America's Martial Culture and its Evolution—A Look at the Warrior Class in Colonial America

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The population of Colonial America had seen much violence, harkening a desperate need for protection. Historian John Keegan states—that by the time of the Revolution in 1776—North America became a continent of conquest.[1] The Imperial wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries brought the colonists into contact with many different enemies, creating a specter of fear. John Shy argues that "unfriendly forces" threatened early Americans into creating a doctrine that stressed total elimination (an all-or-nothing use of force).[2] These forces included Indians and slaves. Overlapping is Don Higginbotham's argument that states that Americans practiced total war against non-whites, while restraining themselves when fighting against Papist French and Spanish, and the Protestant English.[3] These tiers of ferocity on the battlefield must have seemed necessary to the people relying on their own armed citizenry for protection on the frontier. Fred Anderson supports this point in his writing about Pontiac's War; when the settlers had lost many to this insurrection, causing them to view Indians as pests needing to be exterminated.[4] At this point emerged the need to train citizens of frontier towns for militias. Historian Robert Gross claims these "socially inclusive groups" that protected the settlements became the hub of local politics, and the militia meant the possibility to advance one's status (only for whites and protestants).[5] Did these factors contribute to the creation of a warrior culture in America, causing the young nation's xenophobia? This paper attempts to explain the importance of this martial culture and trace its evolution.

To understand the topic of martial culture, we must understand the constant need for protection (a great importance to Colonial America, martial culture can be defined as protection of the community through brutal retaliation and removal of all threats).[6] Perhaps these sentiments emphasized feelings of wariness and racism amongst the colonists. Although they legitimately

feared rogue Indian attacks, this environment of fear had extreme ramifications as peaceful tribes fell under the hatchet. The Indians involved in the Seven Years' War lost their diplomatic buffer in the French, while encroaching colonists justified wholesale slaughter under the threat of possible attack. As the institution of slavery grew in the South during the seventeenth century, southerners became afraid of the slaves they counted as property. Taking this threat seriously, the colonists looked for ways to guard against a possible revolt.

What might have caused all these fears to surface, and what ramifications did the evolution of martial culture have? As the threats grew on the eve of the Revolution, American colonists began to diverge from their British countrymen in their notions about fighting. The ideas of warfare that developed in the colonies became the foundations for the American military and government. The inclusion of the warrior class in the nation building process is evident in the way early Americans mixed politics and military prowess by electing former veterans to political offices often over scholars. The first seven presidents (Washington to Jackson) saw only two non-veterans elected. This may have reflected the social and political nature of military service in the colonies, giving those who served militarily an advantage in Presidential elections over intelligent men like John Adams. The social circles in militias like the Minutemen of Concord gave these warriors a perfect springboard to political careers.[7]

This paper will identify quantitative data and qualitative sources that will explain these questions: was there a martial culture in Colonial America, and how did fear perpetuate the need for constant aggression? Explaining the catalysts that created the warrior class of colonial and early America that spanned the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries, this paper will also show the correlation of protection at home, the push for independence, and the eventual building

of a national character that stresses the importance of military strength that was enjoyed throughout America's nationhood. A correlation can also be seen in the increase in the slave population and the fears of slave revolts just before the War for Independence, showing the racist mentality of a young America. Research has yielded evidence of veto power in the hands of veterans turned presidents; it became a weapon against Congress. Further research found literature of the era that touted the accomplishments of those slaughtering Indians in the name of safety. Through these data and sources one can see the importance put on martial culture. Reflected at the polls, Americans revered their veterans and put them on pedestals for the world to admire. As the colonists became independent, they did not shy away from vulnerability in the face of adversity. They faced perceived fears zealously, often letting their own prejudices dictate their level of brutality.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MARTIAL CULTURE

When considering martial culture in colonial America there is sufficient evidence that the colonists put great importance on preparing for war. The men of small towns trained regularly in fears of Indian attacks and slave revolts, making it important militarily and socially to train for this possibility. Robert A. Gross' book *The Minutemen and their World* shows the town of Concord—the flashpoint of the Revolution—as having regular town meetings and militia musters.[8] In preparing to go to war, the colonists put an important stress on these social institutions, forming close relationships within their respective towns as they prepared for threats to their community.[9] Eventually, the training became instrumental in starting and winning the Revolutionary War (demonstrating the importance of military preparedness to the colonists).

