an illustration of a war meeting, in which a man, appearing more an entertainer than a solemn speaker, addressed his audience and presided over men signing the enlistment roll. Unsurprisingly, the strong emotions drummed up at war meetings often meant men made choices they later regretted once they calmed down. According to Billings, "The complete intoxication of such excitement, like intoxication from liquor, left some of its victims on the following day,

[41] Rev. A.P. Mead, *Manna in the Wilderness; or, The Grove and its Altar, Offerings, and Thrilling Incidents,* 3rd ed. (Philadelphia: Perkinpine & Higgins, 1860), 17-18.

especially if the fathers of families, with the sober second thought to wrestle with; but Pride, that tyrannical master, rarely let them turn back."[42] The exhilarating, befuddling revelry of the war meeting explains why Edward H. Rogers "had avoided the stimulating war meetings" so he could "insure a calm conclusion" on the question of whether or not to enlist.[43] Rogers recognized the power of war meetings to generate choices that men later wished they had not made.

Appeals through song were successful partly because audiences found them entertaining. Like the revivalists of the Second Great Awakening learned, recruiters knew that they would win more converts if they made enlistment part of an enjoyable experience. Audiences at war meetings listened to performers deliver songs, and sometimes joined in the singing themselves. According to George F. Root, "the recruiting officers around us, and an occasional war meeting kept up an excitement … war-songs contributed not a little to rouse the enthusiasm of the people and help the recruiting, sung as they were by our fine chorus."[44] One volunteer, Osborn H. Oldroyd, testified to the excitement caused by one recruiting song when he described how it "is being sung there [in the North], with good will, and volunteers are still pouring in."[45]

Like the songs sung at camp meetings, recruiting music involved catchy tunes and simple language to appeal broadly. Songwriters often set their tunes to already well-known pieces of popular music. R.B. Nicol offered only once piece of musical direction on his song sheet for "Mounted Riflemen"—that it was set to the same tune as the song "Twenty Years Ago," indicating his expectation that general audiences already knew (and presumably enjoyed) the original melody. Moreover, his lyrics used simple words and rhymes. Take, for instance, his first

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[42] Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee,* 38-41. The illustration described in this paragraph is included in Appendix B.
[43] Edward H. Rogers, *Reminiscences of Military Service in the Forty-Third Regiment, Massachusetts Infantry, During the Great Civil War, 1862-63* (Boston: Franklin Press: Rand, Avery, 1883), 14.
[44] George F. Root, *The Story of a Musical Life: An Autobiography of George F. Root* (Cincinnati: John Church, 1891), 144.
[45] Osborn H. Oldroyd, *A Soldier's Story of the Siege of Vicksburg, From the Diary of Osborn H. Oldroyd* (Springfield, IL: H.W. Rokker, 1885), 69.

verse: “Dear friends and fellow soldiers brave, who love the Union cause, / Who fain would crush rebellion and maintain our nation’s laws; / If you would serve your country, each true and valiant friend, / Come join with me this company of *Mounted Riflemen.*”[46] Nicol’s lyrics were not particularly complex, and would have been easy for audience members to consume (and even potentially remember).

Speeches, too, emulated the passionate rhetoric employed by preachers at camp meetings. As seen in the prior chapter, recruiting speeches could induce strong emotional responses and enthusiasm for recruitment. These speeches mirrored the zealous exhortations of camp meetings, where preaching and sermons drew listeners’ rapt attention. According to one reverend’s description of camp meetings, “It was not unusual for hundreds to fall helpless [often, literally] under the preaching of the word.”[47] Through colloquial and easily understood language, humour, and stories (as opposed to dry appeals to logic), the new wave of preachers emerging from the Second Great Awakening “honed the sermon into a razor-sharp recruiting device” for converting audience members.[48]

One speech by Daniel S. Dickinson, reproduced and disseminated by the Union League of Philadelphia in its pamphlet *A Savoury Dish for Loyal Men,* exemplified the how recruiters employed the three major rhetorical themes, borrowed from evangelical preaching, mentioned in the prior paragraph. Addressing an 1863 celebration of George Washington’s birthday hosted by the Republican Central Committee in New York, Dickinson gave an impassioned speech for the Union cause.[49] Dickinson used clear-cut, easily understood language with no room for

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[46] R.B. Nicol, “Mounted Riflemen” (Washington, D.C.: G.P. Hardwick, 1864), LCAS, https://www.loc.gov/resource/amss.cw10382a.
[47] Mead, *Manna in the Wilderness,* 18.
[48] Hatch, *Democratization of American Christianity,* 133, 136-139, 133 (quotation).
[49] Daniel S. Dickinson, *Speeches, Correspondence, etc., of the Late Daniel S. Dickinson, of New York,* vol. 2, ed. John R. Dickinson (New York: G.P. Putnam & Son, 1867), 223.

ambiguity; according to him, “There are two great antagonisms, a government and a rebellion, a government at Washington, a rebellion hatched in hell.” He used a short story as a metaphor to exemplify his point about politicians that sympathized with the South: “This reminds me of a transmigration philosopher who begged a man to desist from the chastisement of a dog, for, he said he could recognize in its howl the voice of a deceased friend.” Dickinson also made his audience laugh through his characterization of the Confederacy’s effort to portray its cause favourably: “you may baptize it [the defining question of the war] at the font of infidel politics as often as you choose, and when it comes out the same bastard of rebellion will be seen.”[50] In these ways, Dickinson’s speech (as published by the ULP) mirrored several of the rhetorical twists and styles commonly employed by preachers. And though Dickinson never overtly called for further enlistments, he called upon New Yorkers to prosecute “uncompromising war … until the rebellion is put down,” and that the Confederacy should be suppressed “by the whole power of the American people.”[51]

Like camp meetings, war meetings employed ritualized use of objects to communicate strong emotional messages. Organizers and attendees of war meetings often displayed large flags and banners. Moreover, speakers often produced artifacts that possessed powerful symbolic value. At an Indianapolis war meeting in February 1863, for instance, then-governor of Tennessee Andrew Johnson read from a manuscript letter written by Andrew Jackson on the Nullification Crisis. According to the *New-York Daily Tribune,* “The sight of that old letter, in the rigid hand-writing of Old Hickory, moved many of the old Jackson Democrats present to

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[50] *A Savoury Dish for Loyal Men* (Philadelphia: [Union League of Philadelphia], 1863), 12. In the final quote, the pamphlet indicates the audience’s reaction through an inserted comment (“[laugher and cheers]”) after the aforementioned passage.

[51] *Savoury Dish,* 12.

tears."[52] At another war meeting, taking place in New York shortly after the fall of Fort Sumter, the proceedings included ceremonially raising the flags that had previously flown above the fort—one of which "was placed on the bronze statue of Washington, the hand of the Father of his Country grasping the shattered flagstaff."[53] These relics of civil religion played an important role in conveying emotion through a quasi-spiritual discourse.

Similar dynamics characterized Confederate recruiting. In western South Carolina, secessionists raised Minute Man companies at public meetings, which took place in 1860 and were publicized through print and verbal communication. These meetings involved individual white males averring their willingness to volunteer in what Stephen A. West terms "a cultural grammar familiar in a society steeped in evangelical religion and revivalism."[54] The ritualized use of objects of patriotic devotion—specifically, flags—communicated community expectations that young men would enlist in the Confederate forces.[55] If similar religiously-rooted recruiting initiatives took place in the South, it should not be surprising that they also contributed to recruiting campaigns in the North.

Ultimately, by employing practices and persuasive methods from camp meetings at war meetings, recruiters discursively framed the war as a crusade, and military service as a holy cause. According to Stout, the ways that Civil War Americans described the war fused patriotism with the trappings and rhetoric of religion. Within this new civil religion, the American public interpreted the deaths of the nation's enlisted men as martyrdoms.[56] Recruiting propaganda's close relationship with religious speeches and events further solidified the connection between

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[52] "Gov. Johnson's Speech," *New-York Daily Tribune,* March 3, 1863.
[53] "Raising of the Fort Sumter Flag," *New York Herald,* April 21, 1861.
[54] Stephen A. West, *From Yeoman to Redneck in the South Carolina Upcountry, 1850-1915* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008), 77-78.
[55] Wayne K. Durrill, "Ritual, Community and War: Local Flag Presentation Committees and Disunity in the Early Confederacy," *Journal of Social History* 39, no. 4 (Summer 2006): 1108, 1110, 1112, 1117-1118.
[56] Stout, *Upon the Altar of the Nation,* xvii-xxii.

patriotism and religion that Stout identifies. Recruiters' tactics portrayed military service for the Union army as a spiritually righteous calling; accepting audiences would have come to view quelling the Confederacy as a Christian mission.

War meetings and pro-enlistment literature also borrowed stylistically from the approaches to winning and mobilizing voters that politicians and their surrogates utilized throughout the prewar years. The proceedings of large war meetings often included organizers reading resolutions, and seeking their ratification from audiences. They also frequently appointed prominent citizens to serve as presidents, vice presidents, and secretaries of the meeting. At one particularly large war meeting in New York in late 1863, the city's mayor, George Opdyke, served as the meeting's president; shortly after his nomination, other individuals read lists of the meeting's vice presidents (over 240 of them) and secretaries (more than 30). Another organizer then read aloud a series of resolutions to the audience, some of which pertained to recruiting and a recent call for more soldiers.[57] Organizers of war meetings, through their usage of positions and resolutions similar to those used at political rallies, framed their recruitment efforts in a familiar style.

Aside from partisan electioneering, recruiting borrowed stylistically from two other categories of political involvement. Firstly, recruiting for the Union army had precedent in the American system of local militias. Like militias, war meetings in the Civil War were rooted in local, community identities, and connected them to a broader region and to the nation.[58] Some local recruiting committees and war meetings also emulated the hierarchical structure of many voluntary associations, in that prominent and prosperous members of the community might serve

[57] "The Great War Meeting," *New-York Daily Tribune,* December 4, 1863.
[58] Harry S. Laver, "Rethinking the Social Role of the Militia: Community-Building in Antebellum Kentucky," *The Journal of Southern History* 68, no. 4 (November 2002): 780-789.

in executive roles.[59] Well-respected members of the upper and middle classes sometimes spoke at recruiting events. Thus, while partisan structures were the most obvious political antecedent of recruiting, advocates for enlistment applied elements of other community institutions to their cause.

Like political rallies, events organized by voluntary associations, and militia muster days, war meetings involved entertaining processions, activities, and events. Whether through processions of men and women wearing finery, parades, and songs, political events featured amusements that sidestepped the substantive political issues voters were theoretically weighing in upon by casting their ballot. Political rallies often featured powerful symbols of patriotism, such as liberty poles and American flags.[60] War meetings mimicked this strategy. The *New York Herald,* for example, describes the presence of numerous flags and banners at the New York war meeting only a few days after the fall of Fort Sumter, including the flags that had flown over the fort itself.[61]

In a persuasive tactic borrowed from political traditions, recruiters drew upon social expectations about gender norms to influence the behaviour and decisions of men. Michael D. Pierson describes how an 1856 Republican rally in Beloit, Wisconsin utilized gender norms to secure supporters in the upcoming election. By selecting single, attractive young women (specifically, it seems, on the basis of their beauty and sexual availability) to take part in a

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[59] Stuart M. Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 195-198, 209-212.
[60] Glenn C. Altschuler and Stuart M. Blumin, *Rude Republic: Americans and Their Politics in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 60-63; Blumin, *Emergence of the Middle Class,* 202-203; Laver, "Rethinking the Social Role of the Militia," 786-788.
[61] "The Reception of Major Anderson," *New York Herald,* April 21, 1861; "Raising of the Fort Sumter Flag," *New York Herald,* April 21, 1861; "Scenes Around the Stands," *New York Herald,* April 21, 1861.

procession during the rally, the event communicated that men should vote Republican if they hoped to find a match.[62]

Women participated no less visibly at war meetings. According to Billings, they typically featured "a patriotic maiden lady … who 'would go in a minute if she was a man.'"[63] An 1863 war meeting in the small community of Clark's Hill, Indiana, exemplified this trend:

> nobody had enlisted, when three ladies came forward and put down their names. If the young men of the feather-bed brigade would not go, the country must be saved in some manner, and they were ready to go. They could at least take charge of a hospital, and send that many soldiers to the front. The example was contagious, and before the meeting closed four recruits were mustered in.[64]

The trope of women declaring their willingness to fight if they could challenged potential recruits' masculinity, goading them into service. Similarly, recruiters at war meetings called upon women to reject a potential romantic partner if he shirked his patriotic duty. A message from Andrew H. Foote presented at a New York war meeting called upon the women of the city to "decline and spurn the attentions of all young men who remain at home when they might be in the fight."[65] Thus, war recruiters used methods of community pressure already familiar from efforts to win voters.

The speeches given in favour of recruiting also borrowed from contemporary political discourse. Congressmen, mayors, judges, and governors gave many of the recruiting and patriotic speeches at war meetings. Philadelphia's war meeting of July 26, 1862 included speeches from the mayor, a congressman from Pennsylvania, and a former governor of

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[62] Michael D. Pierson, *Free Hearts and Free Homes: Gender and American Antislavery Politics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 142-144.
[63] Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee,* 38.
[64] "Ladies Enlisting," *Indiana State Sentinel* (Indianapolis, IN), December 21, 1863.
[65] "Letter from Commodore Foote," *New York Herald,* July 16, 1862. Not unique to the North, Confederates also used gender to encourage enlistment. See Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 17-18.

Pennsylvania.[66] A large audience gathered two days before in Pittsburgh listened to the present and a former governor of Pennsylvania, present and former judges (one of whom may have been a state representative at the time), and a congressman.[67] Even in the small community of McCutchenville, Ohio, their representative in the state House of Representatives served as one of the three speakers at their August 1862 war meeting.[68] In short, politicians played an important part in the public gatherings and events that sought to bolster enlistment.

Generally, recruiters at war meetings tried to appeal to members of both major political parties. The docket of speakers at a given meeting often included both Republicans and War Democrats—probably intentionally, to communicate a more bipartisan form of patriotism. At an August 1861 war meeting in Manchester (presumably in New Hampshire), both the present Republican governor and a former Democratic state legislator spoke.[69] The list of speakers at New York's war meeting of December 3, 1863 included the city's Republican mayor George Opdyke and the fervently abolitionist Republican William D. Kelley, but also a Democratic member of the state assembly, Gilbert Dean, Democrat judge Charles P. Daly, and a Democratic general and former congressman for the party (Daniel Sickles).[70] And although the speakers at a given war meeting were sometimes drawn from one particular political party, they did not typically present party loyalty as a reason for men to enlist. In fact, speakers at war meetings

[66] "Enthusiastic War Meeting in Philadelphia," *New York Herald,* July 27, 1862. Another of the speakers, Daniel Dougherty, was not an elected politician himself, but he was noted for his involvement with political campaigns and nominations. A colonel also gave a speech.
[67] "War Meeting at Pittsburg," *New York Herald,* July 27, 1862. Note that the former governor mentioned in this account is probably William F. Johnston, but as he is only identified by his surname, could be a different former governor.
[68] "War Meeting at McCutchensville," *Wyandot Pioneer* (Upper Sandusky, OH), August 15, 1862; Leggett, Conaway & Co., *The History of Wyandot County, Ohio* (Chicago: Leggett, Conaway, 1884), 340. *The History of Wyandot County, Ohio* places this individual as their representative.
[69] "War Meeting in Manchester," *New-Hampshire Statesman* (Concord, NH), August 10, 1861. The former Democratic state legislature ran for the state governorship as a Democrat in 1863, though he became a Republican in 1865.
[70] "The Great War Meeting," *New-York Daily Tribune,* December 4, 1863.

often explicitly repudiated partisanship. One speaker at a September 1861 war meeting in Boston declared that the North could only succeed if its citizens put aside partisan resentments in favour of patriotism, going so far as to state that "He who goes about crying for partisan issues now must have one of those narrow souls you could put into a nut shell and which would then creep out at a maggot hole."[71] Prominent Democrat John Van Buren, speaking at a New York meeting in March 1863, reiterated his argument from the prior October "that party organizations had ceased to be of any practical importance, and that the sole inquiry was, 'How should we best carry on the war?'"[72] This theme will be addressed in greater detail in Chapter Three, but it is enough to say for now that recruiters did not want to artificially limit their potential pool of recruits by alienating political opponents.