Before fighting so fiercely against their former countrymen, the colonists fought the Imperial wars alongside the Redcoats. During this military relationship, major differences between the British and colonists became apparent. The provincials served their communities by taking up arms, while the Redcoats joined through conscription, having no choice. Fred Anderson shows the complexities of the Seven Years' War in *A People's Army*, explaining how some of the main catalysts that created the American warrior class evolved from the differences in military experience. The provincials compared themselves to the British regulars and the strict rules they operated under, questioning their own existence in the British Empire, even contemplating a push for independence.[10] Additionally, Britain's victory became a liability for her future in North America. In using the colonists to fight the French, the British sowed the seeds of the revolution by exposing the colonists to these differences. America's martial culture emerged from this experience and started to form its own identity. As pointed out in his book *Crucible of War*, Anderson argues that independence might have been delayed without the Seven Years' War.[11] The war gave provincials a new confidence and a lust for war.

As the Seven Years' War ended, the colonists imbibed the lessons learned. British regulars left and the provincials had an open frontier in need of defense. Colonial Americans felt incredibly vulnerable, compounding the need for preparedness which became an impetus of the warrior class. They needed to stay strong in the face of possible violence. The colonists' military identity then became what John Shy characterizes as strong but vulnerable.[12] This identity focused on brutality in warfare, as the boyishly confident Americans tried to avoid being like Europe in the way they fought.[13]

During this process, the colonists developed an idea of warfare that is steeped in retaliation. The Seven Years' War taught them a pattern: virtues are threatened, invasion and early defeats, followed by perseverance and eventual triumph.[14] The strong yet vulnerable Americans did not start wars but became determined to end them. This pattern is repeated in the Revolution and the War of 1812, with shades of it seen in the Civil War. The American way of life is threatened by the French, British; and the Confederacy, leaving no choice but to declare war, then experiencing early adversity in a supposedly doomed battle that leads to victory.[15] Shy's pattern—almost as beautifully played out as a Shakespearian drama—galvanizes martial culture for the colonists in the Seven Years' War, cementing the idea that they can accomplish great things when put in difficult situations. But as the revolution approached, a racial element convoluted this culture of preparedness with Indian skirmishes and an increasing slave population arousing fear.

FEAR ON THE FRONTIER

The settlers of the frontier became dreadfully fearful of Indians and slaves. The French threat to the British had been removed at the end of the Seven Years War, dissolving any need to maintain a standing army, and leaving western settlements vulnerable to the tribes who previously dealt with the French (suddenly operating without restraint). The western frontier became a hotbed for violence between settlers and Indians. The Indians viewed the recent Protestant settlers as aggressors; the spread west in search of new lands looked like an invasion of sorts. Pontiac, a spiritually driven Ottawa war leader sparked a pan-Indian, religious uprising against these settlers (a Revolution of their own) in what became known as Pontiac's War. The attacks raged in response to British General Amherst's policies towards Indians coupled with

colonial encroachment.[16] This justified Pontiac's initial skirmishes to other Indians, with several nations passing around the war belt and breaking treaties with the British, causing Amherst to resort to harsh tactics.[17]

The British General had few favorable options; reinforcements and reserves had been depleted from the previous Imperial tussle, local militias could do little to stop the onslaught, and Amherst himself failed to stop the Indians with conventional tactics.[18] The strength of the Indians could only be countered by an unprecedented use of germ warfare with Amherst's order to spread smallpox. In spreading disease, Amherst's horrendous act created an example for the colonists to follow, which became part of the American pattern of war (against Indians and never against Europeans). It is a cliché of sorts when discussing the tragic treatment of Indians throughout US History; the spreading of smallpox is forever linked to early Anglo-Indian relations. The idea of Indians as less than human also became paradigmatic in frontier warfare, as settlers demonstrated this sense of superiority.

The settlers of western Pennsylvania viewed their friendly Indian neighbors as enemies, fearing an attack at any time. In this fear grew the ideas of superiority that justified attacks on innocents. After Pontiac's War, this fear gave way to slaughter. The Paxton Boys were a group of Scots-Irish Protestants who formed a raiding party preemptively attacking the Indians at Conestoga Town and Lancaster, Pennsylvania, involving the deaths of women and children. These incidents gave credence to the martial culture of the colonists, as Indian attacks drove the armed citizenry's fear and rationalized civilian casualties to white settlers, a perfect what-to-do when faced with constant Indian threats. In the words of Historian Fred Anderson, the colonists felt "the best Indians must be those who could do no harm, for all eternity".[19] The Indians

became a threat just by their existence. This fear on the part of the colonists created an environment where the Indians became pests in need of removal, rationalizing the kind of attacks launched by the Paxton Boys.

The events in western Pennsylvania became controversial, leading to the questions asked in Philadelphia that led to revolution (such as *Who is protecting white settlers in the hostile frontier?*). The farmers and merchants who had dealt with many losses during the Seven Years' War and Pontiac's War looked at the Paxton Boys as triumphant heroes. Early American poet Christopher Gymnast penned the limerick "some lads, of whose courage no mortal can doubt, who's bravery and valor admits no dispute, having long lived in Paxton, and had many swingings from merciless, savage, and barbarous Indians."[20] The frontier settlers saw Indians as savages, preferring their demise over coexistence. They saw men who acted preemptively as brave, glamorizing civilian casualties within the specter of fear at the time. A further immortalization of these supposed heroes comes from a French play written in 1764, "The Paxton Boys-A Farce," with two Protestants and a Quaker debating the need for protection and the rights of innocent Indians. The Protestants are steadfast in their resolve, even quoting the biblical verse Psalm 137:9 about happily killing the children of Babylon. The Quaker— presumably the comic relief of the play—laments this talk in front of the Protestants, but later admits to being relieved that "such numbers of men met armed, for the support of government, and to prevent inhuman massacre."[21] The author of this play is being satirical in his representation, but the Christopher Gymnast poem props up the Paxton Boys with valiant imagery, while both works show the mindset of the warriors who protected these small towns. They saw Indians as subhuman and their attacks as an ever-present threat. Feelings of

vulnerability drove the colonist's fears and it became important to consider barbaric tactics to prevent barbaric attacks, justifying the malicious attitude of the warrior class.

MILITIA PROTECTION

The protection of small frontier towns fell mainly to the militia, an institute convoluted in myth and legend. The typical militia story taught in schools presents a pretty picture of savvy frontiersmen, seasoned in Indian warfare that flouted conventional tactics. While the militia protected their hometowns, ineffectiveness limited their use to reserve forces in the Imperial wars, and they often proved to be unreliable in major engagements.[22] This became clear as battles like those at Camden were lost because of fleeing militia. Despite inefficiencies, the lore of the militia stems from legendary and mythical battles like Cowpens, as the militia commander and tactical genius Daniel Morgan utilized his forces to great effect.[23] Colonial Americans saw the romantic nature of the partisan troops as an embodiment of the fighting spirit. The warrior class then developed around these militias and the myths associated with them.

The militia became rangers in search of battles, consistently wary of Indians and slaves. During the revolution, the militia did not operate the war of attrition portrayed in books and films. The romanticized version has colonial militias sniping enemies from afar and displacing, while the British foolishly stood in ranks waiting to be fired upon. They instead became henchmen, fighting their loyalist neighbors more than Redcoats, hunting down their Tory neighbors.[24] This made the militia protectors of democracy in the eyes of frontier settlers. While the Revolutionary War had been decided by conventional battles involving Continentals, the militia later became the symbol for the fight against tyranny, against those who would take their

freedom. This image persisted even as the militia became an element of social control after the war, putting down rebellions in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts.[25]

Militia duty became a major part of American warrior culture by perpetuating its own importance in protecting the community. Whereas British soldiers had no choice in service, colonial Americans grew up with patriotic notions of service and protection. The militia protected their vulnerable frontier communities, causing the evolution of a social hierarchy. Because of this, an attitude of racial superiority manifested itself. This attitude was solidified by the mass importation of slaves in the eighteenth century. A constant fear of slave revolts evolved out of this for colonists in the South.

FEELINGS OF SUPERIORITY

The personal sentiments of superiority are a natural byproduct of being citizen soldiers of the militia. Depending on which militia unit, the militiamen had less restrictions to abide by than professional and conscripted soldiers. This made the men of colonial America less interested in the military as a professional career, and more interested in civic advancement through militia service. Militias attracted many men from these settlements, including the social elite—and often discouraging anyone of low class and non-whites. Concord's militia, for example, saw service exemptions for students and slaves.[26] This shows the attitude of colonists in what they felt made a good soldier. The subservient and scholarly need not apply. Historian Robert A. Gross points out, the Minutemen of Concord relied on these social and familial connections before and after the war to keep order in the town.[27] It is not surprising that a sense of superiority is prevalent in

the militia story, as these connections allowed for a new social landscape after the war that excluded more and more undesirable townspeople.[28]

The Chesapeake region further defined this superiority racially. The white colonists of Maryland and Virginia fought Indians while maintaining a close eye on important chattel property—their slaves. During the decades leading up to revolution, the population of these colonies rose steadily, bringing in more slaves to work the tobacco farms of this area. Figure 1 shows the increase in Maryland's population during the eighteenth century in terms of racial make-up. The black and white populations both increased significantly, according to these data in Figure 1.[29] The percentage increase also shows a growing black population in Virginia (from less than 2% to 13%) that spread the fear of slave rebellions. [30] Similar data can be found in Maryland, with Table 2 suggesting, with an increase in blacks of up to 30%, the fear of slaves added to the prevalent fear of Indian attacks that existed for over a century before independence. [31] According to a document from 1627, Virginia militia commander Thomas Willoughby asked for and received permission to attack Indians for no apparent reason, an early example of the true nature of marital culture. [32] The men in charge of protection saw threats everywhere.