Rare reports of war meeting speakers attempting to make partisan gains serve to demonstrate their abnormality. In one such example from mid-1862 Milwaukee, a speaker's attempts to explain how Democrats were the ones carrying out a war that was caused by Republicans elicited displeased responses from both the audience and the press. "The man who, with the plea of laboring for recruits and for the country, can deliberately face an audience now and insult them with his party gabble, deserves to lose the respect of all who know him," commented the *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel.*[73] In a similar instance, residents of Richmond, Indiana criticized Republican Solomon Meredith in early 1864 for calling a meeting ostensibly for recruiting purposes, but instead announcing and promoting his candidacy for Congress. The *Richmond Palladium* defended Meredith by arguing his political rival, George Julian, had delivered a speech at a war meeting two years prior where he critiqued the administration rather

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[71] "Address of Hon. B. F. Thomas," *Boston Daily Advertiser,* September 10, 1861.
[72] "John Van Buren's Speech," *New York Herald,* March 7, 1863.
[73] *Milwaukee Daily Sentinel,* August 29, 1862.

than emphasizing volunteering. Julian's supporters had argued that Julian had done nothing wrong in electioneering at the meeting; the *Palladium* contended that Julian's sin was not electioneering, but rather that his critiques of the Republican administration were intended to discourage enlistment.[74] These examples suggest that excessively partisan rhetoric was typically an aberration in recruiting, as it was likely to discourage and frustrate possible volunteers from the other party. Observers generally thought that shamelessly using the platform of recruiter for partisan purposes was considered contrary to patriotic spirit and the needs of the hour at hand.

Additionally, most war meetings were probably attended by a mix of Republicans and Democrats. They were typically advertised and described as events for the community at large, rather than simply the community's Republican or Democratic populations. A telling quote from the *Chicago Daily Tribune* indicates that people of varying partisan backgrounds attended meetings together. In December of 1861, the newspaper lamented that "At the next war meeting, no matter where held, the question of confiscation of the slaves of rebels will be sure to come up, and some man will be found who will go over the usual balderdash about 'constitutional rights,' the 'border states,' &c., &c., &c., in the endeavor to befog and obfusticate this plain matter." This quotation is revealing because it suggests that people who attended the meetings did not always agree on the conduct of the war, but held varying political positions. Moreover, the *Tribune*'s account indicates that meetings attended by individuals with differing partisan backgrounds were not isolated to a particular region, but occurred "no matter where [meetings were] held."[75] While a given community might be disproportionately composed of either Republicans or Democrats, war meetings did not usually clearly identify with a particular party. This probably further discouraged recruiters from giving strongly partisan speeches, as many in

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[74] "Circumstances Alter Cases," *Richmond Palladium* (Richmond, IN), March 22, 1864.
[75] "Who Will Give?—Pass Around the Paper," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* December 7, 1861.

the audience were not receptive to a message that appealed to party loyalty or vilified one's political adversaries.

Speeches made by politicians at war meetings were often reproduced as pamphlets by Union leagues and other groups, or as newspaper articles by the nation's eager and patriotic editors. The previously mentioned pamphlet *A Savoury Dish for Loyal Men,* for instance, contained seven discrete sections with excerpts written by at least six different authors. Of these, one was written by a Democratic general (William Rosecrans), one by the Republican governor of Delaware, one by "an [unnamed] old Democrat," one by the Democratic attorney general of New York (Daniel S. Dickinson), one by a soldier on behalf of his unit, and two by anonymous authors.[76] Thus, of the seven sections, at least two (but possibly as many as five) sections were taken from the writings or speeches of politicians. Other pamphlets reproduced only a single speech by a single politician. Similarly, newspapers sometimes either summarized or quoted verbatim the speeches given at war meetings, allowing them to reach an even wider audience beyond a speaker's immediate vicinity. Such was the case with a "mass war meeting to encourage recruiting" that took place in New York on August 27, 1862.[77] The *New York Herald'*s account of the rally included a copy of the speech given by Moses F. Odell, a US congressman and member of Congress's Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War.[78] The men who sat on committees for recruiting organizations and the metropolitan Union leagues' publication committees were often prominent merchants, lawyers, bankers, intellectuals, or other elites. They often held ties to government or partisan structures, and the verbose publications of

[76] *Savoury Dish,* 3-16, 8 (quotation). This analysis includes the message on the inside back cover with no page number.
[77] "Great War Meeting at New York," *Evening Star* (Washington, DC), August 28, 1862.
[78] "Speech of Hon. Moses F. Odell," *New York Herald,* August 28, 1862.

the Union Leagues reflected their desire to stimulate (what they considered) a more deeply-felt patriotism.[79]

The participation of politicians in recruiting efforts, and the stylistic elements of war meetings that borrowed from conventional political rallies, were significant for a number of reasons. Together, they implied that recruitment was an accepted, even conventional, part of the political system rather than an aberration. By their presence, political figures and rituals endorsed recruiting procedure. Also, the involvement of representatives of the state, and stylistic borrowings from the political sphere in which many Americans interacted with the state, invited voices of authority to endorse soldiering as a patriotic act. To the public, government leaders were strong—perhaps the strongest—arbiters of what acts demonstrated one's love of country, rendering their support for enlistment particularly effective. Finally, like religious leaders, political leaders were often well-respected and admired members of their communities; their endorsement of enlistment was probably meaningful to many men considering joining up.

Whether a given piece of recruiting propaganda was more rooted in political, religious, or commercial discourses, each one benefitted from the intertextual nature of patriotic messages. Some individual pamphlets, posters, songs, or newspaper notices did not explicitly link enlistment to a motivation for doing so. Indeed, many documents would either explain the importance of defending the Union or would exhort men to join the army, but would not necessarily discuss both themes and make the connection between them. But recruiters disseminating one of these messages must have certainly been aware that the companion message was circulating, and that their ultimate purpose would be carried further by a different piece of media. The recruiting advertisements mentioned at the beginning of this chapter that

[79] Melinda Lawson, *Patriot Fires: Forging a New American Nationalism in the Civil War North* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 98-128.

appeared on the second page of the August 8, 1862 *Cleveland Morning Leader*, for example, benefitted from summaries of the speeches given at a Washington war meeting on the paper's first page.[80] In some cases, these messages were constrained by their medium of choice. Recruiters did not have unlimited space for their messages, whether written or spoken; as a result, they often focused what they had to say around what seemed to fit the conventions of that medium.

Recruiting efforts also benefitted from social pressure. The phenomenon of the war meeting, derived partly from religious and partly from political gatherings, drew particularly strongly on interpersonal presence to convey the community expectation that young men would join the army. One recruiting poster for the New York communities of Hempstead and North Hempstead, for example, called upon men to "Show your Countrymen that you choose Honor and Glory before humiliation and shame" by attending an upcoming war meeting—and presumably, enlisting at it.[81] By placing them in a setting where they physically faced their friends, neighbours, and prominent community members, young men must have struggled at these meetings to make a rational, even-handed choice that considered the potential downsides of military life.

The diffuse, community-oriented framework of voluntary recruitment meant that a great number and variety of citizens somehow involved themselves in the production or distribution of recruiting media. Job printers, newspaper editors, preachers, military officers, politicians, prominent professionals, and of course, military officers all contributed. It should be noted that

[80] *Cleveland Morning Leader,* August 8, 1862.
[81] *To Arms!* (New York: Baker & Godwin, [1862]), item ac03165s, Civil War Treasures Collection: Civil War Posters, 1861-1865, New-York Historical Society, http://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16694coll47. Collection hereafter cited as CWP.

the lineages of recruiting propaganda in commercial, evangelical, and political discourses sometimes overlapped.

Peter Carpenter Baker personifies how these lineages intermingled with one another at times. Baker was a member of Baker & Godwin, a printing house in New York where he took primary responsibility for the house's finances and overall management.[82] Baker & Godwin printed a large quantity of recruiting posters distributed around New York, Brooklyn, and their surrounding areas.[83] Baker possessed connections to all three of the major precedents for recruiting propaganda identified in this chapter. Obviously, based on his career, Baker worked in job printing. One account notes that Baker, Godwin & Co. (Baker & Godwin before a third partner left in the mid-1850s) "obtained much [work] from country merchants"—most probably including advertising. Baker involved himself with party politics; his printing house was located in the *New York Tribune*'s building for a time, and filled many print contracts for Whig organizations. Additionally, years later, Baker contributed to having a monument to Horace Greeley erected in New York shortly after Greeley's death.[84] Beyond party allegiance, however, Baker & Godwin found themselves involved with the production of campaign material for presidential elections preceding the war—even producing material for competing candidates. Some of the iconography on these campaign advertisements was nearly identical to iconography used on some of their later recruiting posters.[85] Finally, Baker associated himself with

[82] W.W. Pasko, ed., "Peter Carpenter Baker," *Old New York: A Journal Relating to the History and Antiquities of New York City* 2, no. 5 (December 1890): 330.
[83] See, for example, *McClellan Infantry* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03109s, CWP; *Our Country Calls; Rally to its Support!* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03139s, CWP.
[84] Pasko, ed., "Peter Carpenter Baker," 330, 334-335, 330 (quotation).
[85] The Library of Congress online collections have several examples of Baker & Godwin proofs for woodcut banners or posters for the 1856 presidential campaigns of Frémont, Fillmore, and Buchanan and the 1860 Lincoln campaign. Two proofs cited in this note, respectively for the Lincoln and Fillmore campaigns, use identical iconography to some of their recruiting posters (see example of item ac03175s), but with a different portrait in the centre (George Washington instead of Lincoln or Fillmore). *Abraham Lincoln, Republican Candidate for President of the United States* (New York: Baker & Godwin, 1860), Popular Graphic Arts Collection, Prints and Photographs

philanthropic causes, both of the Christian and civil religious varieties. He involved himself with the temperance movement (often delivering speeches on the subject), the Typographical Society and its charitable work, and the promotion of the memory of the American Revolution. All of these factors likely contributed to Baker's "active part in sustaining the Government" during the Civil War, which included membership in the Union League Club in addition to his firm's production of recruiting posters.[86] Through his background in Christian causes, political involvement, and commercial printing, Baker exemplifies how the various antecedents for recruiting propaganda during the Civil War were not always easily separated categories.

The varied backgrounds of the parties involved, and the diversity of discourses from which their content originated, created a recruiting system that conveyed what may have been interpreted as mixed messages. Russell L. Johnson describes the contradictory messages conveyed in Dubuque, Iowa's *Dubuque Daily Herald.* Though the newspaper ran advertisements seeking to fill the ranks of local regiments, the paper's editor, Dennis A. Mahony, received criticism from locals (officials even jailed him for three months in 1862) for authoring editorials that discouraged potential recruits from enlisting.[87] Without a single bureau directing recruiting propaganda, messages put forward within a particular medium could contain conflicting statements of this variety.

Division, Library of Congress, LC-DIG-ppmsca-19254, https://www.loc.gov/item/2003689297/; *Millard Fillmore, American Candidate for President of the United States* (New York: Baker & Godwin, 1856), Popular Graphic Arts Collection, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, LC-DIG-pga-03523, https://www.loc.gov/item/2003689273/; *Spinola's Empire Brigade* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03175s, CWP. Images of items LC-DIG-ppmsca-19254, LC-DIG-pga-03523, and ac03175s are all included in Appendix A.

[86] Pasko, ed., "Peter Carpenter Baker," 328-335, 335 (quotation).

[87] Russell L. Johnson, "'Volunteer While You May': Manpower Mobilization in Dubuque, Iowa," in *Union Soldiers and the Northern Home Front: Wartime Experiences, Postwar Adjustments,* eds. Paul A. Cimbala and Randall M. Miller (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002), 36-39, 43-44.

Also crucially, the authors of many recruiting pamphlets, posters, and newspaper notices did not make their identities known. David Henkin argues that the conventional anonymity of posters, broadsides, and handbills in the early nineteenth century allowed their messages to seem more civic-minded than they would if they announced their authorship.[88] By imitating that element of commercial advertising, recruiting propaganda seemed to convey a message of public good rather than one that served the needs of the government or a local recruiting committee. Most probably, recruiters did not deliberately exploit anonymity to advance their purpose; instead, they probably just followed the conventions of contemporary advertising culture. In at least one case, however, recruiters specifically chose anonymity. At the March 12, 1863 meeting of the Union League of Philadelphia's Publication Committee, members decided for a certain pamphlet "that hereafter all additional copies be printed without the Stamp & Name of the Union League on them." The committee also decided in the same motion "that the objectionable words 'Regarding the Copperheads' be omitted," showing that the ULP was seeking to extend the appeal of their pamphlets to Democrats, and they believed excluding their organization's name from their pamphlets would help them to achieve that goal. [89] Indeed, many of their pamphlets published from April 1863 onward lack any explicit reference to the ULP—often replacing its name with the phrase "PRINTED FOR GRATUITOUS DISTRIBUTION."[90]

The cultural antecedents of Civil War recruiting propaganda in evangelism, commercial advertising, and electoral party politics reveal that recruiters rarely innovated in the methods they

[88] David M. Henkin, *City Reading: Written Words and Public Spaces in Antebellum New York* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 88-89.
[89] Minutes, March 12, 1863, Union League of Philadelphia Publication Committee, "Union League of Philadelphia Publication Committee Meeting Minutes, 1863 February 26-1876 January 25," accessed April 10, 2018 via Penn State University Libraries: Digital Collections, https://collection1.libraries.psu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/ulp/id/109/rec/1; Later that month, the Publication Committee was restructured as the Board of Publication of the Union League of Philadelphia; thus, the Publication Committee and the Board of Publication were the same entity, but at different times.
[90] See, for example, *Savoury Dish.*

used in their campaigns. Whether more verbose and flowery or terse and economical in style, Civil War recruiters deployed propaganda through familiar forms. The chosen media, their origins, and their corresponding styles of use shaped reception of those media in three key ways. Firstly, recruiters' choice to apply familiar rhetorical and literary forms to their trade made volunteering seem more familiar and ordinary. In so doing, they could communicate recruitment in a way that made it seem more positive, and less of a break with existing cultural norms and practices. Melinda Lawson argues that a new form of patriotism that emerged during the Civil War was "rooted in existing religious, political, and cultural values and identities" rather than "the subjective national idea."[91] The same contention stands true for recruiting propaganda; recruiting efforts borrowed from persuasive elements that already existed in American culture. This continuity with antebellum communications culture constitutes a significant difference from the more jarring propaganda campaigns of twentieth century wars, and perhaps explains why contemporaries did not perceive Civil War recruitment as sinister.

Secondly, the ways recruiting media reached their audiences served to downplay the grave and dangerous aspects of military service. Media emulating advertisements emphasized the idea that enlisting was an economic transaction much like other forms of employment; media borrowing from religious discourse emphasized righteousness and the positive emotions associated with serving such a righteous cause; propaganda in the style of political rallies and writings made more evident the relationship between patriotism and military service. Though distinct in their outcome, these emphases distracted potential soldiers from the possibility of their own deaths, the moral quandary that killing others represented, or even the simple, everyday privations that were normal components of army life. Rather than refuting these drawbacks or

[91] Lawson, *Patriot Fires,* 11.

making a case for how the benefits outweighed them, the styles of media that recruiters used helped them to sidestep those issues entirely.

Thirdly, recruiters' uses of media ultimately impacted the messages conveyed through that specific document. Broadly speaking, recruiting messages were conveyed through either short-form or long-form communications media. Posters and newspaper advertisements usually constituted short-form messages. With these methods of communication, messages were terse and necessarily had to grab a reader or listener's attention quickly. For recruiters, this meant that appeals to enlist needed to be made rapidly and with only cursory explanation for why doing so was a good choice. These brief appeals typically emphasized the economics of enlistment. Conversely, pamphlets, speeches (themselves often relayed through newspapers), and songs typically allowed recruiters to craft a lengthier argument. This enabled them to craft drawn-out explanations for the necessity of military service, with space for rhetorical flourishes that appealed to both reason and emotion.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, American moralists from the middle class (whose culture prevailed over their society) asserted the value of virtuous conduct for its own sake, rather than the economic benefits that resulted from a good reputation. From mid-century onward, however, their culture increasingly emphasized the importance of wealth acquisition and ostentatious displays of affluence.[92] Anne C. Rose posits that middle-class Americans experienced a quandary about their economic roles during the Victorian era. Simultaneously, they desired great economic gain while holding onto a traditional view that an individual's work should benefit the wider community. The Civil War presented an opportunity to simultaneously

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[92] Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 46-47, 186-187, 197.

serve a public good while achieving personal advancement in status and/or wealth.[93] In an example of a similar activity to recruiting, wartime campaigns to sell war bonds asserted that subscribers could aid the nation while turning a profit; Lawson contends that Jay Cooke's war bond drives "taught Americans that patriotism was less about civic duty than it was about opportunity."[94] Applying these arguments to the two contrasting examples from the *Cleveland Morning Leader* described at the beginning of this chapter, they no longer appear as parallel yet distinct discourses. Rather, they support both Rose's and Lawson's contentions that many Americans interpreted serving the public good and securing economic gain as harmonious activities during the Civil War. Though the specific medium of an individual recruiting message shaped the specific message conveyed, the long-form and short-form arguments that recruiters crafted for enlistment did not constitute separate discourses. Rather, they pulled on opposite ends of the same discursive strand. Taken as a whole, the cultural antecedents of the media used to promote recruiting conveyed that enlistees could serve a higher cause while also profiting personally.