Figure 1
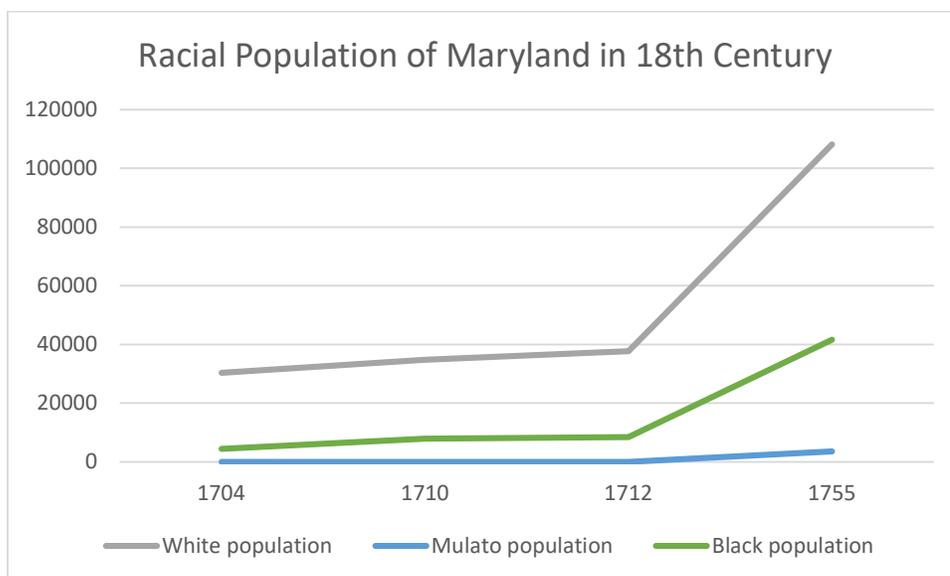
Racial Population of Maryland in 18th Century

Source: *Historical Statistics of the United States, Earliest Times to the Present: Millennial Edition*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006, Table Eg169-181.

Table 1

Virginia's Population Increase by Race (Percentage)

Year	Total Population	% of Whites	% of Blacks
1624	1,275	98.3	1.7
1703	60,606	87	13

Source: *The Old Dominion in the Seventeenth Century: A Documentary History of Virginia, 1606-1689*. Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg, Va., by the University of North Carolina Press, 1975, 121.

Table 2

Maryland's population Increase by Race (Percentage)

Year	% of Whites	% of Blacks
1704	87.2	12.8
1762	69.7	30.3

Source: *The Population of the British Colonies in America before 1776: A Survey of Census Data*. **Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975, 161.**

During this time, a differentiation between indentured servants (white) and slaves (black) became necessary. The white servants attained a higher status based on skin color and religion, as colonists saw black slaves as heathens. This led authorities to make laws pertaining to such things as property ownership and sexual relations. Property ownership became based on race as early as the 1660's, protecting property rights of the indentured servants and confiscating the slaves' properties for church donations.[33] The laws against interracial fornication had grave consequences as pointed out by Historian Edmond S. Morgan, who brings up the well cited case of white Hugh Davis being severely whipped for "lying with a Negro."[34] These early laws laid a foundation for racist America to take shape.

MARTIAL CULTURE IN POST-REVOLUTIONARY UNITED STATES

As the war came to an end, the warrior class of America came to its final stages of evolution. The new nation struggled under the confederacy and eventually adopted Federalism as a form of government. The election of warrior hybrid Washington unanimously by electorates followed shortly after, as the nation picked a statesman with a military past over the scholarly candidates. During this process, the new nation debated the legitimacy of standing armies (a

possible catalysts for despotism, such as those of ancient Rome), which was a concept favored by the first President.[35] Standing armies had always been unattractive to the colonists because of their experiences with the British. But Washington's actions during the Revolution alleviated this fear, and his work during both the Revolutionary and Seven Years' wars showed how control of the army by civilian authorities could avoid takeovers by tyrants.[36] This point became important as North Carolinians rebelled against a tax on the distillation of whiskey, a deeply imbedded cultural practice for the grain farmers of the new state.

As Alexander Hamilton proposed taxes on imported and exported liquor, North Carolinians (for whom the distillation of whiskey represented a way of life) grumbled about the perceived injustice. The Southern congressmen voiced their opposition, as Anti-Federalists and Tar-Heels alike saw the taxation as oppressive to North Carolinians and Virginians, while North Carolina's General Assembly instructed that state's Senators to oppose the tax.[37] This is where warrior President Washington intervened with his recruitment of fifteen-thousand federal troops showed the benefits of a standing army with centralized control. The troops scattered the rebels as the strength of the new nation frightened all opposition, and then arrested thirty-two men whom the authorities tried them for treason—while two men received guilty sentences, they were later pardoned by Washington.[38] The rebels agreed to submit to the power of the federal government because of federal troops acting as a standing army and becoming an attractive form of protection in the new nation.

MARTIAL CULTURE EVOLVES: A HYBRID EMERGES

The era of colonialism created the ideal warrior: standing ready to protect the country from any possible threats. It showed the colonists how important a martial culture can be in the face of adversity. However, racial and religious elements caused a thought process among the leaders of the new nation causing a lasting paradigm of harsh treatment for non-white protestants. As the British became less of a presence on the continent, colonists (who were becoming Americans) proceeded to govern their country under the guise of military prowess. America became a nation led by rambunctious fighters, separating themselves militarily and politically from Britain and the rest of the world. They created a nation based on their warrior ethos encompassing a "bring it on" mentality. Having explored the importance of marital culture, this paper will now examine the evolution of this warrior ethos, and how colonists under British protection became gung-ho defenders of white, protestant America. This evolution's consequences would last as recent as the twenty-first century.

THE WAY BRITONS INFLUENCED REVOLUTIONARY FERVOR

The British Army and Navy protected the colonists from other European powers. The Imperial wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries brought the Redcoats in close contact with the colonies in order to protect them from the French and Indian and Spanish alliance. These incursions into colonial communities often left a bad taste in the colonists' mouths. The soldiers of England earned a brutish reputation through bloody battles and harsh punishments. Major General Wolfe, a commander who fought in the Seven Years' War, demonstrated what earned the British officers this reputation perfectly. His slaughter at Quebec showed the nature of

British brutality as they raped and murdered and left a ruined land.[39] These instances occurred in battles against the French, but provincials fighting alongside the Redcoats had qualms with Redcoat behavior as well.

The militia units fighting in the Seven Years' War experienced the brutality of the British Army not just by proxy in battle, but also military discipline. The British Rules and Articles of War pertained to the provincials just the same as the Redcoats, and colonists became subject to martial punishment from British officers under these strict rules. This seemed excessively harsh compared to the 1754 Massachusetts Mutiny Act. This act restricted provincial commanders in their treatment of the soldiers the Bay Colony. It set limitations on punishments, giving colonists freedom from harsh treatment. Comparatively, these two systems had glaring differences, such as the limitation on lashings administered; British punishments could exceed hundreds while provincials under the simple Mutiny Act kept the number of lashings limited to thirty-nine.[40] These differences and others fostered the martial culture of colonial America to evolve by compounding the cultural differences of provincials and Redcoats. It showed American soldiers how strict the British officers could be.

Provincial soldiers lived a life that differed from the Redcoats in many ways. The colonial community in which they lived centered around traditional values and religious ideals. Additionally, the militia units usually contained the elite men of their respective towns, starkly contrasted with that of dregs of British society that became conscripted soldiers in the King's Army.[41] A comparative look at Redcoat behavior during the Seven Years' War gave provincials a sense of superiority over their protectorates. The Britons, in turn, viewed the provincials'

contribution during the war as inadequate.[42] These differences caused a rift that led the colonists to revolution.

QUESTIONING DEPENDENCE, CONTEMPLATING INDEPENCE

By defeating the French in 1763, Britons removed the last European threat in North America. In helping the British, the colonists learned important lessons about war and protection. The colonists gained a new sense of confidence, believing their contribution to the Seven Years' War directly led to victory. This victory also led the provincials to ask important questions. The colonists asked themselves about their British protectors, wondering if they truly needed them, and about the relevance of their own position in the empire. These questions led to talks about a push for independence.[43] But amidst the debate to declare independence, the question of protection became more important.

Smaller settlements relied heavily on the militia for protection. Western frontier towns needed these units to patrol and repel any attacks (by Indians, as well as rebellious slaves). Faced with uncertainty, protection became the main reasons for militia formations, composed of frightened settlers. As these amateur forces developed into semi-professional armies, local militias became (as pointed out by Don Higginbotham in *War and Society in Revolutionary America: The Wider Dimensions of Conflict*) the basis for the Continental Army.[44] The militia, an imported European institution, relied on structure, requiring this armed citizenry to train regularly, and step in where the regular troops could not, giving colonists a favorable perception of service in the militia, with most able-bodied men striving to become citizen soldiers.[45] These

militia men eventually made a push into politics, taking the first steps of evolution into warrior hybrids.

VIRGINIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WARRIOR CLASS: CREATION OF THE WARRIOR HYBRYD

A superior attitude among colonists prevailed as American democracy took root. The colony of Virginia demonstrates this attitude perfectly, which had racial connotations. The elites of Virginia certainly feared a slave rebellion as they experienced a rising black population. Before the war (and before becoming the fourth President), James Madison felt the only weakness in the colony would be a slave revolt.[46] This reflects the major fear of slaves in Virginia, which came close to reality when provincial governor Lord Dunmore, following the fighting at Lexington and Concord, angered many of Virginia's elite by offering freedom to slaves who served in the British Army, galvanizing the men of Virginia's upper class into action.[47]

The elites of Virginia leading up to the war became politically active in the push for independence. The list of these elites contains many of the men that history students now identify as founding fathers, including the first President and Commander in Chief, George Washington. Washington's commission in the Virginia militia during the Seven Years' War brought him to the forefront of that colony's political quagmire. During the war, the colonel faced opposition from local government in the form of divided war-making powers (forcing him to become a lobbyist as well as a soldier, a huge evolutionary step towards the warrior's statesman status).[48] In his dealings with the Virginia Royal Governor Dinwiddie, Washington often circumvented

authority through the General Assembly.[49] This became influential in later contributions from Washington to Federalism because of the need for a strong central government.[50] As the Revolutionary War approached, other Virginians became instrumental in resisting the British through military and political action. But these men allowed their prejudices to dictate democracy, letting white supremacy become a tenet of Virginia politics, and the warrior politicians of the colony later espoused this ideology as the nation's elite.

Jefferson, the third President, acts as a perfect example to the gaining of prestige through militia service, as he served briefly as county lieutenant during the war.[51] After joining the Continental Congress, he became a key player in politics as he authored the Declaration of Independence, creating the new nation through diplomacy rather than violence. Perhaps this is why Americans celebrate July 4th as the nation's birthday as opposed to June 5th, the first battle at Lexington and Concord. The author of Independence truly separated the new nation from the Mother Country through intellectual channels as opposed to violent resistance. But Jefferson here is an example of Virginia's warrior class and its partiality towards slavery and western expansion. The Virginian famously thought of American democracy as an "empire of liberty."[52] As a slave-owning planter who eventually made the Louisiana purchase, Jefferson can be linked to the racist ideology and expansion into the Indian territory that Virginia's warrior class imbibed, and is remembered with several colonial Virginian warrior politicians who fought to become part of the mechanics of government. His position in Virginia's early contributions to democracy clearly shows the colony's political foundation of xenophobia and racial superiority.

Fourth President James Madison is connected to this culture as well. His veteran status is tenuous at best—serving as militia colonel under the command of his father—seeing no combat

due to health issues.[53] Madison's contribution to the revolution, however, came in the form of intellectual debate, becoming a strong voice in the formation of American democracy like other Virginians. His ultimate contribution came in the form of religious liberty by drafting an amendment that guaranteed freedom of religion and created the separation of church and state necessary in the fledgling democracy.[54] Madison, more politician than warrior, nonetheless belongs to this class of Virginians who fought and thought, true hybrids of warrior statesmen in colonial America.

The next president directly after Madison, James Monroe, fits the paradigm of warrior statesman better than most others in this group (except Washington, of course). As a planter, lawyer, and soldier in the revolution, Monroe's position among Virginia's elites is well-earned through his prolific career. Becoming a world traveler as he did in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries shows how wealthy Monroe became in Virginia's plantation economy, propelling him to the upper echelon of early American politics. As an ambivalent veteran who studied law under Jefferson, Monroe did not remain idle after the war, serving in the Continental Congress and Senate, and ministry to Europe, giving the Virginia planter a worldly reputation.[55] As common themes like slavery and western expansion persisted in Virginia's warrior statesmen class, Monroe did not deter from this. Owning an estimate of over one-hundred slaves, his plantations depended on the human chattel as much as the production of its staple crops.[56] With an eye west, Monroe bought more land with the expansion of Virginia's border to the Piedmont.[57] James Monroe's contribution, then, came in his actions both on and off the battlefield as he fought for independence and worked to build the foundations of the new nation.

But these three Virginians cannot compare to the most prevalent warrior statesman to emerge from the southern colony.

THE WARRIOR EVOLVED

The Revolutionary War made famous a hybrid of warrior and politician in George Washington. The first Commander in Chief had talent in both war and state. A worthy leader in all respects, his duties continued well after the Revolution, championing Federalism and the Constitution.[58] This propelled the martial culture of America to the highest spire of the new nation. The Virginia warrior fought his way to the presidency, creating a new identity for the former colonies of strength and diplomacy.

In winning the war, America (led by Washington and other warriors) saved itself from being part of Europe.[59] But the Revolution had been fought in a very European way in its strategies and discipline, even on the part of the Virginian General. Higginbotham points out that Washington's training contained European elements of partisan warfare[60]. He also used musket attacks to great effect at battles such as Bunker Hill.[61] The General thought his army should be well-organized, nothing resembling the British perception of colonial soldiers (disorganized to a fault).[62] These European tactics helped Washington win the war. They also contributed to his centralized ideas about Federalism, as they required constant compromise between the Continental Congress and local government.[63] This showed the absolute necessity for strong central authority.