The cultural origins of recruiting propaganda in religious, commercial, and political discourses also offer findings about the nature of propaganda and communicative projections of power. Civil War recruiting propaganda demonstrates the importance of historical context to the ways propaganda manifests. As previously discussed, recruiting propaganda for the Union army drew upon media and traditions distinctly rooted in nineteenth century American culture—not some forward-looking body of media that anticipated the iconic and centralized recruiting propaganda campaigns of the twentieth century. The example of Civil War recruitment reveals

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[93] Anne C. Rose, *Victorian America and the Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 70-78, 97-103.
[94] Lawson, *Patriot Fires,* 40-64, 41 (quotation).

that propaganda does not conform to a single, uniform style throughout history, but looks very different depending on the cultural context in which it is created.

Additionally, the heritage of recruiting propaganda underscores the existing presence of powerful, even somewhat propagandistic communication styles in antebellum America. Given the traditional association of the antebellum era's religious, economic, and political changes with an expansion of democratic rights and participation for white men, one might expect to find only limited projections of power through communication.[95] Daniel Walker Howe argues that the market economy granted "a wide variety of people … more control over their own lives"; similarly, Nathan O. Hatch contends that antebellum Christianity became decidedly democratic in character.[96] Yet as this chapter has noted, political, commercial, and religious traditions that seemed to champion popular engagement involved exercises of communicative power. In some regards, this concurs with Reeve Huston's recent argument about Jacksonian era political participation. Contrary to the conventional interpretation of the antebellum era, Huston contends that Jacksonian politics limited, rather than facilitated and served as the culmination of, popular forms of political expression and participation.[97] Like Huston's argument, this chapter's analysis of communicative practices reveals that projections of power proved crucial to even cultural forms that appear to follow in the republican tradition.

As will be seen in the next chapter, recruiters knew what types of arguments and appeals would resonate with the public. Advertisers, politicians, and preachers already had extensive experience with crafting persuasive media—and following the outbreak of war, they crafted

[95] Howe, *What Hath God Wrought,* constituting a synthesis of much of this literature up to his book's publication in 2007, exemplifies this traditional association. See, in particular, pages 489-492, 497-498.
[96] Daniel Walker Howe, "Charles Sellers, the Market Revolution, and the Shaping of Identity in Whig-Jacksonian America," in *God and Mammon: Protestants, Money, and the Market, 1790-1860,* ed. Mark A. Noll (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 59-60; Hatch, *Democratization of American Christianity,* 5-16.
[97] Huston, "Rethinking 1828," 13-22.

justifications for enlistment that Northern men found compelling. The messages they delivered bore common themes that proved convincing to many potential recruits around the country. Though the next chapter will break these messages into their component parts, readers should keep in mind how the intertextuality of the media used to promote enlistment simultaneously conveyed personal advancement and patriotic service.

Chapter Three: "Look to Your Own Interests While Devoting Your Services to Your Country": The Messages of Northern Recruitment

In the August 26, 1862 issue of the *New York Herald,* the fourth battery of the New York State Volunteers' artillery ran an advertisement calling for volunteers. The notice announced "ATTENTION, RECRUITS!—LOOK TO YOUR OWN INterests [sic] while devoting your services to your country." It proceeded to list the economic inducements those who joined the unit could expect to receive. Not only would volunteers earn themselves "Good pay, [and] good rations," but they could also expect "good officers" who would not subject them to digging trenches, drilling with muskets, or carrying heavy loads.[1]

This advertisement exemplifies some of the major themes that commonly appeared in recruiting propaganda for the Union forces. In one portion of its message, the notice mentioned the importance of serving one's country. But in another, the recruiters emphasized the material rewards and creature comforts that soldiers in this specific artillery battery (as opposed to other military units) could expect.

This chapter focuses on the messages conveyed through mass media that sought to promote volunteering for the United States military. I argue that the appeals for enlistment made by recruiters and their surrogates generally adhered to three major styles. Firstly, they played upon men's senses of patriotism, often arguing they had a duty to the nation. Secondly, they made some sort of claim rooted in the identities (and, as a result, the reputations and social statuses) of potential soldiers. Thirdly, they made arguments foregrounding the economic benefits, opportunities for personal advancement, or other practical considerations of enlisting,

[1] "Attention, Recruits!" *New York Herald,* August 26, 1862. The quote spans two lines, which explains the strange capitalization.

usually in reference to a specific unit. Taken together, these themes asserted that men should look out for themselves while performing their socially expected service.

At the same time, the diversity of the appeals made by recruiters demonstrates that their purpose—finding troops—was a greater overriding concern than the reasons for doing so, thereby revealing their outcome-driven, propagandistic nature. According to this thesis, propaganda involves communication for the purpose of affecting the audience's cognitions and/or behaviours; the actual content of that communication is the means to an end. With numerous specific arguments falling within the bounds of one or more of the previously described styles of recruiting messages, there was no clear message for why one should enlist. But there was a clear purpose—gathering soldiers. With a singular goal supported by a multiplicity of reasons for why men should aid in that goal, recruiters' messages reveal that securing enlistments was, to them, more important than the motivations for why the men volunteered.

This thesis defines identities as the elements of an individual's place in society that are based on their membership within a culturally-constructed group. Because one's identity partly defines one's place in society, efforts to appeal to potential volunteers' identities also (either explicitly or implicitly) made claims upon men's socially-constructed reputations and statuses. In a similar vein, patriotic appeals to enlist also played upon obligations to the collective. As Paul Quigley notes in his study of Civil War era Southern nationalism, however, "the corollary political claim of sovereignty is what differentiates modern nationalism from other forms of group identity." Alongside cultural markers of collective identity, nationalism includes ideas about duties incumbent upon members of its community.[2] Recruiters foregrounded the

[2] Paul Quigley, *Shifting Grounds: Nationalism and the American South, 1848-1865* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 11-12.

relationship between nationality and obligations to the nation in their speeches and writings, rendering the two themes very closely connected.

It is important to note that the three broad categories of recruiting messages were not mutually exclusive. A recruiter appealing to the patriotism of potential volunteers, for instance, also drew upon men's identities as citizens (or, at least, inhabitants) of the United States. Additionally, specific arguments sometimes combined more than one of these broad categories. In one notable example, calls for men to avoid the draft by volunteering brought to mind concerns about both how conscription would simultaneously reveal the inadequacy of one's patriotism, hurt one's social status, and cause one to miss out on the financial opportunity of earning bounties.

Recruiters commonly employed different arguments for enlistment within a given poster, speech, newspaper notice, or song. At its most extreme, the juxtaposition between these arguments can appear jarringly bizarre or even tawdry to the present-day reader. The *Bangor Whig and Courier,* for instance, ran a recruiting advertisement that on one line bellowed "Rally Men—Serve your Country!" and the very next instructed readers to "SECURE THE LIBERAL BOUNTY by Enlisting before the Draft comes."[3] These mixed messages in recruiting documents are particularly revealing about the discourse of recruitment. They show that, on the whole, recruiters portrayed soldiering as a way to serve both desires for personal profit/advancement and service to the collective.

Additionally, all the various appeals made by recruiters blended together in an intertextual discourse of recruitment—a large collection of meanings derived from a multiplicity of sources, coming together to convey further meanings beyond those explicitly stated. Although

[3] "Volunteers Wanted," *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier,* December 9, 1862.

each individual notice or speech might only embody a small number of the full assortment of appeals, individuals surely would not have encountered a single poster, newspaper advertisement, speech, or song in isolation. As described in previous chapters, these messages were difficult to avoid. Further evidence for the intertextual discourse of recruitment is found in advertisements that notified readers a given unit was recruiting, but otherwise gave no argument for why they should do so. One such example appeared in the August 17, 1861 publication of the *New-Hampshire Statesman.* The notice featured a picture of eagle carrying the American flag, but its text simply explained that a given unit had begun recruiting.[4] Without intertextuality, readers would have no context from which to derive meaning from the eagle or the flag. And without other messages conveying the value or importance of enlisting, readers would have had no reason to act on the advertisement's recruiting message. Thus, messages promoting volunteering had a cumulative effect in society—even enabling the existence of some advertisements that gave no motivation for enlisting.

Delineating which documents did and did not convey recruiting messages can be difficult. To err on the side of caution, this chapter focuses on documents with explicit recruiting messages, or documents where contextualizing information situates them as recruiting efforts—such as speeches given at war meetings, or songs produced by known recruiting organizations. It should be noted, however, that there are almost certainly other messages that were interpreted as recruiting appeals at the time. Arguments for enlistment sit within broader discourses of their ancillary themes. For instance, public figures frequently commented on patriotism and citizenship, without ever explicitly suggesting that men should enlist.

[4] "New-Hampshire Volunteers!" *New-Hampshire Statesman* (Concord, NH), August 17, 1861.

Evidence reveals that, at least in some cases, the authors, speakers, and songwriters expressing these more abstract arguments intended them to carry recruiting messages. Philadelphia's Supervisory Committee for Recruiting Colored Regiments, for example, published songs about African-American soldiers and/or freed slaves that never explicitly called listeners to volunteer.[5] Given the committee's purpose, however, and given that they published at least one other song with a clearer recruiting message, it is hard to imagine that the purpose of their songs was anything but to encourage enlistment by African-Americans.[6] Other publications are more difficult to evaluate, as present-day historians rarely have the benefit of knowing whether they came from an individual or organization with such a clear purpose as the Supervisory Committee. This chapter omits communications without a clear recruiting message or function.

Broadly, recruiters emphasized patriotic duty to the American nation as a key reason to enlist. James McPherson describes the importance of duty in Victorian American culture; contemporaries understood it as "a binding moral obligation" to their nation-state.[7] Whether explicit or implicit, recruiters often raised the theme of duty to the United States. One song appealing to Unionist Marylanders instructed readers that "If we wish that Flag [the American flag] respected, / We must answer honor's call; / Duty must not be neglected, / Tho' our dearest friends should fall."[8] Appeals to duty were not limited to native-born Americans, either. One

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[5] George H. Boker, "The Black Regiment" (n.p.: Supervisory Committee for Recruiting Colored Regiments, 1863), America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Sheets Collection, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/amss.cw100610/; "A Contraband Song" (n.p.: Supervisory Committee for Recruiting Colored Regiments, n.d.), America Singing: Nineteenth-Century Song Sheets Collection, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/amss.cw101200/. Collection hereafter cited as LCAS.
[6] Captain Lindley Miller, "Song of the First of Arkansas" (n.p.: Supervisory Committee for Recruiting Colored Regiments, n.d.), LCAS, https://www.loc.gov/item/amss.cw105500/.
[7] James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 22-23.
[8] "The Maryland Battle Cry" (n.p., n.d.), LCAS, https://www.loc.gov/item/amss.cw103540/.

New York recruiting poster targeting Irish immigrants asked "now that…our adopted mother raises her enfeebled hands to you for AID, will you, Irishmen, in this her hour of need, shut your ears to the cry? No, never be it said a Phoenixman was deaf when duty calls!"[9] This recruiting poster exemplifies another aspect of appeals rooted in duty and national honour—they often invoked gender roles, sometimes explicitly but often implicitly, by conceiving of the United States as a household and citing men's obligations to protect those within their homes. Thus, theme of duty featured prominently in patriotic appeals for enlistment—but other types of arguments also appropriated the concept.

Recruiters adorned their propaganda pieces with patriotic slogans, images that invoked national pride, and verbose arguments for the importance of preserving the American nation. One poster for Goodwin's Battery of Breech-Loading Light Artillery, for instance, featured images of an eagle, American flags, Lady Liberty wearing a liberty cap, and other symbols. The poster also announced that "NOW IS THE TIME TO SERVE YOUR COUNTRY!" and that "Your cherished institutions and your Noble Flag are threatened by Rebels and Traitors!"[10] Often, patriotic messages invoked national honour as a motive for enlistment—a theme that carried a double meaning, blending patriotism with gendered behavioural expectations. At a New York war meeting in July 1862, for instance, one speaker averred that "Our national honor and reputation demand that rebellion shall not triumph on our soil."[11]

Mid-nineteenth century Northerners understood patriotism through the prism of the Union. For them, the Union was a strongly emotional concept that they treated as the guarantor

[9] *Phoenix Regiment! Corcoran Zouaves!* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03196s, Civil War Treasures Collection: Civil War Posters, 1861-1865, New-York Historical Society, http://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16694coll47. Collection hereafter cited as CWP.
[10] *Rally, Boys, For the Union* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03135s, CWP.
[11] "Mr. Allen's Speech," *New York Herald,* July 16, 1862.

of their political and economic liberties, their inheritance from the Revolution, the embodiment of the American republic, and a bastion of republicanism in a world populated by many less free regimes.[12] Thus, it should not be surprising that recruiting propaganda heavily played upon the cultural importance of defending the now-threatened Union. Recruiters frequently invoked Union-focused rhetoric in their war meeting speeches, either explicitly or implicitly alongside the theme of duty. Patriotic recruiting songs abounded with lyrics emphasizing devotion to the Union, like "Union and Liberty":

> The UNION, boys, it is our birthright—
> For this we fight, for this we fight,
> For this we stand;
> Its stars are still each freeman's birthright,
> So dearly loved, so dearly loved
> In all our land![13]

Meanwhile, recruiting posters called upon men to "CRUSH THE REBELLION! PRESERVE OUR GLORIOUS UNION!" and made pronouncements for "every man who loves this Glorious Union [to] RUSH TO ARMS and preserve unsullied the Flag of Freedom which so proudly waved before the vile serpent of treason encircled its folds!"[14] By arguing for upholding the Union, recruiters played upon a collective attachment, using emotional language to portray its defence as a collective obligation.

Symbolic representations of the Union that appeared in recruiting rhetoric reinforced recruiters' textual patriotic messages. Columbia, the personification of the United States, often appeared on recruiting posters.[15] Printers littered their broadsides and, sometimes, newspaper advertisements with images of eagles—often bearing scrolls inscribed with a patriotic messages

[12] Gary W. Gallagher, *The Union War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 2, 47.
[13] "Union and Liberty" (New York: J. Wrigley, n.d.), LCAS, https://www.loc.gov/item/amss.cw106110/.
[14] *Nineteenth Ward!* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03237s, CWP; *Recruits Wanted* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03224s, CWP.
[15] See, for example, *Recruits Wanted!* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03164s, CWP.

in their mouths or talons.[16] According to David Hackett Fischer, the iconography of eagles conveyed not only American independence and Union, but also bravery, sacrifice, and vigilant defence of individual liberties.[17] Ships sometimes appeared in the background of larger illustrations, drawing upon the notion that the ship represented the American Constitution.[18] Printers almost certainly chose images because they were already in their repertoire, not requiring them to create significantly new artwork. Additionally, printers reused images for different recruiting advertisements.[19] The October 2, 1861 publication of the *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier* listed two different advertisements with different text (though possibly for the same unit) beside each other. These two advertisements included the same image of an eagle holding a patriotic shield.[20]

With the possible exception of the eagle, the most important and ubiquitous patriotic symbol (both visually and rhetorically) within the discourse of Northern recruitment was the American flag. Printers displayed it, or a coat-of-arms variant of the flag, on song sheets and posters. Recruiters as well as members of the public hung flags at war meetings, and speakers sometimes elaborated on the necessity of defending the flag. Songs referenced the flag as a stand-in for the United States itself, as exemplified by "The Standard of the Free": "May its defenders rush onward like the tide, / When it rolls in its foaming might, / To o'erwhelm ev'ry

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[16] See, for example, *Sixteenth Regiment U.S. Infantry!* (Philadelphia: King & Baird, 1862), item ac03299s, CWP. On this poster, the eagle bears a banner with the message "E PLURIBUS UNUM" upon it.
[17] David Hackett Fischer, *Liberty and Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 324.
[18] Fischer, *Liberty and Freedom,* 196-197. See, for example, *U.S. Marine Corps* (Philadelphia: n.p., n.d.), item ac03255s, CWP, where the displayed ship is even named the Constitution. Although this particular poster is recruiting for the marine corps, army units also used ships on their recruiting posters. Numerous patriotic and recruiting songs also referenced the concept of the "ship of state."
[19] An example of two posters recruiting for two different units with identical iconography (except one appears with colour and the other without) are *$150 Bounty!* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03169s, CWP; *Sixth Regiment N.Y.S.M.* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03159s, CWP. See Appendix A for another example.
[20] "Volunteers to the Rescue," *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier,* October 2, 1861; "Our Country and Constitution!" *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier,* October 2, 1861.

traitor who would our Flag deride, / And our God will still stand by the right."[21] The flag's prevalence as a symbol helps explain its importance to recruits. Reid Mitchell contends that many Union soldiers expressed their patriotic motives for enlistment not through eloquent language or high-minded ideas, but by noting their devotion to the flag itself. Many men declared that they enlisted "to fight for the flag," a tangible symbol of the cause.[22] Since recruiters commonly used the flag in their appeals, perhaps enlisted men's common references to it in their self-described motivations demonstrates internalization of the recruiters' messages.

Advocates of enlistment frequently brought up component aspects of the Union that mid-nineteenth century Americans cherished, including their beloved American liberties. Recruiters argued that the Southern rebellion threatened to damage or destroy America's free, democratic, and republican institutions and personal freedoms. One recruiting poster from Providence, Rhode Island proclaimed "Men who love our free institutions; Men who value your own liberties; Men who are ready to DEFEND THE RIGHT! Men who are ready to fight for FREEDOM, COME FORTH NOW!"[23] In an 1862 address to New Yorkers, Democratic politician-turned-soldier Francis B. Spinola stated that "if we have the real principles of freedom at heart, we shall soon teach them [Southerners] what virtue is in Northern arms."[24] Echoing the sentiments of important summaries of the Union cause, such as the Gettysburg Address, speakers at war meetings sometimes emphasized the importance of defeating the South for proving to the world that republican self-rule could survive crisis.[25] Symbols of liberty, including liberty caps and an

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[21] John Mahon, "The Standard of the Free" (New York: H. De Marsan, n.d.), LCAS, https://www.loc.gov/item/amss.as203440/.
[22] Reid Mitchell, *Civil War Soldiers: Their Expectations and their Experiences* (New York: Viking, 1988), 20.
[23] *"Eternal Vigilance is the Price of Liberty!"* (Providence, RI: Cooke & Danielson, n.d.), ac03304s, CWP.
[24] "Speech of Ex-Senator Spinola," *New York Herald,* July 16, 1862.
[25] See, for instance, "War Meeting in Ward Six," *Boston Daily Advertiser,* December 3, 1863; "Address to the Loyal Citizens of New York, in Mass Meeting Assembled, on Union Square, on the 15th Day of July, 1862," *New York Herald,* July 16, 1862.

anthropomorphized female Liberty (sometimes alongside her counterpart, Justice), often appeared on recruiting posters.[26] It should be noted that this particular rhetoric of liberty and freedom was very distinct from appeals connecting enlisting with securing emancipation or African-American rights, a topic which will be addressed later in this chapter. Unlike arguments for enlistment in order to advance African-American freedoms, these appeals strongly tied freedom and liberty to American patriotism, taking a celebratory tone toward American institutions.

Closely related to American liberties in the minds of both recruiters and their audiences were the laws that guaranteed them, including the most supreme law—the United States Constitution. Through these messages, recruiters associated military service with the enforcement of law and order. An advertisement for a war meeting in Doylestown, Pennsylvania in 1861, for instance, asked the men of Bucks County "TREASON AND REBELLION OR THE CONSTITUTION THE UNION & THE LAWS! WHICH WILL YOU CHOOSE?"[27] Songs like "Freedom's Altar" also called upon men to stand up for their country's legal system:

> Our trust is in our righteous cause,
> Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah.
> Our Constitution and our Laws,
> Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah.
> …
> Then quick respond to war's appeal,
> To arms, to arms, to arms.
> Ye men with hearts as true as steel,
> To arms, to arms, to arms.[28]

[26] See, for example, *Fourth Senatorial District Regiment!* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03107s, CWP; *Stanton Legion* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03188s, CWP.
[27] *Treason and Rebellion or the Constitution the Union & the Laws!* (Doylestown, PA: W.W.H. Danis, 1861), ac03251s, CWP. Note that Danis is almost certainly a typo on the poster. The printer was very likely William Watts Hart Davis.
[28] "Freedom's Altar" (Philadelphia: A.W. Auner, n.d.), LCAS, https://www.loc.gov/item/amss.cw101800/.

Additionally, speakers at war meetings often explained how the Constitution did not permit secession, because the government was a compact between individuals rather than states. Through their eloquent comments, speakers sought to elucidate how and why the Confederacy had broken the country's laws. So explained Albert Clarke at a December 1863 war meeting in Williamstown (presumably Vermont), who "proceeded to examine the character of our Government, showing it to be a consolidated national power of the people, instead of a compact of [sic] confederation between the States."[29] In these ways, recruiters connected patriotism with legality. Not only had Confederates violated the sacred covenant of the Union, but they had broken the law and needed to be punished.

Indeed, recruiters commonly instructed their audiences to help put down rebellion and treason by enlisting. Recruiting posters called upon men to "RESCUE our Glorious Union from Rebels and Traitors," and to "help to destroy the hydra-headed Monster, Rebellion."[30] One New York unit called upon "Patriotic young men [to] enlist," because "On you, in a great measure, depends the crushing out of this rebellion."[31] Songs like "Rally Around the Good Old Flag" condemned rebellion and asked soldiers to help destroy it: "Come rally round the good old flag, before us stand the foe, / With all their strength combined, they've come, our government to overthrow, / Then rush to arms ye fearless men, aloof no longer stand, / Come forward now and lend us aid, to drive treason from our land."[32] Songs, broadsides, speeches, newspaper notices,

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[29] "War Meeting at Williamstown," *Vermont Watchman & State Journal* (Montpelier, VT), December 11, 1863, 1. Based on the fact that this article appears in a Vermont newspaper, I assume Williamstown refers to Williamstown, Vermont. However, there is no explicit reference to a state in the article, suggesting that it could be another Williamstown in a different state.
[30] *Now is the Time for Those Who Would Serve Their Country.* (n.p., n.d.), item ac03154s, CWP; *Senatorial Regiment* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03186s, CWP. An image of item ac03186s is included in Appendix A.
[31] "Halleck Guards! Halleck Guards! Halleck Guards!" *New York Herald,* August 26, 1862.
[32] Sergeant John Dyer, "Rally Around the Good Old Flag" (Philadelphia: Johnson, n.d.), LCAS, https://www.loc.gov/item/amss.cw104720/.

and other documents of their ilk emphasized the idea that the Confederacy simultaneously threatened the national honour and violated the laws of the United States. From the recruiters' perspectives, the Confederacy had violated and insulted the nation's laws, warranting punishment. In these recruiting messages, advocates of enlistment asked men to act uphold the law, and associated the Union cause with the cause of justice.

All of the previously described arguments about fighting for the Union invoked, in some regard, the Victorian concept of duty to the nation-state. Yet recruiters also raised the theme of citizens' obligations without such explicit reference to the government. They frequently argued that Northerners had some responsibility to aid those who had already enlisted, and to avenge those who had sacrificed their lives and freedoms. By doing so, they rhetorically situated potential volunteers within a national community, the members of which all held obligations to the collective. One speaker at a December 1863 Boston war meeting asked his audience to ensure the deaths of deceased soldiers were not in vain: "It is left with the young men of this country to fight this battle of liberty. Their comrades who entered the army … call upon them to fill up the ranks … not for themselves alone, but in justice to their comrades under the sod."[33] These particular comments closely followed Lincoln's delivery of the Gettysburg Address, and communicated similar sentiments about the debt owed to the dead—but specifically used them for the purpose of recruiting. At a similar event in New York in July 1862, the president of Columbia College suggested that Americans should "resolve that they will support their brethren in the field. We cannot sit here quietly while thousands of our own fellow citizens … are every day perishing for the want of support."[34]

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[33] "War Meeting in Ward Six," *Boston Daily Advertiser,* December 3, 1863.
[34] "Dr. King's Speech," *New York Herald,* July 16, 1862.

Sometimes recruiters invoked the memory of a particular patriotic hero in need of aid or vengeance. Colonel Elmer E. Ellsworth, who became a Northern martyr after he was killed while seizing a Confederate flag in Alexandria, Virginia in the war's early days, became the subject of many songs and poems.[35] Some songwriters imbued their lyrics with recruiting connotations, like the author of "Ellsworth's Avengers":

> First to fall, thou youthful martyr,
> Hapless was thy fate;
> Hastened we as thy avengers,
> From thy native state.
> Speed we on, from town and city,
> Not for wealth or fame,
> But because we love the Union,
> And our Ellsworth's name.[36]

Similarly, recruiters for the Fourth Regiment of the Empire Brigade called upon Irish-Americans to rescue their countryman General Michael Corcoran from Confederate imprisonment: "Your brave and imprisoned Chief, MICHAEL CORCORAN, is immured in a loathsome Southern Prison, where he calls to you for assistance. Shall that cry be in vain?"[37] Whether in reference to the living or the dead, masses of soldiers or individual leaders, recruiters argued that men had an obligation to honour the sacrifices of their brethren already gone to the war.

In another argument for enlistment rooted in patriotism, recruiters drew upon the notion of progress. They contended that men could contribute to a victory that would ultimately prove a stepping stone in America's journey to achieving its great destiny. Iconography appearing on recruiting broadsides also often associated the war with progress by featuring a train, a symbol of

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[35] Alice Fahs, *The Imagined Civil War: Popular Literature of the North & South, 1861-1865* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 84-86.
[36] A.L. Hudson, "Ellsworth's Avengers" (n.p., n.d.), LCAS, https://www.loc.gov/item/amss.cw101550/.
[37] *Rally 'Round the Green Flag* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03240s, CWP. Though this poster is undated, it must come from either 1861 or 1862, because Corcoran was taken prisoner after the First Battle of Bull Run and exchanged in mid-1862.

technological advancement in the mid-nineteenth century.[38] At a Williamstown war meeting in late 1863, one dignitary closed his speech "by speaking of the glory and prosperity of the American people when the war shall be ended and the government vindicated."[39] Another meeting, this time in New York, involved the unfurling of a banner emblazoned with a quotation stating that those who tear down American flags should be immediately shot. In his speech at that meeting, James T. Brady invoked Manifest Destiny, itself a vision of progress, when he told his audience:

> The sentiment of that banner … will be taught in our schools a thousand years from now, when every State of the old Union be in its proper place, and new States will have been gathered in from Canada and Mexico, from the cold regions of the north, and as far down as you can trace the physical configuration of this continent.[40]

A speaker in Boston around the same time argued for a more international vision of progress, albeit one grounded in American leadership: "If we secure our liberties, —and we will,—we will become a united and free people, no nation will stand against us, and the gilded thrones of despotic kings will be overthrown and we will all stand [as] one brotherhood of freedom."[41] By employing a discourse of progress, recruiters encouraged men to take part in a process (not merely uphold an institution) that was greater than themselves as individuals. Additionally, by associating progress with both the war and the American nation-state, recruiters tied the country's cause to societal improvement and advancement.

The second major category of recruiting appeals consisted of requests upon men's identities as members of particular social groups, and their desires to uphold or advance their

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[38] For an example, see *31st New York Volunteers Re-Organizing!* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03145s, CWP.
[39] "War Meeting at Williamstown," *Vermont Watchman & State Journal* (Montpelier, VT), December 11, 1863.
[40] "The Great War Meeting," *New-York Daily Tribune,* December 4, 1863.
[41] "War Meeting in Ward Six," *Boston Daily Advertiser,* December 3, 1863.

social status and reputations as members of those groups. Recruiters frequently contended that men owed service on behalf of a given (and frequently immutable) social community with which they identified; failing to enlist might hinder the individual's social standing within the group or wider society, or might even negatively affect the particular social group's standing more broadly. At times, little distinguishes these ideas from references to patriotism and the obligations of citizenship. Such was the case when recruiters made references to past crises and conflicts in history, and to the debt owed to past generations of Americans.

Specifically, advocates for enlistment found a powerful symbol in Andrew Jackson's defence of the Union during the Nullification Crisis. References to Jackson's famous phrase "Our Federal Union: It must be preserved" commonly cropped up in recruiting propaganda.[42] "The Union: it Must and Shall be Preserved! (JACKSON.)" appeared on a banner carried by an eagle on one poster for a New York regiment.[43] One unusual 1864 advertisement for the West-Jersey Dragoons featured a likeness of Jackson with no text explaining his presence; presumably, the creator(s) recognized that audiences would make the connection between Jackson and preservation of the Union.[44] Jackson's looming presence carried a patriotic message, reminding audiences that Southerners had previously (and unsuccessfully) tried to break up the Union. But references to the Nullification Crisis also played upon men's identities as Americans, by inviting them to take part in a grand lineage of heroes who stood for American unity. In a sense, these arguments associated American identity with loyalty to the Union.

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[42] Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 372-373; *Mechanic's Free Press* (Philadelphia), April 24, 1830. The word "federal" was not in Jackson's spoken toast that later became famous, but was re-added (as Jackson had originally planned to say it) for publication.
[43] *Fourth Senatorial District Regiment!* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03243s, CWP.
[44] *West-Jersey Dragoons* (Camden, NJ: n.p., 1864), item ac03028s, CWP.

Visual and textual references to Jackson had a further partisan subtext. As a founder of the Democratic Party, Old Hickory was a particularly familiar and powerful symbol for Democrats. As seen in the prior chapter, producing one of Jackson's handwritten letters at an 1863 Indianapolis war meeting "moved many of the old Jackson Democrats present to tears," indicating his particularly strong meaning for members of his own political faction.[45] The example of Jackson indicates that some symbols were more effective with particular groups. Recruiters probably knew this, invoking Jackson for Democratic audiences.

If Jackson appealed to partisanship and situated volunteers in a figurative lineage of great men, references to the American Revolution literally appealed to men's ancestry. Recruiters argued that Americans owed a debt to the Revolutionary generation, and that they must protect the gains—that is, the Union—secured through the Revolution. Songs like "Sons of Columbia" strongly exemplified this theme: "Then treat not so lightly this boon dearly purchased, / By the *blood* of our fathers, the *good* and the *brave!* / Who *fought, bled* and *died* 'neath the *Banner of Freedom,* / Which in *glory* and *triumph forever* shall wave."[46] This song, and other messages like it, contended that avoiding military service meant disregarding the sacrifices made by America's founding generation. Raising the spectre of men's forefathers occurred often. One recruiting advertisement from October 1861 addressed itself to the "SONS OF THE SIRES OF '76!"[47] Another poster recruiting for Kings County, New York asked readers:

> Shall it be said of us, that, though reared amid relics and mementoes of Revolutionary times, we, the blood of whose sires enrich the soil of this Island, and whose bones form a monumental hecatomb in our city … shall it be said of the children of such sires, that, in the hour of their Country's peril, they turned a

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[45] "Gov. Johnson's Speech," *New-York Daily Tribune,* March 3, 1863.
[46] Mrs. Thomas M. Coleman, "Sons of Columbia" (Philadelphia: J.H. Johnson, n.d.), LCAS, https://www.loc.gov/item/amss.cw105550/. Emphasis is from the original document (not mine). Note that this song sheet indicates that Johnson and J.H. Johnson of Philadelphia are the same publisher. Also, Coleman wrote the lyrics, but someone else (George Felix Benkert, Esq.) set it to music.
[47] "Arm for the Liberty Cap!" *Boston Daily Advertiser,* October 12, 1861.

deaf ear to her appeal, belied their ancestry, and proved recreant to the high trust handed down to them?[48]

Together, these advertisements were clear—men who shirked military service betrayed the memory of their forebears.