Washington clearly thought ahead about his political career after the war. Thus, the warrior statesmen had set a precedent for the American warrior class to follow by fighting wars

to build prestige, a common practice for warring statesmen.[64] Once in office, they exercised great authority by both vetoes and wars. Of the first seven presidents, five served in either a militia or regular army (as depicted in Table 3).[65] A strong correlation is the number of laws these presidents vetoed. Vetoing is the most powerful weapon for a president to use, as these warriors used it to show their strength to Congress. In Table 4, four of the five veterans had a total of twenty-two vetoes, all sustained.[66] Coincidentally, these four veto-happy presidents sent troops into thirteen battle campaigns, while the two civilian presidents and Jefferson (who served only briefly) sent no troops into battle as seen in Table 5.[67] This shows the way the martial culture of America manifested itself in the presidency and other governmental positions. This would later dictate policies dealing with Indians, leading to the numerous engagements between the US Military and Indians during western expansion and after the Civil War.

Table 3

PRESIDENTIAL VETRAN STATUS (THE FIRST SEVEN)

	Washington	Adams	Jefferson	Madison	Monroe	J. Q. Adams	Jackson
Veteran Status	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Rank Achieved	General of Continental Army	NA	County Lieutenant	Colonel of Virginia Militia	Major of Continental Army, Colonel of Virginia Militia	NA	Major General of US Army, Major General of Volunteers, Major General of Tennessee Militia

Table 4

VETOES VERSUS WARS (THE CORRELATION OF WARS FOUGHT AND VETOES IMPOSED)

Years Served	President	Bills Vetoed	Vetoes Sustained	Veteran Status	Rank Achieved
1789-1797	Washington	2	2	Yes	General
1797-1801	Adams	0	0	No	NA
1801-1809	Jefferson	0	0	Yes	County Lieutenant
1809-1817	Madison	7	7	Yes	Colonel
1817-1825	Monroe	1	1	Yes	Colonel
1825-1829	JQ Adams	0	0	No	NA
1829-1837	Jackson	12	12	Yes	Major General

Table 5

EXECUTIVE SOLDIERS (CAMPAIGNS OF US ARMY UNDER VETERAN PRESIDENTS)

Campaign start	Campaign end	War	President	Tribe/Location
Jan 1790	Aug 1795	Indian Wars	Washington	Miami
Sept 21, 1811	Nov 18, 1811	Indian Wars	Madison	Tippecanoe
June 18, 1812	Feb 17, 1815	War of 1812	Madison	Canada
July 27, 1813	Aug 1814	Indian Wars	Madison	Creek
July 5, 1814	July 5, 1814	War of 1812	Madison	Chippewa

July 25, 1814	July 25, 1814	War of 1812	Madison	Lundy's Lane
Aug 17, 1814	Aug 29, 1814	War of 1812	Madison	Bladensburg
Sept 13, 1814	Sept 13, 1814	War of 1812	Madison	McHenry
Sept 23, 1814	Jan 8, 1815	War of 1812	Madison	New Orleans
Nov 20, 1817	Oct 31, 1818	Indian Wars	Monroe	Seminole
Apr 26, 1832	Sept 20, 1832	Indian Wars	Jackson	Black Hawk
Dec 28, 1835	Aug 14, 1842	Indian Wars	Jackson	Seminole
Feb 1836	July 1837	Indian Wars	Jackson	Creek

Source: *Historical Statistics of the United States, Earliest Times to the Present: Millennial Edition*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006, Table Ed196-197.

Engagements with Indians in the nineteenth century show the policy of battles building prestige, as military leaders saw opportunity in these battles to unleash their brutality in hopes of political advancement. Of approximately one-thousand hostile encounters with Indians from 1866 to 1891, it is rare to find American military or civilian casualties in the double digits, even less in the triple digits (the only exception being Little Big Horn), but several casualties on the Indian side shows this brutal imbalance.[68] As seen in Table 5 above, Indian wars long ago became proving grounds for American warriors seeking political advancement, as four of the five veteran presidents fought Indians. They built their political careers on slaughter. The table shows four of our five warrior presidents as having engaged in battle with Indians to bolster their political reputations. This echo of past hostilities towards Indians turned Manifest Destiny into a battle cry that fueled expansion in the nineteenth century. To the detriment of the Indian nations, white Americans learned early on how to deal with presumed savagery by their own, preventative savagery. This experience led to the policy of annihilation practiced in the first

century-and-a-half of nationhood. These warrior presidents cemented this policy with their aggressiveness on the battlefield and in the halls of government.