Given the importance of the Revolutionary generation, George Washington emerged as an important icon deployed by recruiters. His image sometimes appeared on recruiting advertisements.[49] Songwriters referenced him, some doing so as a focal point of the song. The author of "Help Us Save the Union," for instance, focused on Washington: "Oh! land that gave us Washington, / Remember deeds his valor done, / … Remember, too, his last farewell, / And ring *Secession's* funeral knell."[50] Other recruiters simply used him as a symbol for wider notions about the Revolution and the sanctity of patriotism. One recruiting poster, created at one of the points in the war when Confederate forces threatened Washington, D.C., asked readers "Shall we see foul traitors reveling in Halls made sacred by Washington?"[51] Recruiters employed Washington as the human embodiment of the gains secured through the Revolution. Unsurprisingly, references to Washington were fundamentally similar to those describing men's debts to their Revolutionary forefathers; in a way, Washington served as a collective forefather that all Americans could claim.

While Jackson, Washington, and the Revolution appeared particularly prominently in recruiting messages, recruiters made other references to American conflicts. According to John D. Billings, war meetings often featured a veteran of the War of 1812 who was "worked for all

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[48] *Senatorial Regiment* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03186s, CWP. The question mark at the end is added by myself, as the sentence does not actually end there. An image of item ac03186s is included in Appendix A.
[49] See, for example, *Wanted Immediately* (Philadelphia: J.H. Jones, 1861), ac03074s, CWP. An image of item ac03074s is included in Appendix A.
[50] "Help Us Save the Union" (n.p., n.d.), LCAS, https://www.loc.gov/item/amss.cw102270/. Emphasis is from the original document (not mine).
[51] *6th Senatorial Dist. Reg't.* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03202s, CWP. The poster is undated but makes it clear that Washington, D.C. was in danger at the time it was created.

he was worth," or a veteran of the Mexican-American War who "would air his nonchalance at grim-visaged war."[52] In these roles, veterans probably served to emphasize the continuity of obligations of American citizens, and to invite audience members to join their community of war heroes on the basis of their shared national identity.

Just as recruiters argued that men owed service as part of the community of Americans, they stated that men needed to fight because of their membership in the community of Christians. Recruiters described fighting in the war as a holy calling. For example, at a November 1863 war meeting in New Haven, Connecticut, a speech by Reverend H.C. Trumbull "showed that the cause of the country was the cause of God."[53] The following month, George C. Bates called upon Chicagoans to enlist and donate to recruiting funds. As part of his appeal, he urged "Godlike, Union-loving action" and compared Jefferson Davis to Satan.[54] Similarly, in 1862 the president of New York City's Columbia College described the rebellion as an "unholy thing," adding that "There never was a more holy or a more sacred cause than this."[55] Presenting the war as a crusade took advantage of men's religion by suggesting that enlistment was not only an obligation of their identities as Americans, but also as a duty to God.

Gender also featured prominently in recruiting messages. Recruiters frequently described the Union as a family or marriage, invoking an easily understood gendered metaphor to suggest that the Confederacy had performed the political equivalent of familial insubordination. A speaker in mid-1862 Philadelphia argued that the war would have been prevented had James Buchanan had been married, as a husband and father "would [not] have allowed any of his boys

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[52] John D. Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee, or The Unwritten Story of Army Life* (Boston: George M. Smith, 1887), 38.
[53] "Enthusiastic War Meeting—A Grand Rally of the Union Men," *New Haven Daily Palladium* (Evening Edition), November 30, 1863.
[54] "Address of G.C. Bates," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* December 17, 1863.
[55] Dr. King's Speech," *New York Herald,* July 16, 1862.

to have stolen his powder, and shot, and gun, and, last of all, his boots, and gone on a gunning excursion," but "would have taken a stick and given them a good cudgeling."[56] At other times, men were instructed that soldiering was a masculine enterprise. Exemplifying this theme, Colonel Hasbrouck Davis's December 1863 speech argued that war "makes men men" and that "It brings out of them not alone the rougher characteristics of our nature, but elicits from them all the tender and gentle sympathies that belong to woman."[57] Recruiters warned men that women would spurn their romantic advances if they refused to fight, and sometimes even asked women to do so. The song "Men and Knaves" described a man who shirked his duty as "A wretched and pitiful wight art thou; / No Freeborn maiden will kiss thee now."[58] Some recruiters explained the need for men to fight for the Union through the lens of men's obligations to protect the women in their households. One recruiting poster argued that defending the nation was "a duty as sacredly incumbent upon every man as is the protection from insult or assault of wife, mother, or sister! —and he who would not lay down his life, if need be, in defence of either, is but a living libel upon manhood."[59] As Southern nationalists often viewed the Confederate nation as a feminine entity in need of defence, so too did Northern men view their obligations to their country in gendered terms.[60]

The association between masculinity and enlistment seemed to have been particularly relevant for a group whose manhood was often questioned—African-American men. Recruiters played upon the desires of African-Americans to prove their manhood, and by extension, their worthiness for citizenship. An African-American speaker at an 1863 war meeting in Washington,

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[56] "The Southwestern Stand," *North American and United States Gazette* (Philadelphia), July 28, 1862.
[57] "Address of Col. Davis," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* December 17, 1863.
[58] "Men and Knaves" (n.p.: C. Magnus, n.d.), LCAS, https://www.loc.gov/item/amss.hc00022a/.
[59] *Senatorial Regiment* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03186s, CWP. An image of item ac03186s is included in Appendix A.
[60] Quigley, *Shifting Grounds,* 163-164.

D.C. employed this rhetoric in his appeal to a black audience: "Which looks the more manly—the colored man with an apron before him, or with a gun on his shoulder? When you get the gun, you will be a man. (Loud applause.) When we have 800,000 muskets, will they take our rights? ('Never.') They will not enslave us again."[61] Similarly, the song "Disfranchised Sons, To Arms!" called upon black men to "Show to the world that you are men."[62] Very often, black Northerners' calls for recognition of their manhood reflected a broad wish for society to accept African-Americans as equals, rather than exclusively gendered recognition that black males were masculine.[63] Recruiters played upon their desires, contending that the war was an opportunity for African-American men to demonstrate their masculinity and worthiness for citizenship to an otherwise doubtful society.

Another major style of identity-based appeal with a clear emphasis on social status came in the form of a paired discourse of glory and shame. On the one hand, advocates of enlistment suggested that men who fought in the war would receive a boost in social status for their efforts. A poster advertising a Hempstead, New York war meeting told readers that attending the rally would "Show your Countrymen that you choose Honor and Glory before humiliation and shame."[64] Messages like those in the song "The Maryland Battle Cry" argued that by enlisting, men would ensure their names and deeds would be remembered.[65] At a late 1863 meeting, General Daniel Sickles argued that men who had fought should receive "a preference accorded to him through the gratitude of the people for what he has done for the republic."[66] At another in

[61] "Enthusiastic War Meeting in Washington," *The Liberator* (Boston), June 12, 1863.
[62] "Disfranchised Sons, To Arms!" ([Philadelphia]: Johnson, n.d.), LCAS, https://www.loc.gov/item/amss.cw101380/.
[63] Brian Taylor, "A Politics of Service: Black Northerners' Debates Over Enlistment in the American Civil War," *Civil War History* 58, no. 4 (December 2012): 455-456.
[64] *To Arms!* (New York: Baker & Godwin, [1862]), item ac03165s, CWP.
[65] "The Maryland Battle Cry," LCAS.
[66] "The Great War Meeting," *New-York Daily Tribune,* December 4, 1863.

April 1864, the governor of Indiana declared that "those who are actors in this hour will be heroes hereafter."[67] Essentially, recruiters contended that volunteers would receive both tangible and intangible benefits as a result of their elevated status.

On the other hand, recruiters argued that men must enlist voluntarily in order to evade being drafted. The draft constituted a dual threat, both economic, since draftees could not choose their unit or receive many of the bounties available to volunteers, and social, since being drafted was seen as shameful.[68] James Geary contends that the draft functioned to spur volunteerism.[69] Matthew Gallman agrees, positing that conscription was intended to prompt communities to recruit more vigorously; actually drafting people was not the main goal.[70] The economic threat of the draft will be addressed later in this chapter. In terms of social status, however, recruiters emphasized that waiting to be drafted meant risking disgrace—either for the individual, or for one's town, city, or state. One army officer asked his war meeting audience if men would voluntarily enlist or "wait till Abraham reaches out his long, bony fingers, and clutches you," adding a question of "'Why should we mourn conscripted friends?'"[71] Posters called out to men to "avoid the awful disgrace of a draft," and reminded them that draftees would come to realize that "There is little merit in COMPULSORY Patriotism."[72] In many cases, recruiters argued that men's military service (or lack thereof) would impact the reputations of not only their individual selves, but also the social groups to which they belonged. By reminding potential soldiers of the draft, recruiters warned them that failing to enlist soon could seriously harm their social standing.

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[67] "The War Spirit in Indiana," *Daily Cleveland Herald,* May 2, 1864.
[68] Bell Irvin Wiley, *The Life of Billy Yank: The Common Soldier of the Union* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1971), 38.
[69] James W. Geary, *We Need Men: The Union Draft in the Civil War* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1991), 47, 65, 82, 173.
[70] J. Matthew Gallman, *Defining Duty in the Civil War: Personal Choice, Popular Culture, and the Union Home Front* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 252.
[71] "Address of Lieut. Col. Mann," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* December 17, 1863.
[72] *Richmond Co. Arouse!* (New York: Baker & Godwin, 1862), item ac03205s, CWP; *Senatorial Regiment* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03186s, CWP. An image of item ac03186s is included in Appendix A.

Another, often related series of arguments rooted identity emphasized men's duty to represent their towns or states and defend their honour. One advertisement for a New Hampshire temperance unit called out to readers "Other states have sent their regiments and companies of praying men. Shall not the Granite State be thus represented in this war?"[73] An 1863 proclamation from the mayor of Boston calling for volunteers stated that the city "cannot prove recreant in this eventful hour of the great struggle, without … casting a reproach upon her own good name and fame."[74] Since men enlisted in units representing their states and localities, it should not be surprising that pride in these sub-federal jurisdictions featured prominently in pro-enlistment media.

In turn, recruiters occasionally played upon local fears. One speaker at a Lancaster, Pennsylvania war meeting in mid-1862 declared that "if there be not at least 600,000 men placed in the field before the first frost, Pennsylvania will undoubtedly be invaded!"[75] In a similar vein, a colonel addressing an audience in Wheeling, West Virginia (presumably in 1864) "predicted that the rebels would have possession of Wheeling in less than 40 days."[76] Another advertisement for the 18th Maine Regiment called upon men to "Arise and prevent Foreign Intervention!"—probably a greater concern in Maine due to its large shared border with Canada.[77] As with arguments appealing to local pride, playing upon regional fears took advantage of men's identities as members of a given local community.

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[73] "Parker Guards," *New-Hampshire Statesman* (Concord, NH), November 2, 1861.
[74] The Recruiting Committee, *Recruiting System of the City of Boston; Together With a Statement of the Bounty Paid to Volunteers by the State and United States* (Boston: J.E. Farwell, 1863), 8. Proclamation was authored by the mayor (F.W. Lincoln, Jr.) on November 16, 1863.
[75] "Frightening or Frightened," *Boston Investigator,* August 13, 1862.
[76] "A Federal Colonel," *Cadiz Democratic Sentinel* (Cadiz, OH), March 9, 1864. I have inferred both the meeting's specific location of West Virginia, and the date of 1864.
[77] "18th Maine Regiment," *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier,* August 9, 1862.

In a similar vein, recruiters made arguments rooted in men's sense of ethnic pride.[78] Take, for example, appeals to Irish-Americans. These arguments frequently asserted that they should uphold the pride of their homeland—sometimes even suggesting they should enlist in the American military as preparation to fight for Irish independence. Images of harps and shamrocks commonly appeared on recruiting posters, along with references to Irish history. "REMEMBER FONTENOY!" and "Irishmen, you are now training to meet your English enemies!" declared one New York poster.[79] Another instructed that "our gallant young [Irish] Countrymen had better 'FALL IN' to the music of the Union, fighting 'neath the Green Flag, winning themselves a name in their Country's history on the same bright page with CORCORAN, MULLIGAN, MEAGHER and SHIELDS."[80] Defending one's ethnic honour, then, proved critical to recruiting minorities.

Appeals to ethnic identity constituted a key element of recruiting African-Americans. Recruiters argued that military service would collectively enhance African-Americans' claims to societal inclusion and ameliorate racial prejudice. A judge speaking at a Boston war meeting in 1863 argued that the day black and white soldiers fought and bled together "will see every prejudice against your race washed out and obliterated."[81] William D. Kelley addressed black men at another meeting, this time in Philadelphia, asking "Are you content to spend your lives as boot-blacks, barbers, waiters, and in other pursuits little, if any better than servile or menial, when the profession of arms … invites you to acknowledged manhood, freedom, and honor?"[82]

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[78] A challenge for this section is my present inability to read German. There are probably recruiting efforts in German language sources appealing to German-Americans that I have limited capacity to study and consult.

[79] *Corcoran's Irish Legion!* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03199s, CWP. An image of item ac03199s is included in Appendix A.

[80] *Rally 'Round the Green Flag* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03240s, CWP.

[81] "The Negro Regiment—Meeting of the Colored Citizens," *The Liberator* (Boston), February 20, 1863.

[82] W.D. Kelley, Anna E. Dickinson, and Frederick Douglass, *Addresses of the Hon. W.D. Kelley, Miss Anna E. Dickinson, and Mr. Frederick Douglass, at a Mass Meeting, Held at the National Hall, Philadelphia, July 6, 1863, For the Promotion of Colored Enlistments* (n.p., n.d.), 2.

Like recruiting messages emphasizing soldiering's gendered meanings to black men, recruiters played upon African-American men's desires for greater social acceptance and equality in order to secure their enlistments.

Perhaps the most important argument related to ethnicity focused on the destruction of slavery. Recruiters addressing African-American audiences often asked for men to help the government put down the institution. Addressing an African-American audience in the federal capital in 1863, Charles Tasco (himself an African-American) posed the following question:

> But God had raised up Abraham Lincoln (loud applause) and his party to break down this infamous institution, and erect freedom in its place … Our country now promises us "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." We have been negligent. Do we expect to sit down and enjoy these privileges without some sacrifices on our part?[83]

At a similar war meeting in Boston for recruiting African-Americans, Wendell Phillips declared the war a "battle between freedom and slavery" in which "the black race [had] its first great historic chance for writing its name high in the history of ages."[84] Songs focused on African-American recruitment also disproportionately foregrounded the themes of slavery and emancipation. "The Black Regiment," published by Philadelphia's Supervisory Committee for Recruiting Colored Regiments, featured the following lyrics that described a black regiment's final moment before rushing into battle:

> "Now," the flag-sergeant cried,
> "Though death and hell beside,
> Let the whole nation see
> If we are fit to be
> Free in this land; or bound
> Down, like the whining hound—
> Bound with red stripes of pain
> In our old chains again!"[85]

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[83] "Enthusiastic War Meeting in Washington," *The Liberator* (Boston), June 12, 1863.
[84] "The Negro Regiment—Meeting of the Colored Citizens," *The Liberator* (Boston), February 20, 1863.
[85] Boker, "The Black Regiment," LCAS.

Whether advocating for them to aid their families specifically or their race generally, recruiters utilized African-American men's racial identities to entice them into service.

It is important to note, however, that recruiting appeals made to white men generally did not cite emancipation as a reason to fight. Certainly, recruiters occasionally condemned the institution—most commonly in speeches or sermons transcribed in pamphlets or newspaper articles. Furthermore, words like "freemen" or "liberty" commonly appeared in recruiting rhetoric; however, these terms should not be confused with advocacy for abolition, as they usually constituted an address toward white American citizens' sense of republican liberty.

Rather, some recruiters seeking to win over hesitant white Democrats distinguished between the war's purpose (defending the Union) with its incidental happenings (emancipation). They posited that Americans of all political orientations had an obligation to unite behind the Union cause, even if they disagreed with its incidental, albeit expedient or even necessary, outcomes. In these arguments, they rarely presented emancipation as a reason to enlist. Instead, recruiters declared that audiences should not let their aversion to emancipation prevent them from defending the Union. In so doing, they clearly argued for preservation of the Union as the war's primary aim, and abolition as a possible side effect. Peleg W. Chandler made such a distinction at a Boston war meeting in August of 1862:

> Our *object* is to put down the rebellion … The *incidents* might be many and various … You might as well put fire to gunpowder and not expect an explosion, as to carry on a war like this, and talk of preserving the peculiar institutions of the South. But the contest is forced upon us. We cannot avoid it if we would. The national existence is in peril, and not on us is the responsibility of the inevitable consequences.[86]

[86] "Remarks, Of Peleg W. Chandler, Esq., of Boston, at a War Meeting, Aug. 30, in that City," *New-Hampshire Statesman* (Concord, NH) September 13, 1862. Emphasis is from the original document.

Chandler's aversion to defining emancipation as a motive for enlistment is significant given his background. As a Republican serving in Massachusetts's House of Representatives, as someone who had criticized the South and popular sovereignty during the Kansas-Nebraska fiasco of the 1850s, and as a speaker addressing an audience in a known abolitionist stronghold, Chandler would be more likely than most to raise emancipation as a reason to enlist.[87]

Chandler was not the only one suggesting that those put off by the slavery issue were missing the war's true purpose—and, accordingly, the important reasons to enlist. At a late 1863 war meeting in Worcester, Massachusetts, the Speaker of the House of Representatives for Massachusetts (a Republican, and an opponent of slavery's extension in the 1850s) argued that the duty of Americans "is one and simple—to stand by the President of the United States," and that "No man can plead his politics as excuse for withholding his co-operation with the government."[88] According to Reverend William H. Boole, speaking at another meeting taking place around the same time in New York, "The Union was not Abraham Lincoln's; this fight was the people's," and "The purpose of the war [sustaining the country] should not be confounded with its incidents."[89] Interestingly, Boole had had no issue denouncing slavery both from the pulpit and the printing press in 1861; most likely, his awareness of Democrats in his audience, and his desire to not turn them away from enlisting, encouraged him to avoid foregrounding the issue.[90] Indeed, at the same meeting as Boole, another speaker argued that Democrats also owed

[87] "Massachusetts State Government for 1862," *Boston Daily Advertiser,* January 1, 1862; "Republican State Convention," *Boston Daily Advertiser,* September 11, 1862; "Good Stories," *New-York Daily Times,* August 19, 1854.
[88] "War Meeting in Worcester," *Lowell Daily Citizen & News,* November 24, 1863 (quotations); Charles Devens, *Memoir of Alexander H. Bullock* (Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society; repr., Cambridge: John Wilson and Son University Press, 1887), 9-10, 13.
[89] "The Great War Meeting," *New-York Daily Tribune,* December 4, 1863.
[90] Rev. Wm. H. Boole, *Antidote to Rev. H.J. Van Dyke's Pro-Slavery Discourse* (New York: Edmund Jones, 1861). The pamphlet notes that its text was based on a sermon Boole delivered in New York in January 1861.

a duty to help suppress the Rebellion.[91] These calls to place country above partisanship and all other issues conformed to a broader wartime strategy of representing the views of Democrats as unpatriotic, detractions from the war effort, or even treasonous.[92] Applying this concept to securing enlistments meant that rather than trying to persuade Democrats to support emancipation, recruiters marginalized it as a war aim and demanded greater patriotism from those with reservations about fighting to free slaves.

As shown in the prior examples, even staunch opponents of slavery were often more interested in ensuring their messages appealed to Democrats than in trying to motivate audiences through the issue of emancipation. Some recruiters contended in their rhetoric that emancipation was necessary to destroy the cause and source of strength of the Confederacy, but even these comments primarily suggested that men should enlist for a war for Union. "To save the Government slavery must die. The war will last as long as slavery unless you take it by the throat," avowed one speaker at a Washington, D.C. war meeting in August of 1862.[93] A military officer speaking in Windsor, Vermont in late 1863 "heartily endorsed" the Emancipation Proclamation on the basis "that slavery was a great element of strength to the South, and anything that should destroy it was necessary and justifiable."[94] Thus, recruiters often tried to quash potential recruits' reservations about emancipationist policy by arguing for the necessity of freeing slaves to save the Union, but their arguments typically stopped short of calling for men to enlist for emancipation in its own right.

Additionally, while the prior examples show occasions when recruiters discussed slavery, speakers frequently avoided raising or barely raised the subject altogether. The slavery issue

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[91] "The Great War Meeting," *New-York Daily Tribune,* December 4, 1863.
[92] Adam I.P. Smith, *No Party Now: Politics in the Civil War North* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 5-8.
[93] "War Meeting," *Cleveland Morning Leader,* August 8, 1862.
[94] "Col. Thomas's Speech," *Vermont Chronicle* (Windsor, VT), December 5, 1863.

arose even less often in recruiting-focused newspaper advertisements, songs, and posters that did not specifically target black men. It seems that in terms of recruiting efforts, then, the subject of slavery mostly (though not completely) functioned as a motivation for recruiters to target toward African-Americans. Those seeking white volunteers often tried to focus on issues and subjects that were less politically divisive, or to quell qualms about soldiering for abolition, as emancipation had a good chance to turn off some anti-abolitionist whites from enlisting.

That said, when recruiters deemed that their audiences were more receptive to emancipationist policies, they sometimes included an antislavery message. Charles G. Loring, speaking in Boston in July 1862, condemned a Southern nation founded upon slavery as one that would bring a reign of tyranny not just for slaves, but also for poor Southern whites.[95] Andover, Massachusetts held a war meeting in late 1863 where "a little girl, rescued from slavery in Virginia, was introduced and sung a freedom song."[96] Even in regions with high proportions of Republicans, recruiters still emphasized the cause of Union more than they did the cause of emancipation. Still, their willingness to condemn slavery in places like Massachusetts, and to minimize its importance in places like New York, speaks to the flexible messaging and diverse meanings that recruiters employed to aid their cause.

Within these attempts to reach hesitant Democrats, recruiters suggested that the war was a national rather than a Republican cause. In an example illustrating this point, they often tried to decentre Abraham Lincoln as a symbol of the Union's war effort. Given that Lincoln was an unpopular figure with Democrats, recruiters argued that the war was the cause of all Americans

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[95] "Address of Hon. Charles G. Loring," *Boston Daily Advertiser,* July 14, 1862. Still, Loring then argued that his audience had "higher and holier obligations" to "the establishment and upholding of a form of national government." Loring added that if Americans must choose between destroying slavery or allowing the Union to collapse, they must choose eradicating slavery. Thus, even though Loring was willing to describe emancipation as a reason to enlist, he still foregrounded Union as a more important purpose.
[96] "Andover," *Lowell Daily Citizen & News,* November 21, 1863.

rather than Lincoln himself (and, by extension, his supporters). In December 1863, staunch Republican William D. Kelley addressed an assemblage of New Yorkers, probably many of whom were Democrats. Attempting to quell their misgivings about Lincoln, he declared "O! says somebody; we will support Abraham Lincoln and his policy, if we give to the war. Not so … the next Congressional and Presidential election may change his policy … But you will sustain the Constitution, of which he is the Executive officer."[97] When conscious of the presence of Democrats, recruiters sometimes disavowed Lincoln and Republican policy as focal points of the Union cause. In doing so, they crafted a message that they thought would be palatable to more reluctant Northerners. Possibly, recruiters in these positions believed that abolitionists and Republicans were more likely than Democrats to enlist without additional persuasion, encouraging them to add these reassurances about the ecumenicity of the Northern cause.

Historian Christian McWhirter partly attributes the popularity of the popular song "The Battle Cry of Freedom" to its ideological ambiguity. Abolitionist listeners interpreted the song's references to freedom as an antislavery message, but its lack of explicit emancipationist language meant that even Northerners opposed to abolition could enjoy the song.[98] Recruiting messages probably conveyed similarly dual meanings when they used vague language about freedom, liberty, and even progress. To an antislavery audience, these themes might invite them to fight against their hated institution; to those less receptive to fighting for African-American freedom, the language connoted American patriotism and the Union more broadly.

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[97] "The Great War Meeting," *New-York Daily Tribune,* December 4, 1863. The speaker referenced here was probably the Pennsylvanian Republican abolitionist, William D. Kelley. However, the newspaper identifies him by different names in different places (as "Wm. D. Kelley" and "The Hon. WM. B. KELLY of Philadelphia").

[98] Christian McWhirter, *Battle Hymns: The Power and Popularity of Music in the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 53-54.

Another possible contributor to the limited amount of recruiting rhetoric discussing slavery may lie in the periodization of the war. James Geary contends that patriotic motives prevailed over voluntary enlistment until the fall of 1862; from 1863 onward, financial inducements served as the primary motivation for volunteers.[99] This transition from high-minded to self-interested motivations roughly coincided with the ascendancy of emancipation as a key component of the Northern war effort.[100] Potentially, these simultaneous changes helped to sideline the principled issue of slavery just as it was achieving greater visibility as a key element of the war. That said, while one still finds numerous instances of patriotic appeals in the recruiting rhetoric of 1863 and 1864, slavery often remains absent—further evidencing that some thought the issue was too divisive to raise to general audiences.

Alexander H. Bullock's speech at a Worcester war meeting in November 1863 argued that men had a duty to their country; the short excerpt of his speech reported in the *Lowell Daily Citizen & News* made no mention of slavery.[101] Either Bullock or the newspaper editors decided to omit discussion of bondage and emancipation. Several months later, in Boston, Bullock welcomed home a group of veterans from Worcester County returning from fighting. Though not the primary purpose of his speech, Bullock used the opportunity to suggest that veterans of the unit reenlist, and to call upon other Massachusettsans to join up. This time, Bullock and the newspaper reporting his speech (the *Boston Daily Advertiser*) had no qualms about raising the slavery issue. He lauded the veterans for their patriotic service, and for their sacrifices made to bring a "new and better life to the South" that "will blossom over the ashes of the institution of

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[99] Geary, *We Need Men,* 47.
[100] James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 494-510; 557-567.
[101] "War Meeting in Worcester," *Lowell Daily Citizen & News,* November 24, 1863.

slavery."[102] These two examples from Alexander H. Bullock show that recruiters argued for different interpretations of the Union cause depending on the time, the place, and the audience. Even those friendly to emancipation might downplay the subject if they believed their audience would not be receptive to it. Depending on the partisan or racial composition of their audiences, recruiters adjusted the extent to which they foregrounded the slavery issue.

In contrast with their hesitancy to advocate for volunteering in order to fight slavery, recruiters vocally and visibly encouraged men to enlist out of personal (typically economic) self-interest. By serving the country, they argued, men could stand to profit—or, at least, obtain the benefits of soldiering with the greatest degree of comfort possible. This form of propaganda was particularly prevalent in recruiting posters and newspaper notices, the documents with origins in antebellum advertising culture.

As discussed in the previous chapter, these self-interested arguments owe their existence to the fierce competition between units looking to fill their ranks. With some exceptions for recruiting efforts that played upon local and ethnic pride, arguments emphasizing either patriotic duty or identity could just as easily persuade a man to enlist in a different unit as the one that a recruiter was hoping to fill. Thus, economic and self-interested factors gave men a reason to choose a particular company or regiment over its competitors.

Of these competing factors, recruiters referenced bounty payments more than any other economic consideration. Arguably, they featured as the single most important component of recruiting posters and newspaper advertisements. Some of these notices served first and foremost to outline the bounties that men might be eligible to receive by enlisting with a certain unit.[103]

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[102] "Local Matters," *Boston Daily Advertiser,* February 20, 1864.
[103] See, for example, *Volunteers Wanted to Fill the Quota of the City of Camden, N.J.* (Camden, NJ: S. Chew, 1864), ac03045s, CWP.

Advertisers went to great lengths to outline when volunteers would receive each portion of their bounty, as some payments were delayed more than others. Recruiters—whether in person or, more commonly, in their advertisements—remarked on the size of the bounties offered. One September 21, 1864 notice in the *New York Herald* argued that men enlisting with them would receive the highest available bounties. This notice faced stiff competition, however, from several other notices making the same claim on the very same page.[104]

The focus on financial bounties is not hard for present-day readers to understand. In turn, recruiters made known the danger of losing potential bounties while still having to serve in the military through conscription. Conscripts did not receive the same bounties as volunteers, and advocates of enlistment made sure to let readers and listeners know.[105] "Take the bounties while the opportunity lasts!" declared one New York poster, adding that "THE DRAFT IS INEVITABLE. IT CAN'T BE SHIRKED."[106] Another, this time from Framingham, Massachusetts, gave a very specific breakdown of volunteer versus conscript finances. Volunteers would receive state and federal pay, federal and town bounties, and (if eligible) state aid for families, totalling a potential $801; drafted men would only receive federal pay equal to $192.[107] Recruiters made sure to instruct their audiences that they might have to serve in the military anyway, so they might as well secure the greatest financial rewards for doing so.

Recruiters raised other economic considerations besides bounties. They listed in their advertisements the rates of pay that volunteers would receive. They informed men with wives and/or children that relief would be made available to their family members. They announced that volunteers would receive ancillary benefits, like rations, uniforms, and lodging. Crucially,

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[104] *New York Herald,* September 21, 1864.
[105] Wiley, *Billy Yank,* 38.
[106] *Forward, Volunteers!* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03143s, CWP.
[107] *Seventy-Six Men* (n.p., n.d.), item ac03004s, CWP.

they frequently added that enlistees would begin receiving these various benefits immediately upon, or shortly after, enlisting. One advertisement in the *New York Sun,* similar to many others, made no patriotic appeal but made sure readers knew that volunteers in the 16th New York Cavalry "will receive the highest bounties paid and relief tickets for your families."[108] Some recruiters attested to the quality of supplies that their soldiers received. Propagandists for the Clinton Rifles informed readers of their poster that "The Uniform is Handsome, well made, and will not drop off after two week's wear."[109] Even rations became relevant in this economic angle. Another broadside, this one recruiting for the navy, invited volunteers "who prefer Active Service and Fresh Beef, to midnight watches and salt junk."[110]

Beyond payments and handouts, recruiters emphasized the relative comfort of soldiers who enlisted in their units. They commonly asserted that their camp or barracks was particularly pleasant. Recruiters on behalf of New Jersey's 34th Regiment of Mounted Infantry told readers that their unit's barracks (where they would likely remain for at least eight months) was "beautifully situated on the banks of the Mississippi," with high-quality quarters, no illness among the soldiers, and with "Good bathing, fishing and hunting."[111] Another advertisement described how volunteers would have the opportunity to stay in camp "in the MOST DELIGHTFUL SPOT ON STATEN ISLAND," where officers were closely attentive to the well-being, comfort, and happiness of their men, and soldiers had the opportunity to enjoy excellent swimming, fishing, and hunting.[112] To the present-day reader, these advertisements sound like promotions for resorts—not military encampments! Meanwhile, a poster for the

[108] "$565," *New York Sun,* September 15, 1863.
[109] *Now is the Time for Those Who Would Serve Their Country.* ([New York]: n.p., n.d.), item ac03154s, CWP.
[110] *Jack Tars, Ahoy!!* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03162s, CWP.
[111] *$500 Bounty!* (Philadelphia: King & Baird, n.d.), item ac03097s, CWP. Note that this poster has a blank banner in one place, making it hard to be sure that this particular copy was used. It may have been an unfinished draft version of a poster later put up.
[112] *Volunteers Wanted at Once* (New York: Baker & Godwin, n.d.), item ac03238s, CWP.

Fourth New York Battery informed readers that the men in their unit would experience "Easy Service!" with "No Musket Drill! No Trenches to dig! No Heavy Loads or Knapsacks to carry!"[113] These examples, and other documents like them, argued that soldiers in their unit would receive the benefits of soldiering with as little discomfort as possible.

Recruiters for different units also competed by describing the personal benefits their particular volunteers might derive. Some described how their units were militarily superior to others. At times, these arguments rooted themselves in the discourse of glory. One notice in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* for Berdan's United States Sharp Shooters, for instance, advertised "A chance now in this brilliant corps … Berdan's men are too well known of fame to need much detail."[114] Different regiments and companies boasted that theirs were more exclusive in their selection, or drew attention to their extensive record of service.[115] These messages imparted that volunteers could enhance their status by serving in respected regiments.