TOTAL WAR

Higginbotham points out in his historiographical essay "The Early American Way of War: Reconnaissance and Appraisal" that the American idea of total war evolved in the mid seventeenth century. It came out of the engagements with Indians, French, and Spanish whom Protestant colonists considered to be savages and papists. This idea focused on total elimination as the preferred method of dealing with these enemies, as opposed to the restrained methods employed by Europeans.[69] This is where martial culture became cemented in an American military policy that has resounded through to the present.[70] This policy of elimination reflects the martial culture of early colonialism on a grand scale, giving rationalization to the racist ideologies influencing military decisions under the assumption of protection. The experiences of colonial Americans led to policies that allowed for a push for its own imperialist designs: Western Expansion and unfair treaties in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Because of the past associations of savagery, Americans viewed these military actions as necessary, preemptively eliminating a possible threat. The warrior politicians could do no wrong if they did their job in protecting the population. The evolution became complete as these men fought their way to political prestige, ignoring the humanity of anyone who did not fit the ideal American profile: white and protestant.

CONCLUSION

Fear is a persistent theme in American history. From early fears of Indians and slaves to those of terrorists and viruses, Americans respond vehemently to threats to national peace. This is the crux Americans cling to when faced with trying circumstances. These threats may not have been so clearly defined, but the colonists convinced themselves of the grave consequences that might follow a lack of preparedness. American warriors made this fear palpable to the constituency, giving them a reason to vote for those wielding their bayonets in defense of the nation.

This is what stressed the importance of martial culture in the colonies. The Imperial wars, slave revolts, rebellions, and attacks from hostile tribes and on innocent victims gave colonists several reasons to rally together in preparation of an enemy that may or may not have been a legitimate threat. America's national character then became that of both strength and paranoia. Threats are often met with a brute force that worsened depending on factors like race and religion, with the Seven Years' War, Pontiac's War, and the Revolution respectively containing limited engagements with Papist French, atrocities associated with a Pan-Indian spiritual movement, and former countrymen requiring restrained retaliation during battle.

Given the nature of fear felt by the colonists, it is not a surprise that martial culture revolved around the need for protection. It involved unknown enemies that looked and acted differently. It then evolved into a need for strong political leaders able to challenge these threats in defense of their communities, with militias formed in the colonies as early as the seventeenth century to fill this need, and militia service becoming important. The citizen soldiers of small towns, often coming from the top echelon of the social hierarchy, took up arms in defense of

their communities. Family and friends became important motivation for these soldiers as they mustered and drilled. In doing so, the colonists created a battle cry for their leaders to yell as they went from battle-hardened warriors to fierce statesmen.

The warrior class evolved out of the need for a strong military presence on the continent. This strong presence allowed the citizenry to react fervently against any danger to national security. Any threat needed to be addressed immediately to save the population from perceived doom. Their saviors thus came from the legions of the new nation's military. Prestige gained on the battlefield outweighed prestige gained through diplomatic and scholarly endeavors. A warrior running for office made more sense to Americans, as they surmised his actions in battle proved his valor more than anything.

Unfortunately, this mantra became mired in the racist and religious ideologies of the time. The rules of war changed depending on who the colonists fought. A slave or Indian threat required more of a violent response than that of European Protestants. The warrior class used this to propel their aspirations in becoming more than warriors; they wanted to become statesmen as well. They needed the fear of eminent attack (from any plausible threat) to give the citizens a reason to elect them to office. This transferred to success at the ballot box when the rank and file of politicians became more and more martially defined. National policy then reflected the nature of the martial culture in the way America fought the War of 1812 as opposed to such wars as the Mexican American war—limited and reserved versus annihilation and victory at all costs.

The colonists broke away from England while becoming distinct in this desire for soldier politicians. An American identity grew out of this distinction as the colonists found comfort in a

strong military presence. This meant fear could be used as a potent political weapon for ex-soldiers to use. People went to the polls with memories of what Washington (from the warrior class) did during the war, while they ignored contributions from men like Adams (from the scholarly class). They saw it as a better choice to have a warrior politician and not need one, instead of needing a warrior politician and not having one.

As the colonists fought and won the seminal War for Independence, they completed the evolution of America. The colonists became citizens of a nation that would militarily challenge all others throughout its history (small threats like Iraq as well as large ones like the Soviets), and they fought fiercely to defend democracy. This ferocity can be directly attributed to the need for protection and the warrior class that evolved out of this. Limited versus total war relies on arbitrary factors like race and religion, while veteran status propelled the men who fought these battles to a new level of stately duties. Even as the twentieth and twenty-first centuries provided Americans with less militaristic threats to be wary of, the nation stands ready to fight for such things as civil rights, lower gas prices, and toilet paper. Martial culture is forever linked to these fights by spreading its tendrils throughout American society after the Revolution.

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