To some degree, however, the attention given to the quality of a unit and its leadership arose from very practical fears about survival and the hardships of war. By enlisting with a tried and tested group of officers and/or enlisted men, volunteers could expect to perhaps fare better than those led into battle by incompetent superiors. Recruiters recognized this concern, and sometimes promoted the experience of their unit's leadership. Advertisements like one appearing in the *New York Herald* in August 1862 asserted that theirs was a brigade for those "wishing to join a tried band."[116] A notice for a unit recruiting in Camden, New Jersey devoted a paragraph of text to outlining the military experience of its officers, and even noted that many of the unit's

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[113] *Now in the Field!* (n.p., n.d.), item ac03220s, CWP.
[114] "Berdan's United States Sharp Shooters," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* August 13, 1862.
[115] See, for instance, *Mounted Rifle Rangers!* (Boston: F.A. Searle, n.d.), item ac03010s, CWP, which asserts that "The Squadron will consist of PICKED MEN!" meeting minimum height and weight requirements; *Sickles' Excelsior Brigade!* (New York: Baldwin, n.d.), item ac03235s, CWP, which gives a lengthy list of battles in which the brigade recruiting had fought.
[116] "'Sickles Brigade,'" *New York Herald,* August 26, 1862.

non-commissioned officers had military experience.[117] An uncommonly explicit advertisement in the *New York Sun* promoted itself as "a safe and honorable organization," instructing men who "wish[ed] in the day of battle of preserving your life" to "join the Corcoran Zouaves, the officers connected therewith all being men who have seen service in the field."[118] In short, the emphasis on the experience of a given unit was, in part, an argument attesting to its safety.

Probably, recruiters crafted messages focused on the comfort, welfare, and safety of the individual recruit to counter existing factors hampering enlistment. Within a year of the beginning of the war, public zeal to enlist had diminished due to reports of high death and disease rates, mismanagement relating to insufficient weapons and uniforms, and convictions that suppliers and officers paid little attention to enlisted men's welfare.[119] Recruiters surely recognized these issues, and their arguments appear clearly intended to suggest that said problems did not afflict their particular unit.

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the three major themes in Civil War recruiting propaganda—patriotic duty; identity, with its close connections to community-defined social status and reputation; and individual self interest—were by no means distinct discussions. Certainly, the long-form nature of speeches and songs allowed them a greater focus on high-minded patriotic rhetoric and appeals to identity, whereas the advertisement-like structure of posters and newspaper notices meant they devoted proportionally greater attention to the economics of enlistment. Still, these themes bled into one another in many ways. Bell Irvin Wiley notes that in men's motivations for enlistment, patriotic and practical factors were often closely intertwined.[120] This was no less true of the documents and orations prompting those

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[117] *Volunteers Wanted* (n.p., n.d.), item ac03081s, CWP.
[118] "Recruiting Headquarters," *New York Sun*, June 18, 1862.
[119] Geary, *We Need Men,* 7.
[120] Wiley, *Billy Yank,* 38.

motivations. Patriotic iconography and slogans sometimes appeared in recruiting advertisements next to breakdowns of available bounty payments. "LOOK AT THE BOUNTIES!" commanded the banner borne by an eagle on one New York recruiting poster.[121] A recruiting advertisement in the *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier* addressed itself "TO THE PATRIOTIC!" but its text drew attention to pay, rations, and bounties.[122] At an Indianapolis war meeting in late April of 1864, the state's Republican governor called upon men to enlist, describing the war as "this last great struggle for national honor and individual security and prosperity."[123] The same governor several months beforehand had called upon "each man to do his duty," while also noting that "the bounties offered [presently] are enormous" and "probably the soldiers now enlisting might never go to the field."[124] These posters, advertisements, and speeches linked personal advancement to the national interest.

One speaker at a war meeting in Chicago in late 1863 offered comments, summarized in the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, that suggested the overlap between duty to the collective and individual self-interest:

> he was in favor of using all the means that could be used to save the country, with all its blessings, with all its glories. What could be done in the present crisis but to use all our power to put down the rebellion and maintain the integrity of the nation … These [volunteers] were wanted afresh … Patriotism should lead them on. Yet money was offered as an extra inducement, so much indeed that if the war should end in a year the soldier would receive more money than he could earn at home and his board and clothing into the bargain.[125]

Here, the speaker shows that personal gain and dutiful service were not conflicting or mutually exclusive goals for volunteers. Rather, he asserted that, in the enlistment process, they

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[121] *Attention, Recruits* (n.p., n.d.), item ac03211s, CWP. An image of item ac03211s is included in Appendix A.
[122] "To the Patriotic!" *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier,* August 9, 1862.
[123] "The War Spirit in Indiana," *Daily Cleveland Herald,* May 2, 1864.
[124] "The New Draft," *Indiana State Sentinel* (Indianapolis, IN) February 8, 1864.
[125] "Address of Hon. E. Van Buren," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* December 17, 1863.

constituted harmonious ends. Rather than choosing between the good of himself or the good of the community, the discourse of recruitment asserted that a volunteer would serve both purposes through military service.

These examples of combined messages, along with the evidence throughout this chapter, demonstrate that while financial inducements became increasingly ascendant over patriotic appeals over the course of the war, the transition was not clear-cut. One can find advertisements in 1861 that publicized their unit's economic or other self-interested inducements, sometimes even bounties.[126] "All those desirous of securing the State appropriation, will take advantage of this call," declared one Camden, New Jersey poster.[127] Alternatively, one can find examples of recruiters calling on men's patriotism in the war's later years. Organizers of a Chicago war meeting in December 1863 read aloud a letter calling upon men to enlist in order to "do honor to the patriotic motives of a people who have nothing to ask for selfishness, but who are ready to brave all, dare all, and do all, for the maintenance of country, and to firmly establish and perpetuate the great constitutional and natural grants to mankind—Humanity. Justice and Liberty."[128] Similarly, the proceedings of a July 1864 war meeting in Lowell, Massachusetts included "patriotic remarks" by at least six speakers.[129] Thus, while both community-minded and self-centred elements of the discourse of recruitment were more visible at different points in the war than others, they still formed a single discourse.

At a cursory level, the multiplicity of reasons that recruiters gave for enlisting look very different than the twentieth century's centralized propaganda campaigns that

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[126] See, for example, *$100 Bounty!* (Camden, NJ: n.p., 1861), item ac03013s, CWP; *6th Regiment!* (Nashua, [NH?]: n.p., 1861), item ac03103s, CWP.
[127] *Old New-Jersey Fourth!* (Camden, NJ: h. curts, 1861), item ac03052s, CWP.
[128] "Letter from Col. De Land," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* December 17, 1863.
[129] "War Meeting," *Lowell Daily Citizen & News,* July 11, 1864. The article reports "patriotic remarks" by five named speakers "and others."

offered tightly controlled messages. Ironically, though, this very multiplicity of appeals for volunteers reveals their propagandistic nature. Taken together, they demonstrate that recruiters cared more about their goal (recruiting troops) than their message (the motivation for, or purpose of, enlistment). Exemplifying this flexible mindset, E. Van Buren's 1863 speech at Chicago "was in favor of using all the means that could be used to save the country" and employing "all our power to put down the rebellion and maintain the integrity of the nation." For him, the need for victory justified the use of any and all means necessary.[130] This thesis defines propaganda as, among other things, communication for the sake of achieving a specific outcome. The content of its message is less important than the resulting changes in behaviour or cognition on the part of the recipient(s). The examples in this chapter have shown that recruiters tried many messages to entice potential volunteers; there was, in effect, no clear, single message for recruitment. Yet these varied arguments all shared a purpose. With many messages feeding into the same goal, it appears clear that the desired outcome was, for recruiters, more important than the reasons provided for doing so. In effect, then, these messages demonstrate their propagandistic design.

Crucially, the major themes present in recruiting propaganda closely mirror the key factors that motivated men to fight. As discussed in the first chapter, the well-developed historiography of Civil War soldier motivation outlines numerous factors that led men to serve. These historians emphasize that volunteers signed up to defend the Union, the Constitution, the laws, and republican liberty; to suppress treason; to fulfill their duty to the United States; to carry out their responsibility to their Revolutionary forefathers; to sustain the honour and show the

[130] "Address of Hon. E. Van Buren," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* December 17, 1863.

patriotic pride of their home locality, ethnicity, or other community; to find adventure; to earn steady pay; and, later in the war, to acquire bounties and avoid the draft. Though Chandra Manning argues that white Union soldiers quickly became supporters of emancipation after enlisting (itself a contentious point in the historiography), she acknowledges that relatively few of them enlisted with the purpose of freeing slaves in mind. African-American men had additional motives, seeking to use enlistment as an opportunity to secure greater citizenship rights, prove their masculinity, and achieve freedom from slavery—either for themselves personally, or to destroy the institution for the benefit of African-Americans more broadly.[131]

Conclusively connecting those motivations to recruiting propaganda is difficult. Few men wrote about the impact of the media they consumed. But it would be surprising if hundreds of thousands of men who volunteered all independently invented the same handful of motivations for enlistment. Rather, it seems more likely that many of these men consumed similar media that conveyed similar messages, and appropriated them as their own motivations. Discussions in prior chapters showed that contemporaries believed in the power of persuasive communication. In the Civil War North, recruiters applied those methods to create an enticing message that combined the public with the personal.

The messages analyzed in this chapter also demonstrate the patchwork nature of patriotism in Civil War recruitment. While conventional forms of nationalism featured prominently in recruiting rhetoric, the genre also drew in other types of appeals. Recruiters mingled service to the nation-state with heritage, ethnicity, locality, gender, progress,

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[131] McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 308-310, 332, 490-492, 600; Wiley, *Billy Yank*, 17, 20, 37-44; Geary, *We Need Men*, 6, 12-14, 47, 65, 173; Taylor, "A Politics of Service," 452; Chandra Manning, *What this Cruel War was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007), 12-13.Gary Kynoch, "Terrible Dilemmas: Black Enlistment in the Union Army During the American Civil War," *Slavery and Abolition* 18, no. 2 (1997): 113-114, 121-122.

opportunities for advancement and profit, and other ideas. The discourse of nationalism benefitted from a close relationship to several other adjoining discourses. Thus, in the context of recruitment, the Civil War North saw nationalism absorb elements of numerous other discourses.

Finally, recruiting propaganda for the Union army encourages us to adjust our thinking on why Northerners fought the war. Distilling the Union cause to either a war for Union or a war for emancipation becomes difficult when recruiters represented no clearly defined meaning for enlisting; according to them, the war meant whatever they thought their audience would find convincing. If recruiters were ready to try any message that they thought would work, it undermines the idea that their messages imparted genuine belief and meaning.

In December 1863, William D. Kelley's speech at a New York City war meeting completely avoided the subject of slavery. Kelley was probably conscious of the significant number of Democrats in his audience. In addition to encouraging enthusiasm by lauding the Union army's skill and high quality of command, he emphasized patriotism, the Constitution, glory, and the need to support those already enlisted as reasons to fight.[132] Speaking five months beforehand in Philadelphia at a meeting for promoting African-American volunteerism specifically, Kelley's speech was very different. He made sure to connect the Union cause to the destruction of slavery, called upon black men to advance their race's status by fighting, and asked them to prove both their individual and collective manliness.[133] In short, Kelley defined the war and the Union cause very differently depending on the audience he was addressing. Deriving meaning from speeches and records of this type is difficult, then, since their messages

[132] "The Great War Meeting," *New-York Daily Tribune,* December 4, 1863. As previously discussed, the speaker referenced here was almost certainly William D. Kelley. However, the newspaper identifies him by different names in different places (as "Wm. D. Kelley" and "The Hon. WM. B. KELLY of Philadelphia").
[133] Kelley, Dickinson, and Douglass, *Addresses of the Hon. W.D. Kelley, Miss Anna E. Dickinson, and Mr. Frederick Douglass,* 2-3.

did not necessarily represent sincere feeling and belief. For recruiters, the Union cause was whatever it needed to be at a given time.

Conclusion

In 1920, George Creel published his account of the activities of the Committee on Public Information (CPI), the propaganda agency of the United States government active during the First World War. As chairman of the committee, Creel was intimately familiar with the practice of propaganda, and was willing to acknowledge its influence:

> It was in this recognition of Public Opinion as a major force that the Great War different most essentially from all previous conflicts … There was no part of the great war machinery that we did not touch, no medium of appeal that we did not employ. The printed word, the spoken word, the motion picture, the telegraph, the cable, the wireless, the poster, the sign-board—all these were used in our campaign to make our own people and all other peoples understand the causes that compelled America to take arms.[1]

Creel erred when he stated that that the First World War was the first war to use propaganda and consider public opinion, however. Though not directed by a central agency like the CPI, Civil War Americans recognized the importance of public opinion and attitudes. The need for troops, in particular, was too important to leave such decisions undirected. Indeed, Creel's comments bear remarkable similarity to those written by the Union League of Philadelphia (ULP) regarding their efforts in the Civil War:

> The striking degree of intelligence with which the causes of the war were discussed by the industrial people as it progressed, in their public meetings, in village groups, and in their local newspapers in remote regions, was very considerably the result of this wise and lavish propagandism, at the right moment and in the right way. Measured alongside the victories of battle-fields, this quiet conquest of wavering or hostile sentiment at the critical time is now seen to be one of the crowning feats of a great campaign on its intellectual side. The creation of sound public opinion and the neutralizing of vicious or latent sedition at such a crisis is a triumph of statesmanship. The Union League men were makers of loyalty.[2]

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[1] George Creel, *How We Advertised America: The First Telling of the Amazing Story of the Committee on Public Information that Carried the Gospel of Americanism to Every Corner of the Globe* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920), 3, 5.

[2] Union League of Philadelphia Committee on History and Oliver H.G. Leigh, *Chronicle of the Union League of Philadelphia 1862 to 1902* (Philadelphia: Wm. F. Fell, 1902), 103-104.

Like the CPI, the ULP's comments refer to a broad range of propagandistic purposes, of which encouraging enlistment was only a portion. Yet clearly, the ULP's involvement with disseminating pro-enlistment messages to sway popular views shared a similar purpose to the CPI. The ULP's publication efforts may not have used the same media, operated on the same scale, or had the status of an official government agency as the CPI did, but both performed the same essential function.

The ULP is but one example of the many institutions, groups, and individuals who used communications media to promote enlistment in the Union army. While they often operated at a local or small-scale level, perhaps in some cases only distributing a single document or giving a single speech, the propagandistic environment created by these documents was cumulatively significant. These mass communications media campaigns played a key role in recruiting the Union army in the Civil War, just as it did for militaries in the conflicts of the twentieth century, often cast as the heyday of propaganda and the focal point of the field of propaganda history.

The view of Civil War soldiers as predominantly internally- and independently-motivated ignores the lengths recruiters went to in order to entice their service. Still, recruiting propaganda in the Civil War appeared very different from its twentieth century counterparts. Civil War recruiting propaganda poorly fits a model of propaganda based upon the First World War and onward because of its diffuse sources of creation, its extremely broad range of messages, and its strong continuity with antebellum communications culture. Furthermore, Civil War propaganda lacks the sinister connotations ascribed to the category in the twentieth century. In order to understand propaganda in the past, then, historians must consider the concept within the cultural context of a given time and place. Rather than evaluating propaganda based on how much

something looks like twentieth-century mass media campaigns, one must consider the power structures and communications networks present in the era in question.

Doing so may help scholars better understand propaganda campaigns of the present day. In many ways, the internet looks like a return to the diffusely controlled communications media of the nineteenth century. Understanding how a multiplicity of actors contributing a multiplicity of messages to a single purpose is becoming increasingly relevant, as society begins to grapple with the political impacts and influences of this new communications medium.

Civil War recruiting propaganda also encourages scholars to rethink the use of power to fill the Union ranks during the Civil War. Typical narratives of Civil War recruitment tend to emphasize individualistic self-motivation at the beginning of the war that transitions toward state-sponsored coercion through conscription. The presence of recruiting propaganda challenges this tidy narrative. Early recruitment was not so clearly rational and individualistic, as individuals made decisions within an environment pressuring them toward a particular choice. Even after drafting became commonplace, recruiters continued to exercise power through communications media to promote voluntary enlistment. Thus, power—albeit through a less heavy-handed means than the draft—was still a part of recruitment early in the war, and it took multiple forms after conscription began.

Limits placed on anti-enlistment arguments further bolstered recruiters' communicative power. For much of the war, provost marshals and their ilk had the power to arrest those disseminating messages that discouraged enlistment.[3] Thus, pro-enlistment literature, music, and speeches met with few counter-arguments. With these limits in place, audiences did not find

[3] William A. Blair, *With Malice Toward Some: Treason and Loyalty in the Civil War Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 107-108, 167.

themselves situated in a free and open marketplace of ideas, but an environment designed to goad them into action.

The messages conveyed through recruiting media also encourage reconsideration of the meaning and roots of Civil War era patriotism. As we have seen, recruiters' arguments broadly appealed to some combination of men's patriotism, identities, and self-interest. Taken together, their messages posited that American men could simultaneously aid their country while adding to their wealth and improving their social standing. Additionally, this thesis has shown that recruiting rhetoric connected diverse discourses ranging from gender to self-interest with patriotism. Some of these connections have already been acknowledged in scholarship; as examples, scholars have identified relationships between local, state, and national identities in the antebellum era, and noted connections between nationalism and gender in the Confederacy.[4] The connections between nationalism and some of the other discourses discussed in this thesis, however, are less clearly understood by current scholars, warranting further analysis of the interplay between them.

This thesis has stopped short of making definitive claims about the effectiveness of recruiting propaganda on a large scale. Identifying its impact on particular individuals has, at times, been possible. But with a limited pool of primary sources that attest to soldiers' motivations, and even fewer sources describing the influences of communications media in forming those motivations, arriving at conclusions for the United States in general would be incredibly difficult. However, if future scholars find a way to conduct this type of research—possibly through a localized analysis of recruiting propaganda's impact in a specific

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[4] Harry S. Laver, "Rethinking the Social Role of the Militia: Community-Building in Antebellum Kentucky," *The Journal of Southern History* 68, no. 4 (November 2002): 780-789; Paul Quigley, *Shifting Grounds: Nationalism and the American South, 1848-1865* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 163-170.

community—their findings would prove significant to scholars' understandings of soldier motivation, the Union cause, and propaganda history. I leave this potential project open for future study.

Additionally, this thesis has focused narrowly on Civil War propaganda intended to promote enlistment. These efforts are far from the only deployments of communications media to support the war effort, however. Even just amongst the documents analyzed in this thesis, many of the sources promoting enlistment also sought to raise funds for local recruiting bounties, quell disloyal sentiment, and the like. These other campaigns, the interplay between them, and their cumulative effects warrant further analysis.

Broadly, propaganda in the nineteenth century remains an understudied topic. But these nineteenth-century media campaigns offer meaningful context for understanding the changes propaganda underwent and the forms propaganda took in the twentieth century, as well as their current iterations in the twenty-first. Understanding nineteenth-century propaganda is valuable in its own right, too, as it enriches our understanding of power relations and lived experiences in that period. With further study in this area, we can better understand John D. Billings's "fishers of men."[5]

[5] John D. Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee, or The Unwritten Story of Army Life* (Boston: George M. Smith, 1887), 36.

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Appendix A: Recruiting Posters

Since the recruiting posters discussed in this thesis are fundamentally visual documents, I have included a small selection of them in this appendix.

Image courtesy of the Civil War Treasures Collection: Civil War Posters, 1861-1865, New-York Historical Society (item ac03186s). The original poster measured 97 x 61 cm.

I have transcribed the smaller text in the section below the bounties on the next page. It should be noted that such verbose sections of text were not common.

Men of Kings County! be not laggards now, but sustain the enviable reputation which our city won by the prompt response of her Sons to the President's first call. Shall it be said of us, that, though reared amid relics and mementoes of Revolutionary times, we, the blood of whose sires enrich the soil of this Island, and whose bones form a monumental hecatomb in our city, which will stand for ages, a source of pride to us, and a testimonial to their valor, patriotism, and self-devotion—shall it be said of the children of such sires, that, in the hour of their Country's peril, they turned a deaf ear to her appeal, belied their ancestry, and proved recreant to the high trust handed down to them—the defence of National Liberty, honor, and even life itself—a duty as sacredly incumbent upon every man as the protection from insult or assault of wife, mother, or sister!—and he who would not lay down his life, if need be, in defence of either, is but a living libel upon manhood.

Come, Brethren, and help to destroy the hydra-headed Monster, Rebellion, which is endeavoring to strangle our Mother! Do not, by delay, make a resort to conscription necessary! Relieve our beautiful City of the stigma which that necessity would cast upon her escutcheon. There is little merit in COMPULSORY Patriotism, and such of our young men as wait to be drafted will FEEL this to be the case. NOW is the accepted time! Come at once! But, above all, COME WITH US—men who have served in the field, and understand our WHOLE duty, and who will discharge it with heart and soul—the duty we owe both to our companions in arms, and to the glorious cause in which we are embarked.

"LET THOSE FIGHT NOW WHO NEVER FOUGHT BEFORE,

AND THOSE WHO'VE ALWAYS FOUGHT NOW FIGHT THE MORE."

Image courtesy of the Civil War Treasures Collection: Civil War Posters, 1861-1865, New-York Historical Society (item ac03074s). The original poster measured 68 x 51 cm.

VOLUNTEERS
WANTED
For New Jersey Regiments,
TO FILL THE QUOTA OF
WATERFORD TOWNSHIP, N.J.
THE BEST BOUNTY OFFERED IN THE STATE.

In addition to the Bounties paid by the U. S. Government,
Camden County - will pay, - $200
Waterford Township " " - 200
Total 400

ALSO, The Families of Married Men or dependent Widowed Mothers will receive $6 per month, and single Men receive $2 per month, on their honorable discharge from Service.

GOVERNMENT BOUNTY & PREMIUM, - $402
THOSE WHO ARE NOT VETERANS, - 302

And also one month's Pay in Advance.

The recruit is furnished with provisions, clothing, and medical attendance, and is paid in money for such part of his allowance of clothing as he does not draw.
APPLY TO

Capt. JOHN T. SMITH,
Recruiting Offic
Long-A-Coming, or Parsons' *Hotel*, Cam

December 14, 1863.

CAMDEN DEMOCRAT PRINT.

Image courtesy of the Civil War Treasures Collection: Civil War Posters, 1861-1865, New-York Historical Society (item ac03093s). The original poster measured 63 x 47 cm.

As exemplified by this poster, some posters were highly focused on financials. This poster also shows how some posters had little to no iconography.

Image courtesy of the Civil War Treasures Collection: Civil War Posters, 1861-1865, New-York Historical Society (item ac03211s). The original poster measured 116 x 81 cm.

The eagle with the banner instructing readers to "LOOK AT THE BOUNTIES!" exemplifies the confluence of patriotism and financial self-interest in recruiting.

COLONEL RUSH'S

LIGHT CAVALRY.

Company K,

ACTIVE MEN WANTED!

THE REGIMENT IS NOW IN CAMP ON THE

Second Street Road ab. Nicetown Lane.

This Company will be fully Equipped here, with

HORSES, ARMS, AND CLOTHING.

RECRUITING STATION,

403 Chestnut Street.

T. W. NEILL, 1st Lieut.
2d "

HOWARD ELLIS, Captain.

KING & BAIRD, Printers, No. 607 Sansom Street, Philadelphia.

Image courtesy of the Civil War Treasures Collection: Civil War Posters, 1861-1865, New-York Historical Society (item ac03279s). The original poster measured 83 x 60 cm.

FALL IN! FALL IN! FALL IN!

Senatorial Regiment

COLONEL ANTHONY CONK.

RESPOND

TO YOUR COUNTRY'S CALL!

RECRUITS WANTED

To fill up a Company of this Regiment, under the command of Officers who have seen service in the field.

The following Bounties will be paid to all those who volunteer:

The City of Brooklyn,............$60
The State,.......................... 50
The United States,...............102
One Month's Pay in Advance,... 13
$225

$150 before leaving the State, and $75 as soon as discharged!

PAY commences from date of enlistment, and good QUARTERS and RATIONS provided immediately.

CAPT. J. W. SWIFT,
1st LIEUT. E. ROGERS, Recruiting Officers.

Tent, City Hall Park, Brooklyn.

$163 BOUNTY!

SPINOLA'S EMPIRE BRIGADE!

RESPOND

TO YOUR COUNTRY'S CALL!

HILLHOUSE LIGHT INFANTRY!

Recruits Wanted for Comp'y I,

CAPTAIN JOHN B. HONSTAIN.

$25 STATE BOUNTY as soon as mustered, and $25 more and One Month's Pay as soon as the Company is full. $27 UNITED STATES BOUNTY when the Regiment is mustered into service, and $75 more when honorably discharged.

PAY FROM $13 TO $23 PER MONTH!

RELIEF TICKETS will be issued to the Families of Volunteers. Comfortable Quarters, Rations and Uniforms furnished immediately.

$5 WILL BE PAID TO ANY PERSON FURNISHING ONE OR MORE RECRUITS.

This Company will be commanded by Officers who have seen service, and is nearly full; therefore,

APPLY EARLY AT 1373 BROADWAY,

Or, in the Evening, at the Residence of CAPT. HONSTAIN, corner Leonard and Devoe Streets, Williamsburg.

1st LIEUTENANT, WM. B. AVERY.
2d LIEUTENANT, A. L. BAGLEY.

Capt. J. B. HONSTAIN.

ARMÉE DU GENERAL F. SIGEL.

AVIS

AUX ETRANGERS!

AVIS AUX ETRANGERS

Les Francais, Italiens, Allemands, Espagnols et les autres etrangers peuvent s'enroler dans un Regiment actuellement en Campagne dans la Virginie.

Le Capitaine d'Etat Major ERCOLE SAVIATTI, a ete sur la demande expresse du MAJ. GEN. SIGEL, autorise le 26 Juillet, par son Excellence le Gouverneur de l'etat de New York, a organiser 4 Compagnies de Tirailleurs Etrangers.

S'adresser de suite a l'office de recrutement,

53 BOWERY.

TERMES D'ENROLEMENT AVANTAGEUX.

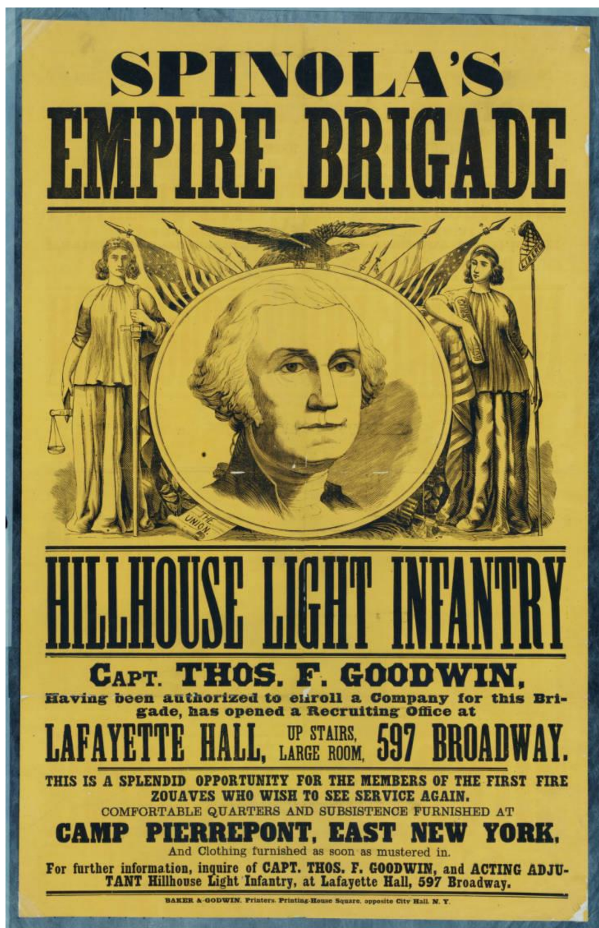
Capt. E. SAVIATTI, Maj. Gen. Sigel's Staff.

Images courtesy of the Civil War Treasures Collection: Civil War Posters, 1861-1865, New-York Historical Society (clockwise, from top left: items ac03179s, ac03171s, ac03163s). The original posters measured 96 x 61 cm, 97 x 60 cm, and 96 x 61 cm, respectively.

Together, these three posters show how recruiters sometimes reused iconography.

Image courtesy of the Civil War Treasures Collection: Civil War Posters, 1861-1865, New-York Historical Society (item ac03199s). The original poster measured 96 x 60 cm.

As others did, this poster used Irish-specific iconography and messages in order to appeal to Irish-Americans.



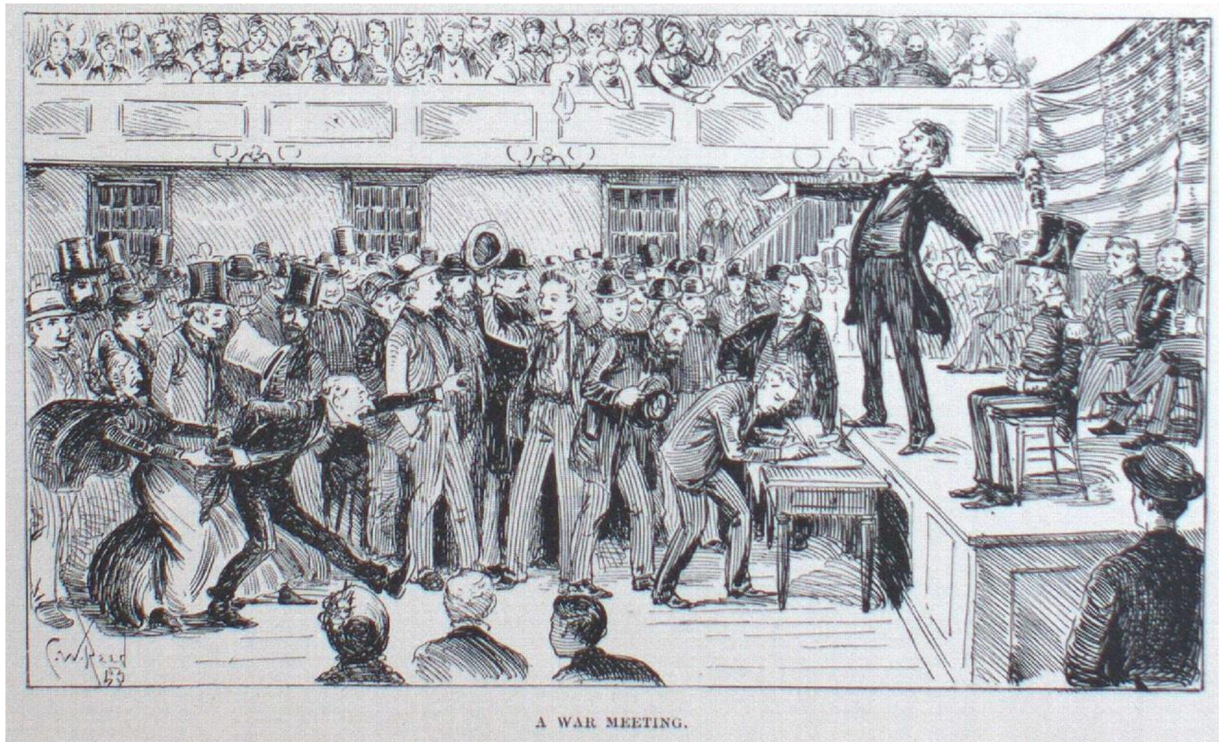
Top left image courtesy of the Popular Graphic Arts Collection, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, LC-DIG-ppmsca-19254, https://www.loc.gov/item/2003689297/. The original document measured 39.3 x 55 cm.

Top right image courtesy of the Popular Graphic Arts Collection, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, LC-DIG-pga-03523, https://www.loc.gov/item/2003689273/. The original document measured 41 x 55 cm.

Bottom left image courtesy of the Civil War Treasures Collection: Civil War Posters, 1861-1865, New-York Historical Society (item ac03175s). The original poster measured 97 x 61 cm.

These three works by Baker & Godwin, two of which constituted prewar campaign advertisements and one of which constituted a recruiting advertisement, demonstrate how printers reused existing artwork in their repertoire when creating recruiting posters.

Appendix B: Billings and Reed's War Meeting



A WAR MEETING.

John D. Billings, *Hardtack and Coffee, or The Unwritten Story of Army Life* (Boston: George M. Smith, 1887), 39. Illustration by Charles W. Reed.

This illustration from *Hardtack and Coffee* depicts the proceedings of a war meeting. As no location or date is given, Billings and Reed probably meant for it to represent war meetings in general. But as both Billings and Reed served in Massachusetts units (and were probably both from Massachusetts—it seems that, at least, Billings was), and the prior pages' examples of recruiting advertisements are drawn from Boston and Roxbury, this illustration may reflect the creators' experiences in Massachusetts specifically